
Spiritual Warfare Part I

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Do you know what Spiritual Warfare is all about?

2 Corinthians 10:1-6

Some Christians spend all their energies on this subject while others do not even know that they are to be on guard against Satan and his demons. They do not know that they need to be ready for attacks and be able to protect themselves against the veracity of "Spiritual Warfare." Others blame the devil and his entourage for all their ills, accepting no responsibility for their own life and actions. Yes, when we are in Christ, we need to worry more about our Fruit and Character than any other thing that may come our way. At the same time, Satan will attack our Fruit and Character and thus, we have to constantly be on the defense.

What is Spiritual Warfare?

Spiritual Warfare is active war waged by Satan along with His followers, such as demons and evil principalities, as they attack, thwart, harass, and mislead the followers of Jesus Christ. It is a war because these evil forces use vigorous tactics and strategies to try to stop the work of God—His Redeeming actions, the Cross, His Church, and in the personal believer's life. The other side is Christ and His followers, such as angels and Believers. The good side is lopsided because the war has already been won and we are given unstoppable, impenetrable shields and massive weapons to combat any effort of the evil ones. Spiritual Warfare exists; it is real. This is not about Pentecostal or Charismatic or Reformed or whatever; it is biblical because it is told to us in His Word, the Bible!

Satan is at war with Christianity; this is what Spiritual Warfare is all about. He seeks for us to have rotten relationships and empty, purposeless lives of despair filled with anger, betrayal, and hopelessness. He wants our Fruit to be rotten and our Character to be absent. He lies to us, engaging us with appealing tactics that cause us to bite his hook so we miss the opportunities Christ has for us and ruin our lives. He tells us we can have fun and fulfillment; but if we just think it through, *how much fun is losing it all?* How much fun is it to be manipulated, to have what we did not earn taken away from us, leaving it to become meaningless and rotten? How much fun is going from one meaningless activity to the next looking for a "high" and a satisfaction that never comes? We can have satisfaction in Christ and His abundance infusing us; this is something that Satan once had but rejected, and he fervently hates all those who have it and excel in Him! So, beware of his ways—how he wants us to hate, disguising it with misplaced emotions, confusion, and hurt, so we are taken away from our families, our opportunities are neutered or pushed aside, and our fullness in Christ ridiculed, then replaced with what is fleeting, hurtful, and meaningless.

Satan's Strategies

In addition to having lies in his “playbook” and hooks to snag us, Satan also has four primary attack postures with which to snare us:

1. **First, *Satan attacks God's character and credibility.*** This was his first strategy as recorded in Scripture, when he tempted and then deceived Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:1-8). He lies and deceives Christians to trade their truth in Christ and His precious precepts for a lie (John 8:44; Rev. 9:11; 12:4-17). Satan and his agents then seek to manipulate and destroy. He wants to seduce God’s people so we will put our trust in him, removing our eyes from God or His ways. (Question. How have you seen this happen?)
2. **Second, *Satan attacks God's power and people.*** This has the most Scriptural instances! He wants his arrogance and pride to be contagious and be fuel for us, and for future Christians (Matt. 4:1-11). (Question. How have you seen this happen?)
3. **Third, *Satan attacks God's people through manipulating values and causing doubt!*** He causes us to love material things over eternal values (Eph. 2:2-3; 5:3-20; 1 Tim. 4:1-5; 2 Tim 3:1-9). When we seek what we want and forget God, or think we have a chance to do it better or on our own, he wins. (Question: How have you seen this happen?)
4. **Fourth, *Satan attacks the Christian's self control*** by offering seemingly good and tempting gifts that are hard to refuse (1 Cor. 7:1-7)! He desires to lure us away from God's will, in a game to see who can win the most souls. Satan does not take into account God's sovereignty and election! There is nothing Satan desires more than for us Christians to run our lives our way, which is really his way. He wants our churches to be run by the will of people, governed by the trends of the day, and swayed by public opinion, where God’s Word is kept out of reach or in the dark by overt or neglected ways (Rev. 12:7-12). (Question. How have you seen this happen?)

What is your response?

We are to have a life filled with purpose and distinction. If we have an empty life, we are no good to ourselves, we cannot grow, and we are of no value to our neighbors or to God. We can try to clean ourselves up and apply purpose to our lives by our own will, but if it is not from God, it is useless. It will just invite chaos and strife into our lives. When we have no purpose in life, we are hollow and empty. Our welcome mat says, *Hey, Satan, come on in; the place is all ready for you!* Let us be God’s family by our obedience, trust, and faith in His work, and seek His will for our lives!

We are going to look at more of Satan’s lies and tactics that are contained in his “playbook” and arsenal in this series, which he uses for Spiritual Warfare. We will see what we can do about it. We can start off with some right thinking from the Bible on this

to give us clarity and insight, as there is a lot of erroneous teaching on this subject. We know that Satan is a very powerful being. We alone cannot protect ourselves from Satan. And most importantly, without Christ we are no match. If we have accepted false teaching or bought into his lies and tactics, we are going to be easy prey for Satan.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you know what Spiritual Warfare is all about? Have you ever experienced Spiritual Warfare? If so, how so?
2. Look over each of these strategies carefully. How can they help you see how and when he may come after you?
3. How do you feel that Satan seeks for you to have rotten relationships and empty, purposeless lives of despair filled with anger, betrayal, and hopelessness?
4. Do you know Christians who spend all their energies on this subject to the point of obsession? How does that help or hinder them?
5. Do you know Christians who do not take this seriously? How does that help or hinder them?
6. What do you think we should do to be on guard against Satan and his demons? How does this relate to Scripture?
7. What can you do to be ready for attacks and be able to protect yourself against the reality of the devil?
8. What is a healthy balance between blaming the devil and his entourage for all of our ills and dealing with our responsibility for our lives and actions?
9. Do you believe that when we are in Christ, we need to worry more about our Fruit and Character than any other thing that may come our way?
10. How do you think Satan will attack your Fruit and Character? What is a good defense to his attacks? Why do people, even some Christians, think they can do this without Christ? Why it is that we on our own are no match for the devil?
11. How can you beware of the devils ways—how he wants you to hate, disguising it with misplaced emotions, confusion, and hurt?
12. What is the armor that God gives that we can use to defend ourselves? How can and will you use it?