

Spiritual Warfare

11 hours ago by [Steve Kromer](#)

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Last night, God spoke to me and changed the direction for this morning's service and the message. I felt that instead of learning about the person and works of the Holy Spirit, that we were to cover the subject of spiritual warfare. This will not be an all-inclusive coverage of the subject, but should be enough to raise awareness of the battle raging against us and for us to know how to begin gaining victory in these battles.

Without going into every detail, we first must understand that there is a reality surrounding us that often are ignorant of, which is the spiritual realm.

Honestly, this is a perfect precursor to understanding the Holy Spirit as well. This realm is not often in the forefront of our minds, but if we fail to realize its reality and the impact which it has on us, we will often be discouraged, confused, and frustrated in life. We will strive and work tirelessly to overcome struggles that we face, but will never have success until we understand the true source of these struggles.

Although this realm is not one that often manifests itself physically, it is still just as much a reality as the physical world around us. Take for example, our thoughts. We know with absolute certainty that our thoughts exist and know with absolute certainty how powerful of an impact that they have on our lives.

However, we can't see, hear, smell, touch, or taste them with our physical senses. We do, however, know that eventually, our thoughts manifest themselves physically through our words and actions. Also take for example, the wind. Although we are not able to see it, we know for certain that it exists because of the physical manifestation as it blows against our skin or as we see leaves shaken by it or dust blown around by it. These are analogies for the spiritual realm as well. Although God, Satan, angels, and demons can physically appear to us, they do not do so very frequently. Honestly, we would probably be completely overwhelmed if we could physically interact with the spirit realm at all times. There are times when we are given gifts of discernment to be able to, but it is not a constant occurrence.

This occurred often in scripture, but one of my favorite places is in 2 Kings 6 where the Aramean army comes to capture Elisha. They have him completely surrounded and Elisha's servant is overwhelmed by their circumstances and panics. Elisha told his servant not to be afraid because those who were with them were more than the army coming against them. Elisha prayed and God revealed to his servant the spiritual realm where the hills were full of horses and chariots of fire.

We need God to open our eyes and show us that the mighty army that is with us far exceeds those who are against us in every aspect!

Without going into full detail, we know that Satan exists along with his demons. From Ezekiel 28 and Revelation 12, we know that he was created by God to be a guardian cherub and was the most beautiful of all creation. We also know that his beauty caused him to walk in pride, which corrupted his wisdom, and that he and a third of the other angels waged war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought and cast Satan and the other angels to the earth. From that moment, Satan and the other fallen angels, called demons, wage war against all of those who follow God's commands and hold fast to their testimony about Jesus. This all takes place in the spiritual realm, but it is a realm that we are fully engaged in and a part of.

If you have accepted Christ's salvation and attempt to follow His commands, war will be waged against you by Satan and his demons. You will find it far easier to just give in and live the way that you feel like living and to do what you feel like doing than to do what God has called you to do. Even if you really, really desire with all of who you are to do what God wants you to, you will find it very difficult to do. This clearly indicates that there is a force opposing you and fighting against you. The truth is that we cannot do it on our own. It is war! Paul said it this way:

Romans 7:15-25

15 I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. 16 And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. 17 As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. 18 For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. 19 For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. 20 Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

21 So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. 22 For in my inner being I delight in God's law; 23 but I see another law at work in me, **waging war** against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. 24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? 25 Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

In order to overcome and win the victory in these battles, we first need to understand who we are, who the enemy is, and who our allies are. We are mankind, born in a state of sin, separated from God, and with a dead spirit. However, we are created in the very image of God who Satan hates. We are created with the free will to do as we please. However, the purpose for our creation is to know God and to worship Him. We are the ones who Jesus gave His life to save, which makes us all the more hated.

- Satan is our accuser. Jesus is our defender.
- Satan is a liar. When he speaks to us, he lies about us. We can recognize his lies by knowing the truth of God. Satan tells us that we are hopeless. God tells us that we have a living and eternal hope.
- Satan tells us that we aren't good enough. God says that He made us good enough.
- Satan tells us that we have screwed up too much and too many times. God says that we're forgiven and restored and His mercy is always new.
- Satan tells us that we'll never get it right. God says that He made us righteous.
- Satan tells us that we never can. God says that nothing is impossible for us.
- Satan tells us that we need more. God says that He is all that we need and to be content with what we have.
- Satan tell us that it will be fun and won't hurt anyone. God says that it will hurt us and those around us and instead satisfies our desires with good things.

Satan wants to kill, steal, and destroy us.

God wants to give us an abundant life.

We could go on and on, but dig into the Bible and learn about what God's truth says about you!

Satan causes division. God brings about unity.

Satan deceives and confuses us. God speaks truth with clarity.

Satan stirs drama and conflict. God gives us comfort and peace.

Satan tempts us. God never allows us to be tempted beyond what we can bear and always makes a way out.

Satan invokes pride. God cooperates with humility.

Satan causes sickness and disease. God heals us from all sickness and disease.

Satan binds us into slavery to our sins. God gives us freedom from our sins.

Satan, his demons, and our sinful nature (which they use as leverage in our lives) are our enemies.

God, his angels, and other believers are our allies.

When engaging in this war, we will find that the battleground in which we primarily fight this battle is that of our minds. It is here where our perspective is shaped, where our emotions are invoked, and where our actions are planned. It is here where we either choose to believe that truth of God or the lie of Satan. It is here where we are either overcoming Satan and winning the battle or losing it.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

3 though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

This is one thing critical to remember while engaging in spiritual warfare. We cannot fight with the weapons of this world and expect to gain victory in a spiritual battle.

Also, we must remember that we have been given divine power from God Himself to demolish the strongholds of Satan in our lives and in the lives of others. Too often when we are struggling in life, we excuse our behavior and justify it by acknowledging that it is a result of spiritual warfare. When we do this, we are admitting that we are losing the battle and that Satan is having his way in our lives.

There may be an intense time of spiritual warfare occurring in our lives, but that doesn't mean that discord, fits of rage, sexual immorality, drunkenness, envy, or selfish ambitions are expected to exist in our lives. Galatians 5 informs us that all of these things are fruits of our flesh, which indicates that we have chosen to accept defeat in this battle. If we are gaining the victory in these battles, the fruits that will exist in our lives are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, and self-control. These fruits indicate that though spiritual warfare may be raging in our lives, we have overcome it and are walking in victory over Satan!

We need to rise up and stop acting like Satan has any power or authority over us! We need to stop acting like the weak and helpless victims of Satan and start acting like the mighty and victorious warriors in the royal family of God that we are!

The choice is ours. We know which thoughts of ours result in the fruits of the flesh (our defeat), versus the fruits of the spirit (our victory). Just like a seed in the natural, we need to realize that we have a choice in which thoughts are allowed to be planted in our minds and bear fruit and which thoughts need to

be demolished before they even have a chance to take root.

One of the greatest weapons that we have to fight with in spiritual warfare is that of truth. Let's take a look at what we should look like in the spiritual throughout life as we battle the various battles of spiritual warfare that we will face in our lives.

Ephesians 6:10-18

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

This is something critical for us to remember. Too often, we fight our battles against people when the true battle is not with them, but in the spiritual realms. More often than not, our true battle is not against our spouse, our kids, our families, our co-workers, our friends, or our enemies. More often than not, our true battle is against the rulers, authorities, and powers of the evil, spiritual forces in the spiritual realms.

The people through which the battle is manifesting is just a side effect. Those people are merely marionettes through which Satan and his demons are fighting us. We can fight endlessly with these people and never gain an inch of ground until we take God at His word and begin to love people unconditionally; extending to them the same grace, mercy, and forgiveness that God grants us and make a choice to instead fight with the dark forces behind them. Then, we will not only gain inches in the battle, but will gain victory in that battle.

13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

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.

We must always be alert and on our watch for the schemes of Satan and praying for each other. Satan is extremely deceptive and sneaky. He prowls and waits for just the right time of our weakness to pounce and attack us. This is why we are called to be alert.

Just as Satan fell because of pride, we also, must be cautious not to become prideful, thinking that we have arrived at some spiritual place in which we are no longer prone to sin and temptation.

1 Peter 5:8

Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Don't let Satan devour you and, just as important, don't let him use you to devour someone else!

How do we fight in this spiritual battle? We just read from Ephesians the armor that God has given us to engage in spiritual warfare. Nearly all of what we have been given for this battle is defensive. Satan may prowl like a roaring lion, but his attacks are often extremely intense, but short lived. We are given defensive gear to resist Satan during these attacks knowing that he will retreat back into hiding until another opportune time of our weakness reveals itself.

James 4:7

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Although we may be tempted to react to circumstances or to give in to temptation, we must stand our ground and resist Satan. We know that he is only out to steal from us, kill us, and destroy us.

1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

Always resist Satan and look for that way out of temptation. It is there, but it is going to be a struggle and a battle to pull away from that temptation and to walk out of the snare and trap of the enemy through that way out to freedom.

While resisting, don't forget the greatest offensive weapon that we have been given in the armor of God, the sword of the Spirit, the word of God. Read, study, meditate, memorize the word of God. When the word of God is in your mind and in your heart, the lies of the enemy will become clearer and clearer.

Choices that we make every day become easier and easier. The way that we are to handle circumstances and how we treat others becomes easy to understand. The word of God is a light to our path so that we know which way we should go and helps us to recognize a trap of the enemy before we find ourselves caught up in it.

The best example of this that we can find is when Satan himself tempted Jesus in Matthew 4. Jesus, having humbled Himself to be just like one of us, took time to prepare for His life of ministry. When He was at His weakest point from fasting, Satan pounced and the battle was on. With each attack, Jesus responded with the word of God to use the truth to defeat the lies of Satan. He resisted and used the sword of the Spirit with great wisdom and accuracy.

Having taken the way out of temptation three times, Satan fled and angels came to strengthen Him.

This morning, many of us are facing intense times of spiritual warfare. The battles may all look a bit different as they manifest themselves, but the source is all one and the same and therefore the way in which they must be fought is one and the same.

We need to stop fighting each other. We need to stop resisting God.

We need to start fighting Satan's dark forces of evil and we need to start resisting him.

Romans 16:20

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

We need to take every thought captive and test it against God's truth; BEFORE we react to it. We need to stop giving Satan a stronghold in our lives by demolishing every thought that is not in alignment with God's word. We know that we have the certain victory in the end, but until that final day comes, we will fight battle after battle as Satan wages war against our souls.

Let's now give God the glory for His victory and for fully equipping us for the battle. Let's do the one thing that Satan hates the most; worship God. Not only does Satan want this worship for himself, but when we voluntarily choose to offer up a sacrifice of praise in the midst of our battle, God comes to our rescue and we are saved!

Let's hear some victorious battle cries this morning!!!