

Faith **worshiping** | **Abel**  
Faith **walking** | **Enoch**  
Faith **working** | **Noah**  
Faith **willing** | **Abraham**  
Faith **waiting** | **Sarah**  
Faith **well-tried** | **Abraham**  
Faith **winning** | **Moses**  
Faith **welcoming** | **Rahab**

In these verses we see several examples of faith **warring**

Battle and war are the grammar of the life of faith

- The NT and OT overflow with the imagery

2 Timothy 2:3

**3 Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.**

### Every war has its heroes

David stands as perhaps the most obvious hero when it comes to **warring by faith**, especially when we think of his encounter with Goliath

- Goliath is a picture of the enemy—Satan
  - Big
    - Goliath was about 9.5 feet tall (1 Sam 17:4)
    - His armor weighed over 200 pounds (1 Sam. 17:5)
    - The head of his spear weighed about 19 pounds (1 Sam. 17:7)
  - Intimidating
    - A champion (war machine) (1 Sam 17:4)
    - Shouted at and openly challenged the armies of Israel (1 Sam.17:8)
    - For 40 days, every morning and every night (relentless) (1 Sam. 17:16)
  - Mocker
    - [“Am I a dog that you come at me with sticks... come to me and I will give your flesh to the birds?”](#) (1 Sam. 17:43)

But David had God confidence (faith) and faced the giant

- [“Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?”](#) (1 Sam. 17:26)

### For David, it wasn't about David—it was about the living God

- He was convinced of the value of God and so the value of living for God
- And God's purposes

Last week we were talking about welcoming God's purposes into our lives

- Being on mission with Christ
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- What we must realize this week is that **there is no mission without opposition!**

## When we talk about warring by faith (or spiritual warfare) we realize:

### 1. Warfare is the normal state of Christian life

#### a. The Christian life is a call to mission

- You do not need to be extraordinary, to be extraordinarily used!
  - **Verse 32**
- **Gideon**, though used mightily, was a frightened farmer, with a lot of doubt, who questioned God and whose faith did not grow strong right away ([Jud. 6:11–7:25](#)).
- **Barak** won a resounding victory over Sisera (the commander of the Canaanite army who attacked Israel from the north with 900 iron chariots) but not before Deborah the prophetess had to tell him to go (see [Jud. 4:1–5:31](#)).
  - **Both Gideon and Barak are encouragements to us who falter in our faith.**
- **Samson** was not necessarily a super godly man; he yielded to his fleshly appetites ([Jud. 13–16](#)).
  - But he did trust God to help and deliver him and, in the end, Samson was willing to give his life to defeat the enemy.
  - Should not be interpreted to mean believers today can expect to lead double lives and still enjoy God's blessing.
    - **But sometimes God blesses us in spite of us (Not because of...)**
    - **For His glory (Cf. Ezekiel 36:22 about the restoration of Israel)**  
Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord God, "It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went.'"
- **Jephthah** the Gileadite was a valiant warrior, but also the son of a prostitute ([Judges 11:1](#))
  - He was the judge of Israel for six years ([Judges 12:7](#)) but had run with a bad crowd ([11:3](#)), and would make some really bad calls ([11:30-40](#))
- **David** was a man after God's own heart, a great warrior, the greatest king of Israel, a lion killer and a bear killer and a giant slayer, but also an adulterer and murder

What can we say to these things other than God is merciful, bigger than even our greatest failures, and uses the foolish things of the world ([Cf. 1 Cor 1:26-29](#))

And as we said at the outset of this series, if these men and women included in the "Hall of Faith" were considered for the whole of their life they could just as justifiably included in the "Hall of Shame"

- It is not so much that they were great men and women, but rather that they had moments of **great faith in The Great God**
  - At the pivotal junctures in life, they chose to trust God
  - And commit themselves to the purposes of God

- For the glory of God

We don't need to be extraordinary, but we do need to be walking in faith

- Look at the amazing things these people (and others) accomplished by faith
- **Verses 33-34**
  - There we see the language of conflict and imagery of war
    - **Because each of these people (mentioned and alluded to) was sold out for God's purposes—God's mission**

## b. There is no mission without opposition

- In Matthew 16: 18 Jesus said:  
*I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.*
- That very clearly speaks of victory—but it is very clearly not without conflict
- Notice: Jesus (and the church) are on the offense! (Warring)
  - Gates are **defensive** and **retentive** (they keep people in)
  - But the Kingdom of God is **liberating** and **expansive** (moving forward)

## Therefore, the Christian who is on mission will live in a state of conflict

John Piper in his book *Don't Waste Your Life*

- In one chapter he talks about having a “wartime mind-set”
- He says the idea and phrase is helpful because:
  - “It tells me that there is a war going on in the world between Christ and Satan, truth and falsehood, belief and unbelief. It tells me that there are weapons to be funded and used, but that these weapons are not swords or guns or bombs but the Gospel and prayer and self-sacrificial love (2 Cor. 10:3-5). And it tells me that the stakes are than any other war in history; they are eternal and infinite: heaven or hell, eternal joy or eternal torment (Matt. 25:46).”<sup>1</sup>
- We need to be reminded of this because we slip into small peace-time living
- 2 Timothy 2:3-4  
**3 Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.**  
**4 No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier**
  - Cf. Hebrews 11:6
  - Faithful living

## Not only is a state of war normal for the Christian, but...

## 2. Warfare is consequential in the Christian life

### a. It results in victories

- As we read of in verses 33-35<sup>a</sup>
- These are real and tangible and transformative

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<sup>1</sup> John Piper, *Don't Waste Your Life* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2007), 111-12.

## b. It results in apparent losses

- There are difficulties and casualties, like in any other war
  - **Verses 35<sup>b</sup>-38**
- The transition in [Hebrews 11:35](#) is important: **not all men and women of faith experienced miraculous deliverance.**
  - Some were tortured and died!
- These **others** (vv. 35, 36) had faith, but God did not see fit to deal with them in the same way he dealt with Moses, Gideon, and David.
  - **But God did honor their faith!**
  - In fact, it takes more faith to endure than it does to escape.
- Like the three Hebrew children, we should trust God and obey Him even *if He does not deliver us* ([Dan. 3:16–18](#)).
 

**16** Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego replied to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter.

**17** If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king.

**18** **But even if He does not**, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”

  - They were committed to God's purposes and glory no matter what

## c. Both result in God's glory!

- If God was not glorified in their deaths, they would not be mentioned in the hall of faith! (Cf. [Hebrews 11:6](#))
- We do not always see, or judge, outcomes correctly—the issue is faith (trust)
- There is a paradox in Christian theology and history: That there is glory in suffering
  - Acts 5:41-42 (When some of the apostles were flogged for preaching and teaching Jesus)
 

**41** So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, **rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name.**

**42** And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

    - Imagine how impactful that witness was then!

Suffering is not merely the **result** of glorifying Jesus, but it is also the **means**<sup>2</sup>

1 Peter 4:13 and 16

**13** but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at **the revelation of His glory** you may rejoice with exultation...

**16** but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, **but is to glorify God in this name.**

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<sup>2</sup> John Piper, *Don't Waste Your Life* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2007), 61.

Scripture and history reveal that when a witness for Jesus shares the truth in love, and meets suffering or death with joy, there is miracle that happens:

- The eyes of unbelievers are opened
  - Truth is revealed, and death proven as defeated
- The centurion's realization in [Mark 15:39](#) (the manner in which he died)
- Thousands upon thousands of Christian martyrdoms throughout history have produced the same results

Tertullian, Christian apologist and author (197 AD)

- "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church"

Philippians 1:20-21

**20** according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but *that* with all boldness, **Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.**

**21** For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

But you are not called to die for Christ, at least not yet—you are called to live for Him

The call on you is to have faith that wages war!

- Because there is war!

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

**16** Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

**17** For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

**18** while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

The life of faith

- It is a life of mission
- And there is no mission without opposition
- And opposition will mean sacrifice
- But Jesus is the ultimate winner
- His grace and love is more than enough for us

Psalm 63:3 (NIV)

**Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you.**

What giants are before you that need to be slain?

Where is the enemy trying to take ground and hold people captive?

- Go to war today
- Pray in Jesus' name!