

CREATING YOUR OWN

Combat Field Manual

Blessed be the LORD, my rock,
who trains my hands for war,
and my fingers for battle;
my lovingkindness and my fortress,
my stronghold and my deliverer,
my shield
and He in whom I take refuge...
Psa. 144:1-2

WARNING: This handout is not merely to be read, but to help
you develop your own personal *Combat Field Manual*.

INTRODUCTION

“Christianity is a battle – not a dream.” W. Phillips

Though our Lord has already won the war and declared victory from the cross and we will most definitely stand in celebration of Christ’s victory before his throne, **we are still in the midst of a mighty battle.**

“Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 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.” 2Tim2:3-4

We have the choice as Christ’s follower to play an active role in that battle. **God has called us to the battle** and wants to deploy us as his own. The only other option we have is to deactivate ourselves as a soldier. Though we would still benefit from his provisions of forgiveness, eternal security, adoption, and all the many blessings he offers us, we can refuse to engage and participate in the battle.

That will never satisfy. That **will never offer protection** from or true avoidance of the fallout of the battle. Our enemy and the battle will continue to advance – we just won’t be an active part of it.

“There are many ways you can climb on the shelf and render yourself ineffective for God. You can sign peace treaties with Satan and let him go his way while you go yours. Satan is willing to hold the ladder for any individual who wants to climb on the shelf for God. It is your choice.”

Many Aspire Few Attain, p8, Walter Henrichsen

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Many go through life dulled and anesthetized to the reality of the battle. Do you prefer it that way? You have a direct call from your God to recognize this battle we are in and to take up your role as his soldier.

The Battle is Real!

This should not surprise us. We've been warned. Yes we are marching toward certain victory, **but in the meantime, we are called to fight.** How will you raise your awareness of this war? What is your plan to engage as a soldier who will stand in battle?

Paul and other NT authors repeatedly use the language and image of war to call our attention to reality. If we recognize the Bible as inspired, then these images are more than just an attempt to motivate - **WE ARE AT WAR!** And it's a battle of extreme measure, scope and significance. Are we alert to this battle each day? How will we engage in the battle? Are those around us engaged? **Are we distracted? Have we become "entangled"?** Do you find yourself cynical about this daily battle?

We must become convinced of the reality of the battle and engage. And like the sentry, we must help convince others as well. The following are just a few verses that offer insight:

*"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. *We are* destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and *we are* taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ."* 2Cor10:3-5

“Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.” 1 Cor16:13-14

“Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. ¹³ Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.” Eph 6:11-13

“Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit*, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” 1Pet 1:13

“Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in *your* faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen *and* establish you. To Him *be* dominion forever and ever. Amen.” 1 Pet 5:8-11

“Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.” 1 Tim 6:12

We have not been called to a “day spa” experience.

“When you were born again, you were dropped into a war zone, not a maternity ward!” Erwin McManus

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Every battle has a field, real estate that is fought upon. Though we have plenty of conflicts in the physical realm, this spiritual battle is not fought on this physical plane.

The Battlefield is our Mind!

Scripture shows again and again we are **fighting a daily battle** in our minds; our thinking & ideas – ideologies – lies – opinions – misconceptions – conclusions – attitudes. This is the arena of battle – truth verses falsehood.

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” Rom 12:2

Are you aware of the significant role your thinking plays in this battle? Can you say that you recognize the thoughts and conclusions that rise up within your thinking regularly that calls for warfare? **Will you stand and fight** against the “speculations and lofty things raised up against the knowledge of God” so that your thoughts can come under the captivity of Christ? (2Cor 10:3-5) Will you stand and fight?

When a soldier is convinced of the battle, things change in their life. **They no longer live like the civilians** around them. They understand the necessity of training, alertness and following the command of their leader. Because of the reality of the battle at hand, they are willing to undergo whatever measures are necessary to become more effectively equipped to fight.

“Fields” or Theaters of Operation

In a physical war, the battlefield is known as the “fighter engagement zone”, or “theater of operation”. **What are the dominating theaters of operation** you are engaging today in the war of thoughts, ideas, conclusions, lies, and assumptions? These have built a “fortress” in your thinking and will need destroyed.

Are you taking new ground? What have you identified as ways of challenging and addressing the specific fight that is going on in your mindset?

All of us have regular fields of battle we struggle with. The best war-time strategists plan and advance toward that ground to take it and secure it. They establish **“military occupation”**, and move to maintain presence. Will you stand and fight?

Pray for discernment and begin to build your awareness of the areas that you find yourself wrestling with repeatedly. You have been given what is needed to take new ground in those areas. As you **identify your specific areas of struggle**, then you will be in a position to begin your *Combat Field Manual* with the scriptures needed to fight.

“The Christian life is very much like climbing a hill of ice. You cannot slide up, nay, you have to cut every step with an ice axe; only with incessant labour in cutting and chipping can you make any progress; you need a guide to help you, and you are not safe unless you are fastened to the guide, for you may slip into a crevasse. Nobody ever slides up, but if great care not be taken they (*you*) will slide down...This is very easily done...the answer is leave off going forward and you will slide backward, cease going upward and you will go downward of necessity, for stand still you never can.”

Charles Spurgeon

Common Theaters of Operation

Possible present battlefields in your life:

- The need to “Wake up!” & avoid the drift – 1Thes 5:4-8
- Come into the light! (honesty and repentance) - Acts 3:19
- “Fighting” For Unity – Eph 4:1-3
- Understanding your commander more fully – Ex 34 & Psa 19
- Use of gifting and talents – 1 Cor 12, Rom 12
- Fear, anxiety – 1 Jn 4:4, Psa 18:33-36
- Operating from the wisdom of this world (identify key traps for you, such as “definition of success”, identity issues, self-protection, etc...)
- Law vs. Grace – Gal 5
- Recognizing and dealing with idols in your life – Psa 115:1-8
- Lack of gratitude – DeMoss’ book “Choosing Gratitude”
- Moving toward others – Rom 12:10-14; Heb 3:13
- Besetting sins (reoccurring weaknesses: chronic cynicism, judgment, hate, bitterness, self pity, etc...)
- Coming of age (time to grow up!) - 2 Tim 4:5
- The Snare! (sexual sin and temptation) – Prov 7
- Attitude toward authority – Col 3:22-25; 1Pet 2:18-25
- Growing in Holy Spirit – John 14-16
- Learning to “rest” in Christ – Heb 4
- Responding to God’s call in your life – Mt28:18-20
- No self-discipline - 1 Cor 9:24-27, 1Tim4:6-16, 2 Tim 2:14-19
- Commitment to the lost – 2 Cor 5:17-21

These are just a few common arenas of battle. **How will you fight these “occupied areas”** of struggle, so the Lord can “take captive” your thinking and destroy the fortresses that you have raised over time that keeps you from victory?

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As Christians, we've been given the most directive and authoritative instruction on this battle through the Word of God.

"The manual of operation for the Christian war-time mentality is the Bible. It was inspired and authorized by the Commander, and contains all the truth needed to win people over from the enemy camp, deprogram their old thought patterns, train them in strategies of righteousness and equip them with armor and weapons to defeat Satan and liberate his captives."

John Piper

If God is our Rock & our Fortress and he is the one training us for this battle (Psa 144:1-2), then obviously it will be his Word that offers the training we need. Let's not just approach the Word devotionally. There is a place for that, but unless we engage the Word intentionally, to advance Christ's name and his cause in our lives, we may only experience an occasional inspiration. We are at war! The Word is "living and active" and able to bring real change in our lives (Heb 4:12 & Jn 17:17). It is given to you for guidance, instruction, protection, and as the artillery to gain real freedom. Will you "take up the sword" of the word and do battle?

The Typical *Combat Field Manual*

A typical "field manual" is used by soldiers in combat. Among other things, it is used to remind them of their call to duty, direct them toward the intended goal of battle, and record the attempted strategies shared among fellow soldiers.

Why take the time to create your own *Combat Field Manual* if the Word is our source of wisdom and artillery? Many of us need to become more active and creative in finding ways to gain new ground in “destroying fortresses”. **Without an increasing “act of aggression”** on your part in the fight, you will make little progress in advancing God’s purpose for your life or others’. Your *Combat Field Manual* can help you advance in taking new ground in this fight, mainly by putting into play the Word of God.

Not a “Journal”!

Journals tend to be memoirs of a life - recordings of our own thoughts, our own line of thinking. They have their place, even in battle. A *Combat Field Manual* is **not a journal**. It’s very different. Can you imagine a soldier on the battle front “journaling” his reflections as mortars and shells explode?

Though it may be helpful to record some reflections, thoughts and prayers as part of your field manual, the main purpose and function is **not a reflection of you – but direction from Him**. It is to become your daily call to arms, exercising your mind and heart toward the fight of battle as directed by your commander.

Your *Combat Field Manual* will be an ongoing gathering of passages from Scripture that apply to your own specific “theaters of operation” within this battle. Like the WARNING on the cover page explains, this pamphlet is not merely to be read, but should be viewed as the catalyst in your field manual design. Use what you can from it and begin your own so you can “fight the good fight of faith” (1Tim6:12) and “run with endurance this race that is set before you” (Heb 12:1).

Getting Started

- Purchase any sized blank book or journal, 3 ring binder or composition book. The point – **make it something you will pick up and use daily!** Hopefully, the one you start today will be the first of many editions for the rest of your life.
- Look over the *Sample Approaches* for ideas on how to lay out your manual. Use what you can to get started, but organize it in a way that is easy for you to use. **Once you start logging time** in the Word and recording it in your field manual, you'll find an approach that works best.
- As you discover passages, **write them out longhand**, leaving space to add notes, thoughts & prayers as you reflect and meditate on these passages. Your thinking needs “transformed” by God’s Word and **that doesn’t happen easily**. Take the time to write out these passages and you will notice the impact.

The Challenge

Many of us may already be active in this battle God has called us to. The challenge before each of us will always be to find ways to “excel still more” (1Thes 4:1). In developing your *Combat Field Manual*, make it about the challenges the Lord calls you to. Those might include employing the weaponry God has provided personally for you, countering the enemy and his attacks, “waiting” on God and hearing from him as your commander, or developing comradery with fellow soldiers.

Sample Approaches

There are many ways you can develop your *Combat Field Manual*. Find the way that best suits your routine and helps you to **easily pick up your manual daily** to fight and take new ground. Here are just a few suggestions:

- **By Date**

A very doable approach is to simply log your readings, thoughts, and resources by date as you engage in your daily readings, study and meditations.

- **General Categories**

Order your manual in such a way that you can group your resources and findings to help you quickly access the materials you need. The front of your manual may be filled with your daily readings written out long hand. The middle of your manual might include events and people that you have been praying for and the follow up of those events and relationships. The back part of your manual may include quotes, book references, etc... You might decide to have multiple field manuals that you use for different categories of the fight. The point is to always to make it usable for daily use.

- **Chapters / Sections**

Some may want to make their manuals very systematic. This is a great approach for those who are more organized. For many of us, this approach could defeat us before we even begin. Use the approach that best suits you. (*See Sample #1*)

Sample #1

Intro	Introduction
Section 1	Getting Started
Section 2	The Challenge
Chapter I	The Battle
Section 1	The Reality of the Battle
Section 2	The Fall, the Culture & the Kosmos
Chapter II	You are “The Enlisted!”
Section 1	Rank & File
Section 2	Soldier Identity, Focus & Purpose
Chapter III	Our Enemy
Section 1	The Reality of his Presence
Section 2	Our Enemy’s Strategy
Section 3	The Fight
Chapter IV	Our Commander
Section 1	His Attributes
Section 2	His Work
Section 3	His Promises
Section 4	His Call to Arms
Chapter V	Our Training
Section 1	Duration, Intensity & Outcome
Chapter VI	Our Weaponry
Section 1	The Truth
Section 2	The Holy Spirit
Section 3	Our Armor
Section 4	Emphasis on Prayer
Chapter VII	Theaters of Operation
Section 1	Common
Section 2	Personal / Specific
Chapter VIII	The Battle Complete

Resources & Quotes

Logging Scripture

This will be the main content of your field manual. Try different approaches to writing out scriptures, leaving room to add your own thoughts and insights

2 Cor 10:3-5 - For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but are divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ *	<p>-the reality of the "battle" is stated plainly - the battlefield is in my mind! (in the realm of "speculations & every lofty thing")</p> <p>-to take my thoughts as "hostage" to Christ will require challenging the lies that I have held, such as ...</p> <p>-some of those lies are about myself, about others and about God. I need to counter them with the truth to "destroy" the hold they have on me.</p> <p>-Lord, show me how to use the weapons you offer through your Word and the Holy Spirit (2cor6)</p>
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* When writing out passages, either leave room next to, or below, the passage to include your own notes, thoughts, or prayers as you study and meditate on the Word.

2Tim 2:3,4 – Suffer hardship with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 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.*

-I have the choice to be a soldier "on leave" or in active service.

- some of the "hardships" of this battle are a drag - i recall Paul and others suffering as "good soldiers" (2Cor11:23-33)

-Lord, help me to recognize the ways I become "entangled" and to fight each day to "please you." Give me the awareness of the battle daily so that I will not be thrown off course by the hardship it often entails.

Gal 5:17 – For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.*

-this battle against my flesh and God's Spirit will be present until I die! Teach me more about what it takes to "put off/put on" (Col3 & Rom8)

-Lord, I do want to please you - give me clarity to recognize that you are ready to strengthen me to fight this fight against my flesh through the power of your Spirit

* When writing out passages, either leave room next to, or below, the passage to include your own notes, thoughts, or prayers as you study and meditate on the Word.

CONCLUSION

This battle will only end when we stand before our Lord. Let's not grow weary, but keep fighting well (Gal 6:9). **Take note** of the words of Charles Spurgeon. His 11/30 entry in "Morning and Evening" springs off of Rev 12:7 - "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and his angels."

Spurgeon calls us to **recognize the battle present!**

"War always will rage between the two great sovereignties until one or other be crushed. Peace between good and evil is an impossibility; the very pretence of it would, in fact, be the triumph of the powers of darkness. *Michael will always fight*; his holy soul is vexed with sin, and will not endure it. Jesus will always be the dragon's foe, and that not in a quiet sense, but actively, vigorously, with full determination to exterminate evil. All His servants, whether angels in heaven or messengers on earth, will and must fight; they are born to be warriors--at the cross they enter into covenant never to make truce with evil; they are a warlike company, firm in defence and fierce in attack. The duty of every soldier in the army of the Lord is daily, with all his heart, and soul, and strength, to fight against the dragon.

The dragon and his angels will not decline the affray; they are incessant in their onslaughts, sparing no weapon, fair or foul. We are foolish to expect to serve God without opposition: the more zealous we are, the more sure are we to be assailed by the myrmidons of hell. The church may become slothful, but not so her great antagonist; his restless spirit never suffers the war to pause; he hates the woman's seed, and would fain devour the church if he could. The servants of Satan partake much of the old dragon's energy, and are usually an active race. War rages all around, and to dream of peace is dangerous and futile.

Glory be to God, we know the end of the war. The great dragon shall be cast out and forever destroyed, while Jesus and they who are with Him shall receive the crown. Let us sharpen our swords to-night, and pray the Holy Spirit to nerve our arms for the conflict. Never battle so important, never crown so glorious. Every man to his post, ye warriors of the cross, and may the Lord tread Satan under your feet shortly!"

NOTES