



SPIRITUAL WARFARE

THE UNSEEN BATTLE

WHAT SHOULD THE CHURCH BE DOING?

Is The Church Doing Enough?

We are living in a time where *mental health* is at the forefront of every conversation...

Many are responding with *therapeutic methods*

Many are responding with *medication*

Communities are responding with *awareness campaigns*...

but the question becomes ~ **WHAT IS THE CHURCH DOING?**

Some have suggested that **ALL** the church wants to do is *Pray and Preach/Teach the Bible*

Some have suggested that the church needs to be more **VISIBLE IN THE FIGHT**

Some have suggested that the church **should be doing more...**

MY RESPONSE HAS BEEN CONSISTENT: THAT IS NOT ALL WE DO...BUT IT IS WHAT WE DO!

The Bible does not explicitly speak on the topic of **MENTAL HEALTH**; however, it does have a lot to say about *the heart and mind*, spiritual brokenness, and *the condition of the soul*.

Mental health is important, as it affects *the whole being*...

Heath Lambert said it best: “Caring for people means being alert to *physical problems* that *require medical treatments* and *spiritual problems* that require **Christ and his Word.**”

We Must Understand **The Dilemma** vs. *God’s Desire*

3 John 1:2 (NKJV)

2 Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.

Introduction

One of challenges, that has become apparent to many believers, is the **AVAILABLE TREATMENT** for the **BODY**, but not the **MIND**.

In 1965, Donald Grey Barnhouse wrote a book called *The Invisible War*. There is a battle **for your mind**, and this battle is **intense**. It is unrelenting, and it is unfair because Satan never plays fair. And the reason why it is so intense is that **YOUR GREATEST ASSET IS YOUR MIND**.

The mind is the control center of one's **attitude, appetites, and actions**. Whatever gets your mind gets you. So, one of the most important things we need to learn and teach others is how to **guard, strengthen, and renew our minds**, because the battle **ALWAYS** starts **IN THE MIND**....

There are at least **100 principles** in God's Word that deals with what we are to do with our **MINDS**. Therefore, because people do not study God's Word, their minds are not prepared to Fight this war and they live everyday with a **DEFEATED MINDSET**...

The mind is a **BATTLEFIELD**.... It is a vital necessity that we line up our thoughts with **GOD'S THOUGHTS**.

Tonight... Let's Evaluate
The Mind
and
The Methods

2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV)

*7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power
and of love and of A SOUND MIND.*

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV)

3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does.

4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world.

On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.

*5 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.*

God Gave Us A Sound Mind, But We Must Guard What God Gave

2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV)

*7 For God has not **given us** a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of **a sound mind**.*

WE ARE THE RECIPIENTS

*This verse suggests **soundness** is part of God's **PROVISION** for the believer.*

The sound mind Paul speaks of is a mind under the control of God's Holy Spirit.

*Having a sound mind requires a thought process based on the wisdom and clarity that God imparts rather than being **manipulated by fear**.*

WE UNDERSTAND THE REALITY

*Although We Have Been Provided With A Sound Mind... There Are **Pressures That Wage War** on The Mind*

*Throughout Scripture, we see that the mind can **still become**:
Weary, Wounded, Distracted, Discouraged, Defeated, Damaged
Deceived, Double-Minded, Unstable, and Anxious*

WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY

God Provides but We Have Responsibilities

*We Must **Guard Our Minds**, **Renew Our Minds**, **Set Our Minds**, **Keep Our Minds Stayed On Him***

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WE UNDERSTAND THE REALITY

The Tactics That The Enemy Uses To Attack The Sound Mind

#1 ~ Fear

Fear affects perception, judgment, confidence, and faith.

Fear will make you Maximize the Problems and Minimize The Promises

Fear Will Make You Constantly Imagine "Worst Case Scenarios"

1 Kings 19:2-4 (NIV)

2 So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them."

3 **ELIJAH WAS AFRAID AND RAN FOR HIS LIFE.** When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, 4 while he himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors."

This Is Why The Enemy Uses The Fear Tactic

Fear Paralyzes Our Perspective

Fear Causes Us To Forget What God Promised and God's Past Performances

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#2 ~ Trauma

TRAUMA is the *lasting internal impact* of painful experiences that *overwhelm* a person emotionally, mentally, spiritually, or physically.

TRAUMA occurs when something happens to you that your mind, heart, or emotions struggle to *properly process*.
It comes from Abuse, Betrayal, Violence, Prolonged Suffering, Tragedy, Disappointment

TRAUMA is dangerous because even after the event is over, **THE EFFECTS** can remain active in the mind.

Instead of interpreting life **THROUGH TRUTH**, people begin interpreting life **THROUGH PAIN**.

2 Samuel 4:4 (NIV)

4 Jonathan had a son who was lame in both feet. **He was five years old** when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled, but as she hurried to leave, **HE FELL AND BECAME CRIPPLED**. His name was Mephibosheth.

2 Samuel 9:6-8 (NIV)

6 When Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, he bowed down to pay him honor.
David said, "Mephibosheth!" "Your servant," he replied.

7 **"Don't be afraid,"** David said to him, **"for I will surely show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will always eat at my table."**

8 Mephibosheth bowed down and said, **"What is your servant, that you should notice a dead dog like me?"**

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#3 ~ Toxic Influences

One of the greatest dangers to a sound mind is **CONSISTENT EXPOSURE TO TOXIC INFLUENCES**.
Because whatever **repeatedly influences** the mind eventually begins to **shape the mind**.

That is why Scripture is so **intentional** about guarding:
what we hear ~ **what we watch** ~ **what environments we remain connected to** ~ **what voices we entertain**

When **unhealthy behavior** becomes common around us, **the mind slowly stops resisting it**.

INFLUENCE is powerful because **environments teach without speaking**.

You can sit in **toxic environments long enough** that dysfunction starts **FEELING NORMAL**.

Eventually people become **emotionally reactive**, **spiritually distracted**, **mentally overwhelmed**...
Not because **GOD STOPPED SPEAKING**...but because **toxic influences became louder than truth**.

Philippians 4:8 (NIV)

8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--**THINK ABOUT SUCH THINGS**.

So Now That We Have Looked At The Attacks Of The Mind

What Should The Church Be Doing?

Renewing The Mind Through The Word

Restoring Your Mind Through The Word

To Effectively Deal With The Attack

We Must Use The Right Ammunition

1 Samuel 17:38-40 (NLT)

38 Then Saul gave David his own armor—a bronze helmet and a coat of mail.

39 David put it on, strapped the sword over it, and took a step or two to see what it was like, for he had never worn such things before. “I can’t go in these,” he protested to Saul. “I’m not used to them.” So David took them off again.

40 He picked up five smooth stones from a stream and put them into his shepherd’s bag. Then, armed only with his shepherd’s staff and sling, he started across the valley to fight the Philistine.

WE MUST UTILIZE THE WEAPONS THAT HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED FOR WARFARE

DO WE HAVE THE RIGHT WEAPONS FOR WARFARE

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV)

3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does.

4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world.

On the contrary, they have **DIVINE POWER TO DEMOLISH STRONGHOLDS**.

5 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.

KNOW WHO YOU ARE

Paul later describes us as **A PECULIAR PEOPLE** ~ Believers are unique ~

We look the same... **but we are different** ~

We are human... **but we are not helpless**

We are visible, vulnerable... **but we are victorious**

We are flawed.... **But we operate in favor**

We Already Have..... **WE JUST NEED TO UNDERSTAND WHAT WE HAVE** ~ This Is Why Jesus Kept Saying

We NEED REMINDERS

You Already Have Peace ~ You Already Have Provisions ~ **You Already Have Joy**

John 17:15-17 (NLT)

15 I'm not asking you to take them out of the world, but **to keep them safe from the evil one**.

16 They do not belong to this world any more than I do.

17 Make them holy **by your truth**; **teach them your word, which is truth**.

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“God never intended for His church to win spiritual battles with secular weapons.”

Why: “If God allowed it to get to you—it’s already been approved for the battle you’re facing.”

Peter ~ Satan has asked to sift you as wheat...**But I prayed for you...that your faith** don’t fail

WHEN YOU ARE CONVERTED.... STRENGTHEN YOUR BROTHERS

The world fights with: **Opinions, Emotions, and Human Reasoning**

But the believer fights with: **Revelation, Authority, Spiritual Power**

When the enemy attacks your mind— you don’t just think your way out... YOU PRAY YOUR WAY THROUGH

When the enemy attacks your mind— you don’t just try to feel better... YOU FIGHT BACK WITH THE WORD

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We Destroy Strongholds....

A stronghold is not just a **struggle**...It is a **SYSTEM OF THINKING**
Patterns that Persist ~ **Cycles that continue** ~ **Mindsets that Master You**

Strongholds are things that **keep you** from **KNOWING GOD AND TRUSTING GOD**

This is why people say:

"I'll never be better..." ~ "This is just who I am..." ~ "Nothing is going to change..."

HOW DO WE COMBAT THE STRONGHOLDS.... THROUGH TRUTH

If Any Man Be In Christ... He Is A New Creation

I Can Do All Things Through Christ Who Gives Me Strength

With God, All Things Are Possible

The Lord Is My Shepherd I Shall Not Want.

Biblical Illustration

Mark 5:2-9; 14-17

2 When Jesus climbed out of the boat, *a man possessed by an evil spirit came out from a cemetery to meet him.*

3 *This man lived among the burial caves and could no longer be restrained, even with a chain.*

4 *Whenever he was put into chains and shackles—as he often was—he snapped the chains from his wrists and smashed the shackles. No one was strong enough to subdue him.*

5 *Day and night he wandered among the burial caves and in the hills, howling and cutting himself with sharp stones.*

6 When Jesus was still some distance away, the man saw him, ran to meet him, and bowed low before him.

7 With a shriek, he screamed, “Why are you interfering with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?”

In the name of God, I beg you, don’t torture me!”

8 For Jesus had already said to the spirit, “Come out of the man, you evil spirit.”

9 Then Jesus demanded, “*What is your name?*” And he replied, “*My name is Legion, because there are many of us inside this man.*”

14 *Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened.*

15 *When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, **SITTING THERE, DRESSED AND IN HIS RIGHT MIND**; and they were afraid.*

16 *Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well.*

17 *Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.*

CONCLUSION

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DO WE HAVE THE RIGHT WEAPONS FOR WARFARE