

Our Spiritual Enemies

Ephesians 6:10-12

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 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.”

For the past two weeks have been able to see that the root of our problem today is Satan. The spirit of antichrist is in the world today. The blinding, darkening, deceiving, diabolically deadening power of Satan is overtaking America.

Obviously, Christians are not immune, in fact, we are prime targets. Just because we have been saved, the devil does not give up quietly and go away. I believe when we wade into the flow of God’s presence, we start jerking the devil’s chain. He is angry and he wants to kill you.

When irritation is high and patience is low, know that Satan has come in great wrath. He will try to plague your mind with fear and burning desires within you. He will try to rob you of restful sleep, drain you of your peace and lay a dark cloud of oppression on your back. Surely, this is all part of what Jesus had in mind when He gave us this warning in John 10:10, “The thief has come only to steal, to kill, and to destroy.”

In our last study we were able to see that demons are our spiritual enemies. In light of that truth we must also realize that it is the responsibility of each Christian to deal with them directly in spiritual warfare.

Ephesians 6:10-12 uses the analogy of wrestling in reference to our warfare with Satan and his hosts. *Wrestling* is an accurate and pointed description. It speaks of *close-quarter fighting*; of *personally grappling with the powers of darkness*. The truth of the matter is that most of us would prefer not to get involved with Satan at all, but that is not possible. When you received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, *you were automatically involved*, and the battle is *personal and close*. The enemy is a spiritual one. The weapons are spiritual.

Wrestling also suggests pressure tactics. This tells us that Satan's tactic is to put *pressure* on us. He does this in the areas of our *thought life, emotions, decision-making* and our *physical bodies*. Believers often feel pressured by the enemy in one way or another. When one is ignorant of Satan's devices he may turn for relief to *tranquilizers, sleeping pills* or even the *psychiatrist's couch*. But God's remedy for victory over demonic pressures is *spiritual warfare*. The Bible shows us how the Christian can put pressure upon the demons and defeat them! In light of that, we must learn some practical ways in which this is done. We must throwaway our ineffective *fleshly weapons* and take up the mighty *spiritual weapons*. The believer must know both his own weaponry and how to employ it, and the tactics of the enemy and how to defeat him.

Ephesians 6:12 reveals four important things about our spiritual enemy. *First*, we are told that we are fighting against **"principalities."** The Greek word for "principalities" is "archas" (ar-khay), and *is used to describe things in a series*, such as *leaders, rulers* and *magistrates*. Therefore, a "series" of leaders or rulers would describe their rank and organization. So the word **"principalities"** tells us that *the satanic kingdom is highly organized*. Perhaps Satan has organized his army pretty much on the same basis as God's angelic host. Satan is the head of his kingdom and has under him a rank of ruling spirits ultimately subject unto himself. The English word "principality" is defined as "the territory or jurisdiction of a prince or the country that gives title to a prince" (Webster). Therefore we are able to

see that these ruling spirits are assigned over areas such as nations and cities.

This truth is shown for us in Daniel 10. Daniel was seeking a word from God through prayer and fasting. After three weeks an angel appeared. The angel explained that he had been delayed in getting to Daniel with God's message by an encounter with "the prince of the kingdom of Persia." **He is not referring to an earthly prince, for no mere man could withstand a heavenly messenger.** He is speaking of a demon prince. From this it is clear that there are ruling demon spirits placed by Satan over nations and cities in order to carry out his evil purposes. **Problems that persist and plague churches and homes can well indicate that special evil agents have been assigned to cause trouble in these areas as well.** Therefore, we realize that our spiritual warfare involves much more than our individual lives. We are fighting for the welfare of our homes, communities and nation. **The enemy is thoroughly organized.** Everything he does is to bring destruction and disruption.

Secondly, we are told that our warfare is against "powers." The Greek word translated "power" is "exousia," which means "authority." This word tells us that the demons who are placed over various areas or territories are given authority by Satan to carry out whatever orders have been assigned to them.

But, listen; the child of God should not be discouraged to learn that demons have been given authority by Satan. We have been given an even greater authority by our Commander in Chief, the Lord Jesus Christ, as seen in Luke 9:1, "Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power (dunamis) and authority (exousia) over all demons, and to cure diseases."

A little later in His ministry Jesus sent the seventy disciples out two by two, and when they returned they reported that they successfully dealt with the demon powers in the mighty name of Jesus, as seen in Luke 10:17-19, "Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." And He said to them, "I saw

Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.”

The commission that Jesus has given to His church provides the same “authority” and “power”. In Mark 16:17 we are told that believers are to cast out demons in the *name of Jesus*. The promise was not limited to the apostles or first century disciples, but is for all believers of all times. The commission as stated in Matthew 28:18-20, opens with the declaration, "all power (authority) is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Therefore, go.”

We today have the same authority and power for ministry that was given to the church initially. It would be sheer folly to go against demon spirits without this *power* and *authority*. The *authority* comes through *salvation*; the *power* comes through the anointing of the *Holy Spirit*. **The power given the believer through the mighty anointing of the Holy Spirit is evidenced through the operation of the gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7-11).** Such gifts of the Spirit as supernatural words of *knowledge* and *discernment* are indispensable in spiritual warfare. This power and the authority of Jesus' name are given that the believer might overcome demon powers.

Listen to me very carefully; when we are under attack from demonic forces, we are not to wait for God to come to our rescue. That is not the time to pray that God will provide power and authority. He has *already* provided the *power* and *authority* for us when we were *saved*, and surrendered to the filling of the Holy Spirit. He is therefore waiting for us to recognize that He has *already made the necessary provisions*, and that *we are to take up the spiritual warfare and become the militant church prophesied in Matthew 18:18*, when Jesus said, "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."

Thirdly, we learn that we wrestle against the “rulers” of the darkness of this world. The Greek word translated "world rulers" is "kosmokratoras" (kosmok-rat-ore), and can be translated "lords of the

world" or "princes of this age." This designation of the enemy emphasizes his intention to control. Satan is referred to in 2 Corinthians 4:4 as "the god of this world."

In light of these truths we must recognize Satan to be a defeated foe. On the Cross he was stripped of his power and his kingdom. We have every right to treat him as a trespasser in our lives.

Jesus explained His ability to cast out demons this way in Luke 11:20-22, "But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils. He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters."

Jesus declared that the "strong man's" armor was taken away from him. This means that Satan is made completely defenseless. The expression "all his armor" is the Greek word "panoplia" (pan-op-leeah), and is used only one other time in the New Testament. In Ephesians chapter 6, it is used when the Christian is exhorted to take unto himself the "whole armor" of God. Therefore, the Christian is not vulnerable at any point while the devil is vulnerable at every point!

Satan is still seeking to rule the world, and we must agree that he has made considerable progress! Why? Because the church has not risen up in the power and authority given it. However, a large segment of the body of Christ today is coming into knowledge of the enemy, and of its own spiritual weaponry and strength and is taking the offensive against Satan and his hosts. The more Christians who enter into the warfare, the more Satan will suffer loss.

Fourth, the Scripture says that we wrestle against spiritual wickedness in high places. The key to this phrase is the word "wickedness." The word suggests that which is highly injurious or destructive in character. These evil powers have only one objective -

wickedness. They may appear as angels of light and by their deceptiveness draw many into their nets of destruction. Jesus exposed their wicked purposes in these words found in John 10:10, "The thief does not come, but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy."

These four expressions from Ephesians 6:12 have given us a very vivid word picture of Satan's kingdom. Demonic powers are regimented and given authority by Satan to control the entire world and plague it with destruction. It is a mistake for us to try and ignore Satan's forces and methods. That would only give Satan the freedom to work undetected and unchallenged.

Today Satan is flaunting his power through spiritism, occultism, false religions and cults as never before in all human history. The church is being forced to re-examine its own resources. To do nothing is to suggest that we do not care what becomes of our loved ones, our community, our nation, our world and ourselves.

I believe that God is raising up a mighty army today that is going forth with spiritual weapons. The results are impressive! Through the ministry of deliverance thousands of God's people are being set free from the torments of demon spirits!

Child of God, we cannot, we must not, and by God's grace we will not allow Satan to take even one more inch of victory that God has already provided for His children and His church!

If you have never been saved, why not today?

Please stand for prayer.

Father,

Your Word is true. You have given your children power and authority over the enemy and made us more than conquerors through Christ who loves. In Jesus' name. Amen.