

What is Spiritual Warfare?

Matthew 6:9-13; Ephesians 6:10-13

INTRODUCTION:

Let me begin this morning with a quote that will begin to invoke our thinking on the subject of Spiritual Warfare.

C.S. Lewis

There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight.

For many in our society the idea of the dark side seems intriguing and creates a lot of internal curiosity. We see so much representation of this in movies and on our TVs. For others the idea of a dark side makes one tremble at the thought, and sets one on edge.

When it comes to Spiritual Warfare or addressing the reality of Satan and His Fallen angels, many Christians are much the same as society either doing two things: 1.) They become so enamored with the subject that they are looking for Satan under every rock and leaf and blame all evil on him. Or 2.) They give no credence whatsoever to the reality of Satan, and therefore, fall prey to the power of darkness.

As we continue our discussion on the model prayer. Jesus taught us not to neglect praying for safety from evil and not to be lead into temptation. How much of our prayers need to be addressing the dark powers that surround.

TEXT:

Matthew 6:9-13

“Therefore, you should pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,
Your name be honored as holy.
Your kingdom come.

Your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
**And do not bring us into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.**

[For Yours is the kingdom and the power
and the glory forever. Amen.]

Ephesians 6:10-13

Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and by His vast strength. Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the tactics of the Devil. **For our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world powers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens.** This is why you must take up the full armor of God

I. The Reality of Spiritual Warfare

Thomas Kinkade

You have to expect spiritual warfare whenever you stand up for righteousness or call attention to basic values. It's just a matter of light battling the darkness. But the light wins every time. You can't throw enough darkness on light to put it out.

C.S. Lewis

“There is but one good; that is God. Everything else is good when it looks to Him and bad when it turns from Him.”

II. Recognize the Ruler and true Enemy of Spiritual Warfare

1 Peter 5:5-9

God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your care on Him, because He cares about you.

Be serious! Be alert! Your adversary the Devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour. Resist him and be firm in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world.

Ignatius of Loyola

After you have made a decision that is pleasing to God, the Devil may try to make you have second thoughts. Intensify your prayer time, meditation, and good deeds. For if Satan's temptations merely cause you to increase your efforts to grow in holiness, he'll have an incentive to leave you alone.

IV. The Response to Spiritual Warfare

A. Paul teaches us to be strong in the Lord; not your own strength.

Ephesians 6:10

Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and by His vast strength.

B. Resist Satan, but how?

1. Keep our eyes on Christ

Hebrews 12:1-2

Let us run with endurance the race that lies before us, keeping our eyes on Jesus, the source and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that lay before Him endured a cross and despised the shame and has sat down at the right hand of God's throne.

2. Keep truth alive in our hearts and minds

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

For though we live in the body, we do not wage war in an unspiritual way, since the weapons of our warfare are not worldly, but are powerful through God for the demolition of strongholds. We demolish arguments and every high-minded thing that is raised up against the knowledge of God, taking every thought captive to obey Christ.

3. Keep alive the experience of Christian living.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-22

Rejoice always!

Pray constantly.

Give thanks in everything,

for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Don't stifle the Spirit.

Don't despise prophecies,

but test all things.

Hold on to what is good.

Stay away from every kind of evil.

4. Submit to the authority of God

James 4:7-8

Submit yourselves then to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Come near to God and He will come near to you.

Henry Blackaby

When you meet opposition to your faith, your first reaction may be anger toward your antagonist. This may divert your attention from the deeper, spiritual dimensions of your conflict. Your adversary may be hopelessly in bondage to sin. Rather than retaliating, you should immediately and earnestly intercede for that person. Your opponent's hostility is your invitation to become involved in God's redemptive work to free him or her from spiritual bondage. Be alert to the spiritual warfare around you.

CONCLUSION:

Jesus includes the recognition of spiritual warfare in the model prayer because we should always be about praying for protection for ourselves and those around us from the enemy.

Jacob Peterson

The #1 key to spiritual warfare is prayer.

To close with the **Apostle Paul:**

Ephesians 6:18-20

Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request, and stay alert in this with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints. Pray also for me, that the message may be given to me when I open my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel. For this I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I might be bold enough in Him to speak as I should.