



To Inspire People Spiritually

The Offense and the Defense



The Apostle Paul lays out our game plan in *Ephesians 6:10-19*. Here's our defense:

- A belt of truth;
- A breastplate of righteousness;
- Shoes of the gospel;
- The shield of faith;
- A helmet of salvation.

However, Paul suggests only one offensive weapon to take on the world. Our offense is:

- The sword of the Spirit.

Yes, the only weapon is to go back to our *child-like* faith, relying on the Holy Spirit for inspiration and power. Paul states further, to also "Pray in the Spirit." Yes, we are to always remember that we must *ask* for God's help.

In *Mark 13:33*, we are also told to "Be on guard! Be alert!" This means, to pray with our eyes open, looking for opportunities to serve Christ. Unless we keep our eyes focused on our congregation and on the community, the master we serve could very well be Robert's Rules of Order.

Your tip, therefore, is to pray daily that the Holy Spirit is active in your ministry, active at church and active in the world. This should be your first weapon of choice.

Where's the Spirit?

Can you remember back when you first began to learn about Christ? Some will reflect back to their childhood, being involved in Christian youth programs or maybe reading the Bible as a family. Others will recall some milestone of life that drew them to Christ. No matter how you came to know Christ, those early times were no doubt exciting and memorable.

I remember those first years when I came to accept Christ as my Savior. They were filled with a hunger to know Him, a never-ending energy to serve Him and a deep joy that I found Him. The Holy Spirit's whisper seemed so loud. Most people I talk to share similar stories. Unfortunately, as time went on, that *child-like excitement* has been replaced with a more mature understanding of one's faith. Is this the normal road of every Christian? Another way to put this is, "*Does the Holy Spirit's role in our lives diminish with time?*"

Of course, the answer NO! Our blessing of the Holy Spirit is a constant source of power. The problem: "We

have met the enemy and it is us."

As new Christians, most do not have the knowledge and understanding of the Bible, the doctrine, the rules so-to-speak, that make up the Christian Church. As true children in the Faith, new Christians have no alternative but to rely on their faith for everything. Their hearts are not blocked by knowledge and the Holy Spirit pours directly into the person.

In our maturing process, it is easy to take on a belief that knowledge, organization and understanding *alone* will somehow improve our relationship with God. While knowledge can help us understand God's character, His expectations, and our purpose, nothing can take the place of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is what brings people to Christ, equips them to do great works and builds great churches.

Accept the challenge and bring back your youthful energy and excitement. Better than vitamins, more invigorating than exercise, a commitment to prayer and to our Holy Spirit will truly let you leap tall buildings in a single bound.

Check List✓

Spend time reflecting on your early years with Christ. Focus on those moments of joy.

Pray with your eyes open. Look for opportunities in your committees, in your ministry, in your homes and neighborhood to share your joy of Christ.

Always remember, a sword only becomes a weapon when it is grasped firmly by a trusting, skilled hand.

Step out boldly in all you do. Be different. Be creative. Be in the Spirit.