



UNIT 6: Spiritual Growth and Development

LESSON 17: Spiritual Warfare

Lesson Objective: To understand the reality and nature of spiritual warfare, helping believers recognize that our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against spiritual forces, so we must be equipped and discerning.

Key Scripture: Ephesians 6:10–12, 2 Corinthians 10:3–5, James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8–9, Revelation 12:11

I. Introduction

Spiritual warfare is the ongoing battle between the kingdom of God and the forces of darkness. It is not a distant or abstract concept; it is a present reality that every believer faces. As children of God, we are called to recognize that our fight is not against people, systems, or circumstances, but against spiritual forces of evil that operate behind the scenes. The enemy's aim is to dismantle our faith, disrupt our divine purpose, and entangle us in fear, doubt, and defeat. These assaults come through spiritual attacks; subtle yet strategic efforts to weaken our resolve. To overcome, we must engage in spiritual warfare, standing firm in God's strength and truth to secure victory.

This battle is waged in the unseen realm, yet its effects are felt in our everyday lives; in our thoughts, our relationships, our choices, and even in the destiny God has prepared for us. Left unaware, believers may either underestimate the enemy's schemes or overestimate his power. But through Christ, we have been given authority, weapons, and the assurance of victory. Spiritual warfare is not about fighting for victory but fighting from the victory that Jesus has already secured on the cross.

When we understand the nature of this battle and equip ourselves with the armor of God, we can stand firm, resist the devil, and walk boldly in the freedom and power that belongs to us in Christ.

II. Misconceptions About Spiritual Warfare

1. It's only about casting out demons.

Many think spiritual warfare only involves exorcism or dramatic encounters with evil spirits. In reality, it also includes resisting _____, renewing the _____, standing firm in _____, and overcoming daily battles with sin.

2 Corinthians 10:5. *“Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God...”*

2. It only happens when something “big” is going on.

Some believe spiritual warfare is rare or only during crises. The truth is, spiritual warfare is _____ because the enemy is constantly seeking to deceive, distract, and destroy.

John 10:10. *“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy...”*

3. Christians should be afraid of spiritual warfare.

Fear is a major misconception. While the enemy is real, believers are not to fear because Jesus has already won the victory. We fight _____ a place of victory, not _____ victory.

Colossians 2:15. *“And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”*

Definitions

Ephesians 6:12. *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

Principalities:

- The highest-ranking entities in Satan’s army.
- National level, impacting laws and policies, often expressed through world leaders

Powers:

- Demonic spirits that derive their jurisdictional and delegated authority from principalities.
- Affect and infect structures, systems, and the five pillars of our society: marriage, family, government, education, and church

Rulers of the darkness of this world:

- Responsible for blinding the minds of people to truth
- Keep people in darkness
- Facilitate sin, wickedness, and iniquity
- Affect people’s thoughts, feelings, and perceptions through mass media, music, movies, fashion, sports, philosophies, and religious ideologies

Spiritual wickedness in high places

- Types of spirits found in high and lofty places that are responsible for anything that is perverted, depraved, debased, warped, or corrupt.
- Works from high, lofty places, including the mind.
- Influences, seduces, and falsely inspires actions, perceptions, motivations, fantasies, imaginations, and appetites through the overt or covert attack and influences of the mind. (Luke 11:16-26, Romans 8:14-23)

- Frustrate and prohibit the manifestation and answers to our prayers. (Daniel 10:10-13)

4. All problems are caused by demons.

Not every struggle, illness, or challenge is demonic. Sometimes issues are due to natural consequences, poor choices, or physical causes. _____ is needed.

James 1:14. *“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.”*

5. Spiritual warfare is fought in our own strength.

Some think it depends on how strong, loud, or determined they are. In reality, victory comes through God’s power, not _____ effort.

Zechariah 4:6. *“Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.”*

6. Only pastors or “special” Believers are called to engage in spiritual warfare.

Every believer is called to put on the _____ of God and resist the enemy. Spiritual warfare is part of the _____ Christian life.

Ephesians 6:11. *“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”*

III. Key Scriptures

Ephesians 6:10–12. *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. 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.*

Key Points in Ephesians 6:10–12

1. Be Strong in the Lord (v.10)
 - Our strength is not found in ourselves but in the Lord and the _____ of His might.
 - This reminds us to rely fully on God’s strength, not human effort or self-reliance.
2. Put on the Whole Armor of God (v.11)
 - God provides spiritual armor for protection and _____.
 - The command is to “put on” the whole armor, meaning we cannot choose pieces selectively, we need full covering.
3. Stand Against the Schemes of the Devil (v.11)
 - The enemy operates through deception, strategies, and subtle attacks.
 - Spiritual warfare is often about resisting lies and temptations rather than _____ confrontation.
4. Our Struggle Is Not Against Flesh and Blood (v.12)
 - People are not our real enemy; the battle is spiritual, not _____.
 - This shifts our perspective from fighting humans to discerning spiritual influences behind opposition and conflict.

5. The Real Enemy: Spiritual Forces of Evil (v.12)

- Apostle Paul lists the layers of spiritual opposition: principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, and spiritual wickedness in high places.
- This shows the organized nature of the kingdom of _____ and the need for spiritual readiness.

We are called to rely on God's strength, wear His full armor, discern the enemy's schemes, and remember that the real battle is spiritual, not against people.

2 Corinthians 10:3–5. *For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*

Key Points in 2 Corinthians 10:3–5

1. We Walk in the Flesh but Do Not War According to the Flesh (v.3)

- Though we live in human bodies and interact in a natural world, our battles are not fought with _____ methods.
- Spiritual warfare requires spiritual weapons, not worldly tactics like anger, manipulation, or revenge.

2. The Weapons of Our Warfare Are Not Carnal (v.4)

- Believers have God-given _____ such as prayer, the Word of God, faith, the name of Jesus, and the power of the Holy Spirit.
- These weapons are “mighty through God,” meaning their effectiveness comes from Him, not from us.

3. Pulling Down Strongholds (v.4)

- Strongholds are deeply entrenched _____ of thinking, lies, or deceptions that the enemy uses to control lives.
- Through God's power, these strongholds can be demolished so truth can take root.

4. Casting Down Imaginations and Every High Thing (v.5)

- This refers to rejecting arguments, philosophies, or mindsets that exalt themselves against God's _____.
- The battle is largely in the _____, where false reasoning must be confronted with Scripture and truth.

5. Bringing Every Thought Into Captivity to Obey Christ (v.5)

- Believers are called to exercise _____ over their thought life.
- Every thought must be tested: Does it align with Christ and His Word, or does it oppose Him? If not, it must be rejected and replaced with truth.

This passage emphasizes that spiritual warfare is fought with God's mighty weapons to destroy lies, mental strongholds, and anything that challenges God's truth, leading us to a renewed mind that obeys Christ.

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

Key Points in James 4:7

1. Submission to God Comes First

- Victory in spiritual warfare begins with _____ to God's authority.
- Submission means _____ with His will, _____ His Word, and _____ on His strength.
- Without submission, resistance is _____.

2. Resist the Devil

- Resistance is an active stance, not passive. It means standing firm, rejecting temptation, and refusing to give the enemy a foothold.
- Resistance is not about fighting in our own strength, but standing in the power and authority of Christ.

3. The Promise: The Devil Will Flee

- When believers are _____ to God and _____ the enemy, the devil must retreat.
- This shows that Satan is not all-powerful; he is defeated under the authority of Christ.

James 4:7 teaches that true spiritual power comes from submission to God, followed by resisting the enemy. The guaranteed outcome is that the enemy will flee, because he cannot stand against a believer under God's authority.

1 Peter 5:8–9. *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.*

Key Points in 1 Peter 5:8–9

1. Be Sober and Vigilant (v.8)

- Sober means to be clear-minded and self-controlled.
- Vigilant*means to stay alert and watchful, not spiritually careless or distracted.
- Spiritual warfare requires awareness because Satan often attacks subtly through temptations, distractions, or discouragement.

2. The Reality of the Adversary (v.8)

- The devil is described as a roaring lion, symbolizing intimidation, fear, and destruction.
- His goal is to _____, not just harm, he seeks to completely destroy faith, testimony, and lives.

3. Resist Him Steadfast in the Faith (v.9)
 - Resistance is possible when _____ in unwavering faith in Christ.
 - To resist steadfastly means to hold firm, refusing to compromise or give in to lies, fear, or temptation.
4. You Are Not Alone (v.9)
 - Believers worldwide face the _____ spiritual struggles.
 - This truth encourages perseverance, reminding us we are part of a larger body standing together against the enemy.

Peter calls believers to stay alert, recognize the enemy's tactics, and resist with firm faith, knowing we are not alone in the battle.

Revelation 12:11. *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

Key Points in Revelation 12:11

1. Victory Through the Blood of the Lamb
 - The foundation of victory over Satan is Christ's _____ work on the cross.
 - The blood of Jesus cleanses, redeems, and secures authority over the enemy (Colossians 2:15).
 - Our confidence is not in ourselves but in what Christ has already done.
2. The Power of the Word of Our Testimony
 - Testimony here refers to both declaring the truth of the gospel and personal witness of God's work in our lives.
 - Speaking _____ counters the lies of the enemy, and sharing what God has done strengthens faith in ourselves and others.
3. Loving Not Their Lives Unto Death
 - True victory requires _____; placing Christ above personal comfort, safety, or even life itself.
 - This shows that overcoming the enemy involves total _____ to God, even in the face of persecution or sacrifice.

Revelation 12:11 teaches that believers overcome Satan by relying on Christ's sacrifice, boldly declaring God's truth, and living with a surrendered heart that values eternal life over earthly life.

Summary List of Our Weapons of Spiritual Warfare

1. The Strength of the Lord
 - Scripture: Ephesians 6:10–12
 - We rely on God's strength, not our own, to stand against spiritual forces.

2. The Armor of God
 - Scripture: Ephesians 6:11–18
 - Truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, the Word of God, and prayer are spiritual protection and weapons.
3. Mighty Spiritual Weapons
 - Scripture 2 Corinthians 10:3–5
 - Prayer, the Word, and God’s power pull down strongholds, demolish lies, and bring every thought into obedience to Christ.
4. Submission to God & Resistance
 - Scripture: James 4:7
 - Victory begins with surrender to God; when we resist the enemy in His authority, the devil must flee.
5. Steadfast Faith
 - Scripture: 1 Peter 5:8–9
 - Staying alert and standing firm in faith enables us to resist the enemy’s schemes, knowing we are not alone.
6. The Blood of the Lamb
 - Scripture: Revelation 12:11
 - The finished work of Christ secures our victory over Satan.
7. The Word of Our Testimony
 - Scripture: Revelation 12:11
 - Declaring God’s truth and testifying of His work in our lives silences the enemy and strengthens faith.
8. A Life Fully Surrendered
 - Scripture: Revelation 12:11
 - Overcoming requires devotion to Christ above comfort, fear, or even life itself.

IV. Examples of Spiritual Warfare in the Bible

- **Jesus’ Temptation (Matthew 4:1–11).** Jesus confronted Satan in the wilderness using the Word of God. This shows the power of Scripture in spiritual battles.
- **Daniel’s Prayer (Daniel 10:12–13).** Daniel prayed and fasted for 21 days, and the angel revealed that spiritual forces resisted the answer. This shows how persistence in prayer impacts unseen realms.
- **Job’s Trials (Job 1–2).** Satan attacked Job’s family, health, and possessions, but Job’s faith remained in God. His story highlights endurance and trust in God during warfare.
- **Paul and the Spirit of Divination (Acts 16:16–18).** Paul discerned and rebuked a spirit operating in a slave girl, freeing her from bondage. This reveals the authority believers have in Christ.

V. Cases Where Spiritual Warfare is Necessary

- **When Facing Temptation:** Like Jesus in the wilderness, we resist by _____ on God's Word.
- **To Overcome Strongholds:** Addictions, generational patterns, or sinful habits require spiritual _____ like prayer and fasting.
- **When Experiencing Delays or Opposition in Prayer:** Like Daniel, _____ in prayer is needed when answers seem hindered.
- **When Attacked by Fear, Anxiety, or Depression:** These are spiritual battles against peace and joy; God's promises become weapons.
- **When Advancing the Kingdom of God:** Any time we share the gospel, serve others, or walk in obedience, the enemy may _____ us.

Personal Reflection

- Do I recognize that my battle is not against people but against spiritual forces?
- What areas of my life show signs of spiritual warfare (temptation, discouragement, oppression, delays in prayer)?
- Am I consistently using the Word of God, prayer, and fasting as weapons?
- Do I wear the "full armor of God" daily (truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, the Word, and prayer)?
- How can I grow in discernment to recognize spiritual attacks early and respond with spiritual authority?

Practical Applications

1. **Put on the Armor Daily** (Ephesians 6:13–18).
2. **Memorize and Declare Scripture** when facing temptation or attacks.
3. **Pray Persistently and Fervently**, even when answers are delayed.
4. **Fast regularly** for breakthrough and clarity.
5. **Stay in Community** for accountability and support, it will strengthen you for battle.

Final Thought

Spiritual warfare is real, but so is our victory in Christ. The enemy's goal is to distract, deceive, and destroy, but God has already equipped us with everything we need to stand firm. Our strength is not in ourselves but in the Lord, who has already triumphed over the powers of darkness. As we put on the full armor of God, resist the devil, and walk in faith, we fight not *for* victory but *from* the victory secured at the cross. Let us live alert, surrendered, and steadfast, knowing that in Christ, we are more than conquerors.