

Spiritual War

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[0:00] Spiritual War, Ephesians 6 verses 10 through 18. The Word of God. Friends, we are at war. 1 John 5 verse 19 tells us, And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. We are at war. When we look at all the evils going on in our world today, it makes sense that the whole world we live in is under the control of a ruthless enemy. It says you're in a fight against him. And some people don't take this seriously, that this is real. It is real. Now, forces are waged against God, against the truth, and against you. You are at war with unseen beings bent on bringing you down, tearing you away from loving God, taking away your love and devotion to the Lord. You know, they're calling the coronavirus the invisible enemy.

Well, I put to you, there is an invisible enemy, and his name is Satan. And he's in a battle with you. It's a battle for your mind, for your love.

[1:54] And it's being waged on many fronts. There's a battle for Christian character, for godliness, and for honour. So we have an enemy. We are at war, and we have an enemy. And you have a fight on your hands.

Friends, I'm not telling you something you don't already know, I'm sure, that you're warring against this enemy of all that is good and right and true. He is warring against you, and he is warring against the lover of man's soul, the one who came as the great peacemaker between God and man, the one mediator between God and man.

These powers are fighting against the one who can save, and the one who loves you truly. He is the enemy of your souls. He is real. He is an enemy to be aware of, an enemy to resist, steadfast in the faith, and yet an enemy not to be afraid of.

This enemy is a real person who's organised with ranks of workers with him. He's a master of disguise. He masquerades as an angel of light. 2 Corinthians 11, verse 14.

Yes, he is real, and we need to take him seriously. This enemy and his forces are marshaled against you, pitted against you, against all that is wholesome and precious and godly.

[3:13] He is powerful, but he has not authority over us. We have to wrestle. There's a war going on. A wrestling. There's striving. There's battle.

This contest. To take over your way of thinking. Through education. Through influences. Like who we mix with. What the media is telling us. We see it in our world's philosophy and culture.

This enemy. This one. Who is against you. He's working out his sneaky plan. And his influences are all around us. And as Christians we need to have a renewed mind. And be alert.

Be ready for an attack. Be ready to wrestle. You're on a battleground with this war being waged on many fronts. It's on the home front. It's on the school front. It's at the work front.

And it's in the church front. The Bible says we should not be ignorant of his devices, his schemes, his plots. He's tempting us by putting wrong thoughts in our minds through movies, through music, through media, through immorality.

[4:13] He may tempt you to use drugs or drink to attack your mind. He knows what things will destroy you. He knows how to attack your thoughts with sin, with pride, with impurity, with bitterness, with hate, with unforgiveness, with disobedience, with wrong teaching.

We see his work in new technologies at times. Not that they themselves are wrong of themselves. But we see his work in new teachings, in new morals, so-called.

So-called truths that deny God's truth. He wants to trick and he wants to tempt us. And that's what he did way back in Genesis 3. When he tempted Eve to sin, you give in to his sneaky plans when you rock on to his driving beat.

Just go with the flow. You become his slave when you follow supernatural things without being discerning. He can work miracles. He especially wants to hinder your relationship with Jesus Christ. The glad news is we can have victory. When you sin, Satan will try and discourage you. To make you doubt that God will forgive you. We can be overcomers, the Bible says.

[5:21] In this battle, we are promised certain victory. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Even death is swallowed up in victory.

Romans 8, 37 Nay, in all these things, whatever happens, all the bad stuff, Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

You can have hope and confidence today. You can decide to live in victory and in faith. Don't give way to fears or worries. Place your trust in the Lord. Decide to walk in obedience to God's spirit and word.

He's already a beaten foe, friends. Yet he's still fighting and at large today. Can we defeat Satan by ourselves? No, we cannot.

He is much too powerful for us. But the good news is that Christ has already defeated Satan for us. When Christ died on the cross, Satan thought that he'd won a great victory.

[6:22] But Christ did not stay in the grave. He rose from the dead. The Lord Jesus was victorious over Satan and all the powers of darkness. And with Christ as your saviour, you belong to him.

And we together share in his victory over Satan. Christ's victory is your victory. The Lord Jesus has set you free from Satan's power.

Friends, we do not need to be afraid of Satan. Why? Because Christ lives in us. And he is greater and stronger than Satan. As the Bible says, greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. 1 John 4 verse 4. This means that Christ who lives in us is greater than Satan who is in the world. Christ lives in us and gives us victory over Satan's temptations.

And the secret of victory over Satan's temptations is knowing that Christ is living in you and trusting him to give you that daily victory. There was a little girl who learned this secret.

[7:23] She said, when Satan knocks at the door of my heart to get me to do wrong things, I say, Lord Jesus, will you please open the door? And when Satan sees the Lord Jesus, he bows low and says, I'm sorry, but I have come to the wrong place.

And he leaves. What was this little girl's secret? It was this. She recognized that Christ was living in her heart and she trusted him to give her victory over Satan's temptations.

This is what we must do also. Satan may tempt us, but he cannot make us sin. We can say no to Satan. The Bible says, submit to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

James 4 verse 7. And again, if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. What is this verse saying?

It says, confess your sins to God. He will forgive you and cleanse you. It's his promise. To confess a sin means call it by its right name. Don't make excuses. If we lied, we need to confess to God, but we lied.

[8:25] If we got angry and lost our temper, we need to confess this to God. We should also make things right with other people. When we have done this, we should believe that God has forgiven us. Friends, God wants you and I to have victory in our lives.

The more we learn to trust and obey the Lord Jesus who lives in us, the more we will be able to say no to the world, the flesh, and the devil. And God gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Friends, for the meantime, Satan is on the loose. He's at work all around us. But this is no reason for fear, but for faith. You can be strong and fight with God's armor and strength.

God gives us the right weapons. It tells us in 2 Corinthians 10 verse 4. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.

Focus upon the Lord Jesus through all the ups and downs of your everyday life. In John 16, 33, he says, These things I have spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace.

[9:29] In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world. If we trust God more, we will worry less. When trouble comes, ask yourself, what is God trying to teach me through this?

Let me just close with a final little quote here. What is a soldier? But you don't know what they said to me. My feelings are hurt, some people say.

Soldiers may be wounded, but many go back to fight again. I'm tired. I want to rest. Maybe I can do it some other time. We excuse ourselves. Soldiers get tired, but they must fight on.

I'm lonely. So lonely. I don't know anybody here. And we moan and moan. Soldiers get lonely too, but they keep right on marching. I'm afraid. I just can't do it.

We may cry. Soldiers are afraid at times too, but they go forward. Nevertheless, friends, God is setting up his kingdom. We are part of this. We belong to him. This is eternal.

[10:31] It's important. For the meantime, those fiery darts of temptation will fly against you. These unseen forces attacking your soul. You have an enemy against you, but your only way to win is to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

What does this really mean in real life? Let's cut to the chase. We're on the front lines. Be on the lookout. It's a wrestling. At times, your opponent will take hold of you and try to bring you down and slam you on the map.

He will use your own pride and anger, your flesh, your temper, your thoughts, your lack of faith to try to get you down. It's a battle for the mind and for the heart. What must we do?

Resist. Resist. While on a trip to the zoo one day, a boy and his father saw a huge lion. The lion was prowling around this enclosure, letting out these chilling roars.

And the boy became very frightened and screamed in terror. But his father remained calm and unafraid. Why? The boy was frightened because he saw only the lion, while the father was unafraid because he saw the cage and closing the lion.

[11:34] Likewise for us, the Christian's view of Satan should be as the father rather than like the boy. Our fierce enemy is a caged lion. Let's remind ourselves that Satan was created.

He's clearly inferior to God. And while he's an angel and clearly more powerful than humans, and while the Bible says that God actually uses Satan to accomplish his own purposes, the devil is not all powerful.

And he's certainly not sovereign. Satan can only do what God allows him to do. 1 John 4 verse 4, it says, The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

So what happens when Satan comes after us? The Bible says this, in conclusion. James 4 verse 7, it's a great scripture to hide in your heart.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. When Satan messes with us, we must submit to God and resist whatever temptation or lies that the devil is throwing our way.

[12:36] And if we resist, the devil must flee. Remember, the Lord is more powerful than the evil one. Friends, we can be encouraged by these words of scripture in this middle of this spiritual warfare, this combat zone that is the human life.

We know God's gracious strength and that he that is in you is greater than he that is in the world.

Let's pray. Lord, we thank you that your word promises us victory.

And we know we have realized victory because at the cross you did everything to save and to keep us saved. Lord, we thank you that we can trust in your gracious power to set us free from sin and to guarantee us a home in heaven because of the virtue of what you've done on our part at the cross.

Lord, we thank you for these things. And we pray that each one might know that daily victory. We pray for our families and friends in the circumstances of life. Lord, whatever's going on for anyone that is here, Lord, that we might have that assurance today that greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world.

And we thank you for these promises, Lord. In Jesus' precious name, amen. Amen.