

WAR OF THE WORLDVIEWS #41

“The Weapons of Our Warfare”

I will make 3 quick points tonight:

1. We are in a war.
2. The war is a spiritual war.
3. Spiritual war requires spiritual weapons

Then we will spend the rest of our time on “The Weapons of Our Warfare”

I. Introduction

A. First: We Are in a War

1. As we near the end of our War of the Worldview series, let me remind you of where we began.

2. 40 weeks ago, we stood here and declared: “We are in a war!”

- a. Our 1st message was: “Welcome to the War Zone”
- b. Our Bible text was a surprising statement from our Savior...

**Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace,
but a sword.
Matthew 10:34**

3. Whenever Jesus said, “Think not”, it was always to correct something that they WERE thinking! (And many still do today).

4. The Christian life is not cakewalk! We are in a war. You might say we are born-again onto a battlefield.

B. Second: The Nature of the Warfare is Spiritual

1. When Jesus said He came to send a “sword” into the earth, He was not speaking of saber; He was speaking of His Word, the Sword of the Spirit.

2. Jesus preached the Gospel of His Kingdom; a biblical worldview that He knew would provoke a battle with every other worldview.

C. Third: Spiritual Warfare Requires Spiritual Weapons

1. The Apostle Paul describes the nature of our warfare in his letter to the Church at Ephesus:

Ephesians 6:12

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood... (KJV)

Flesh and blood enemies (NLT)

- a. We won't win a war with an enemy we can't identify. Our true enemies are not other people!
- b. Our battle is not with flesh and blood.
- c. I'm not really a big fan of the Living Bible, but the paraphrase on this verse is really good...

For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against persons without bodies-

Ephesians 6:12 The Living Bible

- d. This is an amazing verse of scripture; our fight is not with persons with bodies; our fight is against persons without bodies!

2. The late, great Bible teacher **Derek Prince** once said it was the revelation from this one verse of scripture that delivered him from his lifelong battle with depression! He linked this with Isaiah 61:3.

That God would console those who mourn in Zion, giving them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the SPIRIT OF HEAVINESS.

Isaiah 61:3

- a. Try this yourself at home: When you suddenly feel depressed, realize that "someone" has walked into the room; a "person without a body"!
- b. You are dealing with a spiritual enemy; and God has given you a spiritual weapon, namely "the garment of praise".
- c. Praise and worship are 2 weapons of our warfare!

(But back to our text)

3. So the Apostle Paul was saying “we wrestle not against flesh and blood” and then goes on to what we are wrestling against...

...against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Ephesians 6:12

4. Here we have a description of the hierarchy of the satanic kingdom: all spiritual in nature.

Order of Satan’s Kingdom

Principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places

5. The warfare we wage is “against” these enemies; not flesh and blood; “persons without bodies”; so how do we prepare to fight such powerful enemies?

6. Get dressed for the battle!

Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Ephesians 6:13

a. Can you imagine a football player going onto the field wearing nothing but a bathing suit? Then how can we defeat the devil in our spiritual underwear?

7. Paul goes on to describe the “spiritual” armor we wear:

14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 praying always with all (kinds of) prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints —

Ephesians 6:14-18 NKJV

8. We can’t detail the armor tonight; but resources are available:

“The Christian in Complete Armor” was written by the great Puritan Pastor William Gurnall in the 17th century; it contains 600 pages of commentary, in small print, just on the subject of the Christian’s spiritual armor in Ephesians 6:10-20!

9. So we have established these foundations:

Review these Foundations

- **We are in a war**
- **The war is a spiritual war**
- **Finally, spiritual warfare requires spiritual weapons**

So now let’s move from Ephesians 6 to 2 Corinthians 10 and take a look at 3 more things...

- How we fight
- What we fight
- Our weapons for the fight

II. The Weapons of Our Warfare

A. How We Fight

**For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:
(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God...
2 Corinthians 10:3**

1. We cannot win the war of the worldviews by fighting after the flesh; spiritual warfare calls for spiritual weapons; weapons that are “mighty through God”.

B. What We Fight

(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the...)

- **Pulling down of strong holds**
- **Casting down imagination, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and ...**

• **Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;
2 Corinthians 10:3-5 KJV**

1. As in the satanic kingdom there are hierarchies of power, (principalities, powers, rulers, etc.) so there are 3 levels of spiritual warfare; I believe they are listed here from highest to lowest.

2. **To state it negatively:** Every THOUGHT not brought into captivity becomes an evil IMAGINATION, forming an inner image or picture of something evil. Imaginations not cast down become a STRONGHOLD of the enemy.

a. A stronghold is a whole system of thinking and living.

3. The highest level of spiritual warfare is the “pulling down of strongholds”.

Stronghold

A place that has been fortified to protect it against attack.

Oxford Dictionaries

4. When a person has failed to their thoughts captive or cast down the evil imaginations birthed by those thoughts, the enemy establishes a “stronghold” so strong they may need help to get free.

“A stronghold is a house of thoughts.”

Francis Frangipane

a. This is a powerful truth: what began as one thought is now a “house of thoughts”; a stronghold of the enemy in our lives. And very destructive.

b. All the church surveys of the past 20 years show that the #1 struggle of Christian men in America is pornography:

- A man opens a website and sees woman and has an evil thought
- If that thought is not brought into captivity, the thought becomes an imagination
- If that imagination is not cast down, it will become a stronghold that compels shameful behavior

c. Divorce is now as common in Christian churches as in secular society, many times due to infidelity.

- **I believe that all extramarital affairs begin with a THOUGHT that becomes evil imaginations that become strongholds that can *compel* the sinful behavior that can destroy marriages, families and churches.**

5. We could multiply examples but let's leave it with this: everything begins with our thought life. If we fail to "take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ", we can easily end up with "strongholds" that lead to destruction

III. Close: How To Take Every Thought Captive

A. The Sword of the Spirit

1. Most all of the spiritual armor listed in Ephesians 6 is defensive

- A helmet to protect your head
- A breastplate to protect your heart
- Above all, the shield of faith to quench the fiery darts of the enemy

2. The only offensive weapon listed in the armor of God is the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit.

**And take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.
Ephesians 6:17**

3. Our model for winning spiritual warfare is the Lord Jesus Christ.

a. When He was tempted 3 times by the devil in the wilderness, the Lord Jesus quoted the Word of God: "IT IS WRITTEN"!

b. Add Hebrews 4:12 to Ephesians 6:17.

**For the Word of God is alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword. It cuts all the way through to where joints and marrow come together.
It judges the thoughts and intents of the heart.
Hebrews 4:12**

4. There is no substitute for knowing God's word! And I'm not speaking about a kind of casual knowledge many have today. The average churchgoer spends no time in the Word, then wonders why the devil defeats him so easily.

“How can you pull down the strongholds of Satan if you don't even have the strength to turn off the TV?”

Leonard Ravenhill

5. My personal experience is that devotional reading of the Word of God is the only hope we have to “bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ”.

a. The great 19th century English preacher J.C. Philpot said:

“It is not merely taking a text and quoting passages that will beat back the fiery assaults of Satan; but it is having the Word of truth brought into your heart by the power of God.”

J.C. Philpot (1802-1869)

6. The biblical illiteracy rate in the Church is disgraceful.

a. We send our Christian soldiers off to the battlefield with no swords; our children off to secular colleges with no spiritual armor.

b. But God has given us the Divine right to bear arms!

7. The War of the Worldviews is there for the winning if we are wearing the weapons of our warfare.

Closing Prayer

Blessed be the Lord my Rock. Who trains my arms for battle and prepares my hands for war. He is my love, my fortress; He is my Savior and shield, my place of refuge.

Psalm 144: