



## A Publication of the Winnetka Ave. Church of Christ

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## COMPLETE CONSUMMATE COURAGE

The invasion of Ukraine by Russia began on February 24, 2022. Some had speculated that Ukraine would fall to the superior forces of Russia in a few days. As of this writing the people of the Ukraine are setting a sterling example of courage under fire. Their President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, a former comedian is standing resolute against all odds and serving as a role model for citizens of his country. Observing the events in Ukraine and the courage being demonstrated in spite of overwhelming power against them, reminds one of the individual in the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests standing in front of a line of tanks in the Chinese capital. History would record that a massacre occurred with 10,000 killed, according to the BBC. China disputes that number.

Throughout the pages of history there have been people of valor step forward to inspire others. Teresa Prekerowa was but a teenager when the Nazis invaded her native Poland. This was in the early days of World War II. Jews were being rounded up by the Nazis. Teresa and other Polish countrymen put their lives on the line in order to rescue and protect their neighbors from the Warsaw ghetto. Later she would be recognized for her courage to stand against the open evil that was being perpetrated in what is known as the Holocaust. Her name is listed with the Righteous Among the Nations at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem.

As Christians we are called upon to develop a mettle within, mindful that daily we are in a struggle. *"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places."* (Ephesians 6:12) One might argue that fighting an unseen enemy is more difficult than facing an enemy face to face.

While indeed it daunting what we face, we do

not have to go to battle alone. God has provided the necessary weaponry. *"Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil."* (Ephesians 6:10-11) In his second letter to the brethren in Corinth, Paul wrote, *"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses."* (10:3-4)

"Soldiers of Christ Arise" is a hymn that we oft times sing. In it captures the mind set the child of God needs to carry day by day as we face the rigors of spiritual conflict. Notice the lyrics from that song, written by Charles Wesley in 1741. *"Soldiers of Christ arise, and put your armor on, strong in the strength which God supplies, through His eternal Son. Strong in the Lord of hosts, and in His mighty power, who in the strength of Jesus trust, is more than conqueror. Stand then in His great might, with all strength endued, and take, to arm you for the fight, the panoply of God; that, having all things done, and all your conflicts passed, ye may overcome through Christ alone, and stand entire at last. Leave no unguarded place, no weakness of the soul, take every virtue, every grace, and fortify the whole. From strength to strength go on, wrestle and fight and pray, tread all the powers of darkness down and win the well-fought day."*

Paul, in the eighth chapter of Romans asserts, *"If God is for us, who is against us?"* (v.31) A few verses later he writes, *"But in all these we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us."* (v.37) Life will present conflicts simply because we are children of God. Nevertheless, we can have the utmost of courage, knowing God has so provided amply for us. Consider those stalwarts of the faith that serve as a *"cloud witnesses surrounding"* and fix our eyes squarely on Jesus (see Hebrews 12:1-2).

*"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."* (Philippians 4:13) (wbe)

THE BULWARK