

SPIRITUAL WARFARE | THE FLESH

INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUAL WARFARE

1. Spiritual Warfare Is Real

- a. "There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors..." (C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*)
- b. Spiritual Warfare has a lot of "ground" within the history of the church. Therefore, discernment is crucial.

2. What is Spiritual Warfare?

- a. The term "Spiritual Warfare" is not found in the pages of Scripture. Rather, it is a theological term used to describe the conflict we experience within the Christian life
 - "Scripture treats spiritual warfare as a normal, everyday part of the Christian life, and so we should as well. It's not about spooky special effects. It's about how we think, feel, live, desire, and act in the presence of our enemies." (David Powlison)

i. The Flesh

1. "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God." (Romans 8:5-8)

ii. The World

1. "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world--the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life--is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever." (1 John 2:15-17)

iii. The Enemy

1. "He [Satan] was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies." (John 8:44)

b. Biblical Understanding of Spiritual Warfare

- i. Spiritual Warfare is a moral struggle (James 4:1-4)
- ii. Spiritual Warfare is a battle for lordship
- iii. Spiritual Warfare is engaged as a body
- iv. Spiritual Warfare is offensive not just defensive (1 Peter 5:8-9)

- c. Opposition to the People of God
 - i. Satan and Demons (Isaiah 14:12-15; Luke 10:18)
 - ii. False Teachers (Acts 20:28-32; 2 Peter 2:1-3)
 - iii. False Apostles (Revelation 2:9)
 - iv. Wolves/Goats and Sheep (Matthew 25:31-33; John 10:27-30; John 21:15-18)

- d. Spiritual Warfare and the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:1-7)
 - i. The role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian
 - ii. The abuse of the gifts of the Holy Spirit
 - iii. Discernment, Experiences, and Weapons for Warfare (Ephesians 6:10-18)

THE FLESH

1. What does the Bible mean when it says, "The Flesh"?
 - a. Image Bearers and Our fallen nature in Adam (Genesis 1:27; Romans 5:12-21; 8:5-8)
 - b. Internal resistance toward God
 - c. Spiritually Dead (Ephesians 2:1-7)
 - i. Waging War
 - ii. Children of wrath
 - iii. Hostility toward God

2. The Doctrine of Regeneration (Titus 3:3-7)
 - a. Heart is made spiritually alive by the Holy Spirit (Ezekiel 36:25-27)
 - b. Repentance and faith take place
 - c. The heart is now new

3. Sanctification and The Flesh
 - a. Sanctification: God making us to be who we were intended to be;
 - b. Forgiveness of sin because of Christ's victory on the cross
 - i. The presence of sin still exists;
 - ii. Understanding how the flesh works;
 - iii. Confession is about honesty
 - iv. Putting sin to death
 - v. Too much misunderstanding or lack of understanding of the flesh, the world, and Satan.