

PUT AWAY YOUR **SWORD** *and* **GRAB YOUR NET**



— PART THREE —

PUT YOUR
SWORD
IN ITS PLACE



Scripture Reading

Matthew 26:50-56 (NKJV)

50 But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?"

Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him. 51 And suddenly, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

52 But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. 53

Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? 54 How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?"

55 In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. 56 But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled."

Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.

Introduction

There couldn't be a more fitting time to be in this series "Put Away Your Sword and Grab Your Net!" It is a cry through time from Jesus' earthly ministry even to the present day of the ministry of His Holy Spirit to our hearts to not focus on waging war in the natural because our spiritual enemy is not waging that kind of warfare against us. Satan launches tactical attacks that are often like a bait and an illusion to ignite a physical and emotional reaction that leads to spiritual blindness and a disqualification of our Christian witness.

Many times we don't see the setup, but we experience the snap of the trap and before we realize it, we've been lured into something that we should have stayed away from. And before we realize it:

- we're fighting the wrong battle
- with the wrong weapon
- against the wrong target

It is the plan of the enemy to get the Church—the Body of Christ to wage a war in the natural when the decisive battlefield is in the spiritual realm and not on Main Street.

Let's go back to that moment. A shot went off in Peter's soul. And without reflection... he reached for his sword. An attempt was made on Jesus' life, and Peter could not tolerate it. So he reacted. Not in the Spirit...but in the flesh. Peter was rebuked for saying that he would never let anyone lay a hand on Jesus. He did not understand what the Father was up to, and the things that **MUST** take place in order for God's plan to come to pass.

What do you do when God's plan involves the unthinkable? How could it be God's plan to allow such chaos, suffering and persecution and loss? We may not always understand why God allows what He allows...but we can be certain of this—He is never caught off guard. What feels like chaos to us... is often coordination to Him. He cradles our souls on this side of eternity **AND** the next, He keeps His promises and promised that He would never leave us nor forsake us—even in trouble. We are not left comfort less or defenseless.

As we take a closer look this week at the Sword, we must understand the significance of what Jesus said to Peter in His most intense moment: **"Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword."**

Biblically, what is the proper place for the Sword?

The Sword & It's Warfare

The Sword

I pondered a while how Peter and perhaps another disciple may have gotten their hands on a sword, and why would they be carrying it. And one of the simple explanations is that Jesus actually told them to buy one or have one on them.

Luke 22:35-36 (NKJV)

Supplies for the Road

35 And He said to them, "When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?" So they said, "Nothing."

36 Then He said to them, "But now, he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.

The sword here was a defensive weapon and not to be used offensively. The issue was never the presence of the sword...it was the misuse of it.

The sword we are called to master...is not the sword of steel...but the sword of the Spirit. Believers are called to be well trained in using a Sword to wage a kind of warfare that doesn't cut ears but cuts through noise, confusion and darkness.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)

12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

This is the Sword of the Word of God:

- able to cut through the noise
- able to discern fact from fiction
- nuance from black & white
- clarity from deception
- God's standard from man's standard
- separating the feelings of the soul from the truths of the spirit
- knows thoughts and the intents of the heart before they are even expressed or hidden.

Many believers have been oriented towards a carnal mindset and use the Word offensively to

- condemn and not bring life
- to curse and not to uplift
- to kill and not to heal
- to manipulate but not to lead
- to acquire but not to freely give

Many of us have not mastered how to see beyond the natural and we react in the flesh and in the attempt to be spiritual, we put a human face or target in the place of a spiritual occurrence.

The Warfare

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 (NKJV)

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

For the believer, the battle isn't fought with carnal weapons. Our God given weapons are designed to:

- pull down strongholds
- casting down high imaginations
- bringing thoughts into captivity
- bringing false teaching into punishment and accountability

Know Your Enemy

Ephesians 6:10-19 (NKJV)

The Whole Armor of God

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 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.

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 prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— 19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,

In the heat of the moment, Peter thought his enemy was Malchus and sought to mortally wound him. He thought the enemy was standing in front of him but the real enemy was working behind the moment.

But the real enemy the devil and his wiles using:

- Peter's own anger
 - Peter's lack of self control
 - Peter's lack of reflection on what Jesus said
 - Peter's unreadiness to recognize the will of God
 - Peter's pride and disobedience masking itself as bravery
 - Peter's misalignment with the Kingdom of God
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- Notice how the believer and the work of the Lord is the enemy's target and the enemy's own weapons are things that are inherent to our own weaknesses.
 - When he launches his attack, the only thing we see is our own hands holding the sword and the damage he used us to cause.
 - The enemy doesn't need to hold the sword if he can get you to hold it.

If the sword has a place...then the war has a battlefield.

The Battlefield

"I'm a soldier and I'm on the battlefield and I'm fighting—fighting for the Lord"

- the battlefield isn't on Lexington Ave or main street nor in the hills and valleys of wilderness regions
- the battle isn't against a person, a group, a community, a people or an organization
- the battlefield is on the frontier of the spiritual realm trying to cease control of the in the grounds and canals of the soul, and the hallways of our heart.
- the warfare is against demonic ideas, generational deceptions, false teachings, divisions, heresies, false gods
- and the treasures of the war are the deliverance of those who were under the bondage of the enemy's dominion.

How Do We Know When it's Time to Fight and When to Fish?

Ephesians 6:18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— 19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,

You don't decide when to fight or fish...you discern it.

- persevering with prayer and supplication in the Spirit and not the flesh
- praying for the utterance to be given by the Spirit of God
- boldness to make known the mystery of the Gospel (the only sanctioned message we are commanded to give!)