Lesson 9 - Spiritual Warfare

As a Christian, you are in a war - a spiritual war! Spiritual warfare is resisting, overcoming, and defeating Satan, his demons, and strongholds. Spiritual warfare is primarily dealing with three things the enemy sends at us: temptations, deception, and accusations.

Offense And Defense

Spiritual warfare comes in two forms: offensive and defensive. Offensive warfare is tearing down the strongholds the enemy has formed in your mind through deception and accusations, and defensive warfare is guarding yourself against the tactics or schemes of the devil.

The Enemy's Three Primary Weapons

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." - Ephesians 6:12

According to the verse, who do we not wrestle against?
Circle the things we do war against.

There are three primary things we struggle against (weapons of Satan):

#1 Deception
To deceive somebody means to make another person believe a lie or something that is not true. When the enemy sends deception your way, it is an attempt to deceive you into believing something that is not true, so you will fall into error. Strongholds are built through deception. A stronghold is formed when deception takes hold in a person's mind. A stronghold is an incorrect thinking pattern that stems from believing a lie.

“You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. – Genesis 3:4
God said, “But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.” - Genesis 2:17

Compare these two verses. The first is what Satan said and the last is what God said.
How did Satan deceive Adam and Eve?
John 8:44 says what about the devil and those who lie?

We have two weapons to deal with deceptions: the belt of truth (Ephesians 6:14) and the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17) which is the Word of God.

One is meant to be defensive (the belt), while the other is meant to be offensive (the sword). The Word of God is both an offensive and a defensive weapon. A belt is something you wear to guard against an attack, while a sword is used to slaughter the enemy.

"Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."
- Romans 12:2

What are we not to be like?
How are we to be transformed by God?
Ephesians 5:26 says, “That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.” How does God’s word wash, sanctify, and cleanse you?
#2 Temptation
Temptation often follows deception. First Satan lies then he makes sin look good to us. Since Eve accepted Satan's deception (his lie), now the tree that she was not supposed to touch looked good to her. She was tempted (enticed) to sin, because she allowed herself to first be deceived. Temptation is when we are enticed or encouraged to sin. In Matthew 4, Jesus was led out in the desert to be tempted by the devil. All three times Satan tempted Jesus, He quoted scripture.


Does God tempt us?
How are we tempted?
What is the progression after we give into temptation?
Is temptation a sin?

"Your word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against You." - Psalms 119:11

What is the tool we have to help us overcome sin?
What do we do with this tool?

Remember, when the enemy tempts you, he's showing you the worm. But behind that worm is a hook. The Word of God helps you see the hook behind the worm.

No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. – 1 Corinthians 10:13

Is temptation a common thing?
Will God let you be tempted beyond what you can bear?
What does God provide when you are tempted?

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
– James 4:7

What is the first thing we do to resist the devil?
What is the promise of God if we resist the devil?

Remember, dealing with temptation is a two fold process - resisting the devil and drawing near to God. The closer you get to God and the more you become aware of His love, the less power temptation will have over you.

#3 Accusations
The devil is known as the accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10). He is known to take a believer who has done an embarrassing or gross sin in their past, and continue to rub it in their faces and beat them down with guilt and condemnation.

When the devil tries to accuse us of our past sins, we are to have faith in the work of the cross and know that they are forgiven and not to look back.

Read Ephesians 6:16. What do we use to put out the fiery darts of the enemy?
Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. What has passed away? What is now new?
Read Hebrews 10:17. What has been forgotten by God?
Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place. - Ephesians 6:14

We can stand firm in the Lord and not our past sins because of two pieces of armor. What are they?
What is the truth that Jesus did to deal with our sins?
Whose righteousness do we put on? (Isaiah 64:6, Romans 3:22)

Tearing Down Strongholds

"Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings." - 1 Peter 5:8-9

Satan prowls around like what? To do what?
How do we resist Him? (look at the first of verse 8 and verse 9)

The word “stronghold’ means “fortress”. It can be physical, emotional, psychological or spiritual in origin. They are bondages caused by Satan. A stronghold is deception that's taken hold in a person's mind. It's an incorrect thinking pattern based on a believed lie. People can get incorrect perceptions of God by listening to Satan as he tells them how God doesn't love them, etc. People can feel like dirty old sinners when they believe Satan's accusations as he continually reminds them of their past (which has been washed away!). Strongholds are based on lies from the devil.

The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. – 2 Corinthians 10:4-5

We don’t fight the devil with worldly weapons. Name some spiritual weapons we use?
What worldly weapons do you think are powerless against the devil?
What do these spiritual weapons have the power to do?
What do we demolish that sets itself up against God? Circle them.
What do we do with our thoughts? Two things – circle them.
What strongholds are present in your life?
From what you have learned, what can you do to overcome these strongholds?

Remember 1 John 4:4 - "...the one (the Spirit of Christ) who is in you is greater than the one (Satan) who is in the world..."
Daily Application
Use the daily application section below to further your understanding of today’s discipleship lesson.

DAY 1
“The Powerlessness of Satan”

Satan only has power over you if you give it to him. Satan and God are not still in a cosmic battle. Satan is a defeated foe! Jesus defeated Satan on the cross.

Read Colossians 2:14-15
What did Jesus cancel?
What did He do with it?
What did Jesus do with the powers and authorities against us?
What was the instrument of triumph or victory?

Satan is no match for God. There is no comparison between God’s power and Satan’s power.

Read Hebrews 2:14-15
What did Jesus accomplish by His death?
Does Satan have power over us?
Does sin and death have power over us anymore? (Also read 1 Corinthians 15:54-57)

DAY 2
Read 1 John 5:19.
Does Satan have power in this world?
Does Satan have power over the believer?
How does the believer overcome the power of Satan? (1 Peter 5:8-9; James 4:7)

Read Romans 16:20
What power defeats Satan?
Under whose feet is Satan crushed?

Read Ephesians 4:27
What does this verse mean?
What “footholds” are you currently giving the Devil?

DAY 3
“Satan is not your daddy – or is he?”
Read John 8:44
Who is Satan the spiritual lord and father over?
Is this true for the believer? (Read Romans 8:14-17)
Who has Satan been permitted (by God) to rule over? (John 3:19)

Read 2 Timothy 2:26
Can you escape from the devil’s traps?
How does this verse say they escape? What does that mean?
Why does Satan take people captive?