

Wounded Warriors

The moment a person is translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light they are drafted into the army of God. God's army is not at peace. It is at war with the devil and the "spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6:12) The Christian's battle is never with people because we are told to love one another and to love our enemies. When a conflict arises, people will be involved and it is tempting to look on them as the enemy. However, the real enemy is Satan whose desire is to see God's children fighting among themselves or the people they are supposed to be rescuing from the enemy's clutches.

Once drafted into God's army, soldiers are given their equipment. Ephesians 6:13-17 lists the equipment as the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. Equipment is great but of very little value unless you are trained to use it. God's training comes through the trials of life. As you pray and read the Word, God's Spirit teaches you about the enemy and how to use the armor for defense and the Sword of the Spirit to defeat the enemy. This is a real battle, with a real enemy, who uses real weapons that wound and kill.

There are many ways that a warrior can be wounded. Sins that are not immediately dealt with, selfishness, and anything else from the flesh or carnal nature leave an open door for the enemy. The breastplate of righteousness has a hole in it and the enemy will aim a fiery dart for the hole. Lone rangers are another easy target for the enemy. When you try to operate outside of the body, you are like the straggler in a herd; the perfect target for the lion. Just as lions hunt baby animals, so also the enemy will attack baby Christians. He finds them an easy prey because they are inexperienced. However, the most experienced soldiers can also be attacked through weariness and discouragement. When you begin to intercede, you enter into the battlefield and are susceptible to fiery darts from the enemy. No one is exempt from the attacks of the enemy. Sometimes the warrior is beaten, robbed, stripped and left for dead just as the man on the road to Jericho who fell among thieves. (Luke 10:30)

The question is, "What do we do with our wounded warriors?" In too many cases we are like the priest and the Levite who walked right past and did nothing. Even worse we sometimes add to their wounds. Sometimes we are too busy to help someone. Sometimes we think they deserve what they got. "They made their bed they can just lie in it," we say. We are quick to point out what they should have done to avoid the beating of the enemy, but we are far too reticent to find the answer to their healing. What a horrible indictment on God's army that we are known for wounding, leaving to die, or killing our wounded. Jesus said that his disciples would be known for their love for one another. In the story of the good Samaritan, it was the Samaritan who loved his neighbor. If our neighbor is anyone we meet then how much more should we love our fellow soldier. The attitude of the US army is; that we don't leave our wounded behind. We carry them to safety and take them to a hospital to be healed. Christians need to adopt this attitude.

In order to rescue a wounded soldier, the army sometimes must provide cover so that soldiers can go behind enemy lines and retrieve the wounded. In the spiritual realm we do that through prayer. Wounded people need someone to cover them in prayer.

Some wounds and attacks of the enemy could be prevented or at least minimized if people were covered in prayer. Leaders of the church especially need to be covered in prayer because they are in the forefront of the battle. New converts and children also need to be covered in prayer. In order to rescue a wounded soldier, you must first believe that the person can be reached through prayer. Proverbs 21:1 "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, like the rivers of water; he turns it wherever He wishes." If God holds the king's heart in His hand, how much more the heart of one of His own. When the enemy has attacked soldiers and left them beaten, they may become discouraged and completely give up. What they need is a fellow soldier to cover them in prayer, pick them up and pour in the oil and wine that brings healing. Sometimes this process requires a company of soldiers. A lone soldier may not be enough to accomplish the job. There is great power in corporate prayer especially when you believe that nothing is impossible with God. If God's army would develop the attitude that we never leave a wounded soldier behind, and be willing to pray and love one another, we would have fewer casualties.

After a wounded warrior is pulled from the enemy lines through prayer he still needs a medic. He needs someone to pour in the oil and the wine. The wine speaks of cleansing. Wounds cannot heal until they have been cleansed. Pouring wine on a wound is sometimes necessary even though it is painful. Speaking truth into a situation is necessary even though it is painful. True healing cannot be attained without it. Unforgiveness and all sin must be cleansed for healing to occur. After the wound is cleansed the healing oil of the Holy Spirit can be poured on the wound. He can bring healing when no one else can. He knows how to heal emotions and spirits better than any man. Once the oil and wine have been administered it is important to walk in love lest you further wound the wounded. God's army needs men and women who will pray, and carry with them the oil and the wine to administer healing.

Rescue operations flow through the Holy Spirit and His chain of authority. We must walk in obedience to our leader. He knows when to go after the soldier and when to wait in prayer. He has a time to pour in the wine and a time to pour in the oil. He works through chains of authority and we follow His leading.

The last step in helping a wounded soldier is to restore them to their position in the army. They need not be treated as second class soldiers because they were wounded. We need to treat them with love, respect and humility remembering that but for the grace of God we too could be in their shoes.

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