

Spiritual Warfare

BACKGROUND:

The fact that there is a spiritual dimension to life is well known even in very primitive societies and perhaps even more so than western world or modern societies. We do not simply live in a physical world. However, modern societies have been blinded to the spiritual dimension due to its preoccupation with materialism – a religion in and of itself. However in recent years more western world societies are looking into metaphysics, mystical experiences, new age philosophies and more. We believe that God created and reigns over both domains and that their existence is self evident and in no need of proof.

However understanding what these divergent dimensions are like and how they interact is filled with confusion. We believe that God's Word is the only reliable source of truth and understanding and on that basis we need to find out what God has to say about them in order to understand how they influence the lives of all mankind.

STRUCTURE

It is a fact that society cannot operate without some form of government. This holds true in the most primitive societies as well as in the most complex and established societies. Government applies to virtually every area of our lives and includes not just country government, but societies, churches, clubs, associations, and everything in between that affects a group of people.

Although styles of government differ there are some similarities in all governments.

1. There needs to be hierarchies of leaders with varying responsibilities and powers.
2. There needs to be rules developed that control the focus group of people being governed.

When we consider the worlds around us – both physical and spiritual we can see that this holds true everywhere. Satan's kingdom is comprised of rulers at various levels all the way down to the lowly "citizens" of the kingdom and he has rules and regulations by which his kingdom operates. The same holds true in God's kingdom and the physical world as we know it. *Ephesians 6:12*.

Understanding the world around us sometimes appears complex and confusing because we have not clearly understood the dual realities of the natural or physical world and the spiritual world and how they interact. Firstly we need to clearly establish whether spiritual forces are higher and control the physical or if the physical controls and affects the spiritual. Also we need to understand what the spirit world is comprised of versus the physical world.

We also need to understand that the spirit world is at war and that this world is both eternal and real. The physical world we live in is in fact a dramatization or playing out in physical ways what is actually happening in the spirit realm. The two factions we know of in the spirit world are comprised actually of two kingdoms – God's Kingdom and Satan's Kingdom. *Matthew 6:33 and Matthew 12:26*.

But are these factions evenly matched, and is it really predicable who will win? The fact is that in the spirit realm there is no doubt about God's Kingdom being of supreme power and authority. *Matthew 28:18*.

Yet in the dimension of the physical world it appears to be quite the opposite. This is very confusing to most Christians and non Christians alike, and we need to understand why this appears to be the case.

IN THE BEGINNING

We therefore need to go back to the beginning of this world to understand what happened and how and why it affects us today. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. *Gen 1:1*
Some time prior to that, he created the angelic creatures that inhabit the realm of the spirit. The highest of all created beings was one called “Lucifer”. *Ezekial 28:15*.
It is evident that angels were created with free wills. So, despite the fact that Lucifer was created as the most beautiful of all created beings and was the most powerful and highest ranking creature, and he was perfect, he fell in love with himself and chose to rebel against God. *Isaiah 14:13*.

This resulted not only in the fall of Lucifer who we now call Satan (which means Adversary – from which we get the word adversity), but scripture tells us that one third of all the angels God created joined him in this rebellion. *Revelation 12:4*.
Since there is no evidence that God is creating any new angels we can establish that for every fallen angel (demon or devil), that there are two angels of God. That is a decided disadvantage to Satan’s kingdom from the outset. Furthermore, Lucifer can only be one place at a time since he has a being much as we are. God however is omnipresent (present everywhere at the same time) and Omniscient (knows everything – past present and future). Satan however has neither of these attributes which once again set him at a decided disadvantage against the Kingdom of God.

But then God created yet again – this time he created the earth, living creatures, plant life and man. God breathed life into man – unlike the animals and plant life. *Genesis 2:7*.
Man was given freedom of choice as were the angels and he was placed in a magnificent garden by God and given authority over every living thing – to tend and husband the earth God created for man. *Genesis 2:15*.
How could one man and one woman do that? I have a hard time looking after a very small garden and a few pets. Obviously, contrary to “evolutionary thinking”, the first created man was much more powerful and capable than we find ourselves today.

God also placed within the garden two very important trees. These were no ordinary trees though. There was only one of each in the garden. The tree of life, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. *Genesis 2:9*.

This is where the drama on earth begins.

One day Eve, the first created woman met up with a serpent. This is no ordinary serpent either. It could walk and talk and Eve was not at all surprised by either thing. She began the conversation with this serpent when he asked her a few questions.

Note that this has not changed as a tactic by Satan to deceive mankind. So what did he ask her? “Is it really true that God has said, you shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” *Genesis 3:1*.

Seems like a non threatening question right? Her answer was simple – “well we can eat of any tree excepting the one in the middle of the garden because God said that if we touch or eat from that tree we will die.” *Genesis 3:3*.

The serpent’s response was direct and spoken with such authority he caught Eve off guard. “You shall not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be as God, knowing the difference between good and evil, and blessing and calamity.” *Genesis 3:5*.

This same lie is what is now called “New Age”. It is a religion that purports that we are our own gods and control our own destinies and therefore have no need of the Almighty God nor do we need to submit to him.

Eve then was likely taken by the serpent to have a look at the tree although the scripture does not say that directly. We do know however that she went to take a good look at the tree and weighed up what she saw with her physical eyes. *Genesis 3:6*.

1. The tree looked good – suitable as food. Nothing apparently wrong there.
2. It was a pretty tree – nice to look at (so surely it could not be evil as God said)
3. If as the serpent said she would become wise if she ate of the tree then what was there to lose? Being wise was a good thing surely.

So Eve made a decision based on “what she saw” based on what she was told by the serpent. Note that she did not stop to consider that maybe she should talk to her husband or God about this. So she made an independent decision and took of the fruit, ate of it, then gave some to her husband Adam to eat. We do not know if Adam knew what he was eating at the time but regardless, he became a willing partaker of what his wife had done.

So what happened? It looks like the serpent was right – “Immediately, their eyes were opened and they realized that they were naked. So they quickly found some fig leaves and made aprons to cover their nakedness.” *Genesis 3:7*. Then they heard God coming, walking in the garden. What did they do? They quickly ran and hid from Him.

God calls out to Adam – “where are you Adam?”. Adam responds, “I heard your voice in the garden and I was afraid, because I was naked and I hid myself”. *Genesis 3:10*. This is the first indication of fear in the history of mankind – something that has been a plague ever since.

God asks Adam (as if He did not know already), “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the forbidden tree?” Adam’s first response was to blame his wife rather than answer God directly. “The woman you gave to be with me, gave me of the fruit...” So God asks Eve, “what is this you have done?”. Her response was to pass the buck herself and blame the serpent for tricking her into it. Then God pronounces the first judgment – against the serpent because he did not have anyone to blame. The judgment however appears strange because it is a judgment of a physical nature against the physical creature. But the second part of the judgment is concerning the coming Christ who would be born of a physical woman and would bruise the head of a spiritual serpent. *Genesis 3:15*. Right here we see some rather confusing things.

1. Was the serpent a physical created creature or Satan himself? It appears both.
2. How did Satan come to inhabit and speak through a physical animal? The scripture does not tell us but its obviously possible. Jesus allowed demons to enter a heard of pigs.
3. Are then the physical and spiritual worlds intermingled? Again it appears so. If that is in fact the case then our belief that the physical realm is a totally independent realm from the spiritual realm is not true. They are in fact intermingled.

Then God goes on to pronounce numerous judgments against Adam and Eve as well as all of creation. All of creation that God had created for man to rule over became cursed because of man’s eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. *Genesis 3:17*. Of course the serpent neglected to tell Eve the full story of what would happen to her because Satan hates God, is apposed to all that he does and since God loved his new creation and enjoyed fellowship with man, Satan wanted to rob God of that.

But something else happened in the garden that day. Not only did the earth become cursed but the authority God had given to Adam had been taken over by the one he listened (submitted) to – the serpent.

Death did in fact come upon Adam and Eve as well as all of creation – something that would not have happened had they instead eaten of the tree of life. Thus began all the misery of all the ages up to this very day and Satan now ruled the earth enticing humans to join him in his rebellion against God.

THEN CAME JESUS

When Jesus comes on the scene and enters into ministry, he commences it by fasting in the desert forty days. *Matthew 4*. Satan had previously tried to get Jesus killed as a young child but God warned Joseph to take Jesus into Egypt for a while to escape. *Matthew 2:13*. We do not hear any more about Satan interacting with Jesus while he was growing up. But after Jesus had fasted, Satan now appears to him directly with three temptations.

1. He starts again with a question – “if you are the son of God, turn these rocks into bread” Was Jesus hungry? Yes. Was it okay for him to eat bread now? Yes. So what was the big deal? If Jesus did what Eve did by considering for a moment doing anything suggested by Satan, he would have inadvertently yielded himself to the rule of Satan. Jesus overcame him by quoting the scripture – man shall not live by bread alone...”
2. Next he takes Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple and this time tempts him to jump off to prove he is the son of God. This time Satan even uses scripture himself – “ He will give his angels charge over you so that you will not even dash your foot”. Jesus responds with scripture, “You shall not tempt the Lord your God.”.
3. Frustrated but by no means yet defeated, Satan takes Jesus high up on a mountain and in a brief moment of time shows him all the kingdoms of the earth with all their wealth. This time he plays his hand and goes straight to the heart of Jesus. “If you fall down and worship me, I will give you all these kingdoms”. Jesus never disputed that Satan owned them and that they were his to give. Jesus’ response was also now both direct and again supported with scripture. He said, “get behind me Satan, for it is written, you shall worship the Lord your God and ONLY him shall you worship.” *Matthew 4*.

At that point Satan left to return at a later time to destroy Jesus if he could. And he honestly thought he would when he incited the religious leaders to convince the Romans to crucify Jesus. At first it looked like he succeeded because Jesus did in fact die. But Satan not being all knowing as God is, had no idea that he was playing straight into the hands of God in all of this. Through his death as a perfect man, Jesus took away from Satan what he had taken from Adam. When he arose from the dead, Jesus proclaimed that **ALL power** in heaven and earth were now his and that he had the keys to death and the grave. *Matthew 28:18*. These were actually in the possession of Satan up until the resurrection **BUT they are no longer under his ownership or control.**

ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION

So if it is true that Jesus conquered Satan, then why does it appear like nothing has changed? Why do we still die, why do terrible things continue to happen to us? Why doesn’t God immediately change everything?

Col 2:15 And having spoiled (disarmed) principalities and powers, he disgraced them openly, triumphing over them in it.

How did Jesus disarm them? What did Jesus take from them? Satan's power is the direct result of sin in this world. Take away sin and he has no power. Since Jesus took away the sins of the world, he fully disarmed Satan and his kingdom.

Satan continues his fight and is empowered to do so through us sinning. He was defeated but aspires to regain his power and control. For example the seizing of power by a king or political leader does not always result in the defeated leader disappearing "into the woodwork". He may in fact try to regain his power and overthrow the new government. In history and even in some countries today, new leaders have seen to it that anyone who may become a threat is executed or somehow silenced – (Ref: Saddam Hussein). Does the taking over by a new leader mean that all is well and that nobody would try to "dethrone" or kill him in order to take the power back?

Jesus is now the supreme ruler over the earth, but Satan is still trying to get even with him and trying to take the dominion back from Jesus so that he can rule the earth once again. To accomplish this he supposes that he needs an army of spirits as well as humans on his side. Satan is still busy recruiting soldiers to his cause to rebel against everything to do with God, Jesus and His children. Because God hates sin and there can be no fellowship with God where sin exists, Satan's plan is to get and keep everyone in sin and thereby take control of the world.

So what is the state of earth today? The earth is a place where we see every day, the results of a fierce war going on in the realm of the spirit. Satan is at war with God and especially Jesus who defeated him. We live in a war zone. Many people are not even aware of it. Others are and are terrified by it. But what part do we play or supposed to play in this war? How do we fight and how do we arm ourselves and what are our weapons?

Preparing for war.

There are numerous things that need to be attended to when preparing for a war. This is a brief summary of what those things would be.

1. **Know who your enemy is.** That may sound obvious but do believers really know and understand Satan's kingdom? Aspects that need to be known are..
 - a) Who is the leader and what is his true character?– i.e. angel of light, deceiver , murderer, author of confusion and fear etc.
 - b) What does his kingdom consist of? – Principalities, powers, spiritual wickedness. Unclean spirits and demons that inhabit people and how do they do that?
 - c) What is the purpose and goal of his kingdom? Rob, steal and destroy.
 - d) What are his tactics and weapons – what are his tools and devices? Deception and temptation to sin against God.
 - e) How can we recognize someone or something being influenced by his kingdom? Contrary to nature and God's Word. This could be in the form of gross sin (homosexuality or false teaching or false prophesy).
 - f) Where or who will he likely attack? Those who open themselves to him through sin – especially occult activities.
 - g) Who are his allies and what will they do to help his cause? Men in rebellion to God.

2. **Understand the reason for the war.** Why is Satan fighting us and what is our goal in fighting against him? We are to “work out” the Kingdom of God on earth.
3. **Our weapons of warfare.** Once we have a clear understanding of our enemy and his weapons we need to know what our weapons are, how to use them and become proficient at using them and what our armor is exactly. How to put it on, keep it on at all times and keep it in good shape. Ephesians chapter six details this clearly for us.
4. **What is our strategy to win the war?** The following areas may be of particular concern or focus. Spiritual warfare is waged primarily by means of prayer and standing firmly on the Word of God but includes the following;
 - a) **The salvation of souls.** Jesus clearly came to seek and to save the lost. Therefore the primary objective is to see souls saved and brought into the kingdom of God. Alpha is one such battle ground but we need to see God raise up others. Pray the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his harvest field. We desperately need more evangelists and exercises of evangelism. Preaching the gospel is spiritual warfare.
 - b) **Continual training of soldiers and leaders.** This means a steady and deliberate training in the Word of God and in the things of the Spirit. This is “equipping the saints” for the work of the ministry. Both the Word and the Spirit are critical components in equipping competent soldiers and leaders. We need to see people baptized in the Holy Spirit and learning how to pray in the spirit as well as how to rightly divide the Word of Truth. We cannot accept experience as doctrines but rather the Word of God. Soldiers need to be trained and equipped with the gifts of the Holy Spirit because they are the explosive devices used in battle against the enemy.
 - c) **Freeing captives and healing the wounded.** There is no doubt the enemy will take some captive and wound some. We need to clearly remind the saints that to walk in sin is to be in jeopardy of captivity or harm – which could include being overcome by sickness, fear, failure, evil experiences, demon inhabitation and more. We MUST pursue righteousness and holiness to be safe. We need to lead those wounded, back into fellowship, and forgiveness. “If my people who are called by my name will turn from their wicked ways, humble themselves and pray” **I Chronicles 7:14** is wise counsel. For too long the Church has been guilty of spurning their wounded and sometimes even condemning them. No army on earth would act that way would they?
 - d) **Praise and worship.** God inhabits the praises of His people and his presence alone is what we need to drive out the darkness. How do you get rid of darkness in a room? Do you chase it around, yell at it or try to bind it up and put it in a bag? Of course not. All you have to do is turn on the light and immediately the darkness flees. There can be no victory apart from God’s presence and He is worthy of all our praise and thanks at all times anyway. There is an old song that begins...”It gives strength to me, when I worship thee, and my mouth is filled with praise...” This aspect is refreshing to the soldier and will strengthen him in the battle.
 - e) **Prayer.** There is no doubt that without prayer we cannot wage an effective war because it is through prayer that we subdue kingdoms, set the captives free and will see souls saved. Such an emphasis in the church body is critical and God will raise up those who will become prayer warriors, but we all need to pray and know how to pray. Some of these prayers will be “warfare”

prayers – against Satan’s kingdom. Some will be prayers of faith for salvation, for healing and for deliverance.

- f) **Encouragement.** Through a long hard battle believers may become careless, weary or discouraged. The leaders God appoints need to “rally the troops”, remind them of how important the war is, and tell them stories of won battles as well as learning from failed battles. Testimonies by individual “soldiers” also are critical to this end.
- g) **Guidance.** Let us remember that the Lord of Hosts is our Commander and General. He knows what is going on in the realm of the spirit, we do not, excepting those things that are revealed to us. At every step leaders in all areas must seek direction from the Lord. We pray that God will confirm His leading through the prophets he raises up so that we may always be in the center of God’s will, and always know what that is. Every part of every ministry must be guided by the Holy Spirit in all humility on our part. We are only servants after all and to no man is revealed the full revelation lest we be lifted up in pride.

WHERE DOES THE BATTLE TAKE PLACE?

If Satan is a spirit and exists in the realm of the spirit how does he get access to or control of the physical? The scripture tells us that Satan is a deceiver and liar from the beginning. *John 8:44*.

He deceives us through persuading us to believe his lies. How does he do that? Through our thoughts or minds. *Genesis 3 and Matthew chapter 4*. When we look back to the garden of Eden he deceived Eve by putting questions in her mind. When she listened to those ideas and thoughts and dwelt on them she gave place to temptation so Satan made the lie even more appealing and convincing. Once convinced that the thoughts Satan planted in her mind were true and that God was the liar or at best just withholding the best things from her, she gave place to sin which resulted in man’s loss of dominion, death and every terrible thing that happens in the world today. Every disaster, every sickness and disease, every hardship and struggle, every rape and murder is the result of sin. Nothing has changed in the world we live in today.

Sometimes battles take place in the spirit realm that we are not aware of.

In the story of Daniel who fasted and prayed for 21 days (*Daniel chapter 10*), we hear what the messenger angel said to him when he appeared to *Daniel. Daniel 10:12*. “Then he said to me, fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your mind and heart to understand and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come as a consequence of your words. But, the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me for twenty one days. But Michael, one of the chief of the celestial princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.” Then in verse 20 the angel says this..” .. Do you now know why I have come to you? And now I will return to fight with the prince of Persia, and when I have gone, notice, the prince of Greece will come.”

When you read the context of these chapters it appears to be all about earthly Kings and what will happen concerning them in the future. But then who are these princes? Did the angel get resisted by a physical prince of Persia? Did he fight with a physical Prince? Obviously not. This was a spirit being who ruled as a prince over the nation of Persia, through the kings of the region by controlling them.

WHAT ARE SATAN’S WEAPONS AND HOW DOES HE USE THEM AGAINST US?

The very first weapon we see was to question what God has said and think he is holding out on us with nasty rules and regulations. *Genesis 3:1*. Have you ever been tempted to doubt what God has said in His Word? Have you ever thought that God didn’t want you to enjoy any pleasure?

Candy may be sweet to the taste but we know that it can be harmful to our bodies and teeth. It is also addicting. The more we eat it the more we crave it and the more we have to have it. Our appetite for it grows until the effects are so harmful they can destroy our health and even hasten death. The desire for pleasure can be the same. Our appetites will only grow stronger for what we seek and give ourselves to – be it pornography, gambling, sex, alcohol, drugs, eating and so on. Is sin sweet? You bet it is – at least at the beginning, but soon we find we have to have more and more because our cravings are not satisfied anymore. This leads us into bondage and has destroyed many a good person. However, under the controls God has set, pleasures can be wonderful. God created sex for us to enjoy – not Satan. God created tasty foods for us to enjoy and endowed us with taste buds to savor the flavors. God created the beauty of nature around us – awesome sunsets, the stars at night and more. For a man to enjoy the beauty of his wife’s body is good and God made men to enjoy such beauty, but looking at other naked women or men is pornography and will lead to many hurtful things. Once we go outside of the restrictions God has placed on these appetites, we open ourselves to sin, bondage and ultimately death.

The most powerful tool Satan employs against us is to get us to turn our backs on God and reject what He has said. This leads us to sin against God and that in itself brings death, misery, bondage and destruction to our lives. So what does Satan want to get you to do? He wants you to sin against God, because he knows that if you do that you will be separated from God and He will be able to rob all God’s blessings from you. So we can conclude that all Satan’s tactics against us are designed to cause us to doubt God, turn our backs on God and seek after our own pleasures apart from God. Ultimately to hate God as he does, is what Satan is after. He wants us to join him in his rebellion against God. His only power over us is to get us to believe his lies and to sin against God. Apart from that Satan has no power over us whatsoever.

WHAT ARE OUR WEAPONS?

The most important weapon we have is **the Word of God**. “And take also the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God”. *Ephesians 6:17*. You will notice that when Satan tempted Jesus he used the Word of God on all three occasions to defeat Satan’s suggestions (temptations). Through ignorance of the Words of God many good people have been defeated and some destroyed. Ignorance is not bliss but very foolish. So much suffering we bring on ourselves because we have allowed ourselves to be deceived only because we did not make the effort to learn the truth. How often do you study your Bible? How hungry are you to know the truth? We so often are lax in this but when trouble comes suddenly we want to blame God for it. Instead God has given us the tools we need, but if we do not learn how to use them, then we are without excuse and can be assured we will be wounded or destroyed by Satan. He goes around like a roaring lion seeking who he may devour – BECAUSE HE CAN DEVOUR, hence we have been warned.

We use this weapon through **prayer**. When we pray, we release the power of God to work through us and in circumstances around us. Through prayer we defeat Satan. “Submit yourselves therefore to God, resist the devil and he WILL flee from you.” *James 4:7*

We are to pray that we do not enter into temptation *Matthew 26:41*. In the Lord’s prayer *Matthew 6:13*, we are to pray that we do not enter into temptation but that God would deliver us from evil. Because the battle is relentless, we are instructed to “pray without ceasing”. *1 Thessalonians 5:17* Through prayer we connect with God and the greatest power in the universe. Satan trembles when Christians pray because he knows that he will be defeated when we resist him in the power of Christ so he will try everything possible to get us to quit praying.

HOW DO WE PROTECT OURSELVES?

Ephesians 6:12-18 lists our spiritual armor.

1. **Stand** – This means to take a firm standing posture against Satan. We don't run away from him or back down in fear.
2. **Truth** – The Bible says, "You shall know the truth and the truth will set you free." *John 8:32*. But what is the truth? Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life". *John 14:6*. God's Word is the truth and we need to know what it has to say otherwise we can so easily become deceived and believe the lies Satan plants into our minds. Such thoughts could be spontaneous, or the result of someone putting the thoughts into our minds or through something we read or a movie we watched. It may also be through some recording we heard. Taking control of our thought life rather than letting it run rampant wherever it chooses is the first step in living free and victorious. Our only defense against lies and deceit is to know the truth. This is by no means a once only activity. We constantly need to remind ourselves of the truth of God's Word. Primarily we need to know who God is and who we are in Christ. We need to know what power and authority has been given to us.
3. **Righteousness** – We need to cover all our vital organs (with a breastplate) of righteousness. This means that when we sin we immediately repent of it and walk in right standing with God. Unconfessed sin is an open door to Satan to oppress and hurt us. God imputes righteousness to us by faith as with eternal life so we can freely confess our sins to him and he will forgive us. Through repentance God is able to forgive us of our sins and renew our relationship with Himself. This immediately takes away the ground Satan had against us. Apart from sin in our lives Satan has no power over us whatsoever.
4. **Peace** – Gods ways are ALWAYS ways of peace. If we have no peace its not God. We walk in peace with God who gives us peace that passes all understanding through Christ Jesus. Fear is from Satan and he will try to rob us of our peace. The gospel (good news) of peace with God and in him should be proclaimed by us as we walk in it ourselves.
5. **Faith** – Faith is depicted here as a body shield – which we can hide behind. Remember that faith however is not just what you believe but who you believe and trust in. You need to know God's character in order to walk in the assurance of faith. Paul says we can quench ALL the fiery arrows of the wicked one by using the shield of faith.
6. **Salvation** – This part of the armor covers the head. If we allow ourselves to entertain thoughts of failure, loss and discouragement we are not wearing this helmet. Whatsoever things are good, lovely of good report etc., we are to think on those things. We need to be "salvation conscious". This does not just apply to eternal life but being saved from the power of sin and Satan now.

CAN WE BE ASSURED OF VICTORY EVERY TIME?

Have you ever tried resisting the devil or rebuking him and despite your best efforts things don't improve? If so you have probably wondered why. The Bible says, "Submit yourself therefore to God, Resist the devil and HE WILL flee from you." *James 4:7*. The reason could very well be related to the first part of this scripture. When you are not fully submitted to God in all areas of your life you actually give Satan the right to attack you in that area.

Let me give you an example. A young Christian businessman I know, was having severe financial difficulties in his business. It seemed like everything was going wrong. So I asked him if he was submitted to God in everything. He felt he was. Then I asked him if he was paying his tithes. His response

was, “not for several months”. So I pointed out to him that submitting yourself to God is being obedient to God and in this he was not being obedient. I encouraged him to repent and then commit to giving tithes of all his income as God commanded us to do. Once he had done so, to then go back to resisting the devil and rebuking him, telling him to leave and not touch his finances or business. In a matter of a few days everything reversed and his business once again began to prosper.

If we are submitted to God then we can be assured that in all things we can and will have victory over Satan and his kingdom. But it is UP TO US to submit ourselves fully to God and to resist the devil. Many believers have resorted instead to begging God to take care of things for them as though God was holding out on them and they need to persuade God to help them out. That is not at all what the scriptures teach us. No doubt as believers we will experience many persecutions and difficulties, but through God’s enablement and power, we will overcome every one of them. Without a battle there can be no victory. Victorious Christian living is not the lack of problems – on the contrary. It is facing many battles and winning them by God’s grace and strength as we submit ourselves always to him and resist the devil.

SUMMARY

The spiritual health of the church can quickly be ascertained by its commitment and zeal for prayer meetings, Bible study and living in submission to God’s Word in love. The church would be characterized by love and righteousness. Yet unfortunately today many churches reflect instead the sinfulness of society around them

The least attended services (if in fact there even are such services in many churches), are prayer meetings and Bible studies. And we wonder why the world around us is getting more evil and dark and filled with destruction? God has not failed, nor is he responsible for all the pain and suffering in the world. Isn’t it interesting how disasters are called “acts of God”? As with Adam and Eve we still refuse to take responsibility for our actions or inactions as the case may be. God has already provided for us everything we need to make this world a better place but if we as believers have not availed ourselves of them, then we are to blame - not God. May the realization of this grip our hearts and minds enough to motivate us to take action and be doers of God’s Word instead of only hearers. *James 1:22*

The day will come when Satan and his angels and all those men who rebel against God will be cast into the lake of fire to burn for eternity. Until then, the battle rages on but we can easily have victory when we submit to God and resist the devil. Don’t allow yourself to get lulled to sleep by the monotony of daily life and work. Satan lurks around every corner, in every thought and every deception. Let us be alert at all times by daily walking in the Spirit ever mindful of God and Jesus our redeemer.

DELIVERENCE FROM DEMON SPIRITS:

This subject is becoming more well known in western cultures than it has in many years. Materialism and the doctrine of demons called “Evolution” have convinced modern men and women that Satan does not exist and neither does God. That we are merely a higher developed animal or mammal and like animals when we die that’s the end. Everything is explainable by science “the new God” and everything is biological and physical in nature. So when people are afflicted by demons we call them mentally ill and lock them up in institutions. We have “professional” mind counselors who try various techniques including drugs to help but they are weak at best because oftentimes the problems are spiritual in nature.

In order to determine demon activity and how we can defeat it there are several aspects we need to consider.

Demonic influences – wrong thinking – false teaching, false prophets.

Demon inhabitation – demon control of people and animals

Mark 5:1-20 – Story of Legion

Satanic rituals and systems – Occult practices

Haunted places and buildings - Often associated with familiar spirits.

These we will cover in a later study.