

# SPIRITUAL WARFARE



## *Bethel* Discipleship Series

*You have been drafted. You are in a war. There is no demilitarized zone, no neutral ground. Whether you want to fight or not, you are a warrior in the battle of the ages. At the moment of your natural birth you were placed on one side of the battle line. At the moment of your spiritual birth you crossed over to the other side. Now, as a soldier of Jesus Christ, you are commissioned to engage the battle.*

### I. A BATTLE ON THREE FRONTS

A. The first part of our spiritual warfare is an inward battle – against our old, carnal nature.

- **Romans 7:23** – “*But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*”
- **Galatians 5:17** – “*For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*”

B. The second part of our spiritual battle is an outward battle – against the opposition and hindering efforts of people who oppose our walk with God – (not against *people*, but against their *efforts*).

- **2 Corinthians 4:8-9** – “*We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.*”

C. The third part of our spiritual battle is an invisible battle – against “unseen forces,” spirits, and powers of darkness.

- **Ephesians 6:12** – “*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*”

D. We must expect to face attacks on all three fronts, and we must be prepared and empowered to overcome each attack.

#### SCRIPTURE TEXT:

**1 Timothy 6:12** – “*Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*”

**Ephesians 6:11-18** – “*Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.*”

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## II. YOUR MILITARY COMMISSION

- A. In our scripture text, Ephesians 6:11-18, we read our military orders. The apostle Paul, who was very familiar with the Roman army, compared our spiritual warfare with the armament and procedures of the Roman soldier.
- B. Amplified version of Ephesians 6:11-18:
- *“Put on God’s whole armor – the armor of a heavy-armed soldier, which God supplies – that you may be able successfully to stand up against (all) the strategies and the deceits of the devil. For we are not wrestling with flesh and blood – contending only with physical opponents – but against the despotisms, against the powers, against (the master spirits who are) the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenly (supernatural) sphere. Therefore put on God’s complete armor, that you may be able to resist and stand your ground on the evil day (of danger), and having done all (the crisis demands), to stand (firmly in your place). Stand therefore – hold your ground – having tightened the belt of truth around your loins, and having put on the breastplate of integrity and of moral rectitude and right standing with God: And having shod your feet in preparation (to face the enemy with the firm-footed stability, the promptness and the readiness produced by the good news) of the Gospel of peace. Lift up over all the (covering) shield of “saving” faith, upon which you can quench all the flaming missiles of the wicked (one). And take the helmet of salvation and the sword the Spirit wields, which is the Word of God. Pray at all times – on every occasion, in every season – in the Spirit, with all (manner of) prayer and entreaty. To that end keep alert and watch with strong purpose and perseverance, interceding in behalf of all the saints (God’s consecrated people).”*
- C. Mission Outline: *(This is what we have been commissioned to do.)*
1. Put on the whole armor of God.
  2. Stand against the wiles (*strategies*) of Satan.
  3. Wrestle against spiritual wickedness in high places.
  4. Withstand (*survive*) in the evil day. [quality of our strength]
  5. Stand. (*continue, remain, survive*) [quantity of our strength]
  6. Pray.
- D. Armor Inventory: *(This is the equipment we have been given to accomplish the mission.)*
1. Belt of Truth
  2. Breastplate of Righteousness
  3. Greaves (Brass Boots) of the Preparation of the Gospel
  4. Shield of Faith
  5. Helmet of Salvation
  6. Sword of the Spirit



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## III. THE SPIRITUAL ARMORY

- *Ephesians 6:11* – “Put on the whole armour of God, ...”
- *Ephesians 6:13* – “Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, ...”

A. The first order in our commission is to put on the “whole armor of God.”

1. The apostle Paul states that the armor of God consists of six separate pieces. It is not sufficient to “put on” just certain pieces of the armor – we must have it all. Unless we have the *whole* armor of God, we are still unguarded and vulnerable in some areas of our lives.

B. The armor of God is also called the “armor of righteousness.”

- *2 Corinthians 6:4-7* – “But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, ... By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness ...”

C. Spiritual warfare requires spiritual weapons – it cannot be accomplished with carnal weapons.

- *2 Corinthians 10:3-4* – “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.)”

D. Ephesians chapter 6 gives three major purposes for utilizing the whole armor of God (panoply):

#1. To prevail over Satan’s schemes and strategies (Ephesians 6:11)

- *1 Peter 5:8* – “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”
- *2 Corinthians 2:11* – “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.”

- a. Just as Satan desired to “have” the apostle Peter (Luke 22:31), so he schemes to trap and deceive us today.
- b. We must have the armor of God to gain victory over Satan’s assaults and onslaughts.

#2. To withstand all attacks “in the evil day” (Ephesians 6:13)

- a. The Bible speaks of different types of evil days that we may have to face: a day of trouble (Psalm 86:7), a day of battle (Job 38:23), a day of calamity (Psalm 18:18), a day of temptation (Hebrews 3:8), a day of vengeance (Proverbs 6:34), a day of adversity (Ecclesiastes 7:14), a day of grief and sorrow (Isaiah 17:11), and a day of affliction (Jeremiah 16:19).
  - *Psalms 34:19* – “Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.”
- b. Regardless of which evil days we face, if we are equipped with the armor of God, we can successfully withstand all the attacks.

#3. To quench the fiery darts of Satan (Ephesians 6:16)

- *1 Peter 4:12-13* – “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you ...”
- a. Fiery darts, called “*falarica*,” were combustible, burning arrowheads that set fire to fortifications

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and strongholds.

- b. These flaming arrows can be Satan's attempts to ignite our own carnal lusts, desires, passions, emotions, evil thoughts, and intense temptations.
- c. Fiery darts can also be burning trials and difficult situations through which Satan attempts to make us fall.
- d. If we are going to prevail over Satan's schemes, quench his fiery darts, and survive the evil days, then we must be well protected by the whole armor of God.

## IV. THE 5 DEFENSIVE WEAPONS: PROTECTION

### A. The Helmet Of Salvation:

- **Ephesians 6:17** – “*And take the helmet of salvation, ...*”
1. The soldier's helmet was designed to protect or secure the brain, the mind, the “command center” of the warrior.
    - **1 Thessalonians 5:8** – “*But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on...for an helmet, the hope (confidence) of salvation.*”
  2. The helmet protects our thinking processes – it allows us to “think straight.” It protects what we know. The Biblical meaning of “hope” is better understood as confidence or expectation.
  3. When we are confident in our hope of salvation, our priorities, attitudes and thinking are anchored and secure.
    - **2 Timothy 1:12** – “*... for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*”
    - **Hebrews 6:19** – “*Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, ...*”

### B. The Belt of Truth:

- **Ephesians 6:14** – “*Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, ...*”
1. The purposes of the belt:
    - a. To bind the flowing garments that would hinder the soldier's movements in battle
    - b. To hold the soldier's weapons close to the body
    - c. To give support, strength, and protection to the middle body during the fatigue of war
  2. The belt is symbolic of truth – there are two types of truth to consider here.
    - a. Doctrinal truth: protects us from false doctrines and ideologies of men and devils.
      - **Proverbs 23:23** – “*Buy the truth, and sell it not ...*”
      - **1 Timothy 4:16** – “*Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself ...*”
      - **2 Thessalonians 2:10** – “*... them that perish...they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*”
    - b. Personal truth: inner sincerity, honesty and integrity which protects us from corruption.
      - **Psalms 51:6** – “*Behold, thou (O God) desirest truth in the inward parts ...*”

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- **John 4:24** – “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”
3. In the fatigue and weariness of battle, our doctrinal truth and personal integrity with God will provide strength and support.
  4. If we lose either our doctrinal truth or our personal honesty with God, we lose our support and will eventually lose the battle.

## C. The Breastplate of Righteousness:

- **Ephesians 6:14** – “Stand therefore, ...having on the breastplate of righteousness;”
1. This piece of armory, the breastplate, protects the vital organs of the torso. The full Roman breastplate (*cuirass*) came in two pieces – one part to cover the chest, one to cover the back.
    - **1 Thessalonians 5:8** – “But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love ...”
  2. In Ephesians the breastplate is called “righteousness”; in 1 Thessalonians the breastplate is labeled as faith and love – faith and love incorporate all the virtues of righteousness.
    - By *faith* we are bound to Jesus Christ
    - By *love* we are bound to each other (the brotherhood)
  3. When we wear the breastplate of righteousness, we are faithful in our relationship with God (*faith*) and faithful in our correct behavior towards our brothers and sisters (*love*) – that is *righteousness!*
  4. The breastplate was a shining, glistening weapon. It was usually made of brass, bronze, gold or some other reflective metal. It was often highly polished to reflect the light and dazzle, blind, and confuse the enemy.
    - **Romans 13:12** – “The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.”  
  
(light: Greek, *phos*, to shine, especially by rays; luminousness, fire light)
    - **2 Thessalonians 2:8** – “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall...destroy with the brightness of his coming.”
  5. The brightness of the glory of Jesus Christ, which is reflected in us, shall ultimately destroy all the enemies of God. The more His righteousness shines through us, the more our enemies are defeated.

## D. The Greaves, (Brass Boots) of the Preparation of the Gospel:

- **Ephesians 6:15** – “And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.”
1. The soldier’s “greaves” were used to provide protection for the feet and shield the front of the legs. Gall-traps (poison) and sharp sticks were often hidden along pathways to injure the legs and feet of enemy warriors. These were primitive versions of “land mines.” Without the “greaves” a soldier was extremely vulnerable.
  2. The greaves are called the “Preparation of the gospel,” which means being equipped, primed, and ready to obey and proclaim the gospel of making peace with God.
    - **Psalm 119:101** – “I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.”
    - **Psalm 119:133** – “Order my steps in thy word ...”

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3. In scripture, a person's "walk" is an allegory for his or her way of life. Our feet and our steps should be well-schooled in the gospel – the gospel must be our "way of life."
4. When we are prepared and skilled in the gospel, we are protected from Satan's traps which try to cripple us or cause us to stumble.
5. When we are protected with the "preparation of the gospel of peace," our feet can carry us to spread the Word of God.
  - **Romans 10:15** – "... How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

## E. The Shield of Faith:

- **Ephesians 6:16** – "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."
1. The soldier's shield was used as a movable buckler or a cover that protected the soldier from an opponent's weapons regardless of the direction of the attack.
  2. The shield of faith is the most important defensive weapon of all: "... above all, taking the shield of faith."
  3. It has been appropriately said, "In the hour of attack, in the time of temptation, faith is all in all."
  4. Faith is the only shield that can extinguish and smother the flaming arrows of the enemy – passions, lusts, emotions, etc.
  5. Faith is mobile and adaptable. It is versatile to any attack. With the shield of faith we can turn in any direction necessary and ward off the attack from any quarter.
  6. Notice how versatile and adaptable the weapon of faith is. In Hebrews 11 we read "By faith...":

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We understand the creation</li><li>• Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice</li><li>• Enoch was translated</li><li>• Noah prepared an ark</li><li>• Abraham went out into an inheritance</li><li>• Sara received strength to conceive</li><li>• Abraham offered up Isaac</li><li>• Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau</li><li>• Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph</li><li>• Moses was hid of his parents from Pharaoh</li><li>• Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh</li><li>• Moses kept the Passover</li><li>• The Israelites passed through the</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Red Sea</li><li>• The walls of Jericho fell down</li><li>• The harlot Rahab perished not</li><li>• They subdued kingdoms</li><li>• Wrought righteousness</li><li>• Obtained promises</li><li>• Stopped the mouths of lions</li><li>• Quenched the violence of fire</li><li>• Escaped the edge of the sword</li><li>• Out of weakness were made strong</li><li>• Waxed valiant in fight</li><li>• Turned to flight the armies of the aliens</li><li>• Received their dead raised to life again</li></ul>
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  7. Faith conquers the world. Regardless of the attacks we encounter, faith is sufficient to bring us victory over each one!

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- **1 John 5:4** – “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”

## V. THE OFFENSIVE WEAPON

### A. The Sword of the Spirit, The Word of God:

- **Ephesians 6:17** – “And take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”
1. This powerful offensive weapon is used to strike the enemy with an overwhelming blow.
  2. This is not an ordinary sword – it is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.
  3. The Word of God, the Sword of God, is unlimited in its power.
- **Hebrews 4:12** – “For the word of God is quick (alive), and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
4. Jesus Christ Himself wielded the sword of the Word and defeated Satan’s onslaught of temptation by saying, “It is written...” (Matthew 4:4, 6, 7, 10)
  5. The Word of God, hidden in our hearts, will impale and slaughter the lust, pride, malice, envy, and all other corruptions that might be hidden there.
- **Psalm 119:11** – “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”
6. Sample sword tactics:
    - Confusion / Turmoil:  
**Isaiah 26:3** – “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”
    - Fatigue / Weariness:  
**Matthew 11:28** – “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”
    - Temptation:  
**1 Corinthians 10:13** – “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to
    - Grief:  
**Psalm 23:4** – “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”
    - Fear:  
**Psalm 56:3** – “What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”
7. It is advisable that you learn to practice using your “sword” until you become skillful with this powerful offensive weapon.

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## VI. MILITARY PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOLS

A. Not only does our commission order us to be suited in the whole armor of God, it also instructs us on how to use the armor and engage in battle.

B. The Military Discipline of Prayer.

- **Ephesians 6:18** – “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit ...”

1. After the scripture catalogs our spiritual armor, it calls for us to engage in prayer. Prayer is the discipline, the exercise, the regimen, the perpetual habit of the soldier.
2. Without prayer a soldier is weak, feeble, and unable to manipulate the armor effectively. It is through prayer that we build up our strength.

- **Jude 1:20** – “But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.”

3. Effectual, fervent prayer is the means by which we activate the power to properly use the armor that we have been given. (We will study prayer in greater depth in a separate lesson.)

C. The Military Discipline of Preparedness

- **Ephesians 6:13** – “Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God,..and having done all, to stand.”

1. The phrase “to stand” is a military term that means after we have conquered one enemy, stand ready and prepared to conquer the next.

- **1 Corinthians 16:13** – “Watch ye, (be vigilant, awake, prepared) stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, (act manly) be strong.”

2. We must always be prepared to fight the good fight of faith – always ready to defend the gospel, to stand against all attacks from within and without.

D. The Military Discipline of Endurance

- **Ephesians 6:18** – “... watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

1. The final instructions given to us in our commission tell us that as soldiers we must persevere, persist, and endure. It is not enough to begin the fight, we must also finish it!

- **Mark 13:13** – “...he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”

Endure (Gr. *hupomeno*) – to remain, to have fortitude, to persevere, to hold out.

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2. As Warriors of the Word we are called to endure many things:

- Endure afflictions:  
*2 Timothy 4:5* – “*But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions ...*”
- Endure hardness:  
*2 Timothy 2:3* – “*Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*”  
(Hardness: difficulties, situations that are not easy to bear.)
- Endure persecution:  
*2 Timothy 3:12* – “*Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*”
- Endure chastening and correction:  
*Hebrews 12:7* – “*If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?*”
- Endure grief:  
*1 Peter 2:19-20* – “*... if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully ... if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.*”
- Endure temptation:  
*James 1:12* – “*Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life.*”
- Endure all things:  
*1 Corinthians 13:7* – “*(Charity) ... endureth all things.*”

## VII. THE REWARDS OF WINNING THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE

A. The second and third chapters of Revelation reveal that great rewards will be given to those soldiers who faithfully endure and overcome. He that overcomes:

- *Shall eat of the tree of life*
- *Shall not be hurt of the second death*
- *Shall eat the hidden manna*
- *Shall receive a new name*
- *Shall receive power over the nations*
- *Shall be clothed in white raiment*
- *Shall have his name in the book of life*
- *Shall be a pillar in the temple of God*
- *Shall sit with Jesus Christ in His throne*

B. Nothing that we suffer or endure here as soldiers of Jesus Christ can begin to compare with the reward that we shall receive.

- *2 Corinthians 4:17* – “*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*”
- *Romans 8:18* – “*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*”
- *2 Tim. 4:7-8* – “*(Paul said) I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*”

## VIII. SPIRITUAL WARFARE – MISSION POSSIBLE

A. The fight may be fierce, but we are guaranteed the victory if we stay faithful to our Commander In Chief.

- *Isaiah 41:10* – “*Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen*

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- thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”*
- **Jude 24** – *“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.”*

B. Whom He calls – He qualifies – whom He qualifies – He enables.

- **Romans 8:35-39** – *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

## A SOLDIER IN THE ARMY OF GOD

I am a soldier in the army of my God!  
The Lord Jesus Christ is my Commanding Officer!  
The Holy Bible is my code of conduct!  
Faith, prayer and the word are my weapons of warfare!

I have been taught by the Holy Spirit, trained by experience,  
Tried by adversity and tested by fire!  
I am a volunteer in this army, I am enlisted for eternity!  
I will either retire in the rapture or die in this Army,  
But I will not get out, sell out, be talked out, or pushed out!  
I am faithful, reliable, capable and dependable!

If my God needs me, I will be there!  
If He needs me to teach children, work with the youth,  
Help adults, assist the disabled, teach Bible studies,  
Clean the church, feed the poor, pray for the sick,  
Or just sit and learn, He can use me, because I will be there!

I am a soldier! I am not a baby!  
I do not need to be pampered, petted, primed up,  
pumped up, picked up, perked up, or pepped up!

I am a soldier! No one has to call me, remind me,  
write me, visit me, entice me or lure me!  
I am a soldier! I am not a wimp!  
I am in my place, saluting my King, obeying His orders,

Praising His name and building His kingdom!  
No one has to send me flowers, gifts, food, cards,  
candy or give me handouts!  
I do not need to be cuddled, cradled, cared for or catered to!

I am committed! I am determined.  
I cannot have my feelings hurt bad enough to turn me around!  
I cannot be discouraged enough to turn me aside!  
I cannot lose enough to cause me to quit!

When Jesus called me into this army, I had nothing!  
If I end up with nothing,  
I will still have more than I started with!  
I will win! My God will supply all my needs!

I am more than a conqueror! I will always triumph!  
I can do all things through Christ!  
Devils cannot defeat me! People cannot disillusion me!  
Weather cannot weary me! Sickness cannot stop me!  
Battles cannot beat me! Money cannot buy me!  
Governments cannot silence me and  
HELL CANNOT HANDLE ME!

I am a soldier! Even death cannot destroy me!  
For when my commander calls me from this battlefield,  
He will promote me to a captain and bring me back to rule  
this world with Him!  
I AM A SOLDIER!

Additional reading material (available through the Pentecostal Publishing House):

*Three Warfares*, John Arcovio

*Being Expert in War*, Deborah Randall

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