

Understanding Spiritual Warfare - Victory in Christ

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[0 : 00] It should be an interesting topic, spiritual warfare, something that we're all part of. And really, there's so many defeated Christians these days that lack assurance of salvation.

And I know I touched on it Sunday morning with the message about how we can have victory in Christ. So you can watch that if you haven't already. But tonight we've got the notes there in your hands and online for those that want to look them up.

There's just a few pages of notes that you can follow along with the lesson. So take a shot of the QR code or go to the URL there. So spiritual warfare, it's a really big thing.

It's something that there's a lot of confusion about out there. So we want to make sure we're looking at what the sound doctrine, the sound Bible teaching is about the subject. And one of the primary verses you go to when you look at the spiritual war that we're involved in is Ephesians 6.11.

So it's about the armour of God, the whole armour of God. And it reads there, There's all these layers, if you like, hierarchy of various entities, the devil himself, that we're wrestling against them.

[1 : 29] And this is the enemy that we face. So there's this kind of cosmic conflict that's going on. And it's not against flesh and blood, but against these spiritual forces of wickedness in high places.

And led by Satan, the adversary, our enemy, the abuser, the slanderer, once called Lucifer, the anointed cherub. And this is spiritual warfare.

It's an unrelenting struggle that every Christian faces against the world, the flesh and the devil. And it's not some theatrical spectacle. In some circles, it's all about some performance, some show, some ritual, demon chasing.

It's not this dramatic power struggle between Christians and demons, really. Spiritually, scripturally, it's really that daily walk that we are called to, to resist sin and submit to God's word.

It's that disciplined walk of the believer. And that's really the more biblical emphasis, that it's that walk that we have with God. It's that walk of faith.

[2 : 33] And it's fought with spiritual weapons like prayer, obeying God's word, putting it into action. Think of scriptures like this one, which tell us that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God.

It's the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God. And bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

It's that putting the scripture into action, into practice, to obey the word of God. And this warfare that we're part of, it's been right through the book, right through from Genesis 3, where we see the serpent's deception of Eve and Adam, and then the final defeat of Satan in Revelation 20, where he's cast into the lake of fire.

And the Bible frames all of history in this scheme of this battle, this warfare that's going on, as a battle between God's kingdom and Satan's schemes.

And the truth is we fight not for victory, but from victory. Christ has triumphed through his cross. He's disarmed principalities and powers.

[3 : 49] It says that he has come, that he might destroy the works of the devil. And really he has. He's triumphed over Satan and his hordes at the cross.

And our calling then as believers, standing in that victory, that we can have that firm stand in that triumph that we know in Christ. That we've got the sufficiency of the scriptures as well.

And we can reject the unbiblical excesses of false teachings and live in that holiness and devotion to our Lord, God helping us. So let's have a look then at the biblical reality of spiritual warfare.

What does the Bible tell us about this biblical warfare, this spiritual warfare? And again, as I say, there's so many false teachings out there about spiritual warfare. I've got various books and materials that I've gathered over the years, but mostly I reject the most of them because they're mostly from some charismatic or Pentecostal kind of way of thinking, which I see that as really

tainted and false in a large degree.

And so rather than that, I want to really see what the scriptures actually tell us about this truth. And of course, we're not going to go deeply into Satan. We've already had a lecture on Satanology, on the person and work of Satan and of demons and angels and such.

[5 : 12] So we're not going to unpack that so much, but more about the conflict that we have. And we know of Satan, he's a created being. He's a fallen angel who rebelled against God.

And it tells of him, for example, in Isaiah 14, it tells of Satan, So Satan rebelled against God, but we know he is destined for ultimate defeat.

And when you think about Satan, he's neither omnipotent, so he's not all-powerful like God. He's not omniscient, all-knowing. We know that he's not omnipresent, everywhere present.

He is limited. He's not equal to God. And he operates really under the supervision of God. That God has ultimate control. We see in Job 1.12 where Satan had to go asking permission, how he would deal with Job, in effect.

And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power, only upon himself put not forth by hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord. And then we know later on, it says Job 2.6, God allowed Satan to touch him, as in physically harm him.

[6 : 49] But we know that it was all under God's superintendence. Because God ultimately has charge over Satan. And we know of Satan, what's he called?

We see various features of him. We know he's a deceiver. It says there, our Lord says of Satan, he is a liar and the father of it. He's the father of lies.

And then we see in Matthew 4, he came to the Lord and he's called the tempter. He came to him, turn these stones into bread. And the Lord says, thou shalt not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

And then we see he's come also as the accuser of our brethren. He wants to accuse us. And that's his nature. And Satan, he's got this hierarchy of fallen angels, principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, as we read.

And look at his tactics. They're subtle. He's cunning and sly. He lies about God's character, as he did in the garden. And he tempts us to exploit our weaknesses.

[7 : 55] He accuses us to foster guilt and despair. And he hinders too. We see of Paul. He tells how Satan hindered us.

They wanted to go somewhere, but it says that Satan hindered us. So there was that awareness that Satan was hindering something that the people of God wanted to do in that case there.

And we know of Satan, though, his power is limited. There's a limitation on him. He cannot possess believers for one thing, because we are sealed by the Holy Spirit.

This is a false teaching that's out there. You can see some of these popular faith, healing, health, wealth, prosperity. It's false gospel, Pentecostal charismatic teachers and preachers.

And there's some really weird stuff out there. I've seen some of it. You might have seen some of it too on YouTube. Apostle Catherine Crick and all kinds of Kenneth Copeland and Benny Hinn and Kenneth Hagen.

[8 : 56] All these popular ones. And they're really into the spectacle of supposedly delivering people, delivering Christians for one.

And the Bible yet clearly tells us that we've got the Holy Spirit. Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. And it says there that greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.

So there's no way that a Bible-believing Christian, a saved man or woman, is possessed by the devil. So there's no way that is possible because we're possessed by the Spirit of God.

The Holy Spirit lives in us and we're his temple. We're going to unpack a little of some of those false ideas that are common out there. But that really just sets the scene on that.

So we cannot be possessed by demons. We're sealed by the Holy Spirit. And yet of the unsaved, we know that they are described as being in the kingdom of Satan.

[10 : 01] They're bound by Satan, blinded. They're under his dominion. They're in a way under his control. And they're enslaved by the world system that is controlled by Satan.

Now that's not to say they're all demon-possessed either. But there's that sense where they're under the control, the dominion, the domain of the enemy. It reads there about this one, he's the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

So you could think of that as the unsaved, that the enemy's working, blinding them, deceiving them. Really we're focusing more about how does the devil interact with us or how we deal with the devil as believers.

And you could say that this kind of war that we're waging, it's multi-dimensional, three-dimensional. There's three fronts here, as we say. There's the flesh, the world and the devil himself.

So the flesh is one of those areas. And it tells of us that we have this flesh to fight. And for the saved, we see that we still have the battle within us too.

[11:10] It talks about the flesh lusteth against the spirit. So there's this lusting, this desire, these desires are contrary, right? The fleshly desires are contrary to the spirit's desires.

So we have this battle going on on the inside of every one of us of the flesh versus the spirit. And it tells us further in Romans 7, Paul himself, the apostle, he writes, In other words, what I want to do, I don't do.

And what I ought not to do, what I hate, that I do. He knows he should do God's will and go God's way. But there's that battle going on that he's inclined to go the other way.

He's got this striving, this struggle that he's talking about there. Evil is present with me. And there's this war going on in the law of my mind. There's battle that's raging in Romans 7.

There's more you could unpack in that chapter. But essentially it's saying there's this fight going on, this boxing match in the heart of men. And it's the flesh versus the spirit.

[12:28] So every temptation to anger, to lust or pride, it's another one of those battles going on. You can see the old man, the new man, the flesh, the spirit.

It's in all of us, this flesh it's called. And we've got to keep crucifying the flesh it talks about. And then we see the flesh, then we see the world, Satan's ungodly system, the world, the materialism, the ideologies, the immorality, the pridefulness of this world.

And we know that's another battle front, if you like. And 1 John 2 talks about love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loved the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof. But he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

So this is another front of this battle, is the world. The world's constantly barraging us, bombarding us with this messaging, and wanting us to conform to its ways.

[13:37] And then we see, thirdly, the devil himself. The devil himself is that one that we've got this opponent, this adversary. And Satan, the word means adversary.

And Satan and his forces, they prowl as this roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. It tells us there, Peter tells us, be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

Got to be conscious, yeah, we've got an enemy, and he's on the prowl, and he's making some noises here and there. And you think of this battleground then, that's really, it's our mind and our heart, where Satan wants to sow lies and doubt, to discourage.

He's very active in this way. He's constantly trying to eat away at our faith and discourage. And what are we to do? Resist the devil.

Resist the devil. Resist his lies, his doubts. And rather trust God. Obey God. Resist temptation. Think how you can proclaim the gospel.

[14:47] Tell another soul. Witness. We can all do damage to the kingdom of God. I know, I like to tell a story. I know there's a preacher I know. He talks about when he has a hard time, a hard day.

He says, I go and get some tracts, and I letterbox them. Because he wants to repay the devil for the hard day he's had. Rather than kind of despairing that he's had a tough time.

He says, I'm going to fight the devil back. I'm going to go and do something for God, even though I'm not probably feeling like it. So that's the thought there. You see, when the Lord called Paul on the Damascus road, the commission to Paul was in part to turn folk from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

It's one of the things that Paul was called to, to be a witness, to be a testifier of the gospel, to open the eyes of people. And we're plundering, if you like, Satan's kingdom so that there's going to be less people in hell.

Well, thanks to God helping us, God using us to tell souls and to see people saved, snatching them out of the fire, that kind of thought there.

[16:05] And so really, in a way, the normal Christian life is inherently this life of warfare. That is the life. That is the Christian life. As much as it is something we all want to avoid, really, to have to fight and go through some things.

But yeah, it is the normal Christian life. And the Christian life, it's marked really by abundance. We see that Christ has come, that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

But then on the other side, we've got the thief, which could picture the devil, that he's come to steal, to kill and to destroy. So the devil's against that abundance of life in Christ that God wants for us.

And yet we are told that we are more than conquerors. There's a sense where we've got this victory and we're more than conquerors. We're super conquerors. And it's because of Christ who's loved us that we are more than conquerors.

And we triumph through his name. It says, Now thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

[17:08] We can give thanks that we always have victory. We can confess that victory. We can stand in that victory. And it tells us also that we can have holiness too.

The promises of God are for us. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

There's lots of scriptures that can encourage us to spur us on in this fight, to not grow weary and think for every prayer uttered, every sin forsaken, every soul won.

It all advances God's kingdom. There's a sense where there's a snowballing of that victory that we have. And we can encourage others to be saved and reach out and walk more closely with our Lord as we draw near to him.

He draws near to us. And we can have more and more victory. Next section, the sufficiency of scripture. Now, as Bible-believing Christians, what we affirm is that this is absolutely sufficient.

[18:15] It's called the sufficiency of scripture. In other words, we don't need extra biblical revelation. We don't need to add to it. It's everything that we need for faith and practice is in the word of God.

It's in the scripture itself. And it tells us, as Paul tells Timothy, all scripture is given by inspiration of God. It's breathed out by God and it's profitable, it says, for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

So in other words, fully equipped. There's the sense where everything that we need, there's an absolute sufficiency in God's word. And that also includes the subject of spiritual warfare. And it tells us here in 2 Peter 1 that God's given to us all things that pertain unto life and godliness.

He's given us everything. It's all here. It's 100%. All things. He's given us all things. To live the life, to walk in godliness, it's the word of God. Now, these days, there's this trend and this really a falling away where people are resorting to all kinds of extra biblical.

In other words, outside of the Bible. It's called extra biblical. So you've got revelations where people will routinely prophesy, they think, over people and speak words over them and tell them this and that or of trips to heaven and of all kinds of revelations and such things that are really extra biblical.

[19:46] They're outside of the Bible. And they're making doctrines based on these supposed dreams and visions they've had. And so it's no wonder there's a whole lot of confusion out there.

And yet for us, we would understand as Bible believers that the sign gifts, so tongues, the prophecy, the miracles of that time, that is no longer required.

We don't need the signs following anymore because we have the complete word of God. It was ceased with the completion of the New Testament canon. So we've got, in our Bible, you've got 66 books.

66 books. And those 66 books are the complete word of God. It's been completed. And that happened around AD 70, AD.

It was completed. And after that time, we don't see tongues and such miraculous revelations to the degree. We don't see that now as required.

[20:44] It tells us in 1 Corinthians 13, of charity, of love, it never faileth. But whether they be prophecies, they shall fail. Whether they be tongues, they shall cease.

Whether they be knowledge, it shall vanish away to miraculous knowledge. When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. Now, Pentecostals like to take this verse and say, well, when that which is perfect is come, that means when Christ is come. Then we don't need tongues. No, it's not saying that. It's a word that is, it's an object. It's not a person. When that which is perfect is come.

And friends, we've got a perfect Bible. We've got 66 books. We've got all the revelation that we need. We don't need to have extra biblical revelation now because that which is perfect, that which is perfect, the word of God, is come.

And so that which is in part shall be done away. That tells us then that we don't need these new revelations, these visions, these ecstatic experiences. Really, that's confusion.

[21 : 48] And largely the enemies work because it's actually taking us away from the word of God. And we've got to be very careful. The Bible talks very much about testing, about discerning.

And the Holy Spirit works in accord with his word. It's not contrary. And we think about the truth of the word of God. It's the gospel. Paul says, I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it's the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.

The gospel is the power of God. That's the true power of God. And we are communicators of that gospel, taking the message to deliver souls from Satan's dominion and fortifying believers, making believers strong for spiritual growth.

And the problem with this spiritual warfare as in the charismatic camp is that they're relying on all these things that are contrary outside of scripture, anointings and such things and prophetic acts or these emotional highs.

And it's really erring in the sense of it's straying into deception. So moving on, next section, page two, we look at the danger of false teachings.

[22 : 58] And the devil is described as being this angel of light. God wants to deliver us from the power of darkness to translate us into the kingdom of his dear son.

But we see this deception where Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. He takes this disguise, he's like this counterfeit, and he disguises himself as an angel and an angel of light. You think, well, that would be a beautiful thing, wouldn't it? A dazzling, beautiful angel, an angel, a messenger of God, you would think. But no, it's a deception. And this is what's happening.

And I've been there in the Pentecostal movement for many years where we see these false doctrines and there's a whole lot of things here. We'll just touch on them briefly.

Some of these false teachings that are very popular these days. So one of them is called binding and loosing demons. You know, I bind you in Jesus' name. Be loosed.

[23 : 59] All of that carry on. They kind of make it a very theatrical performance. They might be well-meaning, and I'm not meaning to mock them. Just, they've got it wrong.

This binding and loosing kind of idea, you look at the Bible, what it actually tells us. It tells us here in Matthew 16, whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

And Matthew 18, whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. But the context there is about church discipline. It's not about exorcisms.

It's not about that. It's not about loosing people from demons. And then this other kind of trend is, I rebuke you in Jesus name I rebuke the devil they go on like that and that's actually an unscriptural thing too because it tells us here in Jude 1 verse 9 that even Michael the archangel he was contending he was fighting with the devil he did not bring against the devil some railing accusation he didn't go rebuking the devil but he said the Lord rebuked thee Michael said the Lord rebuked thee it's the need for us is to defer to God's authority the Lord rebuked Satan we don't do the rebuking it's not in us or our words and that's the the mishmash that's going on where there's these common practices that are actually not biblical that are quite common and in some quarters too they're overemphasized demons so it's like every trial every test every sickness every time we have a hard day every time we lack or have some distress they attribute it to the devil to demonic hey oh oh I've got the demon of flu today I've got the whatever it be it's like this carry on where everything's attributed to the devil and we've got this fear this paranoia there's a devil under every bush kind of everything that goes wrong rather than actually trusting hey we're in God's hands we're under his providence under his watch even if it be a job experience that we've got that faith and trust in him our Lord and when we see that trials might be actually God's allowing it as in Job's case or the

natural consequences of a fallen world we're living on a fallen planet and we know bad things happen people get cancer people get some dread affliction they have a car accident they have a relationship breakdown that can happen to believers and unbelievers alike it says the rain falls on the just and the unjust it's not the devil that's attacking us necessarily it's sometimes just the natural consequences of this fallen world and we see what are we to do be like it says in James my brethren count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations when you fall into all kinds of trials James says count it all joy knowing this that the trying of your faith worketh patience hey there's going to be endurance you're going to be stronger for it you're going to be persevering you're going to have strength from it so let patience have her perfect work that you may be perfect and entire wanting nothing there's that sense where hey trust God trust God in that trial in that test knowing that God is with you don't think hey oh I'm under attack the devil's having a go at me and I've got this demon and that demon I've been conversing with a chap lately who thinks he's demon possessed and I think it's not this charismatic kind of thinking that obsesses people and they feel like they're under some oppression of the devil not to say that can't happen but some have got the mindset where every little thing that goes wrong is the devil attacking them and then it could be that it's actually personal sin hey you're having a hard time because you reap what you sow okay that's life sometimes personal sin is the problem whatsoever a man soweth that shall he reap now there's a consequence to our actions that come about that that come to develop there's a harvest we reap and it's not really demons of course in that case either and then you've got this other trend with this emotionalism over scripture where they've got slaying in the spirit and this is a commonplace thing when they have some call to the front and they slay they're slain in the spirit and there's all of this carry on that goes on and I've been in that kind of circumstance I've been in those kind of churches and this holy laughter and this chaotic worship and it's getting away from the sufficiency of God's word that's the problem slaying in the spirit is not bible it's some modern day invention it's a false emotional chaotic kind of thing whereas the bible tells us that God is a God of order he says let all things be done decently and in order there's not some thrashing around like a snake and having to cover women to protect their modesty God's about decency and order not this thrashing around this foolishness that is the modern pentecostal carry-on and where there's this emotionalism over scripture this really it dishonors God truly and it's very sad the victory comes as we put the word of God into action and follow it and live it out then you've got this other trend of deliverance ministries where there's these this obsession that believers a demon possessed or they're bound by generational curses oh it must be because your father or your grandfather was a freemason and oh it's come down through the lineage and this and that but yet the bible says that we're a new creature in christ therefore if any man be in christ he's a new creature old things are passed away behold all things have become new we don't have to be worried about what former generations have done it's like the carry on these days with oh we've got to apologize for this and apologize for that because 200 years ago we invaded this country and that's garbage it's generational there's stuff that is of no relevance today and we know that old things have passed away we're not to bear any consequence for what our father or grandfather or great grandfather did we're a new creature in christ yet in some of these quarters they say oh you've got a generational curse there's no such thing in the bible it's not here it's just not there in the bible so it's another thing that these false teachers tend to go right off track and bible tells us that we freed from the curse it says christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us so we know he's taken our curse the curse of adam he's taken it all right back from adam right through all generations he's taken the curse amen that's what he's done for us and also we're indwelt by the spirit of god so if you have the if you're saved it says you have the spirit of god dwelling in you if any man have not the spirit of christ he's in life here so as a saved believer you have the holy spirit inside of you he lives and dwells within you and so some evil spirit can't come and dwell in you or even torment you because you have god's spirit within you you can trust in the promise of god and what the word of god says who you are you're saved and you're filled with the spirit so there's no really biblical precedent for all of this promotion of christians needing deliverance in some of these pentecostal charismatic circles it's like oh i see a demon of this and a spirit of that and you've got to get delivered from the spirit and sometimes they say really crazy things about the spirit of and it could be a disability oh you've got the spirit of you name it oh that's the a spirit of and it's actually a name of a disability and that's quite offensive really isn't it it's not true it's basically not true and there's no need for you to get deliverance from the from this or that because you are delivered in christ you're delivered that we're delivered from the power of the of darkness we translate it into

god's kingdom and so we've got no need of these exorcisms and all that carry on that we see in the popular eyes today and there's really some gruesome videos out there i've seen

[32 : 42] some shocking things of what seems to be routinely going on now these faith prosperity preachers thing this so-called apostle katherine crick you can look her up it's absolutely zany it's comical farcical and it's so disgusting truly to see what people are swallowing and these exorcisms and they've got these people and i've heard some critiques of them and it's actually the same person like this same woman almost like an actor that they're using to bring up and to make some spectacle to roll around and carry on and it's just very very sad and that's not spiritual warfare that is the enemy's counterfeit of the truth and so we see rather we should really shift from all of that spectacle and extremism to what does the bible say what does the bible actually teach us and to cling to the truth and the truth is that greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world if you're saved then you have that victory and so we look then at the next section there at the believers position in christ know your identity in christ he's raised us up he's made us to sit together in heavenly places far above all principality and power it says that he's raised us up and set us at as it says of christ that he set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named it says that we're raised up together with christ and he's delivered us from satan's dominion we're more than conquerors as we've read there's no legal claim left for satan on you because you are filled with god's spirit and he has claimed you he's purchased you with his precious blood you're his possession and the scriptures like this one that that he says i've given you power over all the power of the enemy nothing shall by any means hurt you there's a sense where we can know god's strength that will help us and this truth next one about meditating on scripture we could think of scriptures like there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in christ jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit there's truth here we can dwell on the truths of scripture meditate on the truths of scripture if you're feeling confused you're feeling fretting and fussing and you're worried about demons and devil activity go to the word meditate on the scripture take the hold of the promises of god and dwell on that and pray through pray for strength it tells us that we should pray lord deliver us from evil lead us not into temptation pray for strength to resist temptation to stand firm it's one of the vital verses about prayer isn't it the lord's prayer lead us not into temptation deliver us from evil pray for god's strength and then live obediently too don't give satan a foothold this is an important truth here brother sister that we should neither give place to the devil if you give the devil an inch he'll take a mile don't leave the door ajar don't don't give him an opportunity and it says we should not get let satan get an advantage of us if we give the devil a little bit of a chink in our armor he'll seize that he'll grab hold of that our weakness he'll grab a hold of that area where we weak and it can be like all kinds of things as the notes talk about bitterness unforgiveness if we give satan a foothold we do something that hey i'm going to disobey god but i'm only just going to disobey god this much that's enough isn't it you're giving place to the devil don't do it when you when you sin confess it quickly forgive others guard your heart submit yourselves therefore to god resist the devil and he will flee from you there's promises like that we can take hold of and we can speak the word to ourselves too when we're feeling like we've got doubt and unbelief accusation speak the word to yourself remind yourself of god's promises of your triumph in christ and reject those false teachings don't tune into those false kind of preachers that are always going on about binding satan claiming your victory confess and possess all this stuff go to the word and get it straight from the scriptures submit yourselves therefore to god resist the devil and he will flee from you there's a promise there for you and so think of this nature of the battle it's in the mind and the heart reject those unbiblical thoughts and replace them with scripture look at some of the tactics satan uses deception he'll promote false doctrines like the prosperity theology or new age philosophies and the bible tells us warns us in the last days it says now the spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils this is not just false doctrines and there's plenty of them it's doctrines of devils it's actually the devil's right behind this the devil is a teacher he's a bible teacher there's doctrines of devils you've got to be careful of that right anything's that if it's us be perceptive be discerning and seducing spirits so they're going to entice us in harmful ways and we've got to reject that and we've got to test everything by the scripture we know it tells us we should try the spirits believe not every spirit but try the spirits whether they are of god now test everything prove everything it talks about test everything and hold fast that which is good test all teachings against scripture so always have that

in mind does it line up with the word of god or does it not and there's a degree of you've got to weigh things but some things are plainly not biblical and so reject them and then you see the devil uses temptation it can exploit our weaknesses pride lust don't give him ground don't give place to the devil and look for that way of escape when temptation comes he says that he will make a way to escape look for that exit sign and run for it flee temptation keep looking unto jesus keep looking unto him running that race and knowing that he's the author and finisher of our faith he'll help us get through and we see that the hindrances of satan too like we talked about before and yet we know that ultimately we can trust god in life's journey know that all things work together for good well it doesn't feel like it at the moment preacher i know you get those moments just got to be patient this too shall come to pass all things work together for good ultimately they will all things work together for good to them that love god to them who are the called according to his purpose persevere trust god is watching over you trust god is working out his plan be patient be persevering and guard your mind with god's word it says thy word have i hid in my heart that i might not sin against thee have scripture to combat satan have scriptures that you can turn to in your circumstance and practice discernment evaluate media and philosophies use this kind of filter we talked about it before the philippians 4 8

kind of filter is it good is it just is it true is it honest is it pure is it lovely think on these things avoid the sinful influences such as worldly entertainment things that are going to hinder you let it go god helping you let it go and rather search for that which is righteous and set your mind on things above don't let the earthly things drag you down set your mind on things above god helping you to have that rethinking that total new kind of thinking of that which is good philippians 4 8 stick that one on your fridge that's a good one to put in your mind and next section the armor of god think about the armor of god there's a metaphor here and really ephesians 6 it's a great one to have in your mind when you're feeling like there's some spiritual warfare happening and you're in the midst of some fight going on that you are equipped for victory and ephesians 6 talks through the whole armor of god we see it reads there about take unto you the whole armor of god don't just have pieces of it get the whole lot the whole lot that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand stand therefore having your loins girt about with truth having on the breastplate of righteousness we see the belt of truth the bible talks about thy word is truth john 17 17 we know the word of god this is going to help us fight that deception because this is the truth they even say it in the courts don't they the truth the whole truth nothing but the truth it's here it's in the word it's in your hands so when deception comes go to the belt of truth the word of god and know that he'll guard you against deception see the breastplate of righteousness it covers our heart keep thy heart with all diligence and there's a sense where we righteousness is by faith your righteousness is not your righteousness it's his amen it's his righteousness we're righteous the righteousness we have is by faith talks about that romans 3 22 and then the armor it reads on having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace above all taking the shield of faith wherewith you should be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked the gospel of peace it's saying that these shoes that you wear is really the readiness to share the gospel be ready to share the gospel be mindful that every soul needs the gospel it says how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace your feet can be beautiful and i will look at my feet sometimes they look a bit ugly but the bible says they're beautiful feet amen you might feel the same if your feet are taking the gospel god says they're beautiful feet amen and we can take the gospel and then the shield of faith and the when the roman soldiers got together as a cohort they would have this like tortoise shell of all their shields over above them because they would have the shields above them so the darts the arrows the missiles the javelins would just bounce off their shields and we've got the word of god the shield of faith the god's promises are for us and then it reads on of the helmet take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit which is the word of god praying always with all prayer and supplication the spirit watching their answer with all perseverance and supplication for all saints the helmet of salvation it's really you could think of it as the assurance of your salvation preach it am i saved am i lost did i get it did i lose it did i have it did i not have it am i saved today or not saved tomorrow the helmet of salvation there's an assurance of your salvation and that's not to be flippant about it but because the bible says he who believes on jesus has everlasting life that's an assurance for you if you seize hold of that promise if that's true for you you're trusted in christ then you have the helmet of salvation and there's a sense where there's an assurance that protects our mind from all the doubts and the despair and the confusion and the devil would say oh you've lost your salvation well that's a lie from hell because you cannot lose your salvation god gives

salvation and once you have it you have it forever there's an assurance there and then the sword of the spirit the word of god it's an offensive weapon what did jesus do in matthew 4 when he was tempted it is written it is written we go to the word to combat satan the sword of the spirit and then we see prayer is that one thing that kind of binds it all together the armor of god that we can be led by the spirit to pray we can bring our requests by prayer and supplication we can know the peace of god so put on that armor of god brother sister and commit to that and memorize verses like psalm 23 confess sin to god and know his cleansing and fellowship fellowships another protective measure because we've got accountability there i see believers get in all kinds of trouble when they get out of fellowship they just get in all kinds of mess and messy situations and when they're not accountable and they end up being some maverick or they end up just not having any kind of support there and they end up in all kinds of false doctrine false thinking and sin and fellowship is such a vital part of your walk with god as we see there the next section the role of the church in warfare it's like we've got accountability there we've got encouragement there we've got togetherness we've got community there and we've got faithful preaching we've got church discipline that helps us hey i needed that rebuke me again i need it to keep me on keep me on track i need to be given that direction we all need that guidance that help and it will strengthen us we see prayer we see that corporate worship it strengthens us we see acts 2 they had this that's continuing steadfastly there's a steadfastness hey we're looking out for each other we're encouraging one another we're spurring one another on we're stirring one another up in a good way to good works and there's an engagement in soul winning and not a disorderly worship but a godly worship the notes make a point i like this one we need biblical counseling rather than deliverance ministry some churches it's all about delivering people from this spirit or that spirit and some kind of just spectacle of this performance and this emotionalism but rather let's get some biblical counseling actually okay i've got a problem with xyz go to this scripture i've got a problem with abc we'll go to this scripture because line upon line precept upon precept here's the answer for my need there's some helpful resources like that if you're struggling with anxiety with depression with loneliness the scriptures you can look up for all of those kind of things there's some really helpful lists out there when you've got a problem with this hey here's a pointer from god i'll help you get in the right direction but it'll set you straight on that biblical counseling and then we see some practical steps for daily victory too abide in christ abide in christ abide in christ and know his keeping power and delight in his word delight

in the law of the lord meditate in it day and night read a chapter that will encourage you so for example when you're feeling like you need god's protection you go to psalm 91 and read psalm 91 it'll just bless your soul and search after the things that would please god and honor god when there's temptation go to god's truth go to god's word when you're tempted by worldly media go to the word of god rather than setting some wicked thing before your eyes go to the word of god and let that purify your mind and your thinking and resist the devil use your gifts to serve god to be that living sacrifice let god use you and take a hold of you and find ways that you can be a blessing and rest in god's control we see scriptures like this one when there's a trial there's a great scripture to stick on your fridge too isaiah 41 that he says fear thou not for i am with thee thee not dismayed for i am thy god i will strengthen thee yea i will help thee i will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousnesses blessed scriptures like that one and you think well i needed that today i need that i need that every day and we could think next section talks about reject occult practices now it could be it can happen and i know when i was a child my sisters were playing around with ouija boards one day and there's things going on like that and the stuff that can happen you think back in your history back in your life the stuff that you might have messed around with you repense at that even like things like astrology all of those kind of things if there's anything doubtful then go to god about it ask god to help you to forgive you to relinquish that to renounce that to reject that we see in acts 19 where they had some curious arts in other words though these magical books so it's like books to do with witchcraft and such things as that and what did they do i think this is ephesus they brought it all together and they burned it and it could be and there is a truth to this i think and some people maybe make more of this than they ought to but with something that might be doubtful that you think well that's probably not a good thing to have in my house it's a good thing for you to think hey if it's doubtful then get rid of it if it's stuff that you think whether it has some connotations you know some people that go overseas and they get these masks and things that could have been to do with idols and or heathen pagan worship and such things like that you think well maybe that's maybe not a good thing for me to have in my house and that there's a truth to that as they did in ephesus they

burnt those books that were to do with occult or magic and such things false worship it's good to destroy things like that not have them in your house because i know some people maybe just unknowingly they might have a buddha in their garden or something and they're selling them all the time down at bunnings and that now aren't they buddhas and whatnot and some people think oh it's just a little ornament it's just a harmless statue but it's what it represents isn't it so if in doubt if there's any connotation just destroy that smash it up burn it pulverize it to dust like they did in the bible when there's an idol of any kind it's good to destroy that if you might have books that have got i've got some i've got some books of mormon at home that's more for a reference for example but that stuff that you think if it's questionable then it's better that you don't have it unless you've got a good reason to have it some people have childhood interests in magic and whatnot or witchcraft or harry potter you know

[53 : 09] it's stuff that it's probably not good that i have that in my house so i'm going to destroy it all right you'll come to your own convictions on those things as the lord leads you you might have a different conviction from me on that but i think it's always good to err on the side of no not going to touch it all right other things can forgive others to release that bitterness just forgive release it release them release yourself because you're the one that's being bound up when you're not forgiving and then we see how can i bless others how can i bear others burdens how can i look out for one another all right next section addressing common errors we've touched on some of this already we've got to fight error with truth and this is what i'm hoping to bring out tonight really that there's all of this falsehood and it's really popularized now you go down to the christian bookshop and most of the books on spiritual warfare are from really pentecostal charismatic false teachers i would call them and really we've got to fight error with truth we've got to go to the word we've got to go to what the word of god says and so binding and loosing as we talked about binding demons it's not biblical it's actually not in the bible and only really god finds satan in revelation 20 ultimately and when it's rebuking in the bible it's rebuking of men of error of sin but not of devils then there's this other teaching territorial spirits as people are going on prayer walks and they talk about this kind of territorial spirits as if there's demons controlling regions so some might say oh this community is is under the demon of this or that or of drugs or what it be or the demon of this or that and the bible doesn't talk about that it says preach the gospel preach the gospel if there's demonic activity of this or that the answer is the gospel it's seeing people saved coming to christ it's not about overcoming territorial spirits and such things and again this deliverance ministry this obsession with all of that if the spirit of god is in you you're in christ he's in you and you don't need to be worried about exorcisms and this or that or this emotionalism these generational curses we've talked about all that so we're on page four here it tells us we should walk in the spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh so we think about these extra biblical revelations try to overcome the false teachings with the truth there is a truth where we should be discerning the spirits trying the spirits whether they are of god there can be malicious spirits for example there's diatrophies there's one who sought free eminence we need to guard against that seducing spirits that lead people astray wounded spirits we can have our own spirit wounded as we know with the biblical counseling ministry we heard about that people can have their spirits wounded but we know that christ heals the broken in heart he binds up their wounds we know even hey you might feel here my spirit's been wounded and that could be real for you you've been through some trauma i know people many people most people if not have had some trauma some and that's not to make light of it but there's some real trauma this hurts people are wounded they've been beaten they've been stabbed and hurt offended mistreated abused this is very hurtful and real for people and there's deep hurts but the good news is he healeth the broken in heart he binds up their wounds and you can know that

the grace of god to help you through hurts of all kinds to know god's healing there and we've got the holy spirit too and he's looking for people who've got to worship him in spirit and in truth the word of god is our weapon let's get back to the bible when we see this this preponderance of all these crazy teachings out there what does the bible say what does the bible say it is written and when satan wants to cause you to doubt or to despair don't listen to him listen to the word of god and build up yourself in the faith and there's victory too through sound doctrine the word of god protects us from deception the more that we have of the word the more that we have of the word of god the more we're going to be stronger the more we have of the word of god the more we're going to know his promises and claim them the more we have of the word of god we're going to be able to discern error from truth and we're going to be able to overcome the enemy and really we've got Christ's

victory at the cross that is our constant victory even though in the day by day life is hard sometimes it is hard and life can be wearing and draining and discouraging and we can easily get defeated but the promises of God are real for us and we've got to hang on to the promises of God and know that as in the notes that talks about be vigilant because your adversary the devil he wants to find some way to drag you down and to make you feel miserable and he's going to find your Achilles heel wherever it is that you're weak he's going to attack you there and tempt you and drag you back to the old life the old way of thinking but our weapons are mighty through God the weapons of our warfare are not carnal they're not of our own flesh of our own striving of our own will and strength but they're mighty through God it's the pulling down of strongholds casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God bringing into captivity every thought every thought to the obedience of Christ hey is that thought obeying God is my thinking obeying God or is that me is that Andrew Craig or is it that thinking that is coming under obedience to my Lord is it going to be honoring to him is it going to be God glorifying and God helping us will have that victory brothers and sisters and the promises here that the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly there's a truth here that God's going to crush Satan under your feet my feet yes your feet it's telling us here the sense where even in our humble inadequate way that Satan's under your feet there's a hope there that yes even your feet you can bruise Satan under your feet and it reads in the notes here every act of obedience every prayer every gospel proclamation is a blow against the enemy we're hitting him here when we pray take that devil when we read the word of God take that devil when we preach in the gospel and witnessing someone and reaching souls with the love of God with the word of God we're giving the devil another punch in the face and that's what it's telling us here isn't it greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world the God of peace is

going to bruise Satan under your feet your feet and know that you can be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might you can take on the whole armor of God and you can know victory is assured through Christ's triumph so be encouraged hopefully taking some thoughts here today to reflect on and it's further to what I was saying Sunday morning to about that victory really we don't need to stay in defeat but we can know victory and it's a day by day thing and we know the reality is there's some days we're not going to feel like we're winning but yet we are Jesus is going to bruise Satan underneath your feet shortly yeah it might be a bit of a waiting time maybe maybe it might not feel like today but shortly that's a good that's a good thought that one isn't it that shortly he's going to do it he's going to do it shortly under your feet let's pray Lord we thank you that we have victory Lord you tell us this this is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith Lord we you know sometimes it doesn't feel that way and we see Lord the false ideas about spiritual warfare that does cause so much confusion Lord help us rather to be led by the Bible to have sound doctrine Lord guide us that we might be discerning of trying the spirits to discern between evil and righteousness to Lord to know the world the flesh and the devil is that constant fighting yet Lord there's victory too Lord we pray for us any that are struggling that they can find peace today to know that rest that we can have the promises of God they're for us they're for us we thank you Lord thank you Lord for the refreshments for the kindness of those that have brought it and for our fellowship to share together just now and to rejoice in your goodness every day in Jesus name we pray amen you