

Spiritual Warfare Synopsis

Observe and mimic Jesus: Isaiah 61:1-4, 10; Luke 4:16-21; John 14:12-14.

A. True nature of the battle 2 Corinthians 10:3, Ephesians 6:10-12; Revelation 12:7-17

Spiritual realm of evil a reality; John 17:15-17

God's desire is for freedom through His truth; John 8:31, 32

B. God's truth and the spiritual battle

- People born physically alive, spiritually dead and under Satan's control, Ephesians 2:1-3.
- Although God originally created mankind perfect, we were not complete but needy with primary needs: to be loved and accepted, to be safe and secure, and to be significant and valued. God intended we go to Him for our needs to be met, but when we are separated from God due to sin, we tend to go to other sources instead. Therein is the problem, the world, our flesh and Satan will attempt to meet these needs, but never as God intended.
- Salvation is solely by faith through Jesus Christ; Ephesians 1:7, 2:4-9
- We also died with Christ, Galatians 2:20; Romans 6:1-11 to free us from the "sin nature" we inherited from Adam when he sinned (Romans 5:12). The "flesh" is different from the sin nature. The "flesh" are habits or patterns of living we developed when we were spiritually dead and separated from God; these are still active and need to be controlled; Matthew 16:24; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:17-24.
- **Very important:** when we are "born again" (John 3:1-16) the Holy Spirit comes into our spirit replacing or cancelling out the sin nature (Satan's control), thereby making us spiritually alive and enabling us to submit to God (James 4:7). Though Satan can never again "own" us in our spirit, he and demons can still invade our mind, emotions and will if we grieve, quench or ignore the Holy Spirit (1 Thess 5:19; Eph 4:30) and/or give into our flesh or be deceived. Hence Christians can have or allow demons to attach to the various parts of our body through willful sins, or we can be deceived in our mind, the control center that influences our emotions and will, thereby allowing demons limited but potentially deadly power.

Position of the believer:

- "In Christ"; Ephesians 1:1-14
- New creation; 2 Corinthians 5:17,21
- New identity: Child of God; John 1:12; "I am" statements
- *Saint*, Christians always referred to as, in preface to epistles, Romans, 1&2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians.
- Forgiven and cleansed, Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 John 1:9
- Clothed in the royal robes of righteousness; Isaiah 61:10, Zechariah 3:1-4, John 8:1-11; 2 Corinthians 5:21
- Seated with Christ, dead to sin, alive to God, Ephesians 2:6
- God has defeated Satan through Christ's death and resurrection, Colossians 2:15.
- We are eternally secure; John 10:27-30, Romans 8:38-39.

So why do many Christians struggle with lack of peace, freedom and joy, and instead experience frustration, guilt or shame?

C. Satan's schemes; we should not be unaware, 2 Corinthians 2:11; 1Peter 5:8,9

- Deceiver: father of lies, John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 11:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10; Revelation 12:9
- Tempter: using world, flesh, Satan himself, Luke 4:13; 17:1-2; Thessalonians 3:5; James 1:13-16
- Accuser: using shame and guilt, Revelation 12:10; Zechariah 3:1-5

The effectiveness of Satan's tactics is **proportional** to our strength of faith, dependence on God to meet our every need, and whether our needs are being met by God. Otherwise we may be needy and susceptible to succumb to the world, our flesh or Satan. ***Beware, Satan is aware of our spiritual state and emotional and physical neediness perhaps more than we are!***

D. Battle is in and for the mind! Romans 12:2 "Renewing the mind". Truth sets free; John 8:32

- *What you believe to be true, directly affects your emotions/feelings, which influences your choices, decisions and behaviors. **The battle is for control of your mind!***
- Satan's prime target – your **identity**; hence the importance of the “**I am**” statements, all are scriptural and all are true of the believer who is “**In Christ**”
- "Who are you?" *Position* is all important. Especially vulnerable are those who do not know who they are, or struggle comparing themselves with those held in esteem, or who seem to have it all together, or use power to control.

E. How does Satan work? 1Peter 5:6-11; Luke 13:10-17 Woman crippled by spirit.

- Satan takes advantage of abuse/trauma by placing lies in vulnerable mind, which when believed affect emotions and actions; 2Corinthians 11:3.
- Satan then uses emotions to further distort the truth of who you are or of the situation, resulting in bondage to coping, defense or escape mechanisms for survival; Ephesians 4:26,27
- **2 Corinthians 10:3-5 Strongholds**: habits, engrained patterns, addictions or demonic oppression exerting control. Because they are spiritual and used by Satan, they require spiritual weapons designed by God for our victory.

Emotions are normal response to any event. But in trauma or abuse, or deception which implants lies, these emotions can be powerful and control the mind with lies and resulting emotions, which if not dealt with according to truth, can lead to sin. Ephesians 4:26,27 Anger, bitterness, and unforgiveness are often the avenues Satan uses to gain access.

Other emotions, what I call “fingerprints of Satan,” are fear, anxiety, confusion, shame, guilt and depression.

What do we *usually* do with emotions resulting from any event, but especially trauma or abuse?

- Don't "stuff"-results in bitterness, psychosomatic illness
- Don't "vent"-destructive to all around
- Instead, bring emotions to God, 1Peter 5:7; Philippians 4:6; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4. Vent emotions and pain onto Christ, then **forgive** for your sake in order to be free. Ephesians 4:26-32, 2 Corinthians 2:10-11

Forgiveness releases you from the past haunting of abuse and allows God to be the Judge. It is commanded by God for your good!

Ephesians 4:32 As God forgave you, so do to others.

Forgiveness is...

- Not forgetting
- Not tolerating sin
- Not revenge
- Agreeing to live with consequences
- Not bringing up past
- A choice to obey the command of God

You may also need to confess your sins in response to being hurt. Initial emotions after abuse or trauma are usually justified. However, if not dealt with soon after, can quickly turn to bitterness, anger, guilt, fear, unwillingness to forgive or inability to enjoy healthy relationships.

1 John 1:9 The results of confession are healing and cleansing.

How to forgive

- Pray for wisdom and discernment as to whether it is God's will or "safe" to personally forgive someone face-to-face who has hurt or abused you. Many times it is not, but that does not mean you are released from God's command to forgive.
- In prayer bring the person who has hurt you **before God**. Include what the person did and the result, including hurts, emotions, consequences and even your own sinful behavior. (However, that is no excuse for your sin!)
- Once you have dealt thoroughly with the person's sin and how it affected you, **now forgive the person before God**.
- It is as if you had balled all the hurt and hate and are now giving it to God. Forgiveness sets you free from this person and what they did, but that person is still in God's hands for Him to deal with. You are free.
- Now you can pray for that person, for God to bring conviction, repentance and life. Who knows, perhaps God will convict the person, who may then approach you for forgiveness! That is true freedom and victory!

F. How to resist Satan and demolish strongholds James 4:7

FIRST – Submit to God - James 4:7a

- Take your position "In Christ" and be strong, Ephesians 6:10
- Protect yourself with armor of God, Ephesians 6:11-12 (13-18)
- **Get rid of the garbage!** Your sin, either resulting from the abuse or trauma, or rebellious sinful choices in life, are what enable Satan and demons to attach and cause pain! First deal with these, then demons are weakened and more easily cast out.
- Confess sins, 1John 1:9, Psalms 139:23, 24; Psalms 51
- Do not give sin a place in your life anymore Romans 6:6,7, 11-14
- We are to **forgive** in order to walk in freedom Ephesians 4:32 (see previous notes on forgiveness)

SECOND – Deal with Satan - James 4:7b

- **Spiritual warfare prayer** is speaking God's truths out-loud; a powerful weapon for "binding the strong man," Matthew 12:29; 16:19; 18:18-20.
- Satan is not omniscient and all knowing, although he would like to be. Therefore, Satan cannot know what you are thinking, so you must speak out-loud in dealing with Satan or demonic spirits.
- Rebuke/resist the devil and he will flee James 4:7b; 1Peter 5:9 (God did in Zechariah 3:2 and in Revelation, and Jesus did many times)
- Come against devil with the authority and power of Jesus, Luke 9:1-2; 10:1, 17-20
- Take every thought captive, 2Corinthians 10:3-5. Evaluate what you believe according to Philippians 4:8-9; if it lines up with scripture, allow it. If it doesn't, rebuke, reject and replace it with God's truth.

Example of warfare prayer:

In the name of Jesus I come against all demonic spirits of (name the emotion that is controlling, or oppressing, understanding it is demonic in effect) that are oppressing me (or another) and command by Jesus' power and authority that they are bound and unable to continue to oppress, control or influence me (or another). In Jesus' name I command they stop, leave and never come back. I command they go to the feet of Jesus, for Him to deal with. (If you are praying for another, if that person is allowing demons to oppress due to sin, ignorance or deception, they will need counsel in order to recognize the battle and cooperate with attempts to lead them into God's truth. Demons oppress due to permission.)

On-Going Actions:

- We are "in the world but not of it" John 17:17, therefore our daily protection is putting on the armor of God, Ephesians 6:10-18 for victory in demolishing strongholds, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5.
- God desires our dependence, confidence and obedience. Therefore, be diligent to walk accordingly, confess willingly, submit fully and follow Him, Matthew 16:24ff.
- Sanctification: Walk in faith, by the Spirit, Romans 8:5-14
- Remember, all you need is already given, 2 Peter 1:3-11

Resources:

Neil Anderson; Victory Over the Darkness, The Bondage Breaker.

Rusty Rustenbach; A Guide for Listening and Inner-Healing Prayer

Charles Kraft; I Give You Authority, Defeating Dark Angels, Two Hours To Freedom

Chip Ingram; The Invisible War