



Purview of the Battlefield

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BIG IDEA – The view of what the battlefield looks like from a Cruise Ship and Battleship is radically different. One is an internal struggle of self, the other an external struggle of mission. One produces comfort and abundance, the other a heightened excitement and desire for mission fulfillment.

Scripture Focus – When he saw the crowds, **he had compassion** on them because **they were confused and helpless**, like sheep without a shepherd.
Matthew 9:36 NLT

Blurb: It is undeniable: the world around us feels chaotically evil. Wars rage within and beyond our borders, and what used to be “rumors of wars” now streams 24/7 on screens both small and large. But evil isn’t new; **it has been pervasive ever since we left the garden.**

Here’s the stunning part: when God became human and lived among us, Jesus didn’t merely survive in a broken world—**He loved in the middle of it.** And when He looked out at the throngs who came searching, He didn’t see a hopeless crowd. **Jesus saw a harvest—ripe with hope.**

So, here’s the question: if Jesus could look across the battlefield and see a harvest, can we learn to see what He saw?

To answer the question, is the Church a Cruise Ship or Battleship, let’s look at the differences in what I’m calling the Purview of the battlefield. What does the war look like on a cruise ship versus a battleship.

You might say, “There’s no war, no battle on a cruise ship! That’s the whole purpose of a cruise ship is to avoid wars and battles.”

I would agree that the ships are built for completely different purposes, but I want to point out that there are plenty of battles taking place on both!

Cruise ships are designed and built for the ultimate consumerism experience. It’s just the truth! But within those experiences there are a lot of internal battles – and I’m not talking about getting the norovirus!

Battleships, however, are designed and built for the ultimate conflict at sea. No one signs up to serve on a battleship to experience the fine cuisine and **sail the seven seas to see the world.**

The moment the cruise ship leaves port, it's time to relax, stroll the decks and plan your days for fun and entertainment. The moment the battleship leaves port, it's gets serious really quick.

One ship has internal wars going on because anytime there is a large gathering of people, confined to a defined space , there is **always** a battle going on.

The other ship, the battleship has both internal and external wars to deal with. The attitudes and emotions of shipmates as well as the threat of harm when facing the enemy.

Cruise ship battles

I won't spend a lot of time on this, but the internal battles on a cruise ship are very real:

Comfort-Driven Internal Battles. Because of abundance and ease with lust, greed vs gratitude, grace vs entitlement, comparison vs compassion, judgement vs justice. And moments of the evils of envy. Let me just say this, **“the enemy of our soul doesn't wave us farewell at the port and allow us to have a getaway from him,”** nor the disordered desires of our soul. **There are no vacation get-aways from the Devil and no escaping ourselves!**

For churches that are more like cruise than battleships, the struggles are still intense with infighting, but the purview – the outlook of what the real battlefield looks like just gets forgotten altogether.

But if the Church is a battleship, the fight and the outlook of the battlefield is all about mission – What does Jesus want His church to look like?

BIG IDEA: The view of what the battlefield looks like from a Cruise Ship and Battleship is radically different. One is an internal struggle of self, the other an external struggle of mission. One is produces comfort and abundance, the other a heightened excitement and desire for mission fulfillment.

The Mission begins with how Jesus sees people.

He looked at the vast number of people and saw sheep needing a Shepherd, not consumers needing a show. The Church is a direct reflection of Christ in how we see and interact with the culture (the world).

Yes, there are bad actors, but the majority of people aren't purposely evil, they are just lost and broken.

Matthew 9:35–36 NLT

- “Jesus traveled through all the towns and villages of that area, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness. **When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.**”

When Jesus sees the battlefield over human souls, he did not see evil IN THEM, he saw hurting people and what evil does TO THEM.

When Jesus sees us, in our suffering he sees us with compassion ([4697](#) “*splagxnízomai*” with his physical guts yearning with sympathy!). We’ll see in a moment, this is one of Jesus’ primary weapons to fight with – compassion!

Matthew writes that Jesus saw them as confused and helpless. The real words in Greek are “skulló” – feeling skinned alive & rhiptó – throwaways.

Have you ever felt confused and helpless? Jesus sees you and is all torn up about it.

Have you ever seen someone confused and helpless? Can you see them as Jesus sees them – with compassion?

When Jesus sees the crowd, He sees a harvest, not the weeds.

Later on, in Matthew Jesus tells another story about how he purviews, the outlook of this battlefield for human souls!

In the Parable of the Wheat and Weeds – Jesus explains how the enemy works against what is good by planting “weeds among seeds.”

“Here is another story Jesus told: “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a farmer who planted good seed in his field. But that night as the workers slept, his enemy came and planted weeds among the wheat, then slipped away. When the crop began to grow and produce grain, the weeds also grew.” Matthew 13:24-26 NLT

Of course this bothered the workers who were responsible for the crop! **The workers thought they had the ideal solution!**

“The farmer’s workers went to him and said, ‘Sir, the field where you planted that good seed is full of weeds! Where did they come from?’ **“An enemy has done this!’ the farmer exclaimed. “Should we pull out the weeds?’ they asked. “No,’ he replied, ‘you’ll uproot the wheat if you do. Let both grow together until the harvest. Then I will tell the harvesters to sort out the weeds, tie them into bundles, and burn them, and to put the wheat in the barn.’” Matthew 13:27-30 NLT**

Jesus explained the parable to his disciples telling them,

Jesus replied, “The Son of Man is the farmer who plants the good seed. **The field is the world, and the good seed represents the people of the Kingdom.** The weeds are the people who belong to the evil one. **The enemy who planted the weeds among the wheat is the devil. The harvest is the end of the world,** and the harvesters are the angels. “Just as the weeds are sorted out and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the world. Matthew 13:37-40 NLT

Can I just remind us, these “weeds among seeds” bothers the Church still today!

As disciples we want to pull the weeds, but Jesus warned them that pulling weeds could harm the young shoots of wheat.

There are churches, there are ministries that make it all about ripping out the weeds of sin, heresy, and honestly even evil! I think Jesus had a good point – in doing so it can harm the young in their faith.

I’m not talking about a good shepherd watching over their flock like a Pastor over a church family – that is completely different. I’m talking about being so “against” everything that we lose focus on what we are really about, what we are for.

IS ANGER IS LIKE AN ENERGY DRINK?

I was listening to a Carey Nieuwhof podcast with his guest, **Beth Moore**, and she said something so wise. Beth asked the question: **“Am I fighting against or fighting for?”** She said as a society **we have become addicted to fighting against!** She believes that this kind of anger is like an energy drink. **Anger is like an internal IV that continues to fuel powerful emotions that are not healthy for us but are extremely addictive.** And because these kinds of anger are so addictive, we are always mad at someone or something instead of longing or wishing something good – focusing on what we are fighting for **not against!** [Beth Moore on Carey Nieuwhof Podcast, #789.](#)

Jesus saw the crowd, not as the enemy, but as the battlefield where the war over their souls take place.

I believe we are in a battle over souls; the Church is a battleship and the weapons we fight with are different than weapons of this world!

Paul writes about the weapons we use!

Paul was very specific about this discussion of the battle and the weaponry we use to fight in a spiritual war.

2 Corinthians 10:4 NLT

The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.

Paul says the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty.

- Yes, Paul is speaking of the difference of God's wisdom and human wisdom. But he tells the Corinth church, **“Now I, Paul, appeal to you with**

the gentleness and kindness of Christ—though I realize you think I am timid in person and bold only when I write from far away. Well, I am begging you now so that when I come I won't have to be bold with those who think we act from human motives." 2 Corinthians 10:1-2 NLT

- Paul admits that we have and we tend to see things from a human perspective – our motives are based in our own sense of judgement and justice.
- Here's what I love about Paul's point, he tells the church, **"We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do."** 2 Corinthians 10:3

What are some of our human weapons and how are they wielded?

Human Weapons	Shows up in	Biblical Examples
Violence, physical force and weapons.	weapons and brute force	1 Samuel 17
Power struggles through domination	seizing control or authority over others	Matthew 20
Political manipulation & scheming	intrigue, manipulation, and strategy	2 Samuel 15
Anger, revenge and retaliation	personal vengeance	Luke 9
Self-promotion through pride and boasting	defending themselves through pride or status	2 Corinthians 10
Manipulation through Intimidation and threats	fear to gain compliance	Acts 4

Paul is not about rejecting conflict entirely. Rather, he insists the methods used to confront error must not mirror worldly power struggles. The battlefield is real, but the spiritual strategy is different.

Paul gives us this powerful verse that helps us understand the way Jesus responded, not reacted to the evil around him.

"The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 2 Corinthians 10:4 NLT"

What are the weapons that have divine power to tear down spiritual strongholds?

The best way to answer that question:

Look to see what Jesus used as divine weapons that teardown fortresses.

What are the weapons of divine power?

Jesus used these to fight against evil.

Spiritual Weapon Shows up in	Function
Truth	Confidence and speaking with authority exposes lies
Scripture	Using scripture as that authority, not our own opinion confronts deception
Prayer	preparation for spiritual conflict aligns with divine authority
Compassion	Humility and helpfulness to undo the effects and damage of evil reverses evil's damage
Mercy	Forgiveness to repair, not to imprison to control restores the broken
Love	Sacrificial, costly, self-giving love defeats evil through sacrifice
Spiritual authority	Understanding our legal authority as a Christ follower. casts out demonic forces

Jesus wielded these powerful physical and spiritual weapons with grace and truth.



DIG DEEPER: Charts and comparison of Human vs Divine Power

Jesus weapons of choice in this battle is divine power for healing human souls:
- Truth, Prayer, Compassion, Mercy, Love?

These may be seen as weird or weak, yet Jesus used them with precision and effectiveness.

Question: if Jesus could look across the battlefield and see a harvest, can we learn to see what He saw?

REFLECTIONS

- **The world sees hopelessness; Jesus sees open hearts.**
- **We see a battlefield; Jesus sees a harvest field.**
- **We see problems to avoid; Jesus sees people to love.**
- **We see threats that confront us; Jesus sees souls worth convincing.**
- **We see chaos winning; Jesus sees the Kingdom advancing.**

APPLICATION

Church: Cruise Ship or Battleship – Purview of the Battlefield

- **A luxury cruise ship** is designed for **comfort and consumption**, while a **battleship** is designed for **conflict and mission**. The internal struggles tend to mirror those environments.
- **Cruise ship battles corrupt the heart, Battleship battles test courage and faithfulness.**
- **Jesus saw the crowd and saw their need, not just their sin.**
- **Humans' use weapons of power, control, force and intimidation only cause people to pull away from God instead of running to Him.**
- **Jesus used divine weapons of compassion and mercy to engage in lives of people to show them truth.**
- **Prayer, compassion, mercy and love are legitimately powerful as spiritual weapons and should not be underestimated.**

SCRIPTURES

Matthew 9:35-36 NLT ON SCREEN

Jesus traveled through all the towns and villages of that area, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Matthew 13:24-26 NLT

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Jesus replied, "The Son of Man is the farmer who plants the good seed. The field is the world, and the good seed represents the people of the Kingdom. The weeds are the people who belong to the evil one. The enemy who planted the weeds among the wheat is the devil. The harvest is the end of the world, and the harvesters are the angels. "Just as the weeds are sorted out and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the world.

2 Corinthians 10:1-2 NLT

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DIG DEEPER NOTES



The "Battles" on a Cruise Ship (Internal, Comfort-Driven)

These are primarily **heart-level struggles that grow in environments of abundance and ease.**

Internal Battle	Description
Entitlement	Expecting to be served rather than serving others.
Greed / Consumption	Always wanting more experiences, more comfort, more indulgence.
Comparison	Measuring oneself against others (who has the bigger room, better seat, better experience).
Selfishness	Prioritizing personal pleasure over the needs of others.
Lust / Pleasure seeking	Pursuing gratification without restraint.
Gluttony	Overconsumption simply because abundance is available.
Complaining / Criticism	Dissatisfaction when expectations of comfort are not met.
Apathy	Losing sense of mission because life is about enjoyment.
Spiritual complacency	Assuming everything is fine because life feels comfortable.

Biblical parallels

- **Epistle to the Philippians 3:19** – "Their god is their stomach."
- **Epistle to the Hebrews 12:16** – warning against Esau's appetite-driven decisions.
- **Book of Revelation 3:17** – the church of Laodicea: "You say, 'I am rich... and need nothing.'"

These battles are largely **internal temptations produced by comfort and abundance.**



The “Battles” on a Battleship (External, Mission-Driven)

A battleship exists for a **clear objective in hostile territory**, so the struggles are different.

External Battle	Description
Fear	Real danger from enemies or conflict.
Risk	Mission requires courage and sacrifice.
Physical danger	Possibility of injury or death.
Fatigue / endurance	Long stretches of vigilance and hard work.
Decision pressure	Leaders must make choices under uncertainty.
Threat of loss	Loss of comrades, resources, or victory.
Discipline	Every crew member must stay focused and obedient.
Unity under pressure	The crew must function as one body.
Sacrifice	Personal comfort surrendered for the mission.

Biblical parallels

- **Second Epistle to Timothy 2:3–4** – “Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”
- **Epistle to the Ephesians 6:12** – struggle against spiritual forces.
- **First Epistle of Peter 5:8** – “Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion.”

These battles are largely **external opposition and mission pressure**.

The Core Contrast

Cruise Ship Mindset Battleship Mindset

Comfort	Mission
Consumption	Sacrifice
Self-focus	Team focus
Entertainment	Vigilance
Complaints	Courage
Indulgence	Discipline

One fights **temptations of comfort**.

The other faces **dangers of mission**.

Jesus consistently prepared his followers for the **battleship reality**:

- **Gospel of John 16:33** – “In this world you will have trouble.”
- **Gospel of Matthew 16:24** – “Take up your cross and follow me.”



Jesus’ weapons to fight evil:

In the New Testament, Jesus consistently confronts evil using means that are **not worldly power** (force, politics, coercion), but **divine authority expressed through spiritual practices and character**. The Apostle Paul later describes this same pattern when he writes:

“The weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.” — **Second Epistle to the Corinthians 10:4 (ESV)**

Paul’s description reflects the pattern already demonstrated by Jesus. The Gospels show several recurring “**weapons**” **Jesus used against evil**, both human evil and demonic authority.

1. Truth — exposing deception

One of Jesus’ primary weapons was **truth spoken with authority**.

Example:

- Jesus rebuking Satan during temptation
Gospel of Matthew 4:1–11

Each temptation is answered with “**It is written...**”, quoting Scripture.

Function as a weapon:

- Truth exposes lies.
- Lies are the primary strategy of Satan (John 8:44).
- Speaking truth dismantles spiritual deception.

Paul later describes this same principle as:

“The belt of truth.” — **Epistle to the Ephesians 6:14**

Conclusion: Truth functions as a spiritual weapon because it breaks deception and false belief.

Sources:

- Craig Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Eerdmans, 2009)
 - D.A. Carson, *Matthew* (Expositor’s Bible Commentary)
-

2. Prayer — communion with the Father

Jesus regularly withdrew to pray.

Examples:

- **Gospel of Luke 5:16** — “Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.”
- **Luke 6:12** — spent the night in prayer before choosing the apostles.
- **Luke 22:39–46** — Gethsemane before the crucifixion.

Prayer was not merely devotional; it was **strategic preparation for spiritual conflict**.

In fact, Jesus links **prayer directly with spiritual authority** when the disciples fail to cast out a demon:

“This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer.”

— **Gospel of Mark 9:29**

Conclusion: Prayer functions as a weapon because it aligns the believer with divine authority.

Sources:

- Darrell Bock, *Luke* (Baker Exegetical Commentary)
-

3. The Word of God

Closely related to truth, but more specific.

Jesus repeatedly **wields Scripture as authority**:

Examples:

- Temptation of Jesus — **Matthew 4:4, 7, 10**
- Teaching crowds — **Matthew 5-7**
- Confronting Pharisees — **Matthew 15:3-9**

Paul later describes Scripture metaphorically as:

“The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

— **Epistle to the Ephesians 6:17**

Conclusion: Scripture functions as an offensive weapon against spiritual lies and corruption.

4. Compassion and Mercy — undoing the effects of evil

Jesus consistently responded to suffering with **compassion**.

Examples:

- Healing the sick — **Matthew 14:14**
- Feeding the hungry — **Matthew 15:32**
- Raising the dead — **John 11**

Matthew explicitly links healing to the kingdom defeating evil:

“Jesus went throughout Galilee... healing every disease and sickness.”

— **Gospel of Matthew 4:23**

Scholars note that **miracles in the Gospels function as acts of kingdom warfare**—they reverse the effects of sin, death, and demonic oppression.

Source:

- N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Fortress Press)

Conclusion: Compassion is a weapon because it **restores what evil has damaged**.

5. Love and sacrificial obedience

The ultimate weapon Jesus used against evil was **self-giving love**.

The New Testament presents the cross itself as a victory over spiritual powers.

“Having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.”

— **Epistle to the Colossians 2:15**

Also:

“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

— **Gospel of John 15:13**

Conclusion: The cross shows that sacrificial love defeats evil at its deepest level.

Source:

- Michael Green, *The Message of Matthew*
-

6. Authority over demonic powers

Jesus directly exercised authority over evil spirits.

Example:

- **Mark 1:27** — “Even the evil spirits obey him.”

These exorcisms are interpreted in the Gospels as **signs that the kingdom of God is invading the domain of evil**.

Jesus states explicitly:

“If I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.”

— **Matthew 12:28**

Source:

- Graham Twelftree, *Jesus the Exorcist* (Mohr Siebeck)

Summary: The “weapons” Jesus used

From the Gospels, the consistent pattern includes:

Spiritual Weapon Function

Truth	exposes lies
Scripture	confronts deception
Prayer	aligns with divine authority
Compassion	reverses evil's damage
Mercy	restores the broken
Love	defeats evil through sacrifice
Spiritual authority	casts out demonic forces



Parable of the Weeds

In the Parable of the Tares, found in Matthew 13:24-30, Jesus tells a story about a farmer who sows good wheat in his field. While the farmer's servants sleep, an enemy sows tares (weeds) among the wheat. When the wheat grows, the servants notice the tares and ask if they should pull them out. The farmer advises against this, saying that pulling the tares might uproot the wheat as well.

Key Points

- **Tares vs. Wheat:** Tares, or darnel, look similar to wheat in their early growth stages. This similarity makes it difficult to distinguish between the two until they mature.
- **Reason for Patience:** The farmer's instruction to let both grow until harvest highlights the importance of allowing time for the true nature of each plant to be revealed. Pulling out the tares too early could damage the wheat.
- **Final Judgment:** At harvest time, the reapers will separate the tares from the wheat. The tares will be bundled and burned, while the wheat will be gathered into the barn. This symbolizes the final judgment where good and evil will be separated.

Spiritual Interpretation

- **Children of the Kingdom vs. Children of the Evil One:** In the parable, the wheat represents the children of God's kingdom, while the tares symbolize the children of the evil one. The farmer represents Jesus, and the harvest signifies the end of the age.

- **Moral Lesson:** The parable teaches that good and evil coexist in the world. It emphasizes the need for patience and discernment, as the ultimate separation will occur at the end of time, carried out by angels.

This parable serves as a reminder of the complexities of life and the importance of waiting for divine judgment rather than attempting to make separations ourselves.

The Parable of the Weeds illustrates the coexistence of good and evil in society, suggesting that while we may desire to eliminate wrongdoing, doing so prematurely can harm the good. It encourages patience and understanding, emphasizing that ultimate judgment and sorting will come in due time, which can inform our approach to moral dilemmas today.



What were the “weapons of divine power?”

What Paul means by “divine weapons”

1. The Gospel and proclamation of truth

The primary weapon in the immediate context is **the message of Christ itself**. Paul's ministry involved **confronting false beliefs and arguments with the truth of the gospel**.

Supporting passages:

- **Epistle to the Romans 1:16** — “The gospel... is the power of God for salvation.”
- **First Epistle to the Corinthians 1:18** — “The message of the cross... is the power of God.”

Scholars widely agree that Paul's “weapons” include **apostolic teaching and gospel proclamation**.

Source:

- Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (NIGTC)
-

2. The authority of Christ exercised through the apostles

In the immediate context Paul refers to the **authority Christ gave him**.

“The authority the Lord gave us for building you up.”

— **Second Epistle to the Corinthians 10:8**

This authority was exercised through:

- correction
- teaching
- discipline
- spiritual leadership

Source:

- David Garland, *2 Corinthians* (New American Commentary)
-

3. The Word of God

Elsewhere Paul explicitly describes Scripture as a weapon.

“Take... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

— **Epistle to the Ephesians 6:17**

The Word confronts:

- deception
- false teaching
- spiritual lies

Source:

- Clinton Arnold, *Ephesians* (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary)
-

4. Prayer

Paul regularly ties spiritual warfare to prayer.

“Pray in the Spirit on all occasions.”

— **Epistle to the Ephesians 6:18**

Although prayer is not listed in 2 Corinthians 10 specifically, it appears immediately in Paul’s warfare framework in Ephesians.

Source:

- Peter O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*
-

5. Righteous character and integrity

Paul also refers to moral and spiritual virtues as weapons.

“With the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and the left.”

— **Second Epistle to the Corinthians 6:7**

These include:

- integrity
- humility
- obedience
- endurance

These qualities counter accusations against Paul’s ministry.

Source:

- Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT)
-

What are the “strongholds” Paul says these weapons destroy?

In context, they are **not primarily demons or physical structures**, but:

- arguments
- false philosophies
- prideful ideas
- resistance to the knowledge of God

This is clear from **2 Corinthians 10:5**, which defines them as **“arguments and lofty opinions.”**

Scholarly consensus supports this interpretation.

Source:

- Murray Harris, NIGTC Commentary on 2 Corinthians

Summary: Paul’s “weapons of divine power”

From the text and Paul’s broader theology, they include:

Divine Weapon	Function
Gospel proclamation	confronts false beliefs
Apostolic authority	corrects error
Scripture	exposes deception
Prayer	invokes God’s power
Righteous character	validates truth
Spiritual obedience	submits the mind to Christ

These weapons are **“divine”** because their power comes **from God rather than human force or manipulation.**

Key insight

Paul’s warfare model is striking:

The battle is **not fought with force**, but with **truth that changes minds and hearts.**
The battlefield is primarily **the realm of belief and allegiance.**



How do humans “wage war?”

1. Violence and physical force

Humans commonly rely on **weapons and brute force.**

Example:

- David rejecting Saul’s armor but acknowledging typical warfare tools.

“Saul dressed David in his own tunic... he put a coat of armor on him.”

— First Book of Samuel 17:38–39

The Philistine approach represents conventional warfare:

“You come against me with sword and spear and javelin.”
— 1 Samuel 17:45

Typical human warfare uses:

- **swords**
- **spears**
- **armies**
- **military strength**

Source: Walter Kaiser, *Hard Sayings of the Bible*.

2. Power struggles and domination

Humans often wage war by **seizing control or authority over others**.

Jesus explicitly describes this pattern:

“The rulers of the Gentiles **lord it over them**, and their high officials exercise authority over them.”

— Gospel of Matthew 20:25

The contrast Jesus gives is striking:

“Not so with you.” (Matt 20:26)

Human warfare often involves:

- **domination**
- **coercion**
- **control**

Source: Craig Blomberg, *Matthew* (NAC).

3. Political manipulation and scheming

Biblical narratives often show leaders using **intrigue, manipulation, and strategy**.

Example:

Absalom undermining David's kingdom.

“Absalom stole the hearts of the people of Israel.”

— Second Book of Samuel 15:6

His method included:

- **flattery**
- **political maneuvering**
- **public perception control**

These tactics resemble what Paul likely means by “**fleshly**” strategies.

Source: Robert Bergen, *1–2 Samuel* (NAC).

4. Anger, retaliation, and revenge

Humans often respond to conflict with **personal vengeance**.

Example:

James and John responding to rejection.

“Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?”

— Gospel of Luke 9:54

Jesus rebukes them.

- **Deuteronomy 32:35 ESV**, “Vengeance is mine, and recompense, for the time when their foot shall slip; for the day of their calamity is at hand, and their doom comes swiftly.”
- **Romans 12:19 ESV**, “Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”

This shows the instinctive human response to opposition: **retaliation**.

Source: Darrell Bock, *Luke* (BECNT).

5. Self-promotion and boasting

Another way humans “fight” is by **defending themselves through pride or status**.

Paul directly addresses this problem in Corinth:

“Some measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves.”

— Second Epistle to the Corinthians 10:12

In the Greco-Roman world, teachers often defended authority through:

- **boasting**
- **rhetorical superiority**
- **personal reputation**

Paul refuses to use these tactics.

Source: Murray J. Harris, NIGTC Commentary.

6. Manipulation through fear or intimidation

Human conflict often uses **fear to gain compliance**.

Example:

Sanhedrin intimidation of the apostles.

“They threatened them and let them go.”

— Acts of the Apostles 4:21

Threats are a common human method of control.

Source: F.F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts*.

Summary: “How humans wage war”

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Self-promotion through pride and boasting	defending themselves through pride or status	2 Corinthians 10
Manipulation through Intimidation and threats	fear to gain compliance	Acts 4

Paul rejects these methods for ministry. Instead, he emphasizes **truth, humility, spiritual authority, and dependence on God.**

Paul is not about rejecting conflict entirely. Rather, he insists the **methods used to confront error must not mirror worldly power struggles.** The battlefield is real, but the strategy is different.