

## WEDNESDAY BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

Christ Church, Crouch End Hill

Tel/ Fax: 020 8340 1566

No: 55

### SPIRITUAL WARFARE 1

God is in charge, in the universe which He created, but there is an enemy that is in full-scale revolt, and it has powerful influence all around. They are forces working vigorously to thwart God's work. As with the unseen God, the forces behind the revolt are unseen, non-physical, and supernatural. Just because the battle is unseen doesn't mean it isn't going on. It is.

The Devil has already lost. But the Devil is trying to take as many with him as he can, apparently just to hurt God. And however much the Devil succeeds in doing this, God hurts -- like a parent does over losing a child. This sort of spite is very much in keeping with the Devil's character. Satan is a leech; he is so lacking in life that the only life he has left is what he can suck out of the living.

Satan was one of God's creatures, made originally good, but who became consumed by pride. Luke 10:18 and Revelation 12:7-9 indicate that he (or more accurately **it**) rebelled against God, fell from heaven and set up on earth opposition to God. Because God created and loved this world, it was the obvious place for Satan to wage his warfare.

In Ephesians 6:12, Paul teaches that our struggle is against a range of spiritual powers (hierarchies, authorities and world controllers). The malevolent creatures in Satan's army are called **demons** in the Bible. They range in their power and influence, and some form a particular attachment with people. When this is the case the person is described in the Bible as being **demonized**. The term 'demon-possessed' is unhelpful, and it is more accurate to speak of people afflicted by a demon.

#### **Jesus and the Spiritual Battle**

Jesus came into this world as light into darkness, scattering the darkness of Satan.

*The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's works.*

1 John 3:8

Immediately after the wilderness temptations, Jesus returns to Galilee in the power of the Spirit.

From that point on he is constantly encountering the effects of Satan's work in this world (demonic oppression, sickness, death, hostility in nature, poverty, injustice, etc).

The Devil is more like a sham god, a face without a person behind it, all apparition and no substance. Satan can tempt. Satan, like the archangel he once was, can't make us do anything. Satan is the one who decided to have this spiritual warfare; God would rather give love than wage war. Martin Luther likened Satan to a snarling dog that is chained in place, who can only do you real harm if you're foolish enough to come too close. All Satan can do is use cunning tricks to play off our weaknesses and circumstances, to lead us to choose to do things which suck the life, hope, and energy out of ourselves and others.

- What type of choices can we make that could lead us into the trap of Satan or his demons?

---

---

- Is it possible for a believer in Christ (born again) to be possessed of evil spirit? Why or why not?

---

---

- How can a believer be subject to afflictions of the evil one?

---

---

- What do you understand from Paul's statement in 2 Corinthians 12:7 about spiritual attacks?

---

---

- Read 2 Kings 6:8-22. What's going on here in verses 8-10?

---

---

- What is Ben Hadad's solution?

---

---

- How similar is the experience of Elisha's servant in verse 15 to the ones many of us face?

---

---

- What do you learn from verses 16-17 about unseen spiritual battles being waged on our behalf?

---

---

- What do you make of Elisha's prayer in verse 18?

---

---

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you, and remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Spiritual warfare is a pro-active approach to our faith. We actively resist the devil when his hosts harass us. We actively pursue spiritual disciplines that will make us stronger and better prepared. We actively engage the enemy when people are in spiritual bondage.

- How do we go about all these in real life?
- 
- 

We utilize prayer as a weapon to penetrate strongholds that cannot be reached in any other way. Spiritual warfare is the putting aside of passive attitudes towards faith which keep us from commitment and cause us to pursue only those things that will benefit us.

There is not one area of Christian ministry that has not become a battleground, but often there is not discernment that some form of spiritual resistance is in place.

It has become common to attribute a natural or human explanation to most problems and leave it at that. The one who has a spiritual warfare perspective will be inclined to test the situation to ascertain whether or not there is something more than natural influences involved.

**Discuss.**

---

---

---

---

A spiritual warrior has an alertness to the activity of the enemy. This alertness is by no means fear or paranoia. He does not go around crediting Satan and his hosts for everything wrong under the sun. The Apostle Paul was a good example of a spiritual warrior. He didn't go out of his way to look for demonic activity, but when he encountered it, he quickly recognized it and then he confronted it with spiritual authority victoriously.

Spiritual warfare awareness can also be very effective in witnessing and evangelism. You learn to recognize the barriers and strongholds in advance and prepare the way through prayer, spiritual authority, divine appointments and ministry.