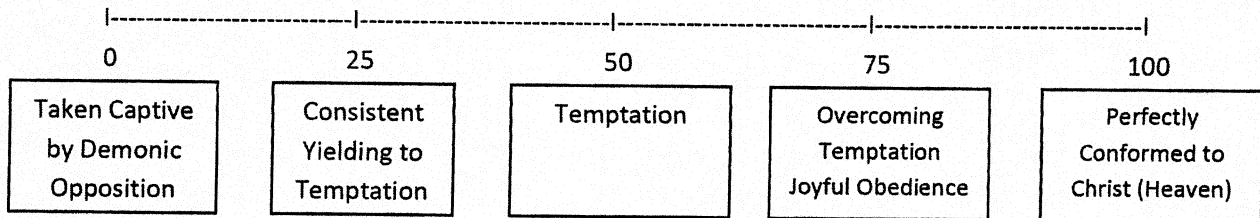


Spiritual Warfare

- I. **Background** – We are at war. As we make disciples, the reality of our enemy is all around us. (After Japan surrendered, there were still guys that got killed by snipers). Jesus defeated the enemy but Satan still has power. “We are not unaware of his schemes.” 2 Corinthians 2:11

Our Goal in this life is to glorify God. Our Enemy’s Goal is to diminish God’s glory. God’s glory is expanded in our lives through perseverance and maturity (James 1:12 and 1 Peter 5:4). Sometimes we glorify Him through suffering and endurance in trials. Sometimes He glorifies Himself through healing and delivering us (Hebrews 11).

Our Enemy’s glory is expanded when he deceives us into pride and self-centeredness (Ezekiel 28:2 and James 4:6-8). Our Enemy’s glory is also expanded when he deceives us into fear.



Spiritual Warfare is an overall life of discipleship in which the truth of God transforms our hearts. Our growing love for God crowds out the sin and the demonic influences in our life (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). It prioritizes God’s glory over everything including our own physical comfort and spiritual peace (1 John 3:7-10, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

- II. When Jesus began his ministry, the synagogue handed him the scroll and he read from Isaiah 61:1-3. I always thought that passage referred to the people down on skid row. But as we look at the people Jesus interacted with, many were churchgoers. They loved God but were in some type of bondage/attack by the enemy.
- A. Mark 1:23-27 Man in the Synagogue
 - B. Luke 13:10-16 A woman (Daughter of Abraham)
 - C. Matthew 16:23 Peter (Get Behind Me, Satan)

I think we need to be mindful of the enemy and how he works and seeks to harm us and those we minister to. Jesus dealt with it matter-of-factly; he wasn’t impressed with the enemy. It was part of his daily activity.

Two Extremes to Avoid: Ignoring it and overemphasizing it.

- III. We battle 3 things on our road to Christlikeness.
1. **The World** (1 John 2:15-16) Lust of the flesh (Wanting physical desires), Lust of the Eyes (Wanting beautiful externals) and Boastful Pride of Life (Selfish Ambition).
 2. **The Flesh.** Internal resistance to obey God. Recognize that we have inside our flesh a desire to be God and put ourselves in the place of God or even above God (Genesis 3:5).
 3. **Satan.** We have an active, intelligent enemy who hates us and wants to destroy us (John 10:10). He uses pride by tempting us to join him in arrogance and self-sufficiency (Isaiah 13:11, Ezekiel 28:17, Proverbs 3:34 and Proverbs 8:13). He tempts us to think too highly of ourselves and too lowly of God. He uses fear by tempting us to revere him or the world more than God (Isaiah 8:12-13, Isaiah 35:3-4, Luke 12:4-5 and Romans 8:15).

- IV. God and Satan both look for Human Cooperation to accomplish their Goals. Both respect our freewill. Our Enemy works by bluff. God works by love (James 4:6-8).

The Enemy has come to steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10). If our names are already written in the Book of Life, He will try to destroy (our marriages, our relationships, etc.) and steal from us (our joy, our confidence in God). We cooperate with the Enemy when we sin. He takes territory (footholds) when we believe his lies. 1 John 1:9 is a very important verse to forgive our sins. Iniquities can involve more than just our sins.

There can be a Foothold due to:

1. Generational Curses
2. Idolatry (Vows/Soul Ties)
3. Unforgiveness

- V. **Generational Curses** - Matthew 27:25 Jews "Let his blood be on us and our children." Exodus 20:5, Deuteronomy 28:18, Exodus 30:2, Genesis 27:13 Rebecca "Let the curse be on me." Matthew 26:74 Peter called down curses. Remember when Jesus had Peter say 3 times out loud "I love you." Why?

When a curse is spoken, the person who spoke it owns it until it is cancelled. Ask the Holy Spirit, "Is there any curse spoken to me or I have spoken that I need to cancel?"

Exercise: "I cancel the curse that _____ said to me. I send it back to them as a blessing." Jesus told us to bless those who curse us (Romans 12:14).

"I break the vow I made by believing the lie of the enemy that said "_____." I embrace the truth that God says "_____. I cancel the curse I said to _____ I send blessings to _____ in Jesus name."

Remember the power of blessing.

- VI. **Idolatry (Vows/Soul Ties)**

A. **Healthy Vows (Soul Ties)**- Ephesians 5:31, Mark 10:7-8, 1 Samuel 18:1

B. **Unhealthy Vows (Soul Ties)**- Genesis 34:1-3 (Shechem and Dinah), 1 Corinthians 6:16

Exercise: "Father, I give you this vow. I can't carry it. I'm not the Savior. You are. Any remaining responsibility I have in this vow, I ask you to show me. I trust you with the rest. In Jesus Name, I confess my sin with _____. I break any unhealthy spirit or soul tie with _____. I give back to her what is hers and take back what is mine cleansed by the Blood of Jesus. I pray blessings on her."

Do I need to go back and confess face to face and ask for forgiveness? (Romans 12:18)

- VII. **Unforgiveness (Bitterness)**- Ephesians 4:26, Matthew 18:34-35, Hebrews 12:15

Exercise: "I forgive _____ for _____. It made me feel _____. Today I forgive _____ in Jesus Name and Pray blessings on his/her life. Today (Date) _____ owes me nothing.

The Enemy wants to keep us in the dark as to who we are. God gave us authority over the Enemy (Matthew 28:18). We have His credit card. He trusts us with it.