



CHRISTIAN WARFARE

OUTLINE

- What do we mean by Christian warfare?
 - Who is the enemy, and how do they operate?
 - How do we arm ourselves?
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WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CHRISTIAN WARFARE?

- 3 writers:
 - “Spiritual warfare is an integral part of the entire christian experience. it is a fact of life. To think that a Christian could avoid spiritual warfare is like imagining that a gardener could avoid dealing with weeds” (Clinton Arnold)
 - ‘The Christian Life is not a playground, Rather it is a battlefield of spiritual warfare... No Christian can afford to be ignorant of the threatening schemes of spiritual combat, not when so dangerous an enemy is seeking the destruction of our faith. It is critical we are well informed regarding Satan” (Borgman & Ventura)
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WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CHRISTIAN WARFARE?

- “There are two equal and opposing errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight” (C.S. Lewis)
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WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CHRISTIAN WARFARE?

- “Spiritual warfare is a way of characterising our common struggles as a Christian” (Arnold)
 - “Be sober minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion seeking to devour.” (1 Peter 5:8)
 - “We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19)
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WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CHRISTIAN WARFARE?

- “Again the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him. “All these I will give you, if you fall down and worship me” (Matt 4:8-9)
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WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CHRISTIAN WARFARE?

- “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” (Ephesians 2:1-7)
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WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CHRISTIAN WARFARE?

- “The kingdom of God coexists with the kingdom of darkness, but it is not a peaceful coexistence...Although we are spiritually renewed, our bodies are artefacts of this age and therefore subject to the greatest enemy, death...our conflict involves struggling against the profound and devastating implications of the spread of sin into the world...We are in the midst of a struggle that is far greater than us, but it is not bigger than our God. It involves two warring kingdoms, but the sides are not at all evenly matched. There is no cosmic dualism here” (Arnold)
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WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CHRISTIAN WARFARE?

- “The Lord is not slow to fulfil his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance” (2 Peter 3:9)
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WHO IS THE ENEMY AND HOW DO THEY OPERATE?

- “And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.” (Ephesians 2:1-3)
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WHO IS THE ENEMY AND HOW DO THEY OPERATE?

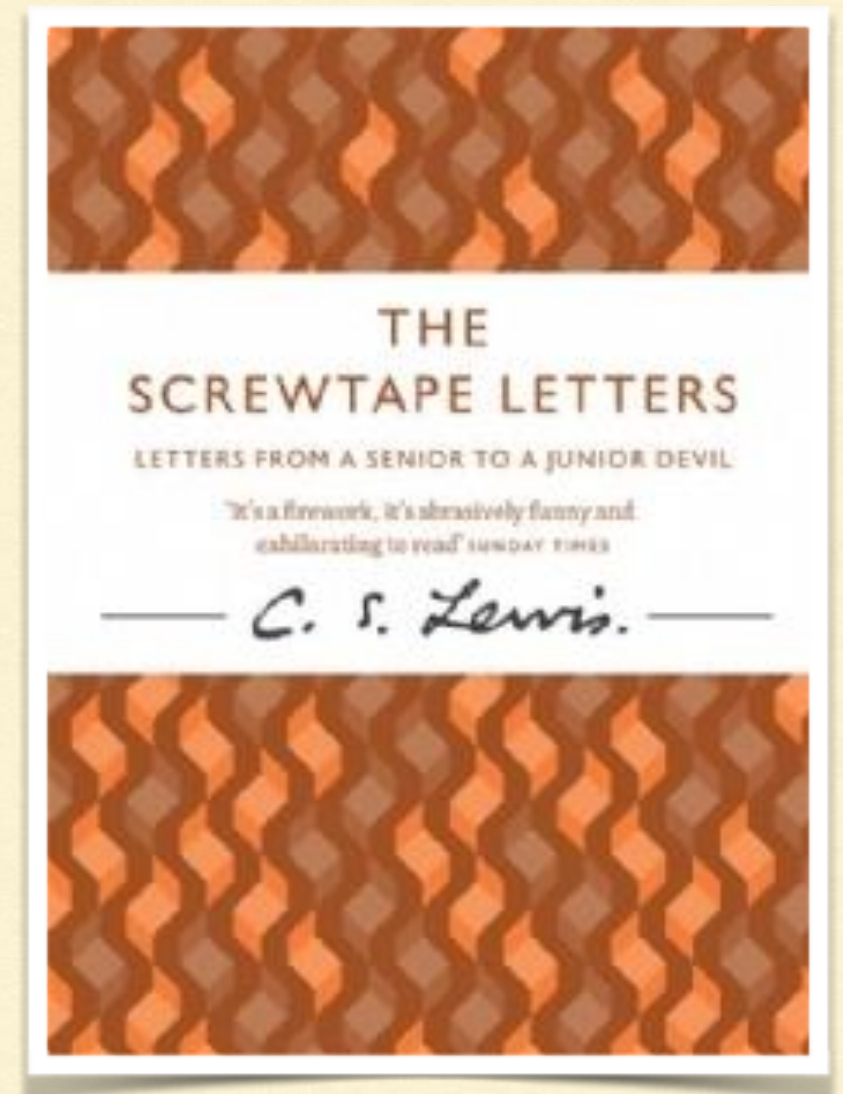
- “It is just as misguided to attribute every manifestation of evil to the human tendency to do wrong or to the influence of culture as it would be to attribute it to the devil...it is important to realise however, that these three influences are not equal in what they are and in how they operate. Nevertheless, each needs to be taken into account in equal measure to the other two and the nature of their interconnectedness must be considered” (Arnold)
 - “So we see our enemy the devil appealing to remaining sin in our flesh through the trappings of a fallen world. His battle rages for our mind heart, and will, the front lines of spiritual battle” (Stanley D. Gale)
 - “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Eph 6:12)
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WHO IS THE ENEMY AND HOW DO THEY OPERATE?

- Demon Possession
 - Does it still happen today?
 - How do we identify it when it is demon possession
 - Can a Christian be possessed by a demon?
 - “do not give the devil a foothold” (Eph 4:27)
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WHO IS THE ENEMY AND HOW DO THEY OPERATE?

- *Screwtape Letters*, C.S. Lewis



WHO IS THE ENEMY AND HOW DO THEY OPERATE?

- “The best thing, where it is possible, is to keep the patient from the serious intention of praying all together...It is funny how mortals always picture us as putting things into their minds: in reality our best work is done by keeping things out...the simplest [tactic] is to turn their gaze away from Him towards themselves”
 - “There is nothing like suspense and anxiety for barricading a human’s mind against the Enemy. He wants men to be concerned with what they do; our business is to keep them thinking about what will happen to them”
 - “For when we were with you we kept telling you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction, just as it has come to pass, and just as you know. For this reason, when we could bear it no longer, I sent to learn about your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and our labour would be in vain” (1 Thess 3:4ff)
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WHO IS THE ENEMY AND HOW DO THEY OPERATE?

- “He must not be allowed to suspect that he is now, however slowly, heading right away from the sun on a line which will carry him into the cold and dark of utmost space”
 - “we always try to work away from the natural condition to that which is, least redolent of its Maker, and least pleasurable. An ever increasing craving for an ever diminishing pleasure is the formula”
 - “Provided that meetings, pamphlets, policies, movements, causes and crusades matter more to him than prayers and sacraments and charity, he is ours - and the more ‘religious’ (on those terms) the more securely ours”
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HOW DO WE ARM OURSELVES?

- “[10] Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. [11] Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. [12] For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. [13] Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. [14] Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, [15] and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.
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HOW DO WE ARM OURSELVES?

- [16] In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; [17] and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, [18] praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, [19] and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, [20] for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.”
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HOW DO WE ARM OURSELVES?

- **Be strong in the Lord**

- “In Spiritual warfare our victory is in Christ; our refuge and strength are in Christ; our confidence is in Christ; our hope is in Christ. The better we learn to abide in Christ the more capable and vigorous we will be for battle as we live in and live out his victory...The position for spiritual warfare is standing in christ and the posture from that position boasts of weakness-our weakness that learns of and leans on Christ’s victory, Christ’s strength...The cross itself is illustrative of God’s plan in battle in that it represents our vicarious victory in Christ but also points to the fundamental principles that spiritual warfare is conducted in God’s wisdom and that, paradoxically, our strength is found in denying ourselves and following Christ” (Gale)
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HOW DO WE ARM OURSELVES?

- “Part of spiritual warfare is the recognition that you are not able in your own strength; you need God to hold you by the hand and fight on your behalf” (Arnold)
 - “He who rushes into this conflict without thinking of Christ, without putting his trust in Him, and without continually looking to him for strength, and regarding himself as a member of his body, deriving all life and vigour from him, is demented...When we are weak, then we are strong. when most empty of self, we are most full of God.”
(Charles Hodge)
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HOW DO WE ARM OURSELVES?

- **Stand**

- “it is to stand like an oak against the winds of satan’s lies that would sway us, against the floods of his temptations that would sweep us away, and against the leeches of his accusations that would deprive us of grace.” (Gale)

HOW DO WE ARM OURSELVES?

- **Put on the whole armour of God**
- **The Sword of the Spirit**

“Our call to war, to love the captive soul,

But to rage against the captor;

And with the sword that makes the wounded whole

We will fight with faith and valor.”

HOW DO WE ARM OURSELVES?

- **Prayer**

- “prayer is the essence of spiritual warfare and the most important means by which believers are strengthened by God” (Arnold)
 - “Prayer is not the 7th piece of the armour but the means by which each piece is effectively employed...once we put the armour on with prayer, it continues to be a fundamental weapon in our warfare, as we, in reliance on the Spirit constantly call to our heavenly headquarters for help, both for ourselves and our fellow soldiers” (Borgman & Ventura)
 - “pray at all times in the spirit with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for the saints and also for me” (Eph 6:18)
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CONCLUSIONS

- Christian warfare is a reality and whether you realise it or not, you are a soldier.
 - The war has already been won, but until Christ returns there are still battles to fight.
 - Your enemy is the devil and his demons, the flesh, and the world.
 - Your enemy uses a variety of tactics, he is often subtle, be alert to the ones that he uses on you.
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CONCLUSIONS

- Your enemy is much more powerful than you are in your own strength, but in Christ's strength we have all we need for victory.
 - Put your armour on with prayer, through the truth of His Word and it's impact on your life. Sing and read them.
 - Pray, pray and pray some more.
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THINK...

- What tactics does the devil use on you? What passages of scripture, what truths about God speak directly to his lies? Pray about these things
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