

HEROES OF
FAITH

FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT



Winning The Battle Of The Mind



"Our goal is not a negotiated peace with the enemy, but a total victory!"

Peter Stevens

(Elder, recovering Brit, and my friend)

~~*Overcoming Brit*~~

Triumphant Brit

All through Jesus Christ

&

Citizen of His Kingdom

But Still Brandon's friend 😊



Big Stick Diplomacy

Theodore Roosevelt

- *“Speak softly and carry a big stick”* diplomacy
 - The idea is **negotiating peacefully**, or to avoid war and **allow your adversary to save face**

“Our goal is not a negotiated peace with the enemy, but a total victory!”



Troubling Statistics

Suicide 10-24 year olds, rose 61% from 2007 to 2018

- Second cause of death for that age group
- Rose 51% during 2020 – Covid isolation exacerbated underlying issues

27% of US Families have an **estranged adult child**

- 40% of US families experience **temporary estrangement**

20+ million Americans struggle with substance abuse

- During 2020 30% increase in drug overdose

12.7% of all 18 and above take anti-depressants – 10% of age 10+

- During 2020 rose to 22% of adult Americans

Those taking **Anti-Anxiety** prescriptions rose 31% during 2020



Remember

- Eph 6:12 ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the **powers of this dark world** and against the **spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms**
- ¹² There is a way **that appears to be right**, but in the end it leads to death. Prov 14:12 NIV
- ¹⁹ For the **wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight**. 1 Cor. 3:19 NIV



**MAKE NO MISTAKE WE ARE
IN A FIGHT FOR:
OUR YOUTH,
OUR YOUNG ADULTS AND
OUR SOCIETY**



Winning The Battle Of The Mind The Apostle Paul



Paul's Life Summary

- A Pharisee among Pharisees
- Persecuted & Executed Christians
- Personally, recounts approving of Stephen's Stoning
 - Never know who is going to be the next Saul to Paul
- Conversion road to Damascus
- Ananias – Go! Chosen instrument – I will show him how much he must suffer for my name!
- Not accepted in Jerusalem – Apostles
- 14 years as a tent maker learning



Continued

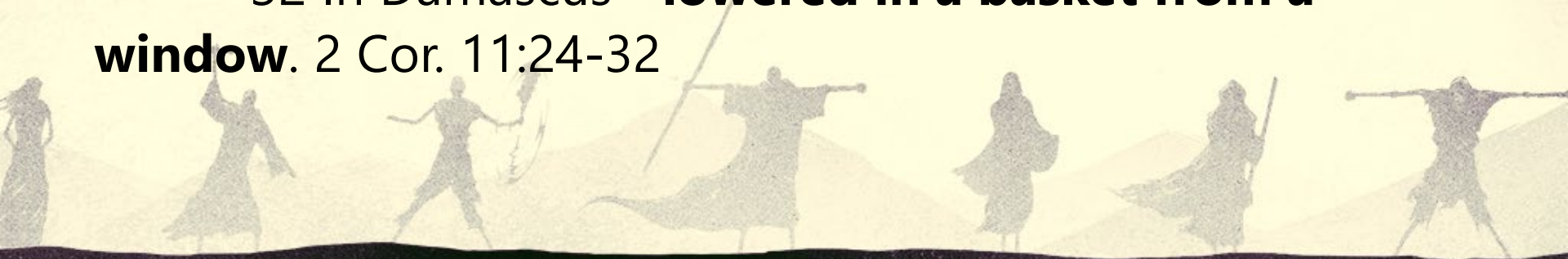
- Apostles in Jerusalem agree he should reach the gentiles
- Rejected by Jews everywhere he went
- Misunderstood, teaching criticized, personally made fun of
- Passionately fought against the tendency of the church to go back to traditions and "works"
- Preached in 49 cities, regions and countries
- Suffered Countless physical issues



Paul's Physical Battles

24 Five times I received from the Jews **the forty lashes minus one.** **25** Three times I was **beaten with rods,** - **pelted with stones,** - **three times I was shipwrecked,** - **night and a day in the open sea,** - **danger from:** - **rivers,** - **bandits,** - **fellow Jews,** - **Gentiles;** - **city,** - **country,** - **sea;** - **false believers.** **27** I - **gone without sleep-** **hunger - thirst** - **without food;** - **cold - naked.** **28** - **pressure of my concern for all the churches.**

- - - - **32** In Damascus - **lowered in a basket from a window.** 2 Cor. 11:24-32



There's More !!

- Heard from the Lord must testify in Rome to Ceasar's house & knew he would die to do it
- Imprisoned under house arrest in Rome
 - Wrote letters 14/27 books of NT
- Died estimated age of between 61 and 68
 - Roman execution, presumed beheaded by sword



What Was He like?

- Full of Gratitude – Rom 16 thanks 28 people
- Compassion for others – took up offerings on behalf of others
- Servant Heart – worked so as not to be a burden
- Transparent of his struggles – So & So
 - Deserted me, abandoned me, did me much harm, left me,
- Resilient – you think!
- Passionate in the defense of the Gospel to Gentiles



What Was He Like – Cont'd

- Encouraged everyone to seek and move in the power of the gifts of the Holy Spirit
- Moved in power, miracles, healing, raising the dead
- Man of prayer



Paul's Autobiography

2 Tim 4:6-7

- ⁶For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. ⁷ **I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.**



Knew How to Fight & Win

What Advice Did He Give
Others?



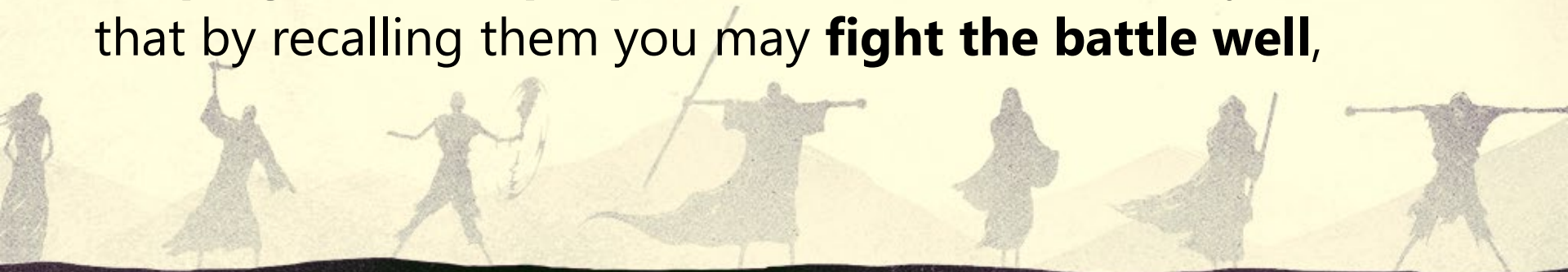
Remind Ourselves – In A Fight

1 Tim 6:12

- **12 Fight the good fight** of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 1 Tim 6:12 NIV

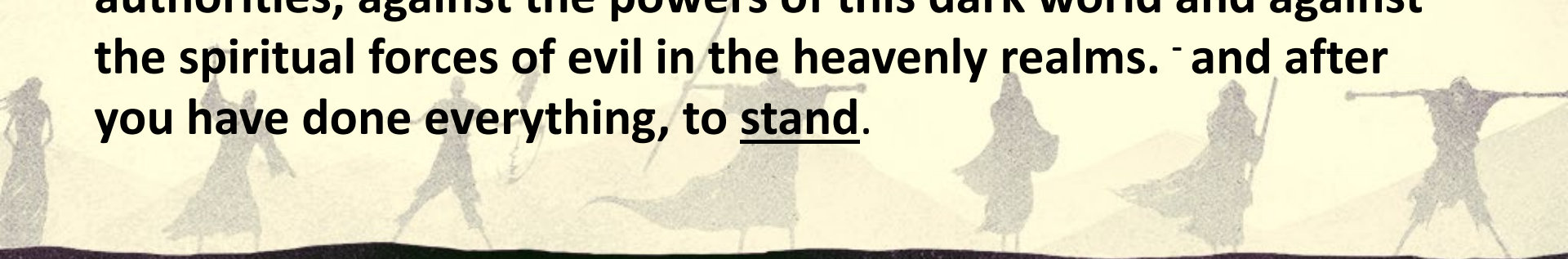
1 Tim 1:18 NIV

- **18** Timothy, my son, I am giving you this command in **keeping with the prophecies** once made about you, so that by recalling them you may **fight the battle well,**



Who, Where, How, What?

- 2 Cor. 10:4-5 - The **weapons we fight with** are **not the weapons of the world**. On the contrary, they have **divine power to demolish strongholds**. ⁵ We **demolish arguments** and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take **captive every thought to make it obedient** to Christ.
- Eph 6:11-13 - ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, - **take your stand** against the devil's schemes. ¹² **For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.** - and after you have done everything, to **stand**.



Lot To Digest

- Who – Not Flesh & Blood
- Where – In The Heavenly Places
- What – Strongholds – Arguments against God
- How – take thoughts captive – full armor STAND



But Why?

⁸ Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion **looking for someone to devour.**

1 Pet. 5:8 NIV

- **Looking for** - Greek, ζητέω (**zēteō**) - to seek, look for, to search after, to be on the watch for, **to pursue, to endeavor to obtain**,
 - He is actively looking for weakness, to attack
- **Devour** καταπίνω (**katapinō**) – **destroy, annihilate, engulf, submerge**



C. S. Lewis Screwtape Letters

- Teach them (Christians) to estimate the value of each prayer by their success in producing the desired feeling; and never let them suspect how much success or failure of that kind depends on whether they are well or ill, fresh or tired, at the moment.
- All extremes, except extreme devotion to the Enemy [God], are to be encouraged.



Powerful Advice

² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**. Then you will be **able to test and approve** what God's will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will. Rom 12:2

- **Transformed** Greek μεταμορφώω (**metamorphoō**) – change external form, transfigure; to **undergo a spiritual transformation**

We Know:

- Someone thinks within himself, so he is. - Proverbs 23:7
- God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and **self-discipline**. 2 Tim. 1: 7.
- Think Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather **think of yourself with sober judgment**, Romans 12:3



OK That's Great

But HOW???



Three Components of The Fight

1. How To Prepare Yourself For Prayer
2. Understanding our "Standing", Authority
3. Use of Gifts Of The Spirt In Spiritual Warfare



1. How to Prepare For Prayer

Phil 4:6-9 **Do not be anxious about anything**, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with **thanksgiving**, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the **peace** of God, which **transcends all understanding**, will **guard your hearts and your minds** in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, **whatever is true**, whatever is **noble**, whatever is **right**, whatever is **pure**, whatever is **lovely**, whatever is **admirable**—if anything is **excellent** or **praiseworthy**—**think about such things**. ⁹ - - -. And the **God of peace** will be with you.



2. Understanding our Standing

- **Heb 4:16** - Let us then approach **God's throne** of grace with **confidence**, so that we may **receive** mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.
 - **Confidence** Greek παρρησία (parrēsia) – **boldness of speech, freedom to speak boldly, authority, confidence, unambiguously**
 - **Receive** λαμβάνω (lambanō) -take in the hand, **to seize upon, to make a rightful or successful assumption n of**



Do & Be

- Crush his head under our feet
- Make His enemies His footstool
- His Mountain will fill the earth
- We are to be, a city set on a hill

*Our goal is not
Negotiated peace but
Total victory*



Using Gifts of Spirit

Scripture encourages us in the following way:

- Tongues, really, really powerful – builds up & helps prayer
- Discernment of spirits - know your enemy
- Words of knowledge – something that unlocks a situation
- Words of Wisdom – to know how to handle a situation

Remember

- Timothy, my son, I am giving you **this command in keeping with the prophecies** once made about you, so that **by recalling them** you may **fight the battle well**, 1 Tim 1:18 NIV



Balance - Caution

2 Peter 2:10b-12 NLT

- Bold and **arrogant**, they are not afraid to heap abuse on celestial beings; ¹¹ yet **even angels**, although they are stronger and more powerful, **do not heap abuse on such beings** when bringing judgment on them from the Lord. ¹² But these people blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like **unreasoning animals**, creatures of instinct, **born only to be caught and destroyed**, and like animals **they too will perish**.



Make no mistake we are in a fight for:

- *Our Youth,*
- *Our Young Adults and*
- *Our Society*

So. . . Stand & Fight!

