



“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

— Ephesians 6:12

We live in times of polarization, social tension, ideological clashes, and family conflicts. It seems that everyone is against everyone. Social media in flames. Broken conversations. Divided churches. Families torn apart. Nations at war.

But the Word of God confronts us with a statement that dismantles our usual perspective: **your enemy is not your neighbor, nor the politician, nor your boss, nor your spouse, nor the person who thinks differently.**

Saint Paul—in his letter to the Christians of Ephesus—reveals an uncomfortable and profoundly liberating truth: the real battle is spiritual.

This article seeks to help you understand that invisible struggle, its theological foundation, its development within the Tradition of the Church, and above all, how to fight it today without losing peace or faith.

1. The Biblical Context: What Did Saint Paul Mean?

The phrase comes from the Letter to the Ephesians, traditionally attributed to **Saint Paul**, the Apostle. In chapter 6, the Apostle describes the “armor of God”: truth, righteousness, faith, salvation, the Word of God.

He is not using a superficial poetic metaphor. He is describing an ontological reality.

In the Jewish world of the first century, there was already a clear awareness of the existence of angels and demons. Jesus Himself expelled demons and spoke of the “prince of this world” (cf. Jn 12:31).

Saint Paul uses very concrete terms:



- Principalities (archai)
- Powers (exousiai)
- Rulers of this present darkness

These terms do not refer merely to human governments. They designate fallen spiritual hierarchies—rebellious angels who, after the fall, exert influence over structures, cultures, and mentalities.

This is not medieval mythology. It is Christian doctrine.

2. What Does the Church Teach About “Principalities and Powers”?

The Catholic faith affirms the existence of angels created good by God and of fallen angels who, by their free decision, rejected Him.

The Catechism summarizes it this way:

“The devil and the other demons were indeed created naturally good by God, but they became evil by their own doing.”

One of them is known as Satan, the Adversary.

But traditional theology does not reduce spiritual evil to a caricatured figure. The Tradition—from the Fathers of the Church to Saint Thomas Aquinas—has developed a rigorous angelology that distinguishes hierarchies.

“Principalities” and “powers” are angelic orders that, in their original state, formed part of the heavenly order. Some, after the rebellion, act by disordering human structures: cultures, ideologies, systems.

This explains something we constantly experience: evil is not only individual; it is also structural.



3. The Structural Dimension of Evil: Beyond Personal Sin

When Saint Paul speaks of the “rulers of this present darkness,” he is not saying that every government is demonic. He is revealing that **there exists a spiritual influence capable of infiltrating human systems.**

An unjust economic system.

A culture that normalizes abortion.

An ideology that destroys the family.

A technology that enslaves attention.

Evil organizes itself.

And that is not paranoia. It is spiritual realism.

The Church’s Social Doctrine speaks of “structures of sin”: social realities that foster alienation from God.

This is not about seeing demons around every corner. It is about understanding that evil is not merely psychological or sociological. It has a spiritual dimension.

4. The Modern Error: Reducing Everything to the Visible

Contemporary mentality has removed the spiritual world from the cultural horizon. Everything is explained in biological, economic, or political terms.

But when we deny the spiritual dimension:

- We lose understanding of the inner combat.
- We confuse enemies.
- We end up hating people instead of fighting evil.

If our struggle were only “against flesh and blood,” Christianity would simply be moral or political activism.



But it is not.

Christ did not come to found a party. He came to defeat sin and death.

On the Cross, Christ conquers the prince of this world.
In the Resurrection, He strips him of his definitive power.

5. The Real War: Where It Is Fought

The main battle is not in Parliament.

It is not on Twitter.

It is not on the evening news.

It is in the heart.

Every time you choose truth over lies.

Every time you choose purity over lust.

Every time you choose forgiveness over resentment.

That is where the war is fought.

That is why Saint Paul continues by saying:

“Put on the armor of God.”

He does not speak of physical swords, but of:

- The belt of truth
- The breastplate of righteousness
- The shield of faith
- The helmet of salvation
- The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God

This is not poetry. It is a spiritual program.



6. Practical Application: How Do We Fight Today?

1. Sacramental Life

Frequent confession breaks invisible chains.
The Eucharist strengthens the soul.

The devil hates grace.

2. Life of Prayer

Whoever does not pray is vulnerable.
Not because God abandons them, but because the soul weakens.

The Rosary, adoration, the reading of Scripture are not optional devotions in times of spiritual warfare. They are weapons.

3. Discernment

Not every human conflict is spiritual.
But many human conflicts are fueled by spiritual dynamics of division, pride, and falsehood.

Ask yourself:
Am I reacting from the flesh or from the Spirit?

4. Do Not Demonize People

Here lies the most important pastoral key:

Your enemy is not the person who thinks differently.

That person is also in the midst of the battle.

The Christian fights error, but loves the one who errs.



7. The Great Trap: Becoming What We Fight

There is a real danger: fighting evil using the weapons of evil.

When we combat lies with insults.

When we defend the faith with hatred.

When we protect truth without charity.

Then we have been infiltrated.

The spiritual enemy does not need us to stop believing; it is enough that we lose charity.

8. Hope: The Victory Is Already Assured

The battle is real, but the ending is written.

Christ has already won.

In Revelation, the dragon is defeated. The Church may be attacked, but not destroyed.

The Christian does not fight from fear, but from the certainty of victory.

We are not alone. We have:

- The intercession of the saints.
- The protection of the angels.
- Sacramental grace.
- The authority of Christ.

9. A Contemporary Reading: What Does This Mean for You Today?

In a world saturated with information, manipulation, and noise:



- Not everything that outrages you is the real problem.
- Not everything that frightens you is the true enemy.
- Not every battle deserves your energy.

Discerning the spiritual dimension changes the way you live.

It makes you more serene.
More strategic.
More charitable.
More firm.

It turns you into a spiritual warrior, not an agitator.

Conclusion: Change the Focus, Change the War

If today you are in conflict with someone, remember:
it is not against flesh and blood.

If today you feel oppressed by dark thoughts, remember:
there is a battle, but you are not defenseless.

If today you wonder why evil seems organized and strong, remember:
Christ has already defeated it.

The question is not whether there is a war.

The question is:
are you fighting with the right weapons?

Because true victory does not consist in defeating people.
It consists in remaining faithful to Christ in the midst of the invisible combat.

And that victory—though the world may not see it—has eternal consequences.