

EPHESIANS: A MANUAL FOR GOD'S SOLDIERS

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Once the Church was called "The Church Militant." We were Protestants with a lot of protest in us. We heeded the call to "fight the good fight." Today the church has changed from the victorious battleship of Christ to a love boat of carnality. "Reprove, rebuke, and exhort" (2 Tim. 4:2) has changed to "love," "feel good," and "tolerate." Some Christians seem to have spiritual AIDS—no ability to resist or fight evil. But Christianity is a constant, unending war with no furlough and no discharge.

The Book of Ephesians can be read as a manual for a soldier who would successfully please his Savior. We need to know four things to overcome in our warfare.

- I. To overcome, we need to know God our Commander in Chief. (chs. 1 - 4)
 - A. See what God has done for us - v. 3
 - 1) He chose us for Himself in eternity, v. 4
 - 2) He justified us (i.e. declared us just), v. 4, Rom. 3:24
 - 3) He adopted us as His own children by predestination, v. 5
 - 4) He gave His son to die for our guilt, v. 6-7
 - 5) He brought us under Christ's headship - includes an inheritance, v. 10-11
 - 6) He marked us as His through the Holy Spirit, v. 13-14
 - 7) He has given us knowledge of battle and victory, v. 17-18
 - 8) He has given us invincible power, v. 19-23
 - 9) He brought us back to life, healed of our fatal disease, ch. 2:1-5
 - 10) He has given us access to Him, v. 6-7, 18
 - 11) He has cleared our record of rebellion and treason, v. 12 - 16, v. 8
 - 12) He has made us members of his own household, v. 19
 - 13) He has made us his dwelling, an implant which guarantees success, v. 22, ch. 3:16 - 17
 - B. See what God our Commander does in and through us, ch. 3 - 5:2
 - 1) A general's personal testimony. All of life is of God's grace, ch. 3
 - 2) The Commander enables us to daily "walk worthy" of our flag, ch. 4:1 - 5:2
 - a) He helps keep our strength under control ['meek'], v. 2-5 - *meek, lowly, patience, keep unity*
 - b) He gives weapons and operators' instructions, v. 7-8, 11-12
 - c) He gives discernment of the battle through the Word and Spirit, v. 13-23

d) He gives spiritual toughness over:

- a] Lying, 25
- b] Anger, 26
- c] Stealing, 28
- d] Blasphemy, 29
- e] Bitterness, 31

[He gives us spiritual toughness so that even in the heat of the battle we might be like, and pleasing to Him, 4:32-5:2. Seeing what our Commander does for us, we realize that he is not a merciless tyrant. He gives everything to us to ensure that we succeed in the battle.]