

Spiritual Warfare

The Unseen Battle

Its October and as you walk through any department store you become aware how much our America culture is **fixated on spiritual phenomena**—such as ghosts, zombies, poltergeists and spirit animals and all sorts of mysterious beings of the unseen world.

In 1978 John Carpenter cowrote and produced and directed the first **Halloween Movie**, the American Slasher movie that brings Michael Myers to life. There have been 12 more sequels of this movie since 1978.

People are more interested in the sensationalism of sci-fi and the supernatural depicted in **movies and video games** than they are the biblical revelation of the spirit world.

People say, ***demons, the devil, spirits of darkness its just make believe right?*** That is exactly what Satan our adversary wants you to believe. JUST BECAUSE YOU DON'T BELIEVE IT DOESN'T MAKE IT UNREAL.

As a pastor and teachers of the word, we need to equip people with what the Bible teaches us about the **dark forces** and their operation in the world.

The Bible describes 3 heavens

- The **first heaven** – this physical heavens created by God (sun, moon, stars)
Ps 19:1 NIV The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
- The **third heaven** is the dwelling place of God. the angels and the saints who have died before us
- The **second heaven** – The **spiritual heavenlies**. This is where spiritual entities operate. This is a place of warfare.

Today I want to help us look at this **unseen realm where spiritual battles occur**.

A story in **2 Kings 6** gives us a picture of this battlefield in the heavenlies.

The **King of Aram** was moving against Israel. And he was so frustrated militarily because every move he made the armies of Israel was ready for it. The King of Aram believed that he has a traitor or a spy.

But his captains told him the problem is the **prophet Elisha**. When he prays, he is sees our battle plan and then reports it to the King of Israel. The King was furious and said, find that prophet and capture him. The report came back that Elisha the prophet is in Dothan!

2 Kings 6:14-17 NLT So one night the king of Aram sent a great army with many chariots and horses to surround the city. 15 When the servant of the man of God got up early the next morning and went

outside, there were troops, horses, and chariots everywhere. “Oh, sir, what will we do now?” the young man cried to Elisha. **16** “Don’t be afraid!” Elisha told him. “For there are more on our side than on theirs!” **17** Then Elisha prayed, “O Lord, **open his eyes** and **let him see!**” The Lord opened the young man’s eyes, and when he looked up, he saw that the hillside around Elisha was filled with horses and chariots of fire.

God had dispatched warring angels in the heavenlies to fight for Elisha and Israel. READ this story! God blinded the army and Elisha led them into Samaria and told the King of Israel to feed them, don’t kill them. Treat them like friends. Their eyes were opened and they were amazed that they were not treated like enemies and the Arameans stopped raiding Israel.

See the Enemy (The real enemy)

3 Things you need to know about Satan

1) The Devil is Real.

- a) **1 Peter 5:8 ESV Be sober-minded; watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.**
 - i) Be watchful... be alert... keep your spiritual eyes open.
- b) **Satan preys on our weakest parts of our flesh** and he does everything he can to keep us and our children from being fully committed to loving and serving God.
- c) Satan is your enemy! and his strategy can be seen in 3 words: **Deceive – Divide – Destroy**. Whether it’s a nation, a church, or a family.

2) His Goal is to Destroy You.

- a) **Peter says he is looking to devour!** Think about that word **devour!** *To swallow, or eat it up greedily.*
- b) Jesus said this: Satan is a thief and **John 10:10 NIV The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy...**
 - i) He wants to **destroy your testimony**, your **finances**, your family and your **future!**

3) He Disguises his Attack.

- a) He Deceives through falsehoods.

2 Corinthians 11:13,14 These people are false apostles. They are deceitful workers who disguise themselves as apostles of Christ. **14** But I am not surprised! Even **Satan disguises himself** as an angel of light.

b) People are not the source of our problem.

Eph 6:12 HCSV (Holman Christian Standard Version) For our **battle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world powers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens.**

You know in your knower that there is a deception happening in our nation that is beyond the contention among political groups.

People are not the source of your problem. They may be the conduit of your problem but they are not the source.

Recognize the real source of your opposition: its not **other people**. Its not **co-workers** or a **supervisor** or **people who don't like you**. Its not a political party or another religion... its not a competitor or a family member.

The pressure and oppression you feel is **not coming from flesh and blood enemies** its come from Satan and his demonic influence.

See the Battlefield

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 HCSV For though we live in the body, we do not wage war in an unspiritual way, **4** since the weapons of our warfare are not worldly, but are powerful through God for the demolition of **strongholds**. We demolish arguments **5** and every high-minded thing that is raised up against the knowledge of God, taking every thought captive to obey Christ.

1) **The battlefield for the Christian is the Mind.**

Satan know exactly what it takes to get our minds off of God and off of spiritual things and onto material things.

His objective is to rob us of the life God intends for us to have.

2) **Watch out for strongholds?**

a) A **stronghold is a dungeon of deception.**

i) People find themselves **Locked up** and **imprisoned by a Lie** or a **series of lies!**

ii) Jesus said, when Satan speaks he lies **John 8:44 HCSV "... When he tells a lie, he speaks from his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of liars."**

b) **Stronghold: Anything that exalts itself in our minds, "pretending" to be bigger or more powerful than our God.**

Satan hates God and because God love you... Satan hates you.

Have you that phrase God loves you and has a good plan for your life? Satan hates you and has a bad plan for your life.

- c) **Deceiving lies of the devil** (See the serpent in the garden)
- i) God is not really for you.
 - ii) You can be as wiser or wiser than God. You know what's best for you.
 - iii) There is nothing wrong with finding pleasure in the things God warns you about
 - iv) God is keeping happiness from you

The elephant is the largest land animal in the world and he can be controlled by little rope tied around his ankle.

The zoo keepers train the young elephants using deception. They chain them to a concrete post and the animal learns over time that when something is around their ankle they are powerless to break free.

They are **NOT bound by the rope** around their ankle, they are **bound by the beliefs** in their **minds**.

The power of a stronghold:

- Steals our focus.
- Causes us to feel controlled.
- Consumes our emotional energy.
- Distracts us from our purpose.
- Robs us of the joy-filled life God intended for us.

See God's Strategy

- 1) **Commit Yourself to God Daily.**

James 4:7 NIV Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Your authority over the devil is only as strong as your relationship with God.

- 2) **Close Every Open Door.**

Take every thought captive and make it obey Christ!

Put off Falsehood!

Ephesians 4:25-27 NIV Therefore each of you must **put off falsehood** and **speak truthfully** to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. **26 “In your anger do not sin”**: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, **27** and **do not give the devil a foothold**.

Like the elephants in a zoo, **some of us are tethered to a lie**... a falsehood.

Everytime somebody lets you down the **stake gets driven a little deeper** and the **rope gets cinched a little tighter** and **you get a little more angry**.

It doesn't do any good to get angry about day after day... you have to break free from the lies of the enemy.

You can't let the devil **get a hold of your foot** with his lies.

3) **Confront the Devil Through Prayer.**

Use the weapons of your faith! These are your spiritual weapons:

i) **The Name of Jesus.**

Luke 10:17-19 (NIV) The seventy-two returned with joy and said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us **in your name**.” He replied, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. **I have given you authority** to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.”

The Name of Jesus transcends all other authority.

(new verse)

Philippians 2:9,10 ESV Therefore God has highly exalted him (Jesus) and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, **10** so that at the name of Jesus **every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth**.

Note: the original Greek word translated here for heaven is the same word in **Ephesians 6:12** for the heavenly places where the spiritual forces of evil operate.

ii) **The Blood of Jesus.**

Revelation 12:11 (NIV) They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony...

The blood of Jesus is so powerful because it reminds the devil, the accuser that **we are no longer guilty!** We are no longer under the shame and control of our past sins!

The blood of Jesus breaks the chains of our condemnation!

You are not tethered to your past sin. He who the Son sets free is free indeed!

iii) The Word of Jesus.

- (1) John 8:31-32 (NIV) Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."
- (2) Know the truth about yourself and speak the truth to the lies of the devil.

Resources: Neil T Anderson (find a screenshot of these books)

Victory Over the Darkness

Bondage Breaker