

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

You and I should **take special note** of the words of Charles Spurgeon. In his “Morning and Evening” collection, the November 30th entry springs off of Revelation 12:7 - “Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.” Spurgeon’s call? **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 for ever 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!”

The Battle is Real!

We are in an all out battle. This should not surprise us. We've been warned of the intensity of the fight at hand and told of the outcome – total and complete victory! **But in the meantime, we are called to fight.** What is our plan? How can we fight with purpose and intent?

“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

Paul repeatedly uses image of war – Jesus too. If we recognize the Bible as inspired, then these are not just images used to motivate - **WE ARE AT WAR!** And it's a battle of extreme measure, scope and significance. Though aware: Are we alert? Are we engaged? Are those around us engaged? **Are we distracted? Have we become “entangled”?** Do we find ourselves cynical about this daily battle?

The Battle is real! We must be convinced, and like the sentry, we must help convince others. The following verses give us just a small glimpse of the reality that Scripture lays out so clearly:

“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

“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

“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

What we don’t have in these descriptions of our life as a follower of Jesus Christ is anything close to a “day spa” experience – we are in a battle!

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

The Battlefield is in the Mind!

Though there are plenty of conflicts in the physical realm, the main war rages elsewhere. Scripture shows we are fighting a daily battle in our minds – our thinking - ideas – ideologies – lies – misconceptions – conclusions – attitudes. We are called to fight daily and should ask ourselves: “Do I recognize the battle at hand? Do I understand its importance? Do I believe it is real? Will I stand and fight?”

When a soldier is convinced of the battle, typically there are things that change in their lives and they no longer live the same way; they recognize that hardship is inevitable & it will mean foregoing some of the comforts of everyday living; they begin to “listen” to their commander for daily direction; and they are willing to undergo whatever necessary training measures are needed to be better equipped.

The Typical *Combat Field Manual*

A typical “field manual” is used by soldiers in combat to remind them of their call to duty, to direct them toward the intended goal of battle and to record the strategies shared among fellow soldiers as well as strategies tried in battle. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are in the greatest battle of all history and God’s Word is ultimately our *Combat Field Manual*, offering us direction and light to navigate through this battle.

“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

So if the Word is our “manual of operation”, why take the time to create your own *Combat Field Manual*? The Word is our source of wisdom, our artillery to use in this battle. Many of us need to find a way to actively gain new ground in “destroying fortresses” raised up against God and against growth. Without an increasing “act of aggression” in our fight, we will make little progress in advancing God’s purposes in our lives or others. Our own *Combat Field Manual* can help us 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 our own lives - recordings of our own thoughts and our own line of thinking. Journals have their place, even in battle. A *Combat Field Manual* is **not a journal**. It’s very different. Can you imagine the soldier on the battle front gaining ground or making progress by writing his “reflections” down, especially as mortars and shells stream past his head?

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 to be a reflection of you – but direction from Him**. It is to become a daily call to arms, exercising your mind and heart toward the fight of battle as directed by our commander.

Gathering passages from Scripture that apply to your own battle is what your field manual is all about. This “sample” is an attempt to help in creating your own personalized *Combat Field Manual*. Like the WARNING on the cover page explains, this is not merely to be read, but should be viewed as a catalyst in your “manual” design. Use what you can – then design 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 a *Combat Field Manual* of your own to write in. This could be 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 with today will be the first of many editions.
- In this booklet there are *Sample Approaches*, ideas for how to lay out your manual. Use what you can from this to get started, but organize your own in a way that will be useful for you. You will most likely find a better way that works well for you as you take new ground in your fight.
- As you discover passages, write out the passage longhand, leaving space to add notes, thoughts or prayers as you reflect and meditate on these passages. Our thinking needs “transformed” by God’s Word (Rom 12:2). This will become the bulk of your *Combat Field Manual*.

The Challenge

Many of us may already be actively fighting the battle God has called us to. No matter what our experience or years of service might be, the challenge before us will always be to find ways to “excel still more” like Paul writes to the church in Thessalonica (1Thes 4:1). In developing your *Combat Field Manual*, make it about the challenges you are called to by the Lord. Those might include:

- learning how to employ the weaponry God has provided;
- recognizing and countering the enemy and his attacks;
- learning how to “hear from”, pursue and follow our Commander;
- developing comradery and unity with our fellow soldiers in this battle;
- learning to “stand firm” on our faith and the ground that God has helped us take in our growth;
- learning to “rest” in Christ’s work in our lives;
- learning what resources are available to aid in our daily fight

“In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable.” Dwight D. Eisenhower

SAMPLE APPROACHES

There will be as many ways to approach fighting this battle and developing your *Combat Field Manual* as there are people. Find the way that best suits your daily habits and helps you to easily pick up your manual to 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 activity.

- **Chapters / Sections**

Some may want to make their manuals very systematic. This is a great approach for those who are more organized and particular about details. 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

Sample #2

Try different approaches to writing out scriptures and adding 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 and the battlefield is in our minds! (in the realm of "speculations & every lofty thing")</p> <p>-to take our thoughts as "hostages" to Christ will require challenging the lies that I have held that has led to extreme thinking.</p> <p>-what are some of those lies about myself, about others and about God that i continue to hold onto and need to "destroy"?</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.

- what are some of the "hardships" i recall Paul and others suffering as "good soldiers"?

-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!

-Lord, 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.

General Categories or “Theaters of Operation”

The current battlefield in your daily walk originates in your line of thinking. In a physical war, the battlefield is known as the “fighter engagement zone”, or “theater of operation”. We will win or lose TODAY within the war of thoughts, ideas, conclusions, lies, assumptions, meditations and all that we chose to set our mind on.

What are the prevalent Theaters of Operation that you are engaging? 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? Though many aspects of our lives are unique, all of us have regular battlefields we are struggling to be delivered from or take new ground on. The best war time strategists plan and advance toward the ground that needs to be taken. They establish “military occupation” and secure the ground taken. They then move to maintain a posture of strength, presence and dependence.

Pray and begin to build your list of areas that you would like to take ground in. Begin to list scriptures that address the areas of need and begin to develop your own campaign to win the battle.

“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

(where the battle rages right now in your life!)

- “Wake up!” Revelry & Avoiding the Drift – 1Thes 5:4-8
- Come into the light! (honesty and repentance) - Acts 3:19
- “Fighting” For Your Wife (and others) – Eph 4:1-3
- Use of gifting and talents – 1 Cor 12, Rom 12
- Troop Morale (fear, anxiety) – 1 Jn 4:4, Psa 18:33-36
- 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”
- Joining forces with others! Heb 3:13
- Besetting sins (reoccurring weaknesses: holding onto cynicism, judgment, hate, bitterness, self pity, categorizing and profiling others, leaning on own understanding, etc...)
- Coming of age (time to grow up!) - 2 Tim 4:5
- Post-war mentality (comfort or taking an “at-ease” posture)
- The Snare! (sexual sin and temptation)
- Learning to “rest” – Heb 4
- 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 areas of battle. Think through the ones you are struggling with and begin to build your armor and artillery to fight these “occupied areas” of struggle, so the Lord can “take captive” your thinking in these areas and destroy the fortresses that you have built over time.

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