

SPIRITUAL WARFARE SERIES

Midwest City Free Methodist Church

The Unseen War

I. A Guide to Spiritual Warfare

A. The Invisible Enemy

1. The devil is a real being - someone who disobeyed God - *Isaiah 14:12-15*
2. The devil is revealed by what he does - liar and murderer - *John 8:44*
3. The devil fell with other angels - *II Peter 2:4*
4. The devil/demons wait for judgment - *Jude 6*
* How many fallen angels? - *Luke 8:30/Revelation 12:3-4*

B. The Business of Evil

1. Oppressing humanity - *Acts 10:38*
2. Stealing, killing and destroying - *John 10:10*
3. Sowing injustice and wickedness - *Matthew 13:24-30*
4. Tempting the righteous - *Matthew 4:1-11*
5. Deceiving the nations to do evil - *Revelation 20:8*
6. Usurping the will of God - *Matthew 16:21-27*
7. Dethroning the Head of the Church - *II Corinthians 11:14*

C. Behind the Scenes

1. Evil spirits are opposed to the work of God - *Revelation 12:9*
 - a. God's work: salvation, healing, deliverance, sanctification
 - b. God's will: being more Christlike
2. Evil spirits attack humanity in various ways
 - a. Afflicting people with evil - *I Timothy 4:1-2*
 - b. Mental derangement - *Matthew 8:28-29*
 - c. Physical illnesses - *Mark 9:17-27*
3. Evil spirits gain access through sinful consent
 - a. Pride - not operating in humility - *I Peter 5:5-7*
 - b. Lust - not operating in love - *I Corinthians 13:4-7*
 - c. Greed - not operating in grace - *II Corinthians 9:6-9*
 - d. Unforgiveness - not operating in mercy - *Matthew 6:14-15*

II. Kingdom Security

A. Be strong in the Lord - *Ephesians 6:10-11*

1. Are you ready to move beyond your fear?
* *"Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ."* *Romans 8:37-39*
2. Are you ready to trust people again?
* *"Forgive each other as Christ forgave you."* *Ephesians 4:32*
3. Are you ready to follow God again?
* *"Well done my good and faithful servant."* *Matthew 25:21*

B. Know the Enemy - Spiritual Background - *Ephesians 6:12*

1. Rulers - make people captive to sin
2. Authorities - usurp God's authority
3. Powers of this dark world - promote evil
4. Spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realm - those who first sinned

C. Standing Firm in the Armor of God - *Ephesians 6:13-17*

D. Prayer - all occasions/all kinds/all saints - *Ephesians 6:18-22*

Kingdoms in Conflict

I. Two Kingdoms

A. The Kingdom of Darkness - *II Corinthians 4:4*

1. Satan has power to attack humanity - oppression
2. Satan has power to tempt humanity - impression
3. Satan has power to afflict (wounds) humanity - depression
4. Satan has power to control humanity - possession

B. The Kingdom of Light - *John 1:1-9*

1. Jesus Christ is Lord over all creation
2. Jesus Christ is Lord over life and death
3. Jesus Christ is Lord over angels and demons
4. Jesus Christ is Lord over the church
5. Jesus Christ is Lord over heaven, earth and hell

II. Two Kingdoms in Conflict

A. Power Encounters - *Luke 11:14-16*

1. Jesus drives out a demon that was mute - deaf and dumb
2. The man is delivered and set free - spoke
3. The crowd is amazed and questions the authority of Jesus

B. Power Evangelism - *Luke 11:17-22*

1. Jesus teaches about kingdom dynamics
 - a. Kingdoms are based on fidelity and obedience
 - b. Kingdoms divided will be ruined - *Satan is not divided
2. Jesus teaches about conquering evil
 - a. Satan thinks that his spoils of war are safe
 - b. God is stronger than Satan and takes away his victories

C. Power Discipleship - *Luke 11:23-36*

1. The mission of Jesus Christ - *Luke 4:18-19*
 - a. To preach the good news - forgiveness of sins
 - b. To proclaim freedom for prisoners - transformation
 - c. To recover sight for the blind - healing
 - d. To release the oppressed - deliverance
 - e. To proclaim the grace of God - blessings
2. Everyone must choose a side - neutral is not an option
 - a. When evil is defeated, it regroups and attacks again
 - b. We must seek the fullness of God's grace

D. Most Vulnerable Areas for Christians

1. Taking the Devil lightly - *Jude 8-10*
2. An unforgiving spirit - *II Corinthians 2:10-11*
3. Invoking Satan's name - oaths - *Matthew 5:33-37*
4. Outward legalism - *Hebrews 12:14*
5. Unequally yoked - *II Corinthians 6:14-15*
6. Worldly friendships - *James 4:4*
7. Undisciplined life - *I Corinthians 9:27*

Bringing Down Strongholds

I. The Battle Ground

A. Living in the World - *II Corinthians 10:1-4*

1. We live in the meekness and gentleness of Christ - humility
2. We live by the standards of the Kingdom of God - truth in love
3. We live in the world, but do not wage war as the world does - grace
4. We live to further the mission of Jesus Christ - demolish strongholds

B. Words - We Demolish Arguments and Pretensions - *II Corinthians 10:5a*

1. From the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks - *Luke 6:45*
2. When words are many, sin is not absent - *Proverbs 10:10*
3. Out of the same mouth come blessings and curses - *James 3:1-12*
4. The tongue plots destruction and deceit - *Psalms 52:2-4*

***A person reveals who they are by what the words they use and do not use.**

C. Thoughts - We Take Captive Every Thought - *II Corinthians 10:5b*

1. People do not have in mind the things of God - *Mark 8:33*
2. The mind of a sinful man is death - *Romans 8:6*
3. The evil conceits of the mind know no limits - *Psalms 73:7*
4. Unspiritual minds puff people up - *Colossians 2:18*

***A person lives by how and what they think.**

D. Actions - We Punish Every Act of Disobedience - *II Corinthians 10:6*

1. Wisdom is proved right by actions - *Matthew 11:19*
2. Each person should test their actions - *Galatians 6:4*
3. Even children are known by their actions - *Psalms 20:11*
4. The acts of the sinful nature are obvious - *Galatians 5:19*

***A person is judged by what they did or did not do.**

II. Bringing Down Strongholds

A. Going into Battle - Word and Spirit - *Ephesians 6:17*

Spiritual Virtues

1. Humility - *Philippians 2:3*
2. Love - *I Corinthians 13*
3. Faith - *Hebrews 11:1*
4. Hope - *Romans 12:12*
5. Peace - *James 3:18*

Spiritual Weapons

1. Prayer - *Ephesians 6:18*
2. Fasting - *Matthew 6:17-18*
3. Blessing - *Deuteronomy 11:26*
4. Worship - *Isaiah 61:1-4*
5. Confession - *James 5:15*

B. Facing the Enemy - *I Peter 5:5-11*

1. We resist the devil and evil including injustice, oppression and wickedness
2. We stand firm in the faith that God makes us righteous, holy and blameless
3. We proclaim the good news: salvation, deliverance, healing and sanctification

C. Winning the War - *Romans 6:11-14*

1. Coming out of darkness into God's light - Transformation
2. Becoming Christlike in word, thought and deed
 - a. Pride becoming humility
 - b. Greed becoming simplicity
 - c. Anger becoming contentment
 - d. Lust becoming peace
 - e. Gluttony becoming moderation
 - f. Envy becoming joy
 - g. Sloth becoming strength

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III. A Practical Guide to Bringing Down Strongholds

A. Preparations

1. Check the condition of your words, thoughts and actions
2. Confess your sins and weaknesses to God and ask Him to purify your heart
3. Humble yourself before God and seek His presence
4. Meditate on the Word of God and let the Spirit guide you into His truth
5. Believe that God will move in people's lives: transformations
6. Trust in the Lord Jesus with all of your heart, mind, soul and strength
7. Endure the difficulties that come with spiritual warfare: insults, persecutions, false accusations, suffering, oppression and temptation

B. Encounters

1. Listen to the words a person uses - **positive or negative?**
2. Watch how a person lives - **healthy or unhealthy?**
3. Look at the person's past behavior - **reconciliation or conflict?**
4. Demonstrate the virtues of Jesus Christ
 - a. Humility - consider them better than yourself
 - b. Love - always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres
 - c. Faith - believe in the power of God for them to change
 - d. Hope - see a preferred future with God
 - e. Peace - rest safe and secure in God's grace
5. Discern how to help the person as a servant of Jesus Christ
 - a. Prayer - asking God to help them out of their situation
 - b. Worship - inviting them to praise God
 - c. Confession - listening to the cry of their hearts
 - d. Fasting - interceding for them over a period of time
 - e. Blessing - speaking good things into their lives
 1. Word of Encouragement - affirming what God is doing in them
 2. Word of Faith - connecting them to the Word of God

C. Endurance

1. Remember that strongholds/bondages often blind people
2. Beware that strongholds/bondages often come from generational sins
3. Expose the sin in gentleness and meekness - power of forgiveness
4. Keep presenting them before the throne of mercy
5. Seek help from pastors, counselors and physicians - prolonged exposure is dangerous
6. Realize that God turns what was something evil into something good
7. Watch and pray

D. Decisions

1. Invite them to change - move out of darkness by confronting the strongholds
2. Invite them to grow - move closer to God by living in grace
3. Invite them to belong - move into the community of faith by trusting others
4. Invite them to serve - move with the Spirit of God by obedience

*If they do not respond to the invitations, love them anyway, but realize that they are in sin. Many people choose to live with the strongholds they know rather than finding freedom in the grace of God. *Matthew 18:15-17*

Holy Expectations

I. A Call to Holy Living

A. Conditions of the New Covenant - *Romans 6:1-7*

1. We enter the New Covenant by receiving God's grace - faith
2. We are changed into the likeness of Christ - renewal
3. We leave the life of sin behind us - deny self
4. We rely upon the power of the Holy Spirit - presence of God

B. Holy Living - *Romans 6:8-18*

1. We live everyday to the honor of God thru Christ
2. We count ourselves dead to sin but alive to Christ
3. We offer our lives to God as instruments of righteousness
4. We are under the covenant of grace
5. We have been set free from sin and are servants of God

C. Eternal Life - *Romans 6:19-23*

1. We offer ourselves to God in righteous - holiness
2. We live holy lives and reap eternal life - heaven

II. The Glorious Transformation

A. Leaving the Life of Sin Behind - *I Corinthians 6:8-10*

1. Only the righteous will inherit the Kingdom of God
2. Unrighteous include: fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, sensualists, homosexuals, thieves, greedy people, drunkards, slanderers or swindlers

B. Connecting to the Spirit of God - *I Corinthians 6:11-17*

1. Flesh is united in a sexual union - made into one flesh
2. Spirit is united in a spiritual union - made into one Spirit
3. Battle for souls starts with the connection to God and others
4. Grace empowers the connection to God and others
5. Holiness guards the connection to God and others
6. God brings together Spirit and body - **A New Temple**

C. Living in Grace and Truth - *John 1:14*

1. Remember you have an enemy
2. Remember he is trying to steal your freedom, kill your heart, destroy your life
3. Remember you are made in the image of God
4. Remember you are on a journey of faith
5. Remember you are setting captives free with the grace of God
6. Remember God has chosen you
7. Remember God's love will protect you and bring you to eternal life

*“You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them,
because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.”*

I John 4:4