



Part 4: Taking Spiritual Warfare Seriously

Ephesians 6:10-20

*We are to stand firm against the devil's schemes
in God's authority and power.*

I. Waking Up to the Real Battle

Series on standing firm...told 4 times to stand firm...we are in a spiritual battle!

“One of the things that surprised me when I first read the New Testament seriously was that it talked so much about a Dark Power in the universe – a mighty evil spirit who was held to be the Power behind death, disease, and sin...Christianity thinks this Dark Power was created by God, and was good when he was created, and went wrong. Christianity agrees...this is a universe at war.” – C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

A casual reader of the New Testament will discover that a spiritual battle is simply assumed. It's a normal part of this life lived out in the clash of kingdoms (John 10:10; 2 Corinthians 2:10-11; 10:3-4; Ephesians 6:10-20; 1 Peter 5:8-9; James 4:7; 1 John 3:8; 5:19; Rev. 12:17).

Evil is personal and ultimately embodied in a rebel angel referred to as the “devil” or “Satan” (adversary, accuser). Jesus called Satan the “prince of this world” (John 12:31; 1 John 5:19).

“Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.” 1 Peter 5:8-9

Think one world: two realms (see <https://greenwoodcc.com/miscellaneous-resources/>).

II. Jesus' Authority and Power over Satan

The spiritual realm operates according to spiritual authority and power.

Jesus gives his authority and power in the Kingdom of God to his disciples to resist demonic attacks and fight for the Kingdom to come on earth as in Heaven (Matthew 28:18-21; Luke 9:1; 10:17-19; Acts 8:7; 16:18; 2 Corinthians 10:3-4; Ephesians 6:10-20; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8-9; 1 John 4:4; Rev. 12:11).

Lord Jesus Christ, I bring myself and (mention by name) under your authority and the power of your shed blood on the cross. I ask you and our Father to protect us by the power of your Name. I ask you to assign your holy angels to defend us and minister to us. I ask you to give me discernment to recognize Satan's schemes in our lives and to resist him in the power of the Holy Spirit. I ask you to deliver us from the evil one.

III. Satan's Schemes

A. General Schemes

1. Dismiss him as superstition or irrelevant.
2. Fighting against each other rather than him (Ephesians 6:12).
3. Slander God's character and Word (Genesis 3).
 - Distorts God's Word & perverts language (Genesis 3:1)
 - Emphasizes God's prohibitions over his generosity (Genesis 3:1)
 - Lies about God's Word (Genesis 3:4)
 - Slanders God's character (Genesis 3:5)

B. Satan's Specific Schemes Against Unbelievers.

- Deceive and blind them to the glory of Jesus Christ (John 8:42; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Acts 26:18; Colossians 3:17-19).
- Promote false religions and spiritualities (1 Corinthians 8:5-6; 10:20-21; 1 Timothy 6:20-21).
- Promote false philosophies and ideologies (Colossians 2:6-8).
- Influence them to believe lies and disobey God's righteous laws (John 8:44; Ephesians 2:2; Colossians 3:17-19).
- Keep them as slaves to sin (John 8:31-36).

- Keep them in the fear of death (Hebrews 2:14-15).

C. Satan's Specific Schemes against Christians.

1. Indirect Attacks

- False ministers (Matt. 7:15-23; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; 2 Timothy 3; Revelation 2:20-25)
- False gospels & doctrine (Gal. 1:6-9; Eph. 4:14; 1 Tim. 1:3; 4:1; 2 Timothy 2:25-26; 1 John 2:18-19). Note: A spirit of religion will distort the gospel usually in one of two ways: legalism or cheap grace
- False disciples (Matt. 7:15-23; 13:24-30)
- False morals (1 Corinthians 5:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; Revelation 2:14-16, 20-25)

2. Direct Attacks

- We are enticed toward a specific sin such as explosive anger, lust, unforgiveness, lying, pride, gossip, dissension, greed, worry (Satan is called "the tempter" 1 Thessalonians 3:5).
- A demon introduces a particular lie or thought into our minds, i.e. something untrue about a us or another person; doubt about God's goodness; hopelessness about a particular situation that tempts us to give up praying or trying, spiritual warfare isn't real, etc. (Jesus called Satan the "father of lies" John 8:44).
- A demon aggravates or deepens an existing emotional wound or "infirmity/weakness" (and their lies).

IV. Our Spiritual Armor (see "God's Armor" at

<https://greenwoodcc.com/miscellaneous-resources/>)

Paul's description of the "armor of God" may be summarized as living a holy life. Holiness removes the enemy's handles from our lives (John 14:30). Ground given must be reclaimed through confession/repentance.

V. Standing Firm

"Here is the challenge to the Church: Those who are awake and alert in Christ, endowed with discernment and wisdom, must recognize that the arch-enemy of Christ is staging a strategic move to deceive and destroy people. The role of the redeemed is to wake up, sound a

call to arms, and actively wage war against these schemes in the name and power of God. Our purpose is not to prevent the final manifestation of evil, as allowed by God. Our purpose is redemptive, to allow the Holy Spirit to wrench people free from the snares of Satan's deceptions." – Tom White, *The Believer's Guide to Spiritual Warfare*.

"You are living out your daily life in the context of war. The men and women who choose to equip themselves and become practiced in warfare prayer are the ones who enjoy the greatest freedom and breakthrough – 'the glorious freedom of the children of God' (Romans 8:21)." – John Eldredge, *Moving Mountains*

Discipleship Resources:

1. God's Armor (<https://greenwoodcc.com/miscellaneous-resources/>).
2. Biblical Worldview (<https://greenwoodcc.com/miscellaneous-resources/>).
3. "A Battle to Fight" by John Eldredge (ransomedheart.com).
4. *Moving Mountains* by John Eldredge.
5. *I Give You Authority* by Charles Kraft.

Discussion Questions:

1. After looking at the various scriptures in these notes, what is the clear testimony of Scripture concerning spiritual warfare? What are we taught as our responsibility as disciples of Jesus?
2. What has been your experience with spiritual warfare? Who, if any, were your teachers and mentors in this area?
3. What is your response to the testimony of M-A and Carrie Williams?
4. What is the next step Jesus may be calling you to take as his disciple?
5. Pray for one another to live in the authority and power of God to resist the devil's schemes.