

# *Spiritual Warfare*



Satan's assault is always against the Kingdom of God and the Lordship of Jesus Christ. He has recognizable tactics and strategies and the Word of God spells out his defeat. We will focus on spiritual warfare as it pertains to marriage, however, and you will discover similarities in the spiritual warfare in every area of life around you.

Romans 14:17 says that the Kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. These three things seem to be the major areas of attack in our lives. And of course righteousness — our right relationships with and before God, is the area of frontal assault concerning our marriages. Satan knows that if he can disrupt our relationship with our spouse, there is a domino effect which is capable of devastating our ability to live in the Kingdom and move in and through the authority of the Kingdom in our lives.

Spiritual warfare is more than concern about the role of the demonic realm and fighting against demonic attack. I believe it is possible to become so focused on demons and being under attack that we can begin losing ground in our lives as our attention is misplaced. A major tactic of the enemy is getting our focus off of the Lord Jesus and Kingdom living. In this chapter we will discover that the best defense is not a good offense. Rather, the best defense is....not to play the game at all.



## Righteousness

Righteousness is often incorrectly identified with sinlessness or holiness. Righteousness is the state of being in right standing or right relationship, especially as it pertains to God. Jesus is our righteousness. He, by His sinless life, obedient death and glorious resurrection offers His right relationship to the Father as a gift for our faith in His work. Our own ability to stand before God would amount to being dressed in dirty garments. But by grace, Jesus adds His right relationship to our inability to have a right relationship with God. In Christ we have righteousness, not by our own merit, but through Him, who perfectly pleases His Father and offers His right relationship with His Father to us.

Because He cherishes us, we are able to step into this relationship by grace and, in turn, cherish Him. And by extension we can begin to cherish others. It is this cherishing, agape love, that is the foundation of our right relationship - the righteousness that defines the Kingdom of God. And when the relationship of the marriage comes under attack, our ability to live in the Kingdom is challenged.

Righteousness, or right relationship, is expressed through **unity** and **harmony**. Both of these found expression in the relationship between Jesus and the Father. Jesus said He and the Father are one (John 10:30). This describes unity. Jesus also said that He did nothing of Himself, but that which He observes the Father do (John 5:19). This is a statement about harmony. Because the marriage relationship is to be the joining of two individuals as one flesh, that same unity and harmony are key to preserving the rightness of the relationship.

*“Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down the beard, the beard of Aaron. Running down on the edge of his garments.”* Psalm 133:1&2 (NKJV)

Unity releases the anointing. This is true for the Church - in the Church and in the marriage. The nature of Christ, the Anointed One, is applied to every situation and circumstance. This makes everyday life a powerful expression of the Kingdom of God. The enemy goes to great lengths to keep a couple from being united around the purposes and plans of God. Ignorance of the Word of God is one of his major tools. If you do not know what you can or should do, it is impossible to be united, except in ignorance.



Harmony is the ability to work in concert together. It is not conformity or identical behavior, although that has its place. But rather, it is the ability of two different minds to work together on the same task from different perspectives. Harmony is two different lines of musical notes being sung or played together to make a richer expression of the song. Harmony is knowing what the other is doing and adding your distinctive qualities to it; not to change it, but to enhance it. A husband and wife who esteem and cherish each other will compliment each other. They can work in concert with each other, making a symphony of creative, nurturing expression of God's heart and love toward us.

### **Peace**

It is the God of peace that crushes Satan (Romans 16:20) under our feet, undoubtedly shod with the Gospel of peace (Ephesians 6:15). Christ is the Prince of Peace, and this peace is far more important than many of us have considered until now. This peace is not the ability to avoid or squelch conflict although those, too, can be blessings. The peace of God is able to take us through the conflicts and storms of life, without us losing our focus or joy.

The Bible says this peace surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:7). I like to think of this in these terms: "It just doesn't make any sense to have this kind of peace right now, but I do!" This kind of peace guards our hearts and minds. If we lose that peace then our hearts and our minds are open fields for the enemy's attack. We can fall under deception, oppression, depression, fear and countless other emotions and attitudes of the heart or mind. The soul, or being, becomes clouded. We can easily lose the ability to hear and perceive the purposes of God.

God's peace is not like the world's peace (John 14:27). The world offers peace through compromise and negotiation. The world offers peace through displays of strength and force - the outward victory over enemies. But God's peace comes through Christ Jesus' victory: His strength and power. It is embodied in our Good News, the Gospel. What we were unable to do for ourselves, Christ Jesus did for us.

We must allow the peace of God to rule our hearts (Colossians 3:15). This word rule means to rule like an umpire, an arbiter. The knowledge of God's love and active involvement in every area of life should become a filter through which all of our experiences are made to pass. When we yield to God, He is in control and therefore, all that He does is good. All things will work together for our good. We are stayed on Him.



## **Joy In The Holy Spirit**

Happiness differs from joy in that happiness is a response to circumstances, while joy is a response independent of circumstances. Joy is the noun form, or state of being, while rejoice is the verb form, or action. Joy is the state of acknowledging, worshiping and praising God in all things. It is being in communion with God's Holy Spirit that this joy is fully found. Our joy is to be found and possessed in the partnership of His Spirit who was sent to walk alongside and fill us. In the Spirit, inside Him, is this state of complete trust in God. Trust that He has it all in control, and from this knowledge flows the worship and praise that is our rejoicing in Him.

To be robbed of joy is to experience defeat before the battle begins. That is why a heart of worship and praise is key to moving and living in the Kingdom of God. It is as if, when we offer to God praise and worship, His reciprocal response to us is to fill us with joy. It is a product of our communion with Him. Like peace, joy sees things from the heavenly perspective. What it looks like in the natural is meaningless in the light of who God is and what His Word says about the situation.

## **Weapons and Tactics**

First, Satan will come to devour the Word of God. Mark 4:15 teaches that he attempts to do this immediately after God has revealed His purposes to us.

Second, what he can't steal, he will lie about. He is the father of lies (John 8:44) and deception is a major tool in his arsenal.

Third, he will take any weapon we give him and use it against us. Our fears, judgments and unbelief become weapons in his hands. It is through these that he is able to build strongholds. Strongholds are fortified areas in our lives that become the workplaces of demonic activity. Demons won't live or work under the lordship or kingship of Jesus, i.e. the Kingdom. But when strongholds are built within our lives, strongholds against the rulership of God, believers can experience demonic activity.

We must be active and diligent in all these areas to defeat the enemy. And we have effective weapons at our disposal—weapons that are not carnal, temporal, susceptible to decay and rot. Our weapons are mighty to the pulling down of strongholds (2 Corinthians 10:4).

## Our Weapons

**Repentance** tops the list of mighty stronghold defeating weapons, and it is of science fiction proportions. Repentance has the ability to disarm the enemy. Any hidden leverage that Satan may have had is now worthless and, in addition to disarming the enemy, there is renewed communion with God. Strategies are gained, insight is given and, of course, the sense of victory that comes when you know that God will be fighting for you.

Following closely behind repentance is **Humility**. God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6). A meek and teachable spirit is powerful in the Kingdom.

Laying hold of **Spiritual Substance** is another valuable weapon. This means being able to handle the “big three” — faith, hope and love. Faith is a mighty shield, able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked. Hope strengthens the inner man, the heart, filling us with the expectation of God and His glory upon us. And love, this cherishing nurturing esteem, is indeed a heavenly substance. These are not just admirable character traits; they embody the nature of heaven and the Holy Spirit’s substance. They are mighty things in the hands and hearts of believers.

*The  
Whole Armor of God  
Ephesians 6:11-17*

Then there is the **Armor of God**. These may actually represent priestly garments more than a Roman soldiers uniform.

1. The helmet of Salvation/Turban of Holiness
2. Breastplate of Righteousness (with 12 stones)
3. Loins girded with Truth/Linen Ephod
4. Shod with Peace/Anointed Toes
5. The Sword of the Spirit
  - a. Scripture
  - b. Praise and Worship
  - c. Prophecy
  - d. Name of Jesus
  - e. Prayer



## **Battleground Priorities**

Recognizing the proper battle is important. So many times we find ourselves fighting the wrong battle with the wrong enemy. People are never the enemy. Even when Satan is able to use people to do his bidding, they are never the enemy. Spouses and children are not the enemy.

Likewise, knowing the battleground is important. First, our minds are the most valuable piece of real estate we possess. Satan's primary battle is for our minds.

*“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NKJV)*

Receive the Word, and then obey the Word. James 4:7 says, “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” (NKJV)

As we gain ground in our minds and hearts we can stand strong in our homes and fellowships. These are areas in which every believer has a measure of authority. These are the priority battlegrounds in our lives. After these, and only after we have begun the task of dealing with the issues in these three areas, we can begin to wrestle for our work place, our city, region and the nations.

## **Does and Don'ts**

Do prayer scripture whenever possible.

Don't pray judgment or correction.

Do pray humbly.

Don't believe you know the answer before God speaks.

Do stay in a “Fix me Lord” attitude.

Don't fall into a “Fix them” attitude.



Do take authority over the devil and the demonic where Christ reigns through you.

Don't exceed your metron or be presumptuous.

Do take responsibility for the seeds you have sown.

Don't blame the devil for your seed. God is not mocked.

Do remember that the devil does not sow seed.

Don't forget that the devil hides leaven.

Thought become attitudes.

Attitudes become behaviors.

Behaviors become habits.

Habits become a lifestyle.

Do bless and do so verbally. Words have power.

Don't curse.

### **AFFIRMATION**

I choose this day to align my heart, mind and words with the Spirit and the Word of God. I will resist the devil and be obedient to God's plan for my life. I will become an instrument of blessing, hope, faith and life for others. I will command all that God has placed in my stewardship and cause it to kneel before Him. By grace and in faith I choose to assault the strongholds that continue to plague my life and my relationships. With the heavenly and mighty weapons at my disposal, I will cast them down and bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.