

# The Weapons of Righteousness

## Series Introduction

Individual Christians, and the Christian church as a whole, were a dynamic force in the first three hundred years. In spite of hostile spiritual, religious, and governmental forces raised up against it, the Christian church changed the world. People flocked to Christianity in order to have a personal relationship with the one true God; and because it was the only place where they could be permanently liberated from the spirits, temptations, and wickedness of the ancient world.

The early church was dynamic because it trained Christians to know God and use all the weapons of righteousness that the Lord Jesus Christ provided. Equipped with the dozens of spiritual weapons from God, average Christians were able to create a life of freedom, dignity, love, and joy, which was unknown in the ancient world. These “weapons of righteousness” allowed them to build a spiritual force field around their life, which shielded them from the wickedness around them. They were in the world, but they were not of it. They knew they were in a spiritual war, and they were ready for it. They not only survived, but they thrived in the midst of exactly the kind of wickedness that infects our societies today. With practice, they learned and became proficient with these weapons of righteousness in their churches. It was in the simple churches themselves of those first three hundred years that Christians became fully equipped to live a different kind of life—not through a school, university, or graduate course.

Unfortunately, the modern church is only now beginning to acknowledge the spiritual nature of the war with sin. There is not yet in our churches acknowledgment of the need for spiritual battle training, let alone consistent training systems for Christians to become fully equipped. It’s almost as if we are fighting the enemy with one hand tied behind our backs. This book will attempt to reintroduce the Christian church to the weapons of righteousness that Jesus and the apostles tell us about in the New Testament. As Christians become thoroughly equipped with these weapons of righteousness, the individuals will become completely free and the church dynamic again. With great anticipation and hope, I have watched numerous individuals, churches, and organizations begin to speak into the spiritual war we all face. But we need a more systematic and practical form of training. I hope that this book will offer a template and unleash other creative projects that will release the power of Christ in Christians and in his bride, the church.

These books outlines forty different “weapons systems” with individual weapons for creating a righteous life of love, joy, and spiritual power. It will outline each weapon and give practical spiritual workouts to begin using them effectively. Each Christian and each church should plan to dive deeper into these weapons systems to cement their understanding.

Let's talk about spiritual warfare. Everyone is living in the midst of spiritual warfare. It's all around us. People are confused about what spiritual warfare actually is; so let me define it for you. At times, it may involve cases of demons inhabiting a person's body, but this is in extreme cases. The primary arenas of spiritual war are actually in our thoughts, choices, emotions, and actions. It consists of thoughts to do evil that fly through our minds, or choices that suggest themselves to us, even though we know they are wrong. It is the emotions of fear, despair, anger, depression, and hatred that seek to overwhelm us, keeping us from doing God's ideal for us. Each of these things can be likened to bullets, arrows, and explosives of a spiritual war.

As in a battle, we need protection and the ability to fight back. In his grace, God has given us a huge cache of spiritual weapons for us to use to push back the darkness. Some of these weapons protect us from the attacks of the enemy, and some of these weapons create new levels of spiritual calm in our life.

Let's begin by giving some basic definitions. The number one goal of life for a Christian is to love God, love others, and love ourselves righteously (Matthew 22:37-39). The Devil's number one goal is to prevent real love from happening or pervert it into something destructive. Over the last thirty-plus years, the church as a whole has been turning out incredibly weak Christians. This book is an attempt to change that. We need Christians who know how to live out their faith with weapons at the ready. If injustice is to be corrected, we need fully developed Christians who understand and are skilled with the weapons of righteousness.

It is clear that evil is growing. Injustice, abuse, and oppression are everywhere. The apostle Paul faced a whole world full of every kind of injustice and oppression, just like we do today (political, religious, occupational, mental, emotional). How do we become stronger to make a difference? Tucked away in a little verse written to the Corinthians is God's answer. Second Corinthians 6:7 says, "...in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and the left..." God's answer is to become aware of, and proficient with, the weapons of righteousness.

I have been involved in helping people grapple with all levels of spiritual warfare, from simple temptation, to severe demon oppression. In every case, the weapons that Christ has given us are adequate when we use them. As I have helped hundreds of people deepen their faith, prepare for ministry, and/or escape from the clutches of the Devil, it is these weapons of righteousness that have carried the day. I offer this book as a practical overview on these weapons systems. We must regularly ask the question: If we become effective at this, who wins and who loses? If everyone except the wicked wins, then proceed.