

## **"SPIRITUAL WARFARE"**

INTRODUCTION=Ephesians 1:17-18 “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may KNOW what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.” The reason so many Christians live in defeat is because they do not KNOW who they are in Christ and what is theirs as believers! Satan seeks to keep believers from knowing all the riches of truth and victory that are ours to claim and believe as “more than conquerors through Him that loved us.” Romans 8:37.

1. The War
2. Know the Enemy
3. The Battle
4. Victory How?

**I. THE WAR**=II Timothy 2:3-4; “Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” II Corinthians 10:3-5; “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ:”

A. The War is between the Almighty God who is holy and just=Isaiah 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory” (Rev. 4:8) “. AND Satan who is under sin’s control. He opposes God and is presently the god of this world system =II Corinthians 4:4 “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”.

**II. KNOW THE ENEMY!** When a nation is going to war they want to know all they can about the enemy. The United States government uses spy satellites, secret agents, and all types of technical equipment to learn about the enemy and his movements. Certainly we who are at war with the forces of evil need to know the enemy’s strengths and weakness so we will know how to fight against them.

A. The Believer in Christ has three enemies God's word explains. Ephesians 2:1-3 "And you hath he quickened (made alive) who were dead in trespasses and sins: Wherein in time past ye walked according to (1) the course of this world, (2) according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation (manner of living) in times past in (3) the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

(1) The world=I John 2:15-17; v. 16 "

- (a)...the lust of the flesh-impure desires, wicked longings, sensual cravings
- (b) the lust of the eyes-pornography,
- (c) the pride of life-Pride was what caused Satan's fall into sin thus he uses it to destroy people's lives. The reason we get angry when our rights are violated is because of pride. Everyone struggles with this sin!

(2) Satan=(See "The Doctrines of our Faith" #IV of the Devil or Satan)

(a) John 8:44=Jesus spake to the religious crowd "*Ye are of your father the devil and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*"

Note the facts about Satan-

1. A murderer=Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 5:12
2. No truth in him-Genesis 3:4
3. He is a liar and the father of lies-Genesis 3:4
4. The great deceiver-Genesis 3:5
5. He deceiveth the whole world = Revelation 12:9 "*And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan,.. which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth and his angels were cast out with him.*"
6. He has evil angels (demons or spirits) to do his bidding. Note Hebrews 1:7 mentions angels as spirits.
7. He appears as an Angel of light=II Cor. 11:13-15

(b) Consider a description of Satan's spiritual army.

Ephesians 6:12 "*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places* (the spiritual realm)"

1. Principalities=Defined-1. A state ruled by a prince, etc. 2. the position or authority of a prince or chief ruler 3. The rule of a prince of a small or subordinate state. (Webster's Dictionary) Satan is not all powerful like God is Almighty. Thus Satan has to set up Evil Angels which are given

degrees of power much like top Generals in an army. Principalities are special angels who are given authority by Satan over a certain geographical area with evil spirits or demons under their authority to do Satan's work.

2. Powers=Fallen Angels given special power by Satan (13.an order of angels- Webster's Dictionary)
3. Rulers of the darkness of this world such as deceiving spirits or demons
4. Spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies (high places or spiritual realm)

II Corinthians 11:13-15 “*For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel: for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the minister of righteousness whose end shall be according to their works.*”

- (a). False apostles- These are pastors or ministers who appear to be true believers but are workers of Satan placed in churches to lead people away from the truth. Cults like Jehovah Witnesses, Mormonism, etc.
- (b) Deceitful workers—leaders of False Religions like Islam, Buddhism, Shintoism, Hira Krishna, Hinduism, New Age leaders, etc.

- (3) The flesh with indwelling sin=Romans 7:14-25;

- (a) Romans 7:17 “Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me “ v. 18 “in me (that is in my flesh)” v. 23 “another law in my members....The law of sin which is in my members” This is why the body must die because the “wages of sin is death” Romans 6:23a. James 1:14 “But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.” Sin indwells our fleshly body and thus the struggle between the Holy Spirit and our flesh with indwelling sin. This struggle takes place in our soul (the thinking part of the mind, the emotions, and the will.

### III. THE BATTLE

Satan has a network of fallen angels or evil spirits (Heb. 1:7; Ps. 104:4; explains that God makes his angels spirits which helps us understand about Satan's evil spirits)  
Ephesians 6:12=(1)Principalities,(2) powers, (3) rulers of the darkness of this world, (4) spiritual wickedness in the spiritual realm (high places or heavenlies)

Most missionaries in foreign lands have encountered demonic activity, especially in third world countries, but here in the United States where the gospel has been freely preached and many have been influenced by the word of God the evil forces are slower to reveal themselves. However as the USA moves more and more away from the truth of God's word, the evil forces are going to become more bold and reveal themselves more openly. The following is an experience my wife had in Hawaii where less than one percent claim to be Christian and false religions are very prevalent!

#### A. Verna's Experience with a demon possessed man who had a prince demon!

When we were missionaries in Hawaii (the big Island) we had started a mission. A big man and his three girls started coming to the mission. We were going to have our first anniversary and he told us he was a baker and would be glad to bake the cake for the Church. However, his oven was too small and so we offered for him to use the oven in our home.

I had taken all the young people to a two day retreat and Verna stayed home with our three children and the child of the Baptist Mid-Mission couple who were bringing their young people and would be helping in the retreat. The first evening we were gone this man came up to our house with his five year old daughter to look at the oven he said. Verna was outside with our two older children when he and his 5 year old daughter walked up. She told him I was not there so it would be better if he came back another time. He pushed past Verna and went into the house so Verna had to follow because the two babies were in the house. She pointed to the kitchen stove as he passed the kitchen and said there is the stove. He glanced in and said he thought it would work and went into the living room and sat down on the couch with his little girl. Verna went in and sat on the piano stool. Our two children were with her. Our baby and the other missionaries' baby were in bed in another room with the door open.

He began to talk to Verna explaining that he had a prince demon living in him and that he had supernatural powers. He said that the spirit wanted her to go to Europe with him to do a work for the spirit. Verna said "I do not know what spirit you are speaking of but I know it is not the Holy Spirit because He would never ask me to leave my husband or do anything contrary to the word of God." Thus he began to tell Verna that she belonged to him and his world. He explained that when she was a little girl, her Mother had gone to a fortune teller to get some information. Later in reading God's word her Mother read that fortune telling etc. was of the devil. She went back to the fortune teller, whose name was Rose, and told her what she had read in the Bible. She told Rose she would never come back to see her again and what she was doing was wrong. Rose told her "We may not have you but we have her." pointing to Verna. Verna's mom told Rose you do not have either one of us and you will not! The possessed man told Verna this was the reason he told her that she belonged to his world. He went on to tell her that he knew all about her and her past life. He pointed to the family Bible Verna had given to me as a wedding present and said "I know you gave this to your husband as a wedding gift." I do not remember ever having told anyone there about that but he knew. He proceeded to tell Verna about her childhood and about her Mother's life and childhood and about her Grandmother. . It was amazing all the information he knew about Verna and her family.

Verna had been to the post office and gotten the mail with a postal card from our neighbors asking Verna to phone their friends to pick them up at the airport the next day as they were returning from a visit to the mainland. Verna had not yet phoned them but he knew about their return and even the flight and time of their arrival.

Verna said during the full time he was there his little girl's eyes seemed to be glazed over and she did not move at all. He told Verna to send the children out of the room. He said his children obeyed him because he tortured them if they did not do what he said. Verna replied "My children obey me because they know I love them." She told the children to stay where they were.

We were renting a model home on the edge of a lava flow where a builder had tried to start a development but no one wanted to live on a lava flow. Our house and the neighbors were the only homes in the area. He got up and looked out the window. He said "If you were to scream I don't guess there would be anyone who could hear you would there." Verna replied "I guess not." At that Verna put moved her arm to brace herself of the piano stool and she felt a leg. She looked to see if she had touched one of the children but they were not near her. She then realized that the Lord was there with her and she said "You cannot touch anything in this house because it is protected by the Lord." He had started toward her but when she said that his head snapped back like he had been hit and he fell to the floor. He got up and said "Don't talk like that!" Verna said "Then you go back and sit down." She said she was amazed to see him meekly go back and sit down. He said "I don't understand you! I have raped and murdered women before and they were all afraid of me but you are not afraid!" Verna said she was falling apart inside but the Lord had given her boldness to stand against him outwardly.

Verna was trying to think of a way to get him out of the house. He had been there about three hours by this time. She remembered that I had asked her to get gas in the car so she told him "Bob asked me to get gas so come on and I will take you and your daughter home." She put the children with her in the front seat of the car and had him and his daughter get in the back. Before they could pull out of the drive way he said "You don't believe I have power but watch!" Verna said it begin to rain like someone was pouring barrels of water on the car. She could not see a thing even with the windshield wipers going full speed. She had to stop and he said "It will let up in a minute. That is just a little demonstration of my power." It stopped as quickly as it had come and Verna started to drive down the road. As she passed the gas station, Rebecca, who had been quite, spoke up and asked Verna if she was going to get gas. When she said that Verna said he reached forward to put his hands around her throat. As he begin to apply pressure Verna said "Go ahead! I'll jam my foot on the accelerator. I and these children are ready to go to heaven. Are you ready to go to hell?" She said at that statement he released his grip and said "You just don't be trying to trick me." She said "I'm not trying to trick you. We will get gas on the way home but we will take you home first."

When she let him out where he lived he told Verna, "I will come to the mission in two Sundays to get your answer." Verna said "I have already given you my answer." He said, "You better think about my power because if you do not go with me, you will begin to see things in your house that your husband will not see and he will think you are losing your mind."

Verna returned home and phoned some saints who phoned the police. The police came up to check on the house during the night. The next day when I returned from the retreat we went next door to talk to the lawyer after their return. He told me to go see the man and tell him that if he came to our house again I would place a peace bond on him. That probably he had been in trouble with the law before.

I was afraid because the man I was to confront was much larger than me so I prayed and asked the Lord to protect me as I confronted him. I was amazed how shook up he was when I told him I had seen my lawyer and faced him with the possibility of contacting the police and placing a peace bond on him. Apparently the lawyer was correct in assuming that he had been in trouble with the law before.

Two Sundays later he came to church with his daughters. I changed my message and preached on the Maniac of Gadara (Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-17; Luke 8:26-39;). The Lord gave me wonderful freedom and I had everyone stand when I gave the invitation. I saw him holding on to the pew in front of him and it was trembling as he held it. He did not move otherwise and when the service was over he went by Verna and asked her for her answer. She replied that she had already given her answer. He told her that she was in for trouble like she had never seen before. Demons begin to work in our house causing Verna to see things I did not see and I began being deceived in ways I had never been before although I did not realize it until looking back later. Our son began to develop facial features like that of a mongoloid and we took him to the doctor. In John 8:44 Jesus stated that the devil is a liar, and the father of lies and I certainly fell under his influence. We returned back to the mainland of the United States for furlough shortly after this and I fear for whoever moved into that house after we left.

We begin to get every book on Demonology that we could find to learn how to stand against demonic powers. We had rented an apartment in San Angelo, Texas, near our home church. One night we were startled by our second son screaming. I fell out of bed and rushed in to him. He was crying “the hairy things, the hairy things are after me!” I held him in my arms and claimed the blood of Christ to cover us requiring the demons of Satan to leave our house and not come back. Oh how Satan and his demons hate the precious blood of Christ because “the blood of Jesus Christ His (God the Father’s) Son cleanseth us from all sin” I John 1:7. My son does not remember that experience but we well remember it. Verna recorded the references to the blood of Christ in the back page of her Bible so she would have them readily available to use against the enemy. I would encourage every believer to do the same!

Yes, the demons of Satan have attacked us several times since then and we have come in contact with other demon possessed people. We have stood against the demons in the power of the blood of Jesus Christ and His mighty name. It is difficult for believers here in the United States where the gospel is so freely preached and where the influence of truth has impacted our culture to really believe or accept these experiences because they have not been exposed like cultures where people are in spiritual darkness. As I John 1:5-7 states *“This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son cleanseth us from all sin.”* The more the United States of America turns from the truth of God’s word and the Eternal God, the more we are going to begin to see and experience demonic activity. How vital it is that we as believers in the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, who alone is “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6;) to and about our almighty God, walk in love as children of light (Ephesians 5:1-18;) being filled with the Holy Spirit! In I John 4:1-11 we are instructed about victory over evil spirits because verse 4 states *“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them (evil spirits): because greater is He that is in you, then he that is in the world.”* May I admonish you who are believers reading this, to daily get into your Bible and obey its instruction? I cannot emphasize enough the importance of God’s word and our obeying II Timothy 2:15-19.

#### **IV. THE VICTORY=THE BELIEVER'S AUTHORITY!**

Luke 7:1-10

Introduction=v. 8 is a key verse “*For I also am a man set under authority having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.*”

The Centurion was under Roman rule yet given authority over approximately 100 men. Jesus marveled at the Centurion’s understanding this principle of authority and the authority that Jesus had.

#### **AUTHORITY IS THE OFFICIAL LEGAL POWER TO ACT!**

In Genesis 1:28 God gave Adam & Eve dominion and authority over the earth= ”*And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*” HOWEVER, THEY YEILDED TO SATANS SUGGESTION TO DISOBEY GOD AND THUS BECAME HIS SLAVES GIVING THEIR AUTHORITY OVER TO SATAN SO THAT HE IS NOW THE god OF THIS WORLD (II Corinthians 4:4;).

However, Jesus came to set us free from Satan’s power and control. John 8:32 “Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” John 14:6 “Jesus saith unto him, I am...the truth....no man cometh unto the Father but by me”

Abraham Lincoln made the Emancipation Proclamation for the slaves yet many of them continued to serve their old masters. They did not accept the deliverance that was given them. All Christians have been liberated from the bondage of sin yet the majority continues to live under its control. Why? Perhaps they do not know who they are in Christ! They do not understand the deliverance that is theirs as Romans 6-8 explains. They know they are going to heaven when they die but they do not grasp the deliverance that is theirs NOW! John 8:31-32 “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” Romans 5:17 “For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one: MUCH MORE they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness SHALL REIGN IN LIFE BY ONE, JESUS CHRIST!” Death reigned by one, HOW MUCH MORE SHALL WE REIGN IN LIFE BY JESUS CHRIST NOW!!!

Joshua Bell, a world famous violinist, played at 7:50 AM for 50 minutes at the Washington D.C. Subway station where the commuters get off the Subway. He played on a \$3and ½ million dollars Stradivarius violin yet very few stopped to listen even though he is the top violinist in the world. Normally people pay \$100.00 to listen to him in concert.

Over 1,000 people passed by yet only a few stopped to listen and only one recognized him.

So the glorious truth of our VICTORY IN JESUS is not understood by most Christians and so many live in defeat because they choose to do so either out of ignorance of God’s word or because they are caught up in the deception of Satan who deceiveth the whole world (Rev. 12:9).

CONSIDER Romans 6:16 “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.”

Luke 7:7-8 “Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come , and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.” He said “I am under authority—thus I have authority” JESUS MARVELED—He has it, He understands the principle of Authority!

REMEMBER-Authority is the official legal power to act!

A. THE SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY=v. 8 “under authority” We have someone to back up the authority that we have which is the Lord Jesus Christ=Matthew 28:18-20.

Illustration=Policeman “Open the door in the name of the LAW.” The Law of the land gives authority to the policeman!

Illustration=hearing a Police whistle, boy playing policeman, I pay no attention to his demands but hearing the whistle and seeing a real policeman I obey because he has authority

I John 4:17 c “because as He is so are we in this world” The Doctrine of Identification

1. We are identified in His death=Romans 6:3 “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? 6-9 “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.” Galatians 2:20a “I am crucified with Christ” When Christ died, the believer died in Christ!

2. We are identified in His burial=Romans 6:4a “Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death:” Romans 6:5a “for if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death” Buried in the likeness of His death!

3. We are identified in His Resurrection=6:4b “that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Romans 6:5b “we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection ” Raised in the likeness of His resurrection

4. We are identified in His assention=Ephesians 2:6 “And hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus”

YES, OUR AUTHORITY COMES FROM THE LORD JESUS CHRIST =Matthew 28:19 “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power (or authority) is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” I Peter 2:22 “Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels, and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him”

Yes, our authority comes from the Lord Jesus Christ! WE HAVE VICTORY IN JESUS! Does Jesus have authority over Satan? YES=It was promised back in Genesis 3:15 when man fell into sin! Listen to the word’s of God “*And I will put enmity* (a feeling or condition of hostility or hatred=Webster’s’) *between thee* (the serpent=Rev. 12:9) *and the woman, and*

*between thy seed and her seed; (note the woman has the egg and the man has the seed so what does this mean? The virgin Mary conceived the Lord Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit=Luke 1:35; so this was what God meant.) it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.”*

Yes JESUS HAS AUTHORITY and note Philippians 2:8-11 “*And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*” James 2:19

“*Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils (demons) also believe, and tremble.*”

B. THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY=V. 8 “*For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.*”

YOU CAN NOT BE OVER UNTIL YOU ARE UNDER! ALL AUTHORITY HANGS ON OBEDIENCE!

1. Jesus was subject to God the Father=John 17:4 “*I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*” Jesus said in John 5:30b “*I seek not mine own will but the will of the Father which hath sent me*” Jesus Always obeyed the Father! “*Not my will but thine be done*” Luke 22:42b.
2. Jesus was subject to the Holy Spirit=Luke 4:1 “*And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness*”
3. Jesus was subject to His earth parents=Luke 2:51a “*And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them:*”
4. Jesus was subject to the Government=Matt. 17:24, 27 “*And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? “ Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money; that take, and give unto them for me and thee.*” Jesus paid His taxes!

Yes, the secret of spiritual authority is YOU CAN NOT BE OVER UNTIL YOUR ARE UNDER!

C. THE SCOPE OF SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY!

Luke 10:18-19 “*And He (Jesus) said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.*”

“Behold, I give unto you power (authority) over all the power of the enemy.

Adam was given authority over creation but our authority is only over evil powers now. Hebrews 2:8 “*Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet. For in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him.*

But now we see not yet all things put under Him." Romans 8:22-23 "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan, within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

Illustration-Do not throw a rock at a Hornets nest or you will discover that we do not have authority over creation!

Jesus gave us authority over the enemy but not over creation now. We can overcome any fleshly temptation through Christ and His power! II Peter 1:3 "*According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

#### D. THE STRENGTH OF SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY!

Luke 7:7 "*Wherfore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: BUT SAY THE WORD, AND MY SERVANT SHALL BE HEALED.*"

We must surrender to have strength from the Lord! I surrendered to the Lord in 1954. I told Him I will go where you want me to go and do what you want me to do! A white handkerchief is a good reminder that we have surrendered to Christ!

Illustration of one under authority=A professional football player who is 6'7" and weights 325 obeys the 5'6" umpire that weighs 140 pounds when he tell him to go to the showers because the umpire has authority.

So we have spiritual authority over the forces of evil through the indwelling Holy Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9) and of God ! Yes, I John 4:4b "*Greater is He that is in you, then he that is in the world.*" WE HAVE SPIRITUAL POWER THROUGH CHRIST WHO INDWELLS US THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT AS WE SURRENDER TO HIM AND HIS AUTHORITY!

#### E. THE SPIRITUAL WEAPONS WE HAVE TO FIGHT THE ENEMY!

1. II Corinthians 10:3-5 "*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal (fleshly), but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*"

What is a stronghold? It is an area of our life where we allow sin to take a foothold and from which sin can begin to take control of a person's life.

Illustration=Pornography in a man begins with a look or two at a picture of a woman that is seductive by showing some of her body that causes a man to lust. It stirs up evil desire and causes the man to want to see more. The more he looks at these types of pictures the more he wants to look and lust. Each look is a brick of the stronghold that starts to be built in his mind and the evil pictures are stored in the brain for later meditation to cause more lust. Dr. James Dobson has stated that pornography lays the foundation for a man to be unfaithful to his wife! This is how Christian men can become slaves to pornography.

Romans 6:16 "*Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his*

*servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness."*

Proverbs 23:7a "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he:" IT IS NOT WHAT YOU THINK YOU ARE BUT WHAT YOU THINK, YOU ARE!

THIS IS WHY JESUS SAID:

Matthew 5:28 "*But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

THIS IS WHY PORNOGRAPHY IS SUCH A GRAVE SIN AND SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED IN ANYONE'S LIFE!!

THIS TRUTH CAN BE APPLIED TO ALCHOL, PRIDE, OR ANY OTHER STRONGHOLD THAT IS BUILT UP IN A BELIEVERS LIFE!!

YES, PRAISE THE LORD ANYONE THAT IS A CHILD OF GOD CAN HAVE ANY STRONGHOLD CAST DOWN BY OBEYING GOD'S WORD!! THAT STRONGHOLD MAY HAVE BEEN THERE FOR MUCH TIME AND IT MAY TAKE TIME TO PULL IT COMPLETELY DOWN BUT THROUGH THE POWER OF THE INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT AND BY YIELDING TO HIM IT WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED!! Philippians 4:13 "*I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME!.*" In John 15:7 Jesus said "*If ye abide in my, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will. And it shall be done unto you.*" This is one of the blessings of memorizing scripture! Get a small 3 by 5 Index Card and write or type the following scripture on it. Read it 60 times and It will begin to sink into your thinking. Repeat it and meditate on it. You will begin to see that stronghold removed one brick at a time!

II Corinthians 10:3-5 "*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal (fleshly), but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*"

Thus the believer can choose with their mind to yield every thought to the Lord and not allow evil thoughts to control their thinking. Cry out to the Lord and claim the authority you have through Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit to not allow your mind to dwell on the evil thoughts. I Corinthians 15:57 "*But thanks be to God, which which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

2. Ephesians 6:17 "*And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*" God's word is our weapon also with which to fight against the enemy of the flesh, the world system, Satan and his demon spirits!! Remember the word of God tells us in I John 4:4 "*Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them* (the evil spirits-verse 1) *because greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.*" Who lives in the believer? I Corinthians 6:19-20 "*What know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost* (another name for the Holy Spirit) *which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For*

*ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."*

A. It is so important that we as believers have God's word hidden in our hearts.

Psalm 119:9-11 "*Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: o let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee.*" We hid God's word in our hearts by memorization. The more of God's word you have hidden in your heart the more you will have to draw upon when under attack by the enemy Satan, the world system and the flesh with indwelling sin (Ephesians 2:1-3). If you get the card mentioned above and write or type verses on it then carry it with you, pull it out when you have free time and repeat it over and over it will begin to be instilled in your thinking. When we do not have our minds active is when the enemy will make evil suggestions and often it sounds like your own thoughts. Thus, if you are not careful, you will take it and begin to meditate on it.

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