

Theme: We must learn to use the weapons of God's Word, prayer, worship, and fellowship to demolish Satan's strongholds in us and others.

I. Intro - The Tactics of Spiritual Warfare

- A. We have looked at strategy (big picture goal) of spiritual warfare - to draw near to God, be alert for the attacks of Satan, and stand against, resist, and attack his works.
- B. We have also looked at strongholds - entrenched habits of thought, emotions, speech, and actions Satan uses to keep us from experiencing freedom in Christ.
- C. How do we stand and resist the building up of strongholds, and then lay siege, attack and tear down strongholds that already exist?
- D. Today - the weapons of our spiritual warfare
For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ **The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.** ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. ⁶ And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete. 2 Corinthians 10:3-6
- E. Note: I can not cover all weapons today; most important

II. The Weapons of Spiritual Warfare

- A. The Word of God
Take the helmet of salvation and **the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.** Ephesians 6:17

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Hebrews 4:12

1. Scripture is the weapon Jesus used in spiritual warfare (Matthew 4:1-11 - it is written!)
2. Scripture is the most important weapon, for it identifies strongholds, is the main battle weapon, & instructs, informs, & fuels all other weapons.
 - a. Spirit uses Scripture to penetrate to the deepest levels of our being to reveal strongholds in us
 - b. Spirit uses the Word to renew our minds & break down strongholds
 - c. Scripture tells us about prayer - and the best way to pray is to pray Scripture!
 - d. Same is true of worship, fellowship, fasting, etc.
3. To use Scripture in warfare we do not randomly or quickly read, but rather specifically meditate, memorize and quote God's Word
4. Malcolm Gladwell - *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*
 - a. Much of behavior driven by subconscious thought
 - b. This is like spiritual strongholds - so deep we are often unaware it is driving us
5. In spiritual warfare we meditate upon God's Word until it begins to change our subconscious thought, tearing down strongholds of wrong thought and building strongholds of godly thought, emotions, words and actions
6. This is why we must meditate on Word day & night
Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Joshua 1:8

- a. We must meditate on it day and night
 - b. We must speak it out loud from our mouth to reinforce its message to ourselves
 - c. This is what alters our behavior so that we obey
7. Like a Marine with his M-16, you can never be too familiar with Scripture!
 8. If you know of a stronghold, study, meditate, memorize Scripture about this - and do this constantly until it alters your very subconscious thought patterns

B. Prayer

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Eph 6:18

1. Prayer is the direct engagement of the enemy in spiritual warfare, as we are guided by the Spirit to apply God's Word to spiritual strongholds
2. This is not random, sleepy prayer, or a wish list of what we want - it is wartime prayer in the Spirit
3. Prayer lists are good - I use one - but we must allow the Spirit to guide for whom we pray, what we pray, and even how we pray
4. Praying in the Spirit includes all kinds of prayers
And **pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests**. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Ephesians 6:18
 - a. This includes praying Scripture - I pray Psalms
 - b. It includes using a prayer list - I do most days - but I let the Spirit direct what to pray
 - c. It includes praying in tongues

- d. It also includes intense times of prayer for specific strongholds we are wanting to see demolished
 - e. This can also include times of fasting and prayer
5. The reason many find prayer optional and boring! "Life is war. That's not all it is. But it is always that. Our weakness in prayer is owing largely to our neglect of this truth. Prayer is primarily a wartime walkie-talkie for the mission of the church as it advances against the powers of darkness and unbelief. It is not surprising that prayer malfunctions when we try to make it a domestic intercom to call upstairs for more comforts in the den." John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad*, 45.
 - a. We are part of the cosmic spiritual war
 - b. Satan is trying to enslave and destroy us and those we love
 - c. We draw near to God and resist Satan as we engage in Scripture filled, Spirit directed prayer
 6. The more we become aware of the cosmic spiritual warfare raging in and around us, the more we will find ourselves engaging in deep prayer.

C. Praise, thanksgiving and worship

Praise the Lord. Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of the saints. 2 Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; let the people of Zion be glad in their King....⁵Let the saints rejoice in this honor and sing for joy on their beds. ⁶ May the praise of God be in their mouths and a double-edged sword in their hands, ⁷ to inflict vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples, ⁸ to bind their kings with fetters, their nobles with shackles of iron, ⁹ to carry out the sentence written against them. This is the glory of all his saints. Praise the Lord. Psalms 149:1-2, 5-9

1. Praise, thanksgiving and worship are powerful weapons in spiritual warfare, binding the enemy and His work.
2. Praise & worship verbally expressed binds the enemy & strengthens the work of God's Spirit for it expresses our trust in the Supremacy of God
3. Spend time each day singing and praying praise and worship to God, and giving Him thanks for all He has done for you
4. This is why corporate praise and worship - including in song - is not optional but a critical component in spiritual warfare

D. Corporate life in a local church

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: ¹⁰ If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! ¹¹ Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? ¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. Ecclesiastes 4:9–12

1. The Christian life is not meant to be lived alone - and solitary spiritual warfare is virtually impossible
2. Remember the whole context of Ephesians 6 is corporate, not private - and the prayer is for others not just ourselves
3. Our personal spiritual warfare is strengthened and made more effective as we gather with other believers for worship in the Word, prayer, praise, fellowship and at the Table.

4. To simply skip a gathering of the local church is to lay down our weapons on the field of battle & to invite Satan to build strongholds in us.
5. The importance of arriving early and joining in every second of corporate worship - from the call to worship to the benediction - can not be overstressed

III. Case Study: Breaking the Stronghold of Anger

- A. I had a major stronghold of anger from my teen years
 1. It was expressed in bursts of rage - embarrassing
 2. Linda was shocked when she first saw it
 3. Often expressed at our children for misbehavior
 4. A real stronghold in my life
- B. Tearing down the stronghold
 1. I studied, meditated, memorized verses on anger and words
 2. I spent real time in prayer - confessing, crying out for help, asking to see root causes, triggers
 3. I confessed my sin to God & the one I sinned against; asked others to check in
 4. I fasted - especially after I had lost my temper
 5. The battle was long, but with gradual improvement
 6. Spirit eventually revealed triggers of towering over children, raising voice, speaking harsh words
 7. He also revealed underlying issues of control, legalism

8. I let Word change my expectations, control, legalism
9. I asked Spirit to remind me BEFORE the battle
10. I have seen major improvement in this area over the years - not by self-help but by real spiritual warfare through the weapons we listed above
11. God can work in each of us - and our church - the same way

IV. Applying the Word

- A. No specific application today - whole teaching is application of the series so far
 1. Take time to go over this during the week
 2. Begin to apply this in your own life
- B. The Table of Deliverance
 1. The Table is a major weapon against strongholds in our life
 2. Here we are reminded of the Gospel and draw near to God
 3. God actually meets us in this Sacrament - and tears down strongholds in our life
 4. Here we receive the grace of God fresh and new
 5. Come and feast in the presence of your enemies - and draw near to your God

The Weapons of Spiritual Warfare

2 Corinthians 10:3-6
August 13, 2017
Communion
Hebrews 13:20-21

Teaching keywords: spiritual warfare; Satan and demons; Word of God; prayer; fellowship; praise; worship; Christian life

May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep,²¹ equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Hebrews 13:20–21

For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does.⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.⁶ And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete. 2 Corinthians 10:3–6