



The Spiritual Wrestling Match

By Bryan Trotter on July 20, 2021

TODAY'S READING: Ephesians 6

Did you ever watch wrestling events as a child? The Monday night and pay-per-view wrestling matches of WCW and WWF were over the top with crazy antics. I was a child in the 90's so I remember wrestling stars like Hulk Hogan, Macho Man Randy Savage and many others on TV. I was not allowed to watch it as a child, but I watched it at a friend's house. After watching a wrestling match, we would then try to perform the wrestling moves on each other until someone inevitably got hurt and we were forced by a parent to stop.

Looking back, I can see why my parents chose not to let me watch any wrestling matches. It was silly, a little violent and everyone was trying to fight each other. That feels a little too close to home in our current culture. It seems like everyone is drawing battle lines and looking to fight anyone who is not on their "side."

Far too often, we see people as our adversary and overlook the true enemy. Paul writes that our struggle is not against flesh and blood. There is a spiritual battle going on around us, and we must prepare for it by putting on the armor of God. But what is armor designed for? A helmet, breastplate and shield are used in the defense of attacks. We put on armor so we are prepared to respond to spiritual attacks in accordance to the Spirit. Only the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, is offensive. When Jesus was tempted in the desert, he quoted scripture to the enemy. Psalm 119:11 reads, *"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."* We study, memorize and internalize scripture so we can offensively overcome temptation.

The people around you are not your enemy. People are sinners who are broken and in need of a Savior. When someone does not side with you on current issues, do not use the sword of the Spirit to slay them. The armor of God is used for spiritual warfare, not to alienate others around you by quoting out-of-context verses. Being prepared for spiritual warfare and loving others are not opposites even though it can feel like they are. We must be ready to respond to spiritual attacks while exhibiting love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control to others. Our wrestle is not with flesh and blood.

Love those around you and point them to Christ. Today, spend some time in prayer and ask God to prepare you to respond to spiritual warfare while exhibiting the fruit of the Spirit.

TOMORROW'S READING: Philippians 1

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