

Introduction:

- *“For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.” (Ephesians 6:12, NLT)*
- Some people do not believe in evil spirits. They do not want to “deal” with a world they cannot see when the world we do see is hard enough to “deal” with. We have a tendency to act like a two-year-old child who closes its eyes and places a blanket over its head, really believing that no one can see them because they cannot see others. Just because we cannot see the spiritual realm does not mean it is not there.
- Spiritual warfare is not giving the devil more attention or focusing too much on his evil ways. Biblical warfare is making ourselves more attentive to what God is doing and has done for us.
- The purpose of understanding Spiritual Warfare is so that we can understand the battle, and move forward in victory, rather than lie in defeat. Our goal is to advance the Kingdom of God, take territory from the enemy and bring souls into the kingdom. If we understand how our enemy works, his traps and strategies are less likely to take us by surprise.
- With that in mind, I want to answer three questions this morning. What is spiritual warfare? How do you wage a spiritual war? How do you win a spiritual war?

I. What is Spiritual Warfare?**A. Definition -**

1. Let’s start by defining ‘warfare.’ Warfare is military operations between enemies : hostilities/war; an activity undertaken to weaken or destroy another. We call it a battle. Ie. *When my sister and I were younger, I would undertake strategic operations to secretly kidnap her dolls. She would engage in underhanded diplomacy with our parents resulting in the rescue of her dolls and the temporary house arrest I would find myself in.* IE. Thumb war.
 2. Spiritual warfare is the battle between good and evil taking place in the spiritual realm.
 3. Spiritual warfare comprises actions, by the believer, against the demonic realm to secure and maintain the victory over Satan, and his kingdom, that Jesus won on the cross.
 4. It is a spiritual battle because it is a battle for your soul and for your eternity. The stakes are high. You cannot take this life for granted. You can’t treat it haphazardly. A great price was paid for your victory. IE. *You can laugh at the illustration of my sister and I but you can’t laugh at people slipping into eternity without God.*
- B. It is a spiritual battle because there is a spiritual realm. You can’t see it but it is real! It is an unseen spiritual world filled with angels and demons. And there is a battle going on there. Heaven fights for your life, hell fights for your destruction. Choose this day which side you are going to be on. One side leads to life the other to death. This spiritual realm is real!**
1. IE. *On our property is a big Pokémon Go realm. You can’t see it but it is there. By our sign, on the office sidewalk, out front, and by our dove. There are creatures and treasures that are there that cause others to come onto our property to play a game.* You can’t see this realm but it is there. It is called augmented reality.
 2. Augmented reality. “an enhanced version of reality created by the use of technology to overlay digital information on an image of something being viewed through a device (such as a

smartphone or TV)“ IE. If you watch football you will know augmented reality as the line on the field marking the ball and the first down. People in the stands can't see it but on your device you can. IE. Games in which you put on a visor and see into another world.

a) They say this augmentation enhances your perception of reality.

b) The warfare that I speak of is not just augmented reality. It is the actual reality of the spirit world God wants us to be a part of. It is Gods Kingdom ruled by His Son Jesus.

3. IE. Spiritual reality: Joshua was telling me that over the last 25 years there have been 30 million documented NDE near death experiences in America and Europe.

C. Epic Spiritual Battles in the Bible for the souls of people.

1. War in Eden - Satan seeks to destroy creation. Seeks domination man. Adam & Eve and Satan. Gen 3

2. Elisha - sees into heavenliness/ his servant. 2 Kings 6:17-18.

3. Daniel - war in the heavenlies. Daniel 10:12-13, 20. Gabriel, Michael, Prince of Persia...followed by Prince of Greece.

4. Jesus in the wilderness - triumph on cross. Mt 4

5. Book of revelation - Rev 12:7, 17.

6. Satan/Lucifer Ez 28:1-18; 16; Is 14:1-19, 12. Lucifer thrown down.

D. The Bible clearly teaches this spiritual realm and the war that goes on there. There is a battle for your soul, your destiny and your life in Christ. Therefore we have to learn to fight this battle.

II. How Do You Wage A Spiritual War?

A. You don't fight it in the natural. You have to fight in the spirit. Having a relationship with the Holy Spirit best equips you for the fight.

1. Pauls words: *“For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.”* (Ephesians 6:12, NLT)

2. *“Your hand-to-hand combat is not with human beings, but with the highest principalities and authorities operating in rebellion under the heavenly realms. For they are a powerful class of demon-gods and evil spirits that hold this dark world in bondage.”* (Ephesians 6:12, TPT)

3. Fight/battle/combats - παλη -pale. This word means to wrestle. It is something that happens up close. What Paul is communicating is that in spiritual warfare there is a struggle that takes place. The reason is, our adversary does not want to give up or give in. He wants to win the fight.

4. *“We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do.”* (2 Corinthians 10:3, NLT) Paul views a war against arguments and reasoning.

B. Use the God supplied equipment for spiritual war. Eph 6:13-18 This is called get prepared. Ready.

1. *“Put on every piece of Gods armor.”* It makes a difference who makes your armor! If you want to win the battle make sure to put on what God supplies. If you do this, Paul says you will stand firm/still be standing when the dust settles and the fray is over.

2. Belt/Molle of TRUTH. Everything connects to this. Not just to hold your pants up. Jesus is Truth. Jn 14:6. everything you are equipped with is connected to Him.

3. Body armor of RIGHTEOUSNESS. Righteousness is something God gives you when you are born again. It is something you also grow to express through your life.
4. Boots of PEACE. This is what you are to walk in.
5. Activate the force field of FAITH. Extinguishes all the projectiles the devil can throw at you. I.e. Star Trek - *shields up Mr Spock. Scotty I need more power!*
6. Put on the helmet of Salvation. What you think about salvation is critical to your success as a Christian. Your enemy works with lies so you have to guard your mind from deception. You do that by knowing who you are in Christ! *"Take all the help you can get, every weapon God has issued, so that when it's all over but the shouting you'll still be on your feet. Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and salvation are more than words. Learn how to apply them. You'll need them throughout your life."* Eph 6:13-17 Message Bible
7. Take the mighty razor sharp SWORD of the Spirit which is the Word of God.
8. PRAY passionately in the Spirit. That means have an active prayer life, get baptized in the Spirit and pray in other tongues. Prayer gives you 'air' superiority.
9. Spiritual battles are won in the Spirit with spiritual equipment and spiritual weapons.
- C. You go on the offensive. Don't wait to prepare start now. Do not develop a defensive mindset or you will build a little fort, go into your little fort, fight from the fort and never take territory.
 1. 1 Sam 17:48 David ran out to meet Goliath. He did not waste any time. vs 51 he ran and took Goliath's sword and cut off his head. Wasn't waiting for him to get up or his friends to carry him off the field.
 2. Jesus went to the demon possessed man of Gerasenes. He was not threatened by the man's reputation. Jesus was on the offensive, taking territory, saving people.
 3. You never stop upgrading equipment.

III. How Do You Win A Spiritual War?

- A. Seize the battle field.
 1. The battle field is for the mind/what you think. This is where the devil seduces, tricks, deceives and starts disarming the Christian.
 2. *"But we understand these things, for we have the mind of Christ."* (1 Co 2:16). This will be an area of ongoing attack because hell does not want you to believe you have the mind of Christ...his perceptions, attitudes, and emotions.
 3. 2 Cor 10:5 Take captive every disobedient thought.
 4. Renew the mind to think as God thinks and see ourselves as God sees us. *"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."* (Romans 12:2, NLT)
- B. Pray without ceasing
 1. Paul - *"Never stop praying."* (1 Thessalonians 5:17, NLT) Eph 6:18 Pray all the time with all kinds of prayers.
 2. Jesus - *"One day Jesus told his disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up."* (Luke 18:1, NLT)

3. "... *The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.*" (James 5:16, NLT)
- C. Get your praise on! Ie. Sick in South Africa. Song: *The atmosphere is changing now.*
1. Ps 22:3 God lives in our praises.
 2. Ps 8:2 Praise silences our enemy.
 3. Ps 149 Praise binds the enemy.
 4. 2 Chron 20:22 Jehoshaphat put the singers and musicians in front of the army.
 5. David lived a life of praise. Wrote songs, had 24/7 worship in Israel.
- D. Become powerful in the Word.
1. "*All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us ... do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.*" (2 Timothy 3:16-17, NLT)
 2. We are renew our mind with the Word. Ro 12:2. Jn 6:63 The Word is Spirit and life. The word is alive Heb 4:12.
- E. Be strong in faith! 1 Tim 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith. Fight and faith used in the same sentence.
1. Ro 10:17 Faith comes from hearing the message and the message comes from the Word.
 2. Heb 11. The faith heroes got their name in the book because of their faith.
 3. Jesus repeated in the Gospels - "Your faith has made you whole...etc.
 4. Embrace faith and patience. "*Then you will not become spiritually dull and indifferent. Instead, you will follow the example of those who are going to inherit God's promises because of their faith and endurance.*" (Hebrews 6:12, NLT)
- F. Obedience - "*So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*" (James 4:7, NLT)
- G. Blood of Jesus - Rev 12:11 They overcame the beast by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.

Conclusion:

- If you are going to win a spiritual war you must be born again. Otherwise you are on the losing side.
- Put on all the equipment that God provides.
- Seize the battlefield!
- In regards to spiritual warfare. IS 54:17 *No weapon formed...* Christ has already won it for us. We just have to know what we have been given!