

Spiritual Warfare (Part 1): *It's Real* (6:10-18)

¹⁰ A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. ¹² For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

¹³ Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. ¹⁴ Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. ¹⁵ For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. ¹⁶ In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. ¹⁷ Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸ Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.

Be Careful of the Extremes

Scoffing
Discounting
Forgetting

VS.

Demon Possession
Territorial spirits
Generational curses / bondage

Lewis warns of two opposite errors we can easily fall into about spiritual warfare:

1. To disbelieve it exists; or
2. To take an unhealthy (speculative) interest in it.

Spiritual Warfare Must Be Understood in the Context of God's Purpose

- "Bring glory to God..." "That God may be glorified"
- But what does that really mean In modern, common language?

So That People Can See Who God Is Through Your Life

Romans 8:29

God works for the good of those who love him, who have been **called according to his purpose**. ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined **to be conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

Image Bearers

Matthew 5:16

Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Habakkuk 2:14 For as the waters fill the sea, the earth will be filled with an awareness of the glory of the Lord.

- Our enemy is intent on either hiding or more often, distorting the picture of God our lives display.
- How does He do this?

Fear Is Our True Enemy

Ephesians 6:18-20

¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

The devil is against us, the world is all around us, and the flesh is within us...all collaborating to defeat us.

Instead of having abiding peace each day in every situation, do you struggle with anxiety? Do you find yourself worried about finances, security, the welfare of your children, or other concerns? Jesus said we have peace so where is all that worry and anxiety coming from? It is certainly not from God. Is someone robbing you of the peace He has given?

God's Word tells us—that we have been given fullness of joy—do you struggle with discouragement, depression, inner turmoil, and conflicts? Could someone be twisting the thoughts and perceptions in our mind, causing us to doubt and disregard what Jesus has given us?

Instead of having power to be His witness, do you find yourself intimidated, hesitant, and shy about sharing your faith? Where is the evidence of the power He said we've been given when we received the Holy Spirit?

Instead of walking in victory, do you accept defeat, struggle with temptation, and sin and look on living the Christian life as futile?

Why do we spend so much time seeking our own comfort and security, influenced by the values and attractions of the world instead of accepting the sufficiency of blessings assured by God? He said He would give us everything that we need, but we take it upon ourselves to be sure that He doesn't drop the ball or something doesn't fall through the cracks. We are not sure God is going to provide for us adequately so we think we have to pick up that responsibility for Him. Instead of holiness and godliness that comes from His presence within us, we struggle with temptation, lustful thoughts, and self-gratification as if all that has not really been crucified with Christ.

If this is the pattern of our lives, in contrast with what God said He has given to us, could it be that someone is deceiving us? Is it just our own weakness or lack of resolve, or is there an enemy that wants to defeat us? Is there someone who is striving to deprive us of all that would bring glory to God in our lives?

Jerry Rankin
The Reality of Spiritual Warfare

We're at war.

Put on your armor.