

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

In order to engage in spiritual warfare, we must first know the opposition between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. **God's kingdom is eternal**, both in time and in space... Furthermore, since God Himself is in light, so also is **God's kingdom in light**. Satan's kingdom is **not eternal**. As to time, it is limited in time; as to space, it is limited to the air and the earth. Furthermore, Satan's kingdom is **in darkness**, the exact opposite of the kingdom of God. In addition, there is still another great difference: God's kingdom is **legal**, whereas the kingdom of Satan is **illegal**. The whole universe was created by God and belongs to Him; hence, God has the legal right to reign. On the contrary, Satan's kingdom was established by rebellion against God; hence, it is entirely illegal.

Satan's Kingdom

Satan's kingdom is the sphere of Satan's reign. The Lord Jesus once called Satan "the prince of the world" (John 14:30). This reveals that Satan not only has his kingdom, but also reigns in his kingdom. Moreover, within his kingdom are his messengers of various ranks, all of which were angels who followed Satan in rebelling against God. Today these are the principalities, powers, rulers, dominions, and spiritual hosts of wickedness of the air, Satan being their head. Furthermore, in Satan's kingdom there are many demons, evil spirits, who serve as his servants. Later, after men were created, Satan came to entice men and succeeded in seducing them. Men became his kingdom's subjects, the ones who were handled and abused by him. Therefore, there are **four classes of personalities** in Satan's kingdom today. In the air are Satan and his messengers, and on earth are his servants and subjects, the innumerable demons and the myriads of people... They are organized altogether into a system through which Satan usurps the air and the earth to the end that he may overthrow God's authority and set up his own kingdom. Therefore, this kingdom, organized by Satan's rebellious force is absolutely illegal.

ALL SPIRITUAL WORK IS A WARFARE

If our eyes have been opened by the Lord, we will see that the nature of our work in serving the Lord is that of warfare. All our spiritual work (**preaching the gospel, edifying the saints, administering the church, even all our prayers**), whether it be delivering men from sin, from the world, from illness, or from problems, has an ultimate goal: to **rescue men** out of the power of Satan and drive out the satanic power

of darkness from within men, so that men might be gained by God. Thus, God's name will be sanctified in men, God's kingdom will reach unto men, His will shall be done in men, and thereby His glory will be manifested upon men. Therefore, the nature of all this work is that of spiritual warfare.

THE PRINCIPLES OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE

The first principle of spiritual warfare is that **we cannot use fleshly weapons**. These fleshly weapons not only refer to the losing of temper, but include **all human schemes** and **natural methods**. For example, we may feel that a certain brother is in error and that this error has already become a problem in the church. We want to correct him, yet we feel that to do so is inappropriate. Later we remember that there is another brother who is rather intimate with him; so we ask that brother to go and talk with him. Even this kind of maneuvering is a fleshly weapon; it will eventually prove futile in solving the spiritual problem. In society and the business world, many such schemes are employed, but on the spiritual battlefield we cannot use schemes. Whenever we use the schemes of our flesh, we have already fallen into the hands of the enemy. How then shall we be able to deliver others from the hands of the enemy?

We see that Paul was a man who **never** used fleshly weapons. In his dealings with the churches and his contacts with the saints, he was perfectly straight—as straight as an arrow. He would rather be treated as a fool than employ ingenious scheming for a moment. For this reason he could be “mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds,” and thereby gain the victory in the spiritual warfare. In the same manner, if we wish to win the victory in all our spiritual works and be effective, we must forsake all fleshly weapons. For example, in preaching the gospel it is all right to use illustrated tracts as helps for presentation, but if we continually rely on various methods or use material benefits to attract people, that is using fleshly weapons. The most it can do is to help people become church members; it cannot deliver them out of the hands of Satan. Therefore, the first principle of spiritual warfare is to **forsake all fleshly, carnal weapons**.

Keeping The Position Of Ascension

The second principle of spiritual warfare is to **keep the position of ascension**. We have spoken much concerning spiritual warfare; in fact, however, there is **only one kind** of people who can engage in spiritual warfare—those who have received salvation, have been raised from death, and are now sitting with Christ in the heavens.

Only this kind of men can attack the enemy in the air from a transcendent position in the heavens. Therefore, in order to engage in spiritual warfare we must **keep the heavenly position**. Whenever we are not heavenly enough, whenever we lose our heavenly condition, everything is finished. If our **gospel** is powerless, it is because we are not heavenly enough; we ourselves are earthly, and we are using earthly methods or fleshly weapons to preach the gospel. As a result, we may get some saved, but **their condition will be muddled**, and they will be unable to be completely delivered out of the power of Satan. If we really desire to deliver men out of Satan's power so that they are not only saved, but **completely delivered** from the hands of Satan, we who are preaching the gospel must be men who are sitting in the heavens and keeping the ascended position.

The same principle applies in **edifying** the saints. If we lose the position of ascension, we can neither supply nor help the saints. If the messages we preach are mere doctrines and the fellowship we give mere knowledge, containing no element of warfare, the most we can impart is teachings for the mentality and stirring in the emotions; we cannot **deliver people out of the power of Satan and turn them to God in a practical way**. Therefore, if we want our work to have the effect of war, work which is able to deliver men from Satan's hands, we must keep the position of ascension and live continually in the condition of the heavens. This is an extremely important secret.

Using Spiritual Weapons

The third principle of spiritual warfare is that we must use spiritual weapons... **Spiritual weapons refer to the "whole armor" mentioned in Ephesians 6:10-17**, which includes the **girdle of truth**, the **breastplate of righteousness**, the **shoes of the gospel of peace**, the **shield of faith**, the **helmet of salvation**, and the sword of the Spirit. All these weapons are spiritual, and when we use them we must be **in spirit**. We can say that the basic principle of employing the spiritual weapons is that all our activities must be of the spirit. Preaching the gospel, edifying the saints, and administering the church are **of the spirit**. Whatever kind of activity we are engaged in, every one must be **of the spirit** and every one must release the spirit. Anything which is not of the spirit, anything which is according to our own view, our own idea, our own wisdom, or our own intelligence, is unavoidably a kind of human scheme and thus a fleshly weapon, not a spiritual weapon. Therefore, when we are fighting, all our activities

must be of the spirit, touching the feeling **from within our spirit**. This also is an extremely basic principle.

Praying Fighting Prayers

The fourth principle of spiritual warfare is to have fighting prayers... Spiritual warfare cannot neglect prayer, for spiritual warfare largely depends on prayer... For example, when Daniel prayed, there was action on the throne. But when the answer came down from the throne, it met resistance in the air. Daniel prayed continually. His prayer was a kind of warfare... God desires His saints to have **such kind of prayer to work together with Him** and fight for Him.

Through the Blood, the Word of Testimony, and Not Loving the Soul Life

To engage in spiritual warfare through the blood means to apply the blood of the Lord as our covering and to take the Lord's blood to counter Satan's accusations and attacks. Since we are still to this very day on the earth and in the body of flesh, we cannot help but have some defilement, corruption, weakness, shortcoming, and other undesirable conditions. When we fight with Satan, the first thing he does is to point out all the weaknesses and shortcomings in our conscience and then to accuse and attack us. Satan's accusation is not only within; sometimes it is spoken without...Secondly, we must testify. That is, we must **declare what the Lord Jesus has accomplished**, the victory of the cross, the attainment of resurrection, and the position of ascension. This is not a matter of preaching, but of **testifying and declaring with words**.

Satan is indeed a very subtle accuser. Sometimes when we just start to talk about overcoming the world, he immediately accuses us within, saying, "*Are you not still loving the world?*" The moment he interrupts and asks such a question, we faint inwardly. This is the time we ought to immediately declare the Lord's victory. We must say, "*Although I have not been delivered from the world, yet the Lord Jesus has overcome the world.*" Thus we can prevail against his attacks. Thirdly, we must **not love our own lives**; we must have no self-love nor self-care. Loving and caring for ourselves will cause us to lose the position of warfare and be unable to fight the battle. Hence, in order to fight the battle, we must not love our soul lives, even unto death.

THE RESULTS OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE

The **first result** of spiritual warfare is **the bringing in of God's authority**. How much we fight determines how much God's authority will be brought in. God's authority can only be executed in the place of our fighting. If this warfare transpires in an individual, then God's authority reaches that individual; if it occurs in the home, then God's authority reaches the home; if it takes place in the church, then His authority reaches the church. Therefore, the first result of spiritual warfare is the bringing in of God's authority. The **second result** of spiritual warfare is that **Satan is driven out and chased away**. This is true in the individual, in the home, and in the church as well. So also it is even in the air and on the earth. The place where the saints maintain the spiritual warfare is also the place where God's authority is brought in; consequently, Satan is driven out from that place.

Among the children of God there are not enough who are fighting the warfare, and the element of spiritual warfare is **too little**; hence, Satan still rules in the air and on the earth. When our spiritual experience is rather shallow, our sense of spiritual warfare is very weak. We still feel that our problem is with sin, the world, the flesh, the self, and the natural constitution. When we deal with these and enter into the fourth stage of spiritual life, our experience is deepened, and we see that the Body which God uses in the universe is the church. Then we have a strong sense toward spiritual warfare, knowing that whatever we do—our every action, word, and attitude—is an influence upon Satan and an attack against him. Only then will we feel strongly that our only problem is Satan, and that we are here as warriors to deal with this enemy of God... Therefore, **we do not deal with things that appear on the surface**, but, through the position and authority of ascension, we deal with the power of darkness which schemes behind these things and reigns on the earth.