



INTRO TO SPIRITUAL WARFARE

STUDY GUIDE
MICHAEL ROWNTREE

I. KNOW YOUR ENEMIES: THE WORLD, THE FLESH, AND THE DEVIL

- a. **Eph. 2:1-3:** *"And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience--among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.*"
- b. **Ephesians 2:1-3 names all three enemies:**
 - i. **The world:** Fallen systems of beliefs, values, and practices opposed to God.
 - ii. **The flesh:** Our sinful nature and its disordered desires.
 - iii. **The devil:** Satan and his army of fallen angels.
- c. **The problem:**
 - i. *Some see the devil behind everything* – ignoring the world and the flesh.
 - ii. *Others see the devil behind nothing* – denying a supernatural worldview.
- d. **Scripture teaches us to account for all three.** But today we'll focus on the devil.

II. FIGHTING AGAINST THE DEVIL AND HIS SCHEMES

- a. **Demonic temptation (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13)**
 - i. **Resist the devil, not the wilderness.** Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Spirit, but tempted by the devil (Matt. 4:1; Luke 4:1-2).
 - ii. **Know the meaning of God's Word, not just its words.** Satan quotes Scripture but twists its application. Jesus sees through the distortion and answers with Scripture rightly understood (Matt. 4:6-7; Luke 4:9-12).
 - iii. **Talk back to the devil—don't bargain with him.** After the third temptation, Jesus says, "Away from me, Satan!" (Matt. 4:10; see James 4:7).
- b. **Demonic deception (1 Tim. 4:1-8)**
 - i. **Pay close attention to the character of your teachers.** Doctrines of demons spring not from holy hearts but from hard, hypocritical ones (4:1-5).
 - ii. **Devote yourself to sound doctrine.** Devote yourself to "the faith" and to "the good doctrine" passed down through church history (4:6).
 - iii. **Don't confuse spiritual fascination with spiritual formation.** Reject "irreverent, silly myths" (v. 7)—such as genealogical speculation (see 1:4)—and train yourself in godliness, which profits both this life and next (4:7-8).
- c. **Demonic strongholds (2 Cor. 10:3-5)**
 - i. **Identify the stronghold:** Entrenched arguments, assumptions, and beliefs opposing the knowledge of God (10:4-5).
 - 1. **Cultural strongholds:** Unbiblical worldviews and ideologies.
 - 2. **Personal strongholds:** Deeply rooted lies and patterns of thinking that hinder faith and obedience.
 - ii. **Demolish the lies with truth:** Take thoughts captive to obey Christ (10:5; see Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:20-24).
- d. **Demonic footholds (Eph. 4:26-27; 2 Cor. 2:5-11)**
 - i. **Don't let anger give the devil a foothold** (Eph. 4:26-27). If you go to bed with ripe anger, you will wake up with rotten anger. Satan is a junkyard dog, and he feeds on rotten anger. It gives him a foothold—a place—in your heart.
 - ii. **Don't let unforgiveness give Satan an advantage** (2 Cor. 2:10-11). Corinth disciplined an unrepentant sinner—but then he repented! Paul says, "forgive him." God designed church discipline to be restorative. Satan intends for it to be destructive.
- e. **Demonic oppression (i.e., *demonization*; Luke 13:10-16; Acts 10:38)**
 - i. **Repent:** Turn from sin and the power of Satan to God (Acts 26:18-20).

- ii. **Renounce:** destroy idols; openly reject idolatrous “benefits” (Deut. 7:5; Judges 2:2; Acts 19:18-19).
- iii. **Expel:** Command demons to leave in Jesus' name (Mark 1:25; Acts 16:18).
- iv. **Casting out demons does not always require all three steps.** Repentance and renunciation can be necessary responses where sin is present, but they are not universal prerequisites to deliverance. The New Testament frequently depicts expulsion through direct commands, though not every deliverance follows an identical procedure (see Luke 13:12-13).
- f. **Demonic accusation (Job 1-2; Luke 22:31-32)**
 - i. **Worship God when Satan tests your faith (Job 1:20-22; 2:9-10).** Satan accuses Job of loving God's blessings rather than God himself. He seeks permission to test Job, hoping to expose his faith as fraudulent. Job responds to devastating suffering with worship.
 - ii. **Watch and pray when Satan seeks to sift you (Luke 22:31-62).** Jesus warns Peter that Satan has demanded to sift him like wheat. Later, Jesus exhorts the disciples to “Pray that you may not enter into temptation” (vv. 40, 46). They failed to pray in private, then failed to confess Christ in public. Peter's failure is emphasized because of the warning about sifting.
- g. **What about fighting territorial spirits? See you next week!**

III. FIGHTING FROM THE PLACE OF CHRIST'S VICTORY

- a. **Christ defeated the devil for us:**
 - i. He crushed the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15).
 - ii. He invaded Satan's kingdom as the stronger man (Luke 11:20-22).
 - iii. He inaugurated his judgment of the devil (John 12:31-32)
 - iv. He rose and reigns above every spiritual power (Eph. 1:20-22).
 - v. He disarmed the rulers and authorities through the cross (Col. 2:13-15).
 - vi. He defeated Satan's tyranny of death through his own death (Heb. 2:14-15).
 - vii. He came to destroy the devil's works (1 John 3:8).
 - viii. He will bring Satan's defeat to its final consummation (Rev. 20:10).
- b. **Christ defeats the devil through us:**
 - i. We conquer Satan by the blood of the Lamb—and our testimony about him—not by the strength of our own will (Rev. 12:10-11).
 - ii. We don't rise above Satan by our own power; God raises us up and seats us with Christ in heavenly places to share in his authority (Eph. 2:4-7).
 - iii. We don't fight in our own strength; we stand in his (Eph. 6:11, 13-14).
 - iv. We don't don our own armor; we put on God's (Eph. 6:11-18; see Isa. 59:17).
 - v. We don't overcome by our prayers alone. Ultimately, we overcome by Christ's intercession (Luke 22:32; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25)—and the Holy Spirit's (Rom. 8:26-27).
 - vi. Christ not only crushed the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15); God continues that crushing—through the church!—until Satan is finished (Rom. 16:20).