



# WE ARE A FORCE AGAINST WHICH THE GATES OF HELL CANNOT STAND!

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If you were to take a poll among Christians, asking them to define the “church,” many would describe the place people attend most Sundays to sing songs and hear an inspiring Bible message. Some people love their church. Many others are restless, perhaps even bored, though they might not be able to bring themselves to admit it. Jesus has *so* much more in mind for his Church than just weekly worship gatherings and a calendar of social events. He said he would establish a family, a Bride, a Body — an *army*.

Jesus’ blueprint for his Church is one of rare unity, great clarity and intense bravery as they run toward the battle to bring people back from behind enemy lines into the Kingdom of God. Jesus doesn’t see church nearly as casually as we do. He sees a living, passionate and bold squadron of sold-out, Spirit-filled warriors who have found true life and who represent a Savior and a cause so great, they do not fear losing their comfort or their lives on this earth. They know the hope they possess and the eternal joy that awaits them. They are advancing like streams rushing together into a raging river, bringing life wherever it flows. That *is* what the Church of the living God is — even when we fail to see it. We *are* a force that the gates of hell cannot stand against. We *are* more than conquerors. We *are* the light of the world and the salt of the earth. And the more we come into agreement with who we already *are*, the more we will see it with our eyes. We cannot afford to yawn our way through spectator-oriented gatherings and studies when adventure, purpose and freedom beyond our imagination beckons to flow through our being. Today, he is inviting you to take your place and surge forward with your fellow warriors. Know who you are — a force to be reckoned with for the Kingdom, bringing this same hope to the world!

“And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock *I will build my church*, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it” Matthew 16:18 – Emphasis added.

“The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and *put on the armor of light*” Romans 13:12 – Emphasis added.

“Join with me in suffering, like a *good soldier* of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer” 2 Timothy 2:3-4 – Emphasis added.

## QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. *As Christians, we are compared to soldiers in a war. As such, God calls us not to be “entangled in civilian affairs” (2 Timothy 2:3-4). Civilians think about comfort, quick solutions and immediate gratification. Soldiers think about cause, long-term solutions and delayed gratification. What are some ways you find*

*yourself thinking more like a civilian than as a warrior? What specific things is God bringing to your attention?*

- 2. The church has been called to stand together against the gates of hell. In what areas do you need greater confidence, equipping or mentoring in walking out your authority? Talk to a leader of your church about your next step!*

**PRAYER:**

*Father, today I stand by faith on the rock of Jesus Christ and join with believers in declaring that no weapon formed against us shall prosper! We decree salvation over our families, friends, neighbors and communities. We speak life to the dead, healing to the sick and freedom to the captives. We break every agreement with death, lies and deception in the mighty name of Jesus Christ! Continue to build our church upon the solid rock!*

**LISTENING TIME:**

*Stop for a few minutes and ask the Lord what he wants to say to you. He might bring to mind a picture, a word, a song, an encouragement, a Scripture or an answer to a burden in your heart. Don't rush or feel pressure to figure out the meaning of your impressions. Just invite him to speak and draw or write down what you sense. Afterward, ask God to help you discern and understand what he is saying to you. You might want to ask other trusted friends in the Kingdom for their input as well.*

*USE THE FOLLOWING SPACE TO RECORD WHAT GOD IS SAYING*

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**TOOLS FOR FAMILY DEVOTIONS:**

Talk about Christians, including the early church, who have changed history. Ask if these believers were civilians or soldiers. Pray that we can live with the same intentional purpose they possessed.

**TOOLS FOR PRAYING FOR OTHERS:**

Pray against a specific scheme of the enemy trying to rear its ugly head in your community or church.