

“Are You Spiritually Naked?”

Written April of 2017

Scripture Reading: II Corinthians 10:4

Introduction

The message I bring for you today is something that God has shown me that someone or possibly everyone needs to hear today. I am going to share with you how I know this. This was a tough week for me to say the least. My grandmother at age (88) passed away on Tuesday night. My first instinct was to head up to Orlando and be with my family during this time of grieving and cancel my commitment to be here today. I immediately lifted this up in prayer so that I would be guided by the Holy Spirit, not my emotions; in an instant the Lord spoke in my spirit **“let the dead bury the dead”!** I knew right then and there that my responsibility was to do the work of the Lord.

My wife and I went yesterday to the funeral service, but it ran longer than expected and in order to be at the church for Adventurer Day (*Kids day service*) rehearsal at 6:30pm, my Wife and I had to leave at 3PM. My Grandmother hadn't been buried yet but God gave me the Peace to not be sad, but to rejoice because the next time she would open her eyes would be to see HIM coming in Glory. God spoke in my spirit **“if you truly want to follow me, pick your cross and follow”**. Yesterday evening was not an easy thing to do for me, but I made it to church at 6:30PM on time to fulfill my commitment to the Lord NO MATTER THE COST...funny thing is not every parent showed up on time last night for rehearsal. Our children are our future, this lack of commitment by the parents made me wonder are we giving them the priority they deserve in Gods Eyes?

My Grandmother was a Warrior for the Kingdom of God. The seeds that she planted in me as a boy watching her witness to bums on the street, leading out in church and the love she had for her fellow man are what have brought me here today. Those seeds have begun to give fruit over the past (11) years that I have been in Ministry.

Grandparents, Parents, Aunts, Uncles Friends and Family our children are watching what we do, how we conduct ourselves and **MOST IMPORTANTLY, HOW WE LIVE OUT OUR FAITH**. The greatest example of **TRUE FAITH** I saw didn't come from my mother or father but it came from my Grandmother who lived a life of service, truly being the Hands and Feet of Christ!

Let us pray before we begin so that the Holy Spirit can illuminate our minds to the Message that the Lord has given to me to present today...

Sermon

The title of today's Message is: *“Are you Spiritually Naked?”* However, I would like to take this Title a step further and ask every Parent, Grandparent, friends and family here today: **ARE WE SENDING OUR CHILDREN INTO THE WORLD SPIRITUALLY NAKED?** Are we truly equipping them with the Spiritual Weapons necessary to defend themselves from the attacks of satan?

Or are we handing them to satan on silver platter to satan by celebrating the **Easter bunny** instead of the Death and Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour? Or do you dress them up for **Halloween** because they look cute in their costume? Are you attending a **Fall Festival or Trunk or treat** so that they can get candy and dress them up anyway? Do you let your child watch **cartoons or movies** that have themes of witchcraft like Harry Potter or maybe Vampire diaries? Do you allow your child to watch **movies with violence**? Oh, but I am sure that there isn't a single parent here that lets their child play **video games** of violence, games that shoot people and other graphic scenes. Or do we let our children **surf the Internet** un-supervised????

My dear brethren I have just described to you the **MODERN DISGUISE of satan**. There is a reason why our youth and young people are leaving the church at an alarming rate. **WHAT SEEDS ARE WE PLANTING IN THEM?** Jesus was extremely clear about this in **Matthew Chapter 7**, let's look at **Versus 16 to 20**.

Verse 16: "Ye shall know them by their fruits" Verse 17 & 18 tell us: "that a good tree produces good fruit. And that a bad tree produces bad fruit" Notice what happens to the bad tree.

These Verses seem like a logical statement RIGHT? But let's analyze this for a moment. How does a tree begin? From a seed, RIGHT! And that seed grows from the way you water, feed and cultivate it. Let's look at the spiritual significance of what Jesus was trying to tell us almost 2000 years ago for our children today.

"A TREE IS EVIDENCE OF A SEED"

So, in practical terms if you plant an Orange seed, you will get...yes, that is right an Orange Tree. Let's try another one: If you plant a Mango seed, you will get...correct again a Mango Tree. How about if you plant a Peach seed, you will get...a Peach tree. You are all getting so good at this, let us do one more if you plant a seed of demonic filled movies and video games, you will get...**not so quick to answer now huh!**

That is the point my dear brothers and sisters, the fruit of that evil seed is that our youth and teenagers find the world more appealing than serving God. Our children cannot be given the choice of what is right or wrong to watch or do. We are Gods' Stewards over our children...

Ask yourself this; HOW CAN WE EXPECT GOOD FRUIT FROM BAD SEEDS THAT WERE PLANTED?? Makes no sense, right? Let us dig into the Word of God to better understand this Spiritual Battle we are in. Paul tried explaining this to us in: Ephesians Chapter 6 let's turn to Verse 12 for right now.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

My dear brothers and sisters we are fighting a Spiritual Battle. Our Children are fighting a Spiritual Battle day in and day out. **Again, I ask you: “Are we sending our CHILDREN Spiritually Naked into the BATTLEFIELD OF LIFE?” ARE WE TRULY EQUIPPING THEM TO DO BATTLE?** Let me give you an illustration of this.

I remembered when I was a kid my Grandfather taught me how to make a sling shot out of rubber bands, a piece of inner tube from a bicycle tire and how to cut a “Y” shaped piece of wood from the hedges in our front yard when we lived in Jersey City. I tell you what, it was great at defending myself against the stray dogs in our neighborhood and the feral cats that lived in alley on the way to school, no doubt about that.

But my question to you is: **WOULD THAT SLING-SHOT BE EFFECTIVE FOR ME NOW IF I WERE TO GO TO THE MIDDLE EAST AND FIGHT IN A WAR OVER THERE?**

That would be dangerous and make no sense right! Because how effective could my childhood sling-shot be against machine guns, grenades and tanks? Not effective at all right! Let me give you another analogy, by asking this question and really think about this.

Would you come to church dressed in only your bathing suit? No speed-o’s next week please. Of course not right! But why not? Simple because you would feel exposed and vulnerable RIGHT!

Yet on a daily basis we get so caught up in our daily routine of life: get the kids ready for school, make breakfast, iron your work clothes so you can get ready for work and run out the door because you are running late, or you make sure you put the morning news on, tune into your favorite morning show...sound familiar! Maybe I am just preaching to myself today, but I am willing to admit that this has happened to me on many occasions.

We are fighting a Spiritual Battle my dear Brothers and Sisters yet on a daily basis we are not taking the time to equip ourselves or our families for this BATTLE in the Spiritual Dimension. **IF WE ARE NOT HAVING MORNING WORSHIP WITH OUR CHILDREN** before they leave for school it’s like sending them to fight in the Middle East with a sling-shot wearing only their bathing suits.

Body of Christ are you getting this????

We cannot use physical elements to fight a Spiritual Battle. It just doesn’t make sense. This is why so many so called “christians” live broken and defeated lives. We neglect to realize and understand the Spiritual Battle we are in. **Religion has put us to sleep, to this reality.** Church Leaders we must teach of the Spiritual Dimension so that we can Battle effectively against satan.

This has been an issue since the early church almost 2000 years ago. This is why Paul wrote this letter to the Ephesians. **Paul wanted them to understand that through the Blood of Christ we have a Spiritual Armor we can declare and proclaim over ourselves in the name of Jesus Christ.**

In Paul's time everyone knew the sophistication and protection a Roman Armor offered and would provide in battle so he used an Armor as a metaphor of what the Blood of Christ has provided us. **This is something that the Body of Christ has lost sight of in my opinion and I am over-joyed to know that Sister Barbara and her staff have made the Armor of God Kids Department focal point for this year.**

Let us continue reading what Paul tells us in **Ephesians 6:13:**

“Wherefore take unto you the whole Armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand”

Paul is telling us that the only way we can stand and not be over-taken by Satan is **ONLY BY PUTTING ON THE ARMOR OF GOD**. Mind you, the Armor of God is not something you can buy on E-bay or Amazon; this is a Divine and Holy Armor that the Blood of Christ has purchased for us.

#1-Now my little helper (*Adventurer dressed with a roman belt and breastplate*) will read **Ephesians 6:14.**

The Holy Spirit taught me so much about the Armor of God that I never realized before and I am going to share a few of those points with you today. Notice that the belt is referred to as “Truth”. Interesting choice of words Paul used but why? What does **John 14:6** say: **“Jesus saith unto them: I am the Way, TRUTH and the life”** so in essence Paul is saying put Jesus around your waist. Now when I began studying the Roman belt that was used in ancient times, typically the belt held a sheath and it was one of the main reasons a Roman soldier would use a belt.

So, church...what goes into a sheath? You are correct a Sword. Now we will cover the symbolism of the sword shortly, but what does the Sword represent? The Word of God right. And in **John 1:1** tells us that **“Jesus is the living Word”**. **So according to the metaphor Paul gives us of this Roman belt it is Jesus who holds the WORD in place and is always on stand-by ready to be used. Is your mind blown yet WOW!!!**

Now let's look at the **Breastplate or Body Armor** that Paul illustrates to us. In ancient times the Body Armor or Breastplate in particular was used to protect your vital organs, most importantly the area of your heart where the Breastplate was most heavily reinforced. Paul tells us that we must put on Righteousness. **What is Righteousness? To be made Holy, Sanctified or in right standing with God.**

The only way that this can be accomplished is by being sanctified by and through a Baptism of the Holy Spirit so that we can invite Christ to dwell in hearts. **So, in essence according to this metaphor, Paul is saying here that the only way to keep Jesus who is righteous protected in our heart is by daily asking the Holy Spirit to Baptize us with Righteousness.**

#2-Now my next little helper (*Adventurer dressed with a roman shoes/sandals*) will read **Ephesians 6:15.**

Our feet should be prepared with a Gospel of Peace. Now this is an interesting choice of words that Paul uses here. Typically, **Roman sandals** were incased in thin pieces of iron to protect the feet of the soldier because it was a part of the body that was not covered by the Shield when in battle. It was well known that if a soldier was going into battle, they would have that protective piece over the sandals. Paul mentions a Gospel of Peace. We all know that the word Gospel in the Greek translates to "Good News". I prayed about this one to understand the deeper meaning of what Paul was trying to say here.

And the Holy Spirit gave me this deeper meaning. We are the Hands and Feet of Christ and as his Body we should prepare ourselves with the Truth, however we should NEVER ARGUE OVER THE TRUTH.

My dear brothers and sisters how many of us have gotten into heated debates about Bible doctrine, food you should eat and a day of worship with non-believers? Body of Christ those who have ears listen and perceive. God did not call us to convince people of the Truth that is the Holy Spirits job; our job and mandate is to bring the Good News in a spirit of Peace and most importantly in a spirit of LOVE and plant the seed of righteousness. All on behalf of Jesus!

#3- Now my next helper (*Adventurer holding a **Roman Shield***) will read **Ephesians 6:16.**

In ancient times the Romans would run drills and maneuvers using the **Shield** in different ways to protect themselves and also on how to advance the front lines against enemy attacks. By standing in a straight line they would actually create steps to advance the front line towards an enemy high point. Now this was an important detail that I never knew. The fact they would use different formations with the Shield to advance their front lines. **The Roman Armies in ancient times were well known for their organization, tactics and absolute obedience of their soldiers when given orders. Even if those orders meant their death; they were obedient even unto to death.**

When I read that online I immediately thought of Jesus **WHO WAS LEAD LIKE A LAMB TO THE SLAUGHTER AND WAS OBEDIENT EVEN UNTO DEATH.** Paul used this knowledge of Roman military tactics to really strike a chord with the New Believers of the Early Christian Church who were being persecuted because of their Faith.

According to this metaphor Paul used he was in essence saying that there are times that we can use our Faith to SHIELD ourselves against the attacks (fiery darts) of the satan, but also Paul tells us that the Shield can be used for more than a defensive maneuver. When we work with other soldiers of the Lord (Christians) we can use our SHIELDS (OUR FAITH) to mount a counter attack against the enemy (satan). Together we can use our Faith to mount a counter attack against the enemy (satan) and be on the offensive using our "Shield of Faith".

#4-Now my next little helper (*Adventurer holding a **Roman Sword with a Roman Helmet***) will read **Ephesians 6:16.**

The Romans were experts in working iron with other metals to make superb swords used in battle. In ancient times the **Roman Sword** was the primary weapon used to inflict damage (death) to the enemy and with extensive training a soldier would be a lethal force on the battlefield. We all know the Sword symbolizes the Bible or Word of God. **What if every Christian took the time to do extensive training in the Word of God? Brothers and Sisters, we to could be a lethal force in this Spiritual Battle we are fighting.**

Now let's look at the two particular types of **Helmets** today; however in Roman times there were many different kinds of helmets worn. Here in my hands we see an example of a Centurion helmet distinguished by feathers on the top. **By the type of helmet, a soldier was wearing you would know their rank on the battlefield and at a distance be able to coordinate attacks against the enemy.**

This helmet I am holding in my hands is a typical Legionaire Helmet who were the foot soldiers or the front lines of the Roman Army. This Helmet was designed to protect the head from a lethal blow. However, helmet designs included metal shielding to protect the face as well. Every time we think of a Helmet, we think of a regular helmet like this however; helmets that were used in direct combat had a Face-Plate.

Here's what the Holy Spirit showed me about this. Paul says that the Helmet represents Salvation right? **What is the Hebrew word for SALVATION. Yeshua** you are correct. And Yeshua translates into the English word Jesus. Wow, are you still with me? So according to this metaphor Paul is using he is telling us to be identified on the Battlefield as Jesus because we are wearing his Helmet. Do we get this church?

Wait it gets better. As we just mentioned, remember the Helmet that was typically used on the frontlines in battle always had a faceplate right? NOW GET THIS...**WHEN WE PUT ON THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD WHICH INCLUDES THE HELMET OF SALVATION OR JESUS' HELMET, WE USE THE FACE PLATE ON IT; AND WE CONFRONT SATAN, HE HAS NO IDEA IF ITS US OR JESUS IN THE ARMOR BECAUSE THE HELMET REPRESENTS JESUS THE GENERAL OF THE CELESTIAL ARMIES.** The Scriptures also tell us ***"LET THIS MIND BE IN YOU"***.

As long as we let the Sword do all the talking, satan will never know that it is us IN THE ARMOR and we WILL BE VICTORIOUS in Jesus name. Now, if we open our mouths without being directed by God and start spewing out the head knowledge religion has taught us that we think makes us righteous then we will be in trouble. SO THE KEY IS TO LET CHRIST IN US DO THE TALKING THROUGH HIS WORD (The Scriptures).

In Closing

BODY OF CHRIST the name **"Christian"** means **CHRIST IN US.** This is a Holy and Sacred title that the Blood of Christ has purchased for us. Before we close today, I would like to read for you the Scripture Reading that was done at the beginning of today's message found in: **II Corinthians 10:4.**

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds”

Notice this text says ***“Mighty through God”*** which means when the Kingdom (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) live in us, through them or because of them we are MIGHTY to pull down any stronghold. Again, here is Paul using a Military word to describe the Spiritual Battle we are in. A stronghold is basically where an enemy has chosen to draw a battle line and fight. The goal of an advancing Army was to conquer one military stronghold after the other in order to win the War. This is what God is asking us to do Body of Christ.

Daily we MUST ask God for HIS Armor so that we can be victorious in the Battlefield of Life. Our children need to be trained to use the Spiritual Weapons that Christ Blood has purchased for us. As the final song today, the Adventurers will be singing a song called: “I am a Christian” listen to the words my friends and may this become our new BATTLECRY as we walk into the battlefield called LIFE.

AMEN!!!