

Are You Dressed for Battle?

“At the rate our country is going I’m really concerned about what my grandchildren will face in the next 20 years,” a former pastor of mine said recently. Yes, I am concerned about that for the children of today as well and for my grandchildren who are yet to be born.

Will they be able to freely worship God? Will they have freedom of speech to speak how they feel based on the Word of God? Will they be able to stand up to those who wish to pull them away from their faith? Will they be able to raise their children based on biblical values?

Strategic Hour in Human History

So many of these freedoms seem to be threatened today. It makes me angry and sad all at the same time. We need to wake up to this fact instead of trying to push everything under the rug as “Well, this is just the times we are living in.” It’s also the times Paul was living in. However, Paul wasn’t afraid to address the issue and give guidance about what we should do to change it.

Romans 13:11 (TPT) says, “To live like this is all the more urgent for time is running out and you know it is a strategic hour in human history.” The book of Romans tells us how to become a Christian and how to live like one. When Paul says “to live like this,” he means to live like a Christian should live.

This is a dire warning about the future. He describes how we as Christians should live knowing we are closer to the return of Christ today than when we were first saved. Even if Jesus doesn’t come back in our lifetimes, we are still always one day closer to meeting Him. So in light of that, how should we live?

Wake Up and Get Dressed

First we have to wake up to the spiritual issues around us. Romans 13:11 tells us to wake up from our slumber. Second, we have to take off the old clothes we were wearing in the darkness. Romans 13:12 tells us to “strip away what is done in the shadows of darkness, removing it like filthy clothes.”

Then, we must dress for battle by putting on “the radiance of light,” as it says in Romans 13:12. “Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh” (Rom. 13:13-14, NIV).

It is vitally important that we remember what kind of battle we are fighting so we can dress properly. Second Corinthians 10:3-5 (NET) tells it to us plainly: “For though we live as human beings, we do not wage war according to human standards, for the weapons of our warfare are not human weapons, but are made powerful by God for tearing down strongholds. We tear down arguments and every arrogant obstacle that is raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to make it obey Christ.”

Clothe Ourselves in Jesus

It's time to dress our souls and spirits to be able to stand against the enemy. We have to put on the clothes ourselves or put on Jesus. It's not a physical outfit; it is very much about the creation Jesus has created us to be. We stand for Jesus and against evil desires, thoughts and opinions.

Galatians 3:26-27 (NIV): “In Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” We are His. We must be consciously aware of this. We are already clothed with Him so we must let Him reign in every part of our lives.

We must be dressed in the armor of God. Ephesians 6:13 says, "Put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand."

It's Time

That day is here. Don't forget to dress yourselves with the armor of God: one of those is righteousness but also truth, peace, faith, salvation and God's Word. But don't forget one of the most critical pieces: "And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests" (Eph. 6:18).

We don't fight this battle alone. We fight it in the power and strength of the Holy Spirit. We fight it on our knees.

Finally, we have to know where we are going. We have to be dressed to run with Jesus. Romans 13:14 (MSG) tells us we can't loiter or linger. We have to be up and about what God is calling us to do.

Run Your Race

Hebrews 12:1-3 (NIV): "Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."

Whatever issues we encounter on our journeys are nothing compared to what Jesus endured. There were times when He was in great agony. Sweating drops of blood is a very human experience that only a small number of people have experienced. If it is not because of a medical condition, it is because the person is in great anguish of spirit. That happens when you are human and facing certain death. Jesus knows what that feels like.

Most of us haven't faced that but whatever we have faced, whether it is just plain exhaustion or despair, Jesus knows what that's like. He asks us to run this race with Him because He knows exactly what it feels like and can help us.

Leave the Baggage Behind

We can't run any race dragging along extra baggage. We will never get anywhere doing that. When we put on Christ, that means we have made the conscious decision to live our lives more like Him every single day.

Our fleshly desires will always hold us back. If we keep feeding them, we will fall flat on our faces in the middle of the race we are destined to win. However, if we make the mindful decision to nourish our spirits and souls with the things of the Spirit of God, we cannot fail.

Jesus is coming back. It may be in our lifetimes or it may not be but we still need to be ready to meet Him and make sure those around us are ready. Because one day we will all meet Him.

And when we do, how will you feel? Will you cringe at the thought of the things you have done that you haven't repented of and changed your behaviors about? Or, with joy and excitement, will you run into His arms to meet Him?

For more on this topic, check out Sweet Grace for Your Journey podcast episode 104: Time to Wake Up. {[eo](#)}

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