

SPIRITUAL WEAPONS: SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

September 24, 2017 | Pastor Randy Remington

This is part 5 of our Sunday morning study on "Spiritual Forces". The idea behind the series is that we're in a spiritual war. We're to take a stance of resistance against darkness and against the true enemy. None of us get to be spectators in the fight; the fight will come to you.

We've come to believe that comfort and peace are normative. Jesus made peace but he made it through the war on the cross.

Some in our culture would say that there is no devil, but it's dangerous not to believe in the devil. We tend to think that all evil has a human explanation to it. Believing that if we could solve societal issues and bring about a just society then we could all live in peace. We lie to ourselves and believe we can manage and control it.

"Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.' Jesus answered, 'It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ***"If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"*** Jesus answered him, ***"It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"*** Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ***"All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"*** (Matthew 4:1-10)

Jesus encountered the devil head on. Most of us will never have that experience. The devil has had a lot of time and experience to understand human nature and tendencies. Jesus hits him head on and defeats him through the means and message of scripture. Jesus is so saturated in scripture that it instinctively comes up out of Him in time of battle. We see this when he was agonizing on the cross with the sin of the world upon Him; what comes out of Him...scripture. His last words are scripture from the Psalms. What came out of Him was the truth of the Word.

What Jesus was telling the devil was, "you're lying, you're not telling the truth, that's a distortion, that's not true. We may be saved but not necessarily safe. There's well-meaning believers that walk in bondage because they have believed a lie. Satan can't hurt us unless he can get in our heart and our head with these false beliefs and lies.

If it's just about you trying to be good, satan can hold mastery over you in accusation and condemnation. Why is the devil our enemy? Because he is the enemy of truth. And Jesus in the way the truth and the life. And you stand with Jesus. The minute you align with truth, you have an adversary; you've got an enemy.

"Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" (Genesis 3:1)

The first line of attack is; let's take what God said, let's twist it, let's cast suspicion on it, let's just set it aside and get away from what God said for a moment. Let's just start thinking for ourselves and set God aside.

"You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies." (John 8:44)

Anything that the devil whispers to you is a lie.

THE WORD IS DEFENSIVE: A FOUNDATION

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.” (Matthew 7:24-27)

Jesus said if we hear His Word and obey His Word we will have a firm foundation. We’re all building our lives on something. You’re building your marriage on something. You’re building your finances on something. What is the foundation you are building on? When we build on the rock there is something that is undergirding you that’s stronger than you.

“Faith in God makes us saved; Faith in God’s Word makes us safe.”

I am called to be both a secure believer in my salvation and to say I stand strong. The enemy will come to you in your weakest most vulnerable moments and in the midst of crisis and difficulty.

THE WORD IS OFFENSIVE: A SWORD

“Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” (Ephesians 6:17)

The sword that is being referred to is not a “brave heart” type sword, but a roman centurion type sword. It is a double edged sword that was used in hand to hand combat. It was a lethal weapon.

“For the word of God is alive 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)

“The Word is powerful...the enemy has to disarm you before he can defeat you.”

The enemy wants you to keep your sword in the drawer; keep it under some books; keep it away from your daily life; because you’ll be weaponless. The scripture tells us that the enemy “prowls, searching for those he MAY devour. Who’s let their guard down? Who’s given him an opening? Who’s without a weapon?

The enemy fears the Word. He can’t defend against it.

When you’re armed, you don’t run from the roar you run toward the roaring lion because God hasn’t given us a spirit of fear.

THE WORD IS PREEMPTIVE: A LIGHT

“Your Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” (Psalm 119:105)

The light shows us where we’re supposed to take the next step. When I’ve lost my way, my joy, my peace...I go to the light. It keeps me from stumbling.

“I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.” (Acts 26:17-18)

The light shows you the next step you should take; but also shows you the direction you should go. The enemy dwells in the darkness. The only way to dispel the darkness is to turn on the light. Light and dark cannot coexist.

A MANDATE TO SATAN:

Satan take note and listen well. You will not conquer me, I'm blood washed, I'm spirit filled, I'm daily delivered. I am strongly sanctified, I'm spirit soaked and word indwelt. I'm linked with sovereign and eternal power and have set my face like flint towards the Lord. You're extremely subtle but I'm on to your ways. You parade as an angel of light but I walk in a much brighter light. Your days of deception are over with me. I won't be deceived, detoured, derailed, distorted, distracted, discouraged or disillusioned by your schemes. Your vile influence will not cross the no trespassing sign on the gate of my heart. My life is off limits to you now. My doors are closed to you forever. You will not walk in, crawl in, slither in, sneak in, pry in, jump in, swim in, fly in, drive in or barge into my life. I now have a permanent guest that lives inside and He will never share His temple with you. Face it, your days are numbered, your kingdom is doomed, your designs are dwindling, your evil eroding. Your devilishness dissolving, your deceit decaying, your deception diminishing and your death is dying. Your victory party has been canceled and soon your show will be over. You can't trap me with your snares, assault me with your subtlety or defeat me with your deception because He that is in me is greater than you and I'm submitted to God and His Word. I resist you; you must leave.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. We noted that in our society today we've come to believe that comfort and peace are normative. Yet we know that Jesus made peace, but he made it through the war on the cross. Do you agree with this assessment? Also please discuss the observation that we as a society tend to think that all evil has a human explanation to it believing that we can solve societal issues, through humans means.
2. When we look at the head to head battle between Jesus and the devil in Matthew 4, what were the tactics of satan and how did Jesus win this battle?
3. Discuss what we learned from "The Word is Defensive: A Foundation"
4. Again look at the second point and discuss what you saw in "The Word is Offensive: A Sword"
5. Lastly, what do we see in the third and last point, "The Word is Preemptive: A Light"