

Spiritual Weapons or Fleshly Weapons

Welcome to Harvest Community Church

Series: Battle Ready

Text: 2 Corinthians 10:3-4

It is important when we are studying spiritual warfare to magnify Jesus and His **finished** work on the cross that delivered us from Satan's power. If we do not completely believe in Christ's absolute victory over our enemy, we will begin to develop systems and add things that we need to do to gain additional freedom from the devil's control. This kind of thinking forms a new kind of spiritual **legalism** that causes us to trade one form of bondage for another. This becomes dangerous because it comes in the disguise of spirituality and can be difficult to discern.

Paul says that though we **walk** in the flesh, we do not war like the flesh. What he is saying is that nearly everything we do we do because we are **human**. We walk, live, eat, sleep, think and play in the flesh. We are body **bound**, literally locked into this state until we are changed, and our corruptible bodies put on our immortal bodies. Because we are flesh and blood, we must be aware of the weaknesses and **limitations** we have in our natural man. This is why we must turn to the spirit realm where supernatural assistance is available. Again, this is not becoming mystical but spiritually practical.

We do not **war** according to the flesh. The word 'war' refers to the militant attitude of a trained soldier who is dressed for battle, prepared to kill and committed to victory. The Roman soldiers were the finest trained of their time, warfare was **instinct** to them. They wanted to be on the front lines and the first into battle. Paul wanted to defeat the enemy and take the Gospel where no one else would go. Paul was saying we do not war according to the weakness, cowardice and limits of the flesh.

Many Christians today do not see themselves as front line soldiers. They act like arm-chair quarterbacks – spiritual spectators content to watch from the sidelines while the Spiritual Gladiators fight it out. They do not realize that our enemy has no regard for those in the stands and is actively out to destroy them. God is **equipping** His people for the battle. He is not raising up weak kneed, cream of wheat Christians who have no appetite for engaging the enemy. (He does have compassion on the wounded, the shell shocked, the hurting and the tender. There is a place for all.) **Matthew 11:12, Psalm 144:1, Psalm 18:33-35, Matthew 10:34-36**

The weapons of our warfare are spiritual weapons, they are both **offensive** and defensive. The weapons we are given are primarily found in Ephesians chapter 6.

The word 'warfare' in the Greek is where we get our word **strategy**. To engage in a battle with weapons without a divine strategy will ensure that we live defeated. To be fully equipped with weapons but no stomach to use them and no strategy to deploy them means that an army will never obtain its objective. You can have the full armor of God but if you do not use it or know how to **skillfully** wield what you have you will not have victory. We need the power, wisdom, direction and leading of the Spirit of God if we are going to defeat our enemy and pull-down strongholds.

The weapons we fight with are not carnal, they are not of the flesh. This tells us that we are waging an unconventional warfare. Flesh can fight flesh, but flesh is no match for the spirit realm. Paul was intelligent and educated but all of that was of no use in and of itself against the schemes of the enemy. Legalism is adding our own works to the already completed and perfect work of Christ. Many people are adding unscriptural things like, having to pray in the spirit for a certain length of time, forcing themselves to vomit or yelling loudly until their voice is raw. One of Satan's tricks is to get us so tied up in "law" that we are never really free. **Galatians 5:1, Colossians 2:16,20-23** All of the legalism in regard to spiritual warfare has a look of something spiritual but it really is pride all over again. It is saying "I can do this on my own". The good news is we never could, and we never can. Christ has given us His Holy Spirit, so we do not have to. We do not fight for our deliverance we accept our deliverance in spiritual battles the same way we accepted our salvation when we first believed.

To engage our enemy correctly we must have a correct view of redemption.

There are four words that are used throughout the New Testament to describe redemption.

- Agoridzo – a technical term used to describe the marketplace. Specifically, the slave market. These were horrible places where human life was auctioned like an animal. By using this word, we understand that when Jesus came to the earth, He found all of us enslaved to Satan and the effects of sin. Literally the Bible says that we were sold under sin. Adam's sin sold us out to the enemy. **Romans 7:14 (AMP)** Satan's hellish ownership has taken people from one form of bondage to another. This was our condition before the grace of God touched our lives. **Romans 6:17-20**

Before our salvation we were completely swallowed up in the will of Satan. Even when we thought we were calling the shots we were being manipulated by the one who wanted to destroy us. **Ephesians 2:2** Before we met the Lord we were not only influenced by the "course of this world" we were dominated and controlled by it. The word course describes not only a specific period of time but the attitude and spirit of the time. Just like the "Roaring 20's or the Rebellion of the 60's-70's. Before Jesus, we were dominated by the prevailing popular thinking and philosophies of our generation. Satan is the spirit that works in children of disobedience.

Jesus came to purchase our salvation to redeem us out of the slavery and bondage of our enemy. **1 Corinthians 6:19-20, 1 Corinthians 7:23 (AMP), Revelation 5:9**

- Exagoridzo – carries the idea of redeeming or buying us off and removing. It is the idea of purchasing a slave with the express purpose of setting that slave free. It is a picture of a slave that has been liberated out of the disgusting and depraved cursed life. **Galatians 3:13** We are not only free from the penalty of the law of sin and death; Christ has redeemed us from living under the curse of the law. **Galatians 4:4-5** We are not only NOT slaves, we have been brought into the family as equals as sons and daughters of God.

- Lutroo – This means to set free by the payment of a ransom. A highly desired slave that someone was going to set free was not just bought for the regular price, but that person was willing to pay an unreasonably high price. Our freedom was expensive.

The price paid by Jesus shows us of how much value we are to God.

Matthew 6:26-34

For us to be free a price had to be paid and that price was the blood of Jesus.

Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:14,20, Hebrews 9:12, 1 Peter 1:18-19, Titus 2:14

- Apolutrosis – This means to redeem in order to return back. Jesus paid the ransom to return us to the status and condition we were in before our captivity began. Slavery alters a person and scars them for life. Even after having been redeemed they will never be the same again in the natural. We are forever redeemed and delivered from Satan’s power. We are now not only free but healed and made heirs of His grace.

Romans 8:17, Galatians 4:7

To put all four words of redemption together Jesus came to:

- Locate us in our depravity
- Remove us permanently from Satan’s power
- Pay the price of His own blood to break the devil’s ownership over us
- Restore us to the position of a child of God and a joint heir with Jesus

This is important as we war against the enemy because as children of God, we are free from Satan’s control over us. We do not have to submit to him any longer **Ephesians 1:19-23, Ephesians 2:6-7, Colossians 1:13** We are seated with Christ in heavenly places far above all powers and principalities. **Philippians 2:10-11**

Many people want to know why, if Jesus broke all the authority of the devil over our lives, does the battle still rage?

One day a game warden released an elephant that had been on a chain for years since it was an infant. As he grew, he could have easily snapped the chain but never did. When the warden removed the chain, the elephant continued to stay within the limits of the reach of the chain. He had to be shown slowly that he was not only free from the chain, but completely free indeed.

Like that elephant, many people are still held captive in their mind. They are still bound up by hurts, scars, pains and mental-hang ups. Many have been bound up for so long they do not know how to be free and think free and live free. **John 8:36** Some people have not been ok for so long that when things are finally ok, they do not know how to be ok. We will have to learn many times to workout or walk out our own salvation. **Philippians 2:12-13** While God has made our inner-man born again and new, the mind, the body and our emotions must now be conformed to our transformation.

The mind is the strategic center where spiritual warfare with the “god of this world” takes place. The enemy knows that the mind is the key to controlling our life. If he can gain a strategic foothold in one small area of our thinking, he can expand into other areas and make it a stronghold. **Ephesians 4:27 (NKJV, NIV, AMP)**

Through doubt and unbelief Satan can poison our mind to create strongholds that manipulate our thinking and emotions. The mind on its own is a hostile place to God.

Romans 8:7, Colossians 1:21, Ephesians 4:17-18, 2 Corinthians 4:4, Romans 1:28

To win our battle with the enemy we must give attention to the conditions of our mind and our thinking. Instead of allowing the devil to manipulate us with stinking thinking, we need to re-condition our mind.

Romans 12:1-3 (NKJV & AMP), Ephesians 4:23-24, Colossians 3:16, 1 Peter 1:13-14

To gird up the mind is a picture of a runner whose garments have fallen down and have entangled his legs hindering his steps. This happens to our thinking all the time which is why we need to consistently renew our mind just like we need to frequently adjust our pants.

This constant renewing will eradicate wrong thinking and believing, scars from the past, hurtful emotional memories that try to re-exert their influence on our lives. It is in these loose and dangling, uncommitted areas of the mind that the devil likes to wage warfare.

If we permit or allow wrong thinking and believing to continue it will impair our ability to enjoy the freedom our redemption brings. In addition to taking authority over demonic powers, real spiritual warfare also entails taking authority over your mind.

Meditation on the Word, praying in the Holy Spirit, learning to live holy and seeking to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ are all elements of genuine spiritual warfare. Real spiritual warfare requires a life of commitment, purify and consecration.