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## Spiritual Warfare Part VII

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**Christians can stand against Satan by being in Christ.**

**Ephesians 6:10-18; 1 Peter 5:8, 9; James 4:7**

God gives us all of the armor we need to defend ourselves (2 Cor. 10:4). So, we are to trust Him and use Him and His gifts and tools! We are to have them on and be holding them and using them, especially militant prayer! It is our responsibility to have the armor of God on in order to be ready for attack. If we are watchful and prepared, then we are ready for the attack of the devil, his demons, and those fiery darts. We may not all know how to attack with the Sword of the Spirit; that is why we have the rest of the armor. If we are not ready to properly use the Sword Of the Spirit, then we need to do as 2 Timothy 2:15 calls us to: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." When we have all of the gear of the armor then we are to, "With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints." (Eph 6:18)

**Here is how we can respond to Satan's Lies!**

Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 John 4:1; James 4:7

1. **We are to submit to God's will** (2 Cor. 11:3; 14-15). Satan's ways look good and are appealing, but God's way is the best way; Satan's way is death. It is better to be poor and honest than rich and dishonest! *Q: How can we do this?*
2. **We are to obey God's will** (2 Tim. 3:16). This is our *surefire* response to temptation, as our Lord proved to be so! *Q: How can we do this?*
3. **We are to focus on the cross** (John 14:6). We are to ignore human standards and remember that Jesus died for us; no sin is too big for Him to deal with and forgive. No matter what we have gone through, He is there for us, loving us. Satan wants us to diminish the cross by adding penance to it; Christ just wants us to repent! *Q: How can we do this?*
4. **We need to commit to God's purpose** (1 Tim. 4:1-3; Luke 8:11-12; John 11:25-26)...not to our will and dreams and aspirations, but totally surrender to Christ all our plans and desires no matter where it takes us. *Q: How can we do this?*

**Why the battle of will?** Real, spiritual warfare has more to do with the battle of the will than what we see in movies or from false teachers. Rarely will we see the fire and brimstone that we expect; rather, we see what we want to see. Our will is our prime motivator. Our needs motivate and our desires set the agenda. God's precepts are there, perhaps even known to us, but they go unheeded, unapplied, and/or unused.

God's desire is for us to be formed in Jesus Christ as LORD. Satan wants us to be centered on anything but that; he wants us to be disobedient and distorted to the things of God, and God wants us surrendered and dependant with faith upon Him. This is the battle; this is where the line is drawn, where what we choose will determine whether we serve Satan or Christ. There is no in-between, no middle ground, and no other choice for us to accept.

God wants you to overcome Satan; you do not have to believe in Satan's deceptions and lies. Not only can we resist Satan, but we can actually overcome him! Revelation 12:11 says "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death." Jesus has already overcome Satan by His triumph at Calvary, and that victory has been imparted unto us! If you have confessed your sins under the shed blood of Jesus Christ, you have been cleansed and are no longer under the control of Satan. This is called the *Testimony of Jesus*. It refers to the testimony that Jesus bore by His work and involvement. Christ's blood and sacrifice prevails when we accept it and use it as our main artillery. Our unwavering faith in Christ, by whom and what He has done, is too much for Satan to handle; he cannot stand against the goodness of Christ. Thus, when we are in Christ, we prevail; Satan has already lost and has been defeated (Rev. 1:2, 9; 19:10).

### **No weapon shall defeat us when we have the armor of God (Isa. 54:17).**

Our response to Satan's lies (Eph 2:8-9; 1 John 4:1; James 4:7) is this:

- "Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes." This means to stand up to the craftiness and the darkness of the devil.
- "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 means demonic activities, and direct evil manipulation (such as witchcraft), as well as demons and non-humans who come against us. It also means evil people who are anti-God, such as "Marilyn Manson".

### **God wants us to be ready to fight a "spiritual" fight.**

So, what is the armor of God? "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." Paul gives a description of *Roman Battle Gear* as an image of the weapons Christ gives us to use.

- **Belt of Truth:** "Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist," God's Word gives us our main gun—confidence that holds up the rest of our weapons. It protects our vital areas, as a roll cage protects a race car driver. Truth holds our lives together, and it defends against arrogance and ignorance.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14: 6).

- **Breastplate of Righteousness:** "with the breastplate of righteousness in place," This protects our hearts from immoral behavior and other areas that may cause death if we are wounded. Doing right will protect our hearts from evil. We can be protected by the righteous character of Christ imputed on us (Rom 4:6-11). Allow Christ to give you the power—His power to resist temptation, and then follow His character. How many times have you prayed before facing temptation? Most Christians = *none!!!*
- **Feet Fitted with Peace:** "and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace." Feet that are prepared with the Gospel of Peace are protected by taking a stand, which is faith in our beliefs, by His grace. This is our stability and steadfastness in battle.
- **Shield of Faith:** "In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one." Our faith in God will help protect us from the evil and the intimidation we face. The Roman shield was big and covered the soldier's body; it also interlocked with the shields of other soldiers for group protection, making the early Roman soldier invincible.
- **Helmet of Salvation:** "Take the helmet of salvation". It protects our lives from the devil, because it is one thing that we can NEVER lose. This is our confidence (Phil. 1:6) and His faithfulness that He gave us salvation that Satan cannot take away. It protects our minds from indifference and false beliefs, and misguided advice from friends and the media.
- **Sword of the Spirit:** "and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." It helps us attack those that tempt us and it will cut to the hearts of those who hear the Word of God. Jesus defeated Satan during His time of temptation by quoting the Word; so should we (Matt 4:1-11)!
- **Prayer:** "And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests." This is the most neglected, yet most important weapon we have! This is militant prayer, not just on our behalf, but for one another (Eph 1:15-23).

These weapons are more defensive weapons than offensive! Satan is quick and powerful. He is a lion seeking whom he may devour. You may not even know you are being attacked because "fiery darts" can be shot at you from quite a distance. You need to always have your spiritual guard up.

## Discussion Questions:

1. How have you seen Satan real and powerful?
2. Do you struggle with which direction in life to go?
3. If God asked you if you are resisting Him or resisting the devil, what would you say? Do we fight Him or do we glorify Him? How do we know?
4. How do these passages point us to honoring God and relating to people?
5. What does it mean to you to, *Draw near to God*? How does being humble before God help us resist the devil at the same time?
6. Why can't we serve both our desires and God's will? Why do so many Christians try with all of their might? What will this double mindedness give them?
7. When we draw near to God, the devil is pushed further away; if we draw near to the devil, then God is pushed further away. How has this been so in your life? What has been the pattern in your life and your closeness with God?
8. The signpost is clear where we are to go; the direction we choose is up to us. So what does the signpost say to you?
9. How can you submit to and surrender to God? What would this mean? What would it look like? How will you go about it?
10. What do you need to do to allow Christ to be your only Lord and direction? How can the fact that He will lift us up beyond our desires and plans to a much greater plan and purpose in life give you the confidence and passion to do it?
11. The devil does not have equal authority or power as the popular "Ying/Yang" philosophy states; rather, he has the power we give to Him, while God has absolute power. How does knowing this help you resist the devil and your desires?
12. What can you do to stop combating with God, stop fighting within ourselves and stop hostility with one another? So, what will you do?