

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

The Unseen Battle

In our Baptismal Covenant we have three renunciations:

- Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?
- Do you renounce the evil powers of this world, which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?
- Do you renounce your own sinful desires that draw you from the love of God?

Who is Satan?

- He was one of three archangels mentioned in scripture. (Michael, Gabriel, Lucifer)
- He was anointed, beautiful, powerful and of high rank in the kingdom of God. (Ez 28:13ff)
- He fell into pride. (Isaiah 14:12-14)
- He led one third of the angels in rebellion against God. (Rev 12:4)
- He was named “Satan” (adversary).
- He became our ruler through Adam’s temptation and fall. (John 16:11)

Who is Jesus?

- Jesus is the eternal Son of God.
- Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil (***I John 3:8***).
- Jesus came to set us free from the dominion of darkness. (Col 1:13)
- Jesus came to reverse all the damage done by our fall and rebellion.
- Jesus paid the price for our sins. (2 Cor 5:17-21)
- Jesus defeated Satan on Calvary. (Col 2:15)
- Jesus and His Church now are invading Satan’s territory. (John 14:12; Matt 28:18-20)

What is the Prize?

- We are the prize. (Heb 12:2)
- The battle is over the control of each heart and soul. (Romans 10:9-10)
- Until we accept Christ we are under Satan’s lordship. (Eph 2:1-8)
- Satan wants us in the dark, deceived and serving sin (him). (2 Cor 4:4)
- The Heart of the Battle (Matthew 15: 1-20)

The Heart of the Battle

- The battle is over what we believe about Jesus.
- The war is over the preaching of the word of God.
- God's word is key – it is powerful and brings good news. (Heb 4:12)
- Satan wants to diminish the word of God and neutralize it completely. (Parable of the Sower) (Luke 8)
- Satan comes immediately to steal the word away (parable of the Sower).
- Satan always casts doubt on God's word (hath God said?). (Genesis 3:1ff; Luke 4:1-13)

The Darkness Exposed

- The public ministry of Jesus exposed the works of Satan. (Mark 1:21-28)
- Healing the sick, casting out demons, forgiving sins, raising the dead, calming storms feeding multitudes etc., exposed the darkness. (Acts 10:38)
- Exposing the darkness demonstrated the Kingdom of God. (Luke 10:9)
- Exposing the darkness demonstrated victory over Satan. (Luke 10:18-20)
- Jesus destroyed Satan's power on the cross (*Colossians 2*).
- We, the church, are to continue to do the same through the Power of the Holy Spirit.

Our Weapons for this Warfare

1. WORD OF GOD - is called the sword of the Spirit. God's word contains His revealed promises and is given to the church to minister in His name. There are general promises for all people at all times (salvation, forgiveness of sins and eternal life are in this category). And then there are promises that we access through prayer, fasting, faith, unity, discernment, and interaction with others (healing, direction, wisdom, guidance, and knowledge fall into this category). The more we know of God's word, the more powerful we become in avoiding sin, pleasing God, and defeating Satan.

2. PRAYER- Jesus is at the right hand of God and ever lives to make intercession for us. Through his death we have access to the Father and can enter His presence as sons and daughters. Here we can ask the Lord for all things pertaining to this life. Prayer involves us in conversation with our creator and from His throne comes our every need.

3. NAME OF JESUS - We have been given the privilege of ministering in His name and using His name as the source of our power and authority. Jesus commanded us to go in His name and minister in His name for His glory. This is not magic. The use of the name of Jesus is only effective with believers who know Him and serve Him. This is significant. Remember in *Acts 19*

that the sons of Sceva were trying to cast out a demon by using the name of Jesus. The sons of Sceva had no power of authority since they were only mimicking others. The demon knew about Paul and feared but turned on these poor sons and beat them up soundly.

4. FAITH - God loves faith. In fact, without faith, we cannot please Him. Jesus modeled a life of faith and confidence in God and taught us to live by faith. Faith in God can move mountains and raise the dead. Faith comes by hearing God's word. It is developed through our trials (James) and experiences of seeing God move in power and in faithfulness. Faith is more like a muscle. Muscles grow strong through resistance. Our faith can and will be tested.

5. UNITY - Jesus taught that when two or three gather in His name and agree, things happen in heaven. Unity brings forth a boldness and power. Unity is critical in the battle. (Matt 18:20)

6. SACRAMENTS - The blood of Jesus, holy water, holy oil, confession, and baptism are all-powerful weapons in the spirit realm.

7. WORSHIP - Satan hates it when God is glorified, praised, and worshiped, especially when we do it under harsh circumstances (Paul and Silas in prison sang praises to God). When we gather and worship the Lord, He comes to inhabit our praises. The Spirit comes to anoint us, and this drives out the works of darkness.

8. GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT - Jesus said he would not leave us comfortless, but he would send the Holy Spirit and give us gifts. We have received wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, discerning of spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues, miracles, and prophecy. We can hear from God, get insight from God, power from God, discernment from God and receive miracles from God, all through the Holy Spirit.

9. TURNING THE OTHER CHEEK - When we return blessing for curse, pray for our enemies, go the extra mile, and demonstrate love instead of hatred, much damage is done to the works of darkness. Our kingdom response to adversity, persecution, injustice, cruelty, and the like is a powerful weapon that demonstrates the works of righteousness (*Romans 12:17-21*) and heaps burning coals upon the heads of your enemies.

10. ARMOR OF GOD – *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that*

you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which, you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— Ephesians 6:11-18

Satan Operates Through

- Temptation - using our fallen nature against us
- Doubt - hath God said?
- Fear - of failure, man, persecution, loss, losing face, etc.
- Accusation - accuser of the saints
- Harassment - sheep without a shepherd
- Discouragement - why bother, it does not make any difference
- Condemnation - you are unworthy, you are a sinner, shame from past failures