

# THE CHURCH – AN ADVANCING ARMY

## Lesson 17

**Introduction:** One of my best friends, whom I had the privilege of leading to Christ in high school, followed me to Bible College and after graduation became a very successful pastor in the St. Louis area. However, prior to position, he was first an Assistant Pastor in a couple different churches. In one of them, he shared with me how they were stockpiling food and weapons for the end times. He couldn't wait to get away from there. It was just too weird for him. However, that brings up some interesting questions like: Is the church supposed to be militant? Will we have to resort to a militant posture in the last days? And what exactly will that look like? ... Well, the answer to the first two questions is: YES! However, it may not look like what you might imagine. We're going to break the next lesson into three parts as we explore this final picture of the church that the Lord showed me – An Advancing Army!

### **\*THE SEVEN PICTURES OF THE CHURCH THE LORD SHOWED ME...**

1. **PICTURE / VALUE #1: A RESTORED CHURCH ✓**
2. **PICTURE / VALUE #2: THE CHURCH – A HOSPITAL ✓**
3. **PICTURE / VALUE #3: THE CHURCH – A SCHOOL ✓**
4. **PICTURE / VALUE #4: THE CHURCH – A FAMILY ✓**
5. **PICTURE / VALUE #5: THE CHURCH – WORSHIPERS ✓**
6. **PICTURE / VALUE #6: THE CHURCH – SERVANTS ✓**
7. **PICTURE / VALUE #7: THE CHURCH – AN ADVANCING ARMY**

### **\*IN THIS CLASS WE WILL DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING POINTS...**

- A *MILITANT* CHURCH – Part A
- THE *WEAPONS* OF OUR WARFARE – Part B
- *CHARACTERISTICS* OF A MIGHTY MILITANTS – Part C

**\*PSALMS 144:1 – “BLESSED BY THE LORD, MY ROCK, WHO TRAINS MY HANDS FOR WAR, AND MY FINGERS FOR BATTLE.”**

### **PART A: “A MILITANT CHURCH”**

**\*Mt 16:18 – “... I will build my church and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”**

#### **1. IS THE CHURCH SUPPOSED TO BE MILITANT?**

##### **A. WAR**

*\*1 Peter 2:11 – “...abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.”*

##### **B. ARMOR**

*\*Eph 6:11 – “Put on the full armor of God...”*

##### **C. SOLDIER**

*\*1 Tim 2:3 – “...like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”*

##### **D. WEAPONS**

*\*2 Cor 10:4 – “The weapons we fight with...”*

## 2. WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

### A. NOT PHYSICAL WARFARE

*\*2 Cor 10:3 - “...though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does.”*

*\*Eph 6:12 – “For our struggle is **not against flesh and blood...**”*

*\*Mt 5:43-44 – “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: ‘**Love your enemies and pray** for those who persecute you.’”*

### B. RATHER SPIRITUAL WARFARE

*\*Eph 6:12 – “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.**”*

### C. IT CAN MANIFEST ITSELF AS SICKNESS, OPPOSITION, STRESS & WORRY, FINANCIAL BATTLES, ETC... → BUT SEE BEYOND THE OUTER MASK TO THE REAL ENEMY BENEATH!

*\*Homework Assignment for Part B: Weapons of Our Warfare (to be taught July 12) – List the “spiritual weapons” that Jehoshaphat and Judah used to win a very real physical battle (2 Chron 20:1-26). See how many you can find without looking below.*

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## PART B: “THE WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE”

*\*2 Cor 10:4 – “The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.”*

*\*2 Chron 20:1-26 – “Jehoshaphat & Judah’s battle and the spiritual weapons they used to gain victory.”*

### 1. SEEKING THE LORD

*v. 3 – “Alarmed, Jehoshaphat resolved to **inquire** of the Lord...”*

### 2. FASTING

*v. 3 – “...and he proclaimed a **fast** for all Judah.”*

### 3. UNITY

*v. 4 – “The people of Judah **came together** to seek help from the Lord...”*

### 4. PRAYER

*v. 5,6 – “Then Jeshoshaphat stood up and said: ‘**O Lord God...**’”*

### 5. HUMILITY

*v. 12 – “... we **have no power** to face this vast army that is attacking us. **We do not know what to do...**”*

6. **FOCUS**  
v. 12 – “...but our eyes are on You.”
7. **FAMILY**  
v. 13 – “All the **men** of Judah, with their **wives and children and little ones** stood there before the Lord.”
8. **PROPHECY**  
v. 14-15 – “Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel ... He said: ‘Listen ... this is **what the Lord says to you** ...’”
9. **WORDS OF KNOWLEDGE**  
v. 16-17 – “Tomorrow ... **they will be climbing up by ... you will find them at ... You will not have to fight**...”
10. **DIRECTION**  
v. 17 – “You will **not have to fight** in this battle. **Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you.**”
11. **WORSHIP**  
v. 18-19 – “Jehoshaphat  **bowed ... and all the people fell down in worship before the Lord. Then some stood up and praised the Lord ... with a very loud voice.**”
12. **FAITH**  
v. 20 – “Have **faith in the Lord your God** and you will be upheld; have **faith in His prophets** and you will be successful.”
13. **OBEDIENCE / PRAISE**  
v. 22 – “As the began to **sing and praise**, the Lord set ambushes...”

*2 Chron 20:24 When the men of Judah came to the place that overlooks the desert and looked toward the vast army, they saw only dead bodies lying on the ground; no one had escaped. 25 So Jehoshaphat and his men went to carry off their plunder, and they found among them a great amount of equipment and clothing and also articles of value—more than they could take away. There was so much plunder that it took three days to collect it. 26 On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Beracah, where they praised the LORD.*

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## **PART C: CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGHTY MILITANTS**

*\*1 Tim 2:3 – “Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs – he wants to please his commanding officer.”*

1. **BEFORE CHRIST**  
*\*1 Sam 22:2 – “All those who were in **distress or in debt or discontented** gathered around him and he became their leader.”*

### **A. DEBT**

**B. DISTRESSED**

**C. DISCONTENTED**

**2. AFTER CHRIST**

*\*1 Chron 12:1 – “These were the men who came to David ...they were among the warriors who helped him in battle...”*

**A. AMBIDEXTROUS → VERSATILE**

*v.2 – “they were armed with bows and were able to shoot arrows or to sling stones **right handed or left handed**...”*

\*Notes:

**B. SEPARATED**

*v.8 – “some ... **defected (separated)** to David”*

\*Notes:

**C. READY FOR BATTLE**

*v.8 – “they were brave warriors, **ready for battle**”*

\*Notes:

**D. FACES LIKE LIONS → COURAGE / CONFIDENCE**

*v.8 – “Their faces were the **faces of lions**”*

\*Notes:

**E. SWIFT TO OBEY**

*v.8 – “They were as **swift as gazelles**”*

\*Notes:

**F. CHAIN OF COMMAND → SUBMITTED TO AUTHORITY**

*v.9-14 – “Ezer was the **chief**, Obadiah the **second in command**, Eliab the **third** ... Jeremiah the **tenth** and Macbannai the **eleventh**. These Gadites were **army commanders**...”*

\*Notes:

**G. TENACITY & PERSEVERANCE**

*v.15 – “It was they who **crossed the Jordan** in the first month when it was **overflowing all its banks**...”*

\*Notes:

**H. UNDERSTAND THE TIMES → DIRECTION**

*v.32 – “Men of Issachar, who understood the times and knew what Israel should do...”*

\*Notes:

**I. ALL WEAPONS / OFFENSE & DEFENSE**

*v.33-34 – “...experienced soldiers prepared for battle with every type of weapon... carrying shields and spears...”*

\*Notes:

**J. UNDIVIDED LOYALTY**

*v.33 – “with undivided loyalty”*

\*Notes:

***\*1 Chron 12:38 – “All these were fighting men who volunteered to serve in the ranks. They came to Hebron FULLY DETERMINED TO MAKE DAVID KING over all Israel.”***