



take it home



The Battle is Real
But We Win!



Know It!

I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

John 10:9&10 ESV

If you've heard of the title *War of the Worlds*, you've probably heard of Orson Welles famous radio adaptation in 1938. Welles' broadcasts about alien invaders landing in New York state caused panic throughout the country. People thought the broadcast was real, despite the fact that the *broadcast itself had warned people it was fictional*. They had been told the truth by Welles, but people went on believing what they wanted to believe.

The Bible also gives us a truth that people are too quick to ignore; Satan is real. His attacks are real. Jesus himself tells us that 'The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy' (John 10:10) We are engaged in a very real spiritual war with an enemy whose only goal is to separate us from our heavenly father. Jesus here refers to him as a thief. Satan wants to rob us of our inheritance as the sons of God and co-heirs with Christ (Rom 8:17).

Now I am too young to have been around for Orson Welles' radio broadcast but I was the right age for G.I. Joe when I was a kid. They had a slogan, *knowing is half the battle*. As we look at this series about spiritual warfare we can take heart and praise God because we know! We know that Satan is real and his attacks are real. But we also know we have a champion in Christ who is stronger and who has already won the battle for us!

What Are You Afraid Of?

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Ephesians 6:12

Movie makers fill our vision with things to be afraid of: Godzilla, Birds, Romulans, asteroids, polar ice melt, the creep next door, the Stay-Puff marshmallow guy. We go to the movie, jump on cue, our heart beat racing, and then we go home and forget about it. Satan is very pleased with our tendency to be preoccupied with these fictitious threats putting him in the same category.

Then the media presents news with exclamations in the form of terror, epidemic, invasion, and we again follow the cue to live in fear. We fall victim to a fearful life based on circumstances that really have no eternal impact on us. What we fear is our realization that there are things over which we have no control.

Yes, Satan and his opposition to God and to God's people is real, but before that truth drives you to fear, the victorious reality is that Christ is the one in control. Satan is only rattling his chains.

Take an inventory of your fears and put them in one of two columns. Give God the praise!

- Put your temporary out of control fears under 1 Peter 5:6-7 (NLT) So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor. Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.
- Put your eternal fears under Romans 8:38-39 (ESV) For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

On Alert

Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. 1 Peter 5:8,9 NLT

You're familiar with the stock movie scene. The main character is busy with something or focused on a false clue while in the background we in the audience know the threat is about to pounce. Peter tells us to stay alert and pay attention.

Paul gives us the confidence of how we come into the heightened alert state. *Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. Put on salvation as your helmet...*
Ephesians 6:14-17 (NLT)

Did you catch that? The truth of your identity as God's child through his righteousness given through Jesus, the peace that comes from that truth in whatever situation Satan can cook up, the shield of faith that offers protection against anything Satan can throw at us, topped off by a helmet of God's salvation that cannot be reverted. Paul is telling you that Christ's victory and power to oppose Satan is yours. God back and reflect on each phrase. Polish your armor and suit up.

On Call

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

Ephesians 6:12-13 NIV

Be clearheaded. Keep alert. Your accuser, the devil, is on the prowl like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 1 Peter 5:8 CEB

The alarm goes off; you start to stir with bleary eyes and a foggy head. This moment can be one of vulnerability because you have to make the choice of giving into the allure and seductive call of the warm bed knowing full well that sleep deprivation is not at play. Or do you fix your mind on your daily duties to accomplish God's plan.

The struggle is real! Do you stay in bed or do you sit up, firmly plant your feet on the ground declaring, "This is the day the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it! (Psalm 118:24 NLT) and be about God's business? You see, Satan will play mind games and we, as humans, are simply not strong enough to defeat him. **BUT** we have the greatest Warrior waiting for our call to defeat Satan on his battlefield with His Almighty word. How will you use God's Word to defeat Satan?

Cool!

Something else appeared in the sky. It was a huge red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, and a crown on each of its seven heads. With its tail, it dragged a third of the stars from the sky and threw them down to earth. Then the dragon turned towards the woman, because it wanted to eat her child as soon as it was born. Revelation 12:3&4 CEV

In case you haven't noticed, dragons are currently "in". On the one side, people don't pay Satan any mind, write him off in disbelief. On the other side, a person can become fascinated with the trappings of mysterious power. The dragon is cool. They dabble and get more than they bargained for.

Revelation gives us the truth of Satan's threat. God reigns over every square inch of His creation, and Satan stands in opposition for each inch. He'll use what tools he has. But that's not the end of the story. *But the dragon lost the battle... "Our God has shown his saving power, and his kingdom has come! God's own Chosen One has shown his authority."*
Revelation 12:8, 10 CEV

Be wary of evil's allure. Be confident in Who holds the true power and Who backs you up when you tell the dragon to scat. Have a conversation with God about the real evil you see and thank Him for the confidence to face off with the dragon.