

SPIRITUAL FORCES: WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE: WORSHIP

September 17, 2017 | Pastor Randy Remington

As we continue our study of "Spiritual Forces", we have begun to see that there is a spiritual reality around us that we might not even be aware of. The scriptures, including Jesus, addressed this spiritual reality without hesitation or apology.

We have been shown that this reality has influence, (for good or bad) on our lives and world. But to take it a step further, we're called into this conflict between two kingdoms. We're not battling flesh and blood...people, our battle is against spiritual forces. Additionally, we're not battling for ourselves or our kingdom/s, but for God's Kingdom.

So what are our weapons, let's look to the scriptures:

"For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 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. And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete." (2 Corinthians 10:3-6)

The original words used for the Devil were:

New Testament: "Diabolos": slanderous, accusing falsely, liar and

Old Testament: "Ha-Satan" and "Satanas" means "adversary".

The moment we choose to follow Jesus we have an enemy, who is our adversary. He is lurking, waiting to destroy what God is desiring to birth. He hates God and because we are his, he hates us and our families and marriages, etc.

For many of us who live in America, September 11th 2001 was an eye opener. There were people at our shores and in our cities that wanted to kill us. We may have wondered why and it may be the same in this situation; in short Satan hates anyone who loves God.

A study was done in 2008 of people who identified themselves as "Christians". At that point 60% of those responding did not believe in an actual devil. If there truly is no devil, demons, etc., we must ask ourselves why is there so much scripture devoted to the subject?

When you confess Jesus as Lord, you have an enemy. We are not to live in fear, but we are to be aware. We don't war against people, but we are to be on the offensive against the darkness.

So why does praise and worship to God matter? It is absolutely vital because it is one of our most powerful weapons.

"How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, "I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of Mount Zaphon. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." But you are brought down to the realm of the dead, to the depths of the pit. Those who see you stare at you, they ponder your fate: "Is this the man who shook the earth and made kingdoms tremble, the man who made the world a wilderness, who overthrew its cities and would not let his captives go home?" (Isaiah 14:13-17)

Can you hear the echoes of this in the Garden;

"You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God"

We also see that Lucifer was filled with pride;

"You said in your heart, "I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of Mount Zaphon. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."

'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: "'You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: carnelian, chrysolite and emerald, topaz, onyx and jasper, lapis lazuli, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings.'" (Ezekiel 28:12-17)

He was created, he had a beginning.

He was designed to worship God, it was his purpose, but he became proud and desired the worship for himself.

The Serpents real message to Adam and Eve was; "God's not enough" "don't look to God"! He was telling them to look within yourselves, elsewhere, anywhere but God. Even though Adam was made from the dirt, he was not a living being until God breathed life into him. That moment was incredible in and of itself; but think about the breath going into Adam and as he comes alive. The first face he sees is God's. This was telling him (and us) "this is what you're made for"; he is more than enough, don't let the deceiver and adversary lead you astray!

GOD HATES PRIDE AND ACTIVELY RESISTS IT

"But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:

"God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." 7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up." (James 4:6-10)

Remember what Pastor Randy and Keith told us; God actively opposes pride. Don't align with the devil on this. If you do, don't be surprised if you're running up against a wall of opposition.

"The Answer to pride is worship"

THREE PRACTICAL REASONS WHY WE WORSHIP GOD

1. TO KEEP OUR LIVES GOD-CENTERED

"Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits— who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed. He made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel: The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust." (Psalm 103:1-14)

2. TO KEEP OUR FAITH IN GOD STRONG AND ACTIVE

"I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure." (Psalm 16:8-9)

I'm making a decision, I've put God in my line of sight, keeping my eyes on him. He is ever before me; it is our decision to put him first, then we will not be shaken.

"And provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair." (Isaiah 61:3)

3. TO KEEP EVERYTHING IN ITS CORRECT PERSPECTIVE

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." (Matthew 6:13)

David, the "giant killer", who was not large in stature, could bravely confront and kill the giant. He did not fear the lion, bear or the giant because he served a big God. His perspective was correct on both sides of the issue. This is why we are called to "magnify the Lord". He becomes what he truly is in our eyes, our perspective.

God has not given us a spirit of fear, Isaiah extorted us to put on: "a garment of praise, instead of a spirit of despair"

When you got dressed this morning, the clothes didn't jump out of the closet. We have to make a choice, a decision to put on the "garment of praise".

SOMETHING IS AT WORK

"Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God." (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4)

The "Man of Lawlessness" will be revealed in our world. That spirit is already at work. When he is fully manifest, it will be nothing new or surprising. He will seek for people to turn from God and worship him.

But for us something powerful happens when we look to God and we live and worship him. We are not living for ourselves or something else, we are living for him and his kingdom!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. We have learned in our "spiritual forces" study that there is an unseen spiritual reality around us. The scriptures give us insight into this reality and the influence it has in our lives and world for good or bad. Take a look again at 2 Corinthians 10:3-6, what does it tell you?
2. A couple of discussion points.
 - The names in the original language show us that the devil is slanderous, accusing falsely and a liar. But his name also means "Adversary". What does this tell us as believers and why does he hate us so much.
 - So we know that when you confess Jesus as Lord you have an enemy. Please discuss how not to live in fear, but remain aware.
3. Discuss what we learn about Lucifer/Satan in these Passages found in Isaiah 13:14 Ezekiel 28:12-17.
4. We learned that the "Answer to pride is worship"; pride of course was Lucifer's original sin. Let's finish by discussing the three Practical Reasons Why We Worship God:
 - To keep our lives God-centered
 - To keep our faith in God Strong and Active
 - To keep everything in its correct perspective