

Chapter 16 Spiritual War.



War? I thought Jesus
came to bring peace!

No Victory without Conflict. We must recognize that we dwell in an enemy's territory. His aim is to keep lost people lost and going to Hell. His aim for Christians is to get them so interested in the Kingdom of the World and its systems of money, entertainment, power, popularity, etc., that they are not even aware that they could live by a higher kingdom, the Kingdom of God. Satan can neutralize Christians by getting them to depend upon the Kingdom of the World and their own resources.

Satan was able to convince Adam and Eve that they could operate their lives without the Word of God (Genesis Chapter 3). Satan tempted Jesus with the same issue in Luke Chapter 4. He will use the same tactic on you. If Satan can get you to act out of your own independence without putting the Word of God first in your life, he has succeeded.

“Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, ‘**Did God really say**, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?’” (Genesis 3:1).

Doubting the Word of God is Satan's main weapon. This is the essence of spiritual warfare. Without getting too complicated, spiritual warfare is primarily about believing or doubting God's Word. God wants us to trust His Word above all other evidence. Sometimes it is difficult to believe the truth we cannot see and feel with our five natural senses.

If you want to get in shape physically, there are some helpful steps you can take such as, eat properly, get adequate sleep, take a multi-vitamin capsule every day, etc.. But in the final analysis, there is no substitute for exercise or working against a resistance. The same is true in the Christian life. Proper nourishment from the Word is essential, but so is “exercise.” In God's strength, facing and conquering trials and difficulties, God, the perfect coach, knows exactly what kind of “workout” you need in order to turn an area of weakness into an area of Christlikeness.

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything” (James 1:2-4).

Satan does not always use “bad” things to tempt us, sometimes he uses the “good” things of the world to lure us away from God’s Kingdom. Satan uses circumstances and ideas to convince us that we are not **SITTING** with Christ (our position in Christ), that we should not **WALK** like He walks (our responsibility), and that we should give up instead of **STANDING** on the promises (our warfare). We are heirs of the Kingdom of God. Why should we live like those people who are not heirs?

Here is how it works:

Jesus was teaching His disciples in Mark chapter 4. He told them that **THE** mystery of the Kingdom of God was contained in this parable. He asked them in verse 13, “And He said to them, ‘Do you not know this parable? And how then will you know all parables?’” Jesus used this very visible agricultural example of seed being sown to explain and unveil the mystery of the unseen world. Mark 4:9-11 says, “And He said to them, ‘He who has ears to hear, let him hear.’ And when He was alone, they who were about Him, with the Twelve, asked Him concerning the parable. And He said to them, ‘To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God. But to those outside, all *these* things are *given* in parables.’”

The entire Kingdom of God works like this parable. God plants the seeds of His Words in your heart (regardless of the condition of your heart). These seeds represent all of God’s purposes for your life. Being born again is the first purpose. Next is being filled with the Spirit, being healed physically, emotionally, and mentally, and having your needs provided. The Word brings you into your proper relationships in life, and provides all of God’s further purposes for you. God uses His Word to impart His purposes to you.

Mark 4:14-20 says, “**The sower sows the Word.** And these are those by the wayside, where the Word is sown. And when they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the Word that was sown in their hearts. And these are those likewise being sown on stony places; who, when they hear the Word, immediately receive it with gladness. But they have no root in themselves, but are temporary. Afterward when affliction or persecution arises for the Word’s sake, they are immediately offended. And these are those being sown among thorns; such as hear the Word, and

the cares of this world, and the deceit of riches, and the lust about other things entering in, choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful. And these are those sown on good ground, who hear the Word and welcome *it*, and bear fruit, one thirty, one sixty, and one a hundredfold.”

Notice that Satan comes to steal the Word. This is really the only weapon that Satan has against mankind; to steal the Word or to blind us from the Word (2 Corinthians 4:4). If any person would receive and act upon the Word of God, they would be saved and go to Heaven. If any person would receive and act upon the Word of God, he/she would be made whole, spirit, soul, and body, their needs would be provided, and their life would be in order. Satan cannot hurt you if you believe and act upon the Word of God. He can and will tempt you, he can put signs on you that make it look like the Word is not true, but he cannot hurt you if you are totally submitted to the Lordship of the Word, Who is Jesus Himself!

Once the Word is planted in your heart, you must “stand,” or wait against adverse circumstances, until the plant matures. “Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand” (Ephesians 6:13).

We will always need to overcome difficulties, but we can overcome and win! The way in which we overcome, the results, are God’s business. Often things do not work out according to our plans. However, we can trust Him in all things!

So in a very simple, childlike way of looking at spiritual warfare, let’s focus on Satan’s only weapon and on our response to his actions. Standing, or spiritual warfare, is not reserved for the saint of God who has been walking with God for 20 years. No, it is for every child of God. God makes it possible for all of us to perform warfare in His might and power. We do not have to be experts. Remember God gives grace to the humble. James 4:6 says, “But He gives more grace. Therefore He says, God resists the proud, but He gives grace to the **humble.**”

So how do we fight this war?

1. First we must know something. Wisdom.

Wisdom is knowing and relying on the fact that the Cross of Jesus absorbed all the evil and everything must turn out to be a blessing. The law of gravity says that whatever goes up **MUST** come down. The law of reconciliation (which is the law of the Cross - Colossians 1:20) says that all evil has been disarmed, and now must be a blessing, **IF** you believe.

Wisdom is knowing that all things have been reconciled through the Cross. Not just people, but all things. “And through Him having made peace through the blood of His cross, it pleased the Father to reconcile all things to Himself through Him, whether the things on earth or the things in Heaven” (Colossians 1:20).

Reconcile is a powerful word. Strongs Concordance calls it “to bring back a former state of harmony.” It is defined “to repair, to put back into working order, making peace between two opposing views or groups.” Vines Bible Dictionary defines it “to change from enmity to friendship.” The Cross of Jesus Christ takes all of our “enemies,” whether they be people, demons, circumstances, sickness, poverty, everything, and changes them into a friend. This is Wisdom! Christ crucified!

2 Corinthians 5:18 says, “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation...” So this is our ministry here on earth, to take all the enemies of our lives, dip them into the blood and Cross of Jesus Christ, and turn them into friends. I can tell you by the Word of God and by my own experience that this is true. It works if you stand.

Wisdom is knowing that the blood of Jesus has defeated Satan. What does it mean to have victory over Satan? How does the blood of Jesus give us power? “Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil-- and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death” (Hebrews 2:14,15).

“Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him” (Romans 6:8,9).

These verses say that Satan was “destroyed.” What does that actually mean? He seems to be running around doing a job of destroying others.

The word destroy is defined in Strongs Concordance as:

- 1) to render idle, unemployed, inactivate, inoperative.
- 1a) to cause a person or thing to have no further efficiency.
- 1b) to deprive of force, influence, power.

When Jesus and you and I were raised from the dead, we were born again as a new race that is no longer subject to Satan. He has no more dominion over us. We have dominion over him. Satan used his ultimate power on Jesus at the Cross, and then Jesus was resurrected. Satan has no more power to exert. He is out of tools and weapons.

He can still destroy an unbeliever, and he can deceive a believer, but if we know the truth, he cannot harm us any longer. As far as we are concerned, he is destroyed. If we stand on the truth, all Satan can do is lie to us. Satan has no power over the new creation; that includes you and me!

“And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy” (Colossians 1:18).

This is the script of life. We need to recognize where we are in it. It will make suffering more compatible. Yes, Jesus is returning to earth someday, but He will also “return” for you now to turn your problem into a blessing.

A good example of this kind of overcoming is Daniel in the lion’s den in Daniel chapter 6. Daniel was wholly following God and was persecuted by his enemies and God’s enemies. Rather than being delivered *from* the lion’s den, he overcame *in* the lion’s den. The result was that his enemies were totally defeated.

“At the king’s command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lions’ den, along with their wives and children. And before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones. Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations and men of every language throughout the land: ‘May you prosper greatly! I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel. For he is the living God and he endures for ever; his kingdom will not be destroyed, his dominion will never end. He rescues and he saves; he performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions.’ So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian” (Daniel 6:24-28).

I doubt that Daniel would have prospered and that his enemies would have been defeated if he had not gone through the lion’s den.

2. Second, we must do something. “As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead” (James 2:26).

Warfare, or standing, requires that we do something, we are not to just wait around. Hebrews 6:12 says, “ We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.”

a. We must maintain our “virginity.” That is, we must stay clean before the Lord. We must keep short accounts with our sins, and

keep them confessed and cleansed before God and man. I use the word “virginity” because I want you to remember that Jesus makes you as if you had never sinned every time you are forgiven!

We must live our life worthy of the Lord and dwell in His presence. “As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received” (Ephesians 4:1). “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty” (Psalms 91:1). You should stop now and read the rest of Psalm 91.

If Satan can get you to act according to your old nature (flesh) and the way of the world, he can separate you from the living presence of God and he can steal God’s promises. Galatians 5:19-21 says, “Now the works of the flesh are clearly revealed, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lustfulness, idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, fighting’s, jealousies, angers, rivalries, divisions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkennesses, revelings, and things like these; of which I tell you before, as I also said before, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” (The seed of the Word bearing fruit in your life.)

b. The Bible teaches us that there is a waiting period in warfare and that we are to use the Word of God as a sword. Ephesians 6:17b says, “...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

We are told in Hebrews 3:1, “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” Jesus takes our confession to the Father as our High Priest, and the Father sees to it that it is accomplished, provided it is the Word of God. The enemy also takes our confession, our negative confession, and accomplishes what we say.

When the Word of God is confessed and prayed over a person or a situation, it is powerful! Jesus created everything by His Word. Jesus IS the Word. Jesus gave us the authority to use the Word as if it were Him saying it!

John 1:1-3 says, “**In the beginning was the Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and without Him not even one thing came into being that has come into being.”

When the Passover was administered to Israel in Exodus 12, the Israelites were told to put the blood of an innocent lamb over their doors and the death angel (demon) would “pass over” and not hurt them. Jesus

is the Lamb of God, and we can put His blood over our doors and over the doors of our loved ones and those for whom we pray. How?

Revelation 12:11 says, “And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony. And they did not love their soul to the death.”

The words of our mouth will apply the blood. Notice in Exodus 12 that as long as the lamb’s blood stayed in the basin, it did no good. But when they took the hyssop, dipped it in the blood and applied it to their door, then God and the devil could see it. The hyssop was a common weed that did not seem to have much value. The words of our mouth do not seem to have much value, but when we dip them into the Word of God (Who is Jesus Himself) and apply them as blood, God sees it and the devil sees it!

Jesus takes our confession and makes it powerful. Hebrews 3:1 says, “Therefore, holy brothers, called to be partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.”

When we speak God’s Word, Jesus takes it to the Father and asks Him to perform it. John 16:23 says, “And in that day you shall ask Me nothing. Truly, truly, I say to you, Whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give you.”

Then we can enter into rest and let the Word do the work.

Hebrews 4:1 says, “Therefore, a promise being left to enter into His rest, let us fear lest any of you should seem to come short of it.”

Hebrews 4:12 says, “For the word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing apart of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Angels go to work when they hear God’s Word. Psalms 103:20 says, “Bless the LORD, O angels of His, who excel in strength, who do His command, listening to the voice of His word.”

Demons flee! Psalms 149:5-9 says, “Let the saints be joyful in glory; let them sing aloud on their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand, to carry out vengeance on the nations and punishments on the peoples, (representing our spiritual enemies) to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with iron-bands, to carry out on them the judgment written; this is an honor for all His saints. Praise the LORD!”

Remember that you are not trying to win a battle, Jesus at the Cross has already won the battle. You are called to “stand.” That means to be established in your position of victory in front of a court of law, so that the lies told about you cannot prevail. You will experience a lot of mental pressure, but you will win if you stand.

Standing against the wiles of the devil.

Ephesians 6:11 says, “Put on the whole armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”