

It Really Is War

You have made a significant effort and probably a significant sacrifice to enroll your children in a Christian school. You have recognized the importance of integrating faith and learning, an integration that focuses not only on intellectual development but also on the nurture and development of the spiritual from a biblically based, Christ-centered perspective. These are crucial days for the development and nurture of our children. Ephesians 6:10–12 is a grim reminder of the reality of our world today: “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. 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 the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (NIV).

This passage reminds us of the deadly force of Satan and his demonic army, whose full intent is to kill and destroy. Too often we consider spiritual matters more along the lines of nurture and development, something like coddling and gently preparing our children to engage in a fulfilling life of joy and peace and happiness. And from that perspective, terms such as *the devil’s schemes*, *struggle*, *powers of this dark world*, and *spiritual forces of evil* don’t really fit. These terms are far more about battles and war. And this fact reveals the point that the writer of this New Testament letter is trying to make. We truly are at war, and this war is against what can be a most formidable foe. Satan and his demonic army are relentlessly determined to defeat the work of Christ and His righteousness in the world through the destruction and devastation of His followers.

In relatively recent times, this attack has been ratcheted up in places that we would normally feel far less concerned about. At the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), we are facing firsthand the reality of such spiritual warfare as we fight for the rights of a Christian school to determine its own programs and the textbooks that it will use in its academic subjects. One of the nation’s most influential university systems, the University of California (UC), which consists of 10 university campuses such as UCLA and UC Berkeley, has decided that it will not accept new private-school course submissions for core curriculum subjects if the courses use textbooks that reflect a strong Christian bias or viewpoint. Today, this position is resulting in Christian high school courses

being rejected toward meeting certain core subject requirements such as science, literature, history, and ethics. ACSI contends that this decision is a bold implementation of viewpoint discrimination. The UC system admits that there is no evidence that students who have taken courses that include the use of such textbooks are any less capable of university success, but the UC system still contends that students who wish to enter the UC system must have taken core courses that use only textbooks that do not promote a Christian viewpoint. For a more complete understanding of this issue, visit the ACSI website at www.acsi.org/-7875.

As I recently sat for hours of deposition in preparation for the court case that will be heard later this year, I became acutely aware of the significance of this battle and the increased level of warfare that is being waged against all things Christian. And yet this is just one of many fronts where this war is being fought. If this case is lost and this university system is allowed to inject such controls on courses that will be accepted for matriculation into higher education, we are convinced that it will only be a matter of time before other higher education systems across the nation will follow suit.

ACSI needs your diligent prayer support in this critical battle to retain the rights of Christian schools regarding their choice of educational materials and textbooks. Of even further significance, however, is the importance of urging you to be on guard and alert to the battlefronts that face you and your children. A continuation of the above passage from Ephesians 6 tells us, “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” (v. 13).

May this summer be a blessed one as you continue every effort in the development of your children so that they can withstand the attacks of the evil one. Speaking of these attacks gives us a strong reminder to consider Jesus’ teaching on how we should pray, and included in that teaching is the line from the Lord’s Prayer, “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one” (Matthew 6:13, NIV).



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