

## A different View of “Spiritual Warfare”

### **Finally my Brethren...STAND!**

A few reflective thoughts By Rev. Earl Jackson

**Eph 6:10-17** Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, **that ye may be able to stand** against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, **that ye may be able to withstand** in the evil day, and **having done all, to stand. Stand therefore**, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

There is a plethora of “spiritual warfare” books, lectures, sermons, tapes, videos and material available for today’s savvy Christian consumer. I knew on lady who told me that she spent over \$1400.00 on teaching materials about “spiritual warfare”, and she said that she still wanted to get a \$300 seminar series on the subject from one of her favorite televangelist/healer gurus. She was battling cancer, and she thought that this was the Devil attacking her faith, because if she had the faith to believe, she would be cured. These false teachers had convinced her that cancer is from the devil, and that she needed to learn how to “be victorious” in ‘spiritual warfare’. Millions of people have been duped of their money, and still end up dying of the cancer (like this friend of mine did). But do you think the rich televangelist/healer/marketing wiz gives a care? He could care less.

I see this, as demonic tool, for deceiving innocent well-meaning people, bilking them out of their hard earned money, and ruining their understanding of and experience of Christ’s blessed grace, and the victory which he secured for every believer. The current “spiritual warfare” agenda, is just another blinding, mis-directing, mangling of scripture so these filthy rich gurus can stay filthy and stay rich. Satan loves to use Bible quoting liars. He’s been doing it since the Garden of Eden, and people still listen when he talks about God and quotes the Bible! We need to learn to listen to the Holy Spirit and read the Bible for ourselves! The Devils scripture quoting minions cannot teach even the most ignorant child of God one thing! He is a liar, and has been from the beginning, so why listen to him? All the truth is in Christ, and that’s who you have, so why do you need to listen to Satan? Do you think he is capable of enhancing Christ? Can he explain the truth to you better than the holy Spirit, as you read the Bible? Get rid of those garbage materials that these false teachers are peddling and settle all questions directly through the Holy Spirit teaching you the Bible! He wrote it, and

He is the one who teaches it to your soul. You cannot improve on that, and you don't need tapes, videos, books written by men, or CD's to understand the Bible. You need only the Holy Spirit, and guess what? HE'S FREE! And...THERE'S NO SHIPPING OR HANDLING! Think what you'll save? Not just money...but YOU VERY OWN SOUL!

## 1. A few of the crazy current warfare myths.

- That we are to wage war against the devil, attacking him on strategic battle fronts and seizing tactical high ground. This idea is not found in the Bible. The closest thing to it is **Jas 4:7** "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." We resist the devil, when we submit to God's methods, and when we put on the armor as he commands. That's our resistance. We don't need to do anything else.
- That demons are territorial, and that we should mark out their territories and plan our attacks and prayer meetings accordingly. They are spirit beings, and spirits have no physical locations but are everywhere around us, being dispatched in an instant to any person in anyplace that Satan wants to attack or use a person for some evil purpose. The spirit realm is non-geographic and non-spatial. Satan is called the prince of the air. It means the ether, the gaseous realm of vapors. He wants people to think he is in their closet, under their bed, or down at the booze joint and prostitution zone. He is not there. He is in the spirit realm...not the physical. It's another of his deceptions. (just for reference it should interest you to know that Zebub, one of his names, as in Beelzebub, means Lord of the things that fly! That's because demons can appear flying anywhere throughout this world. Aerial phenomenon are his specialty, and ghost's, apparitions, signs in the heavens above, UFO's, etc are all trademarks of his.
- That demons always appear as malevolent beings...horns, flesh eaters, tormentors, creatures of the night, ghost's etc. This is simply one of the deceptions that they want people to believe, so that we are distracted from their true appearance as angles of light, bible teachers, preachers of righteousness, enlightened beings etc. They are the most evil, when they appear the most good. Christians are commanded to try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world. They require exposing, otherwise we will not recognize them. That's how cleverly they disguise themselves as beings of light. But they have no light or truth in them at all. Millions are deceived by these spiritual shape shifters.
- That we are supposed to exercise "spiritual authority" over the demons. And that we responsible for "advancing the cause of Christ in the world", "storming the gates of hell", "launching attacks against darkness and evil forces", "rebuking demons and forcing them to obey Christ", "commanding demons to do what we think they should do, and that if we say the

magic words: 'In Jesus Name', they will be forced to do whatever we say." Don't be so naïve, the thought of such stuff is ridiculous rubbish. Demons are of such infinitely superior power to us, that we can do absolutely nothing against them! That's right, we can do nothing against the power of demons! They obey only Satan, and Christ who is the Lord of all realms. We have no authority, whatsoever, over them. They do not obey you, or me. We are powerless against them.<sup>1</sup>

## **2. A few casual observations about what's currently in vogue.**

My teachings and my doctrines are completely out of synch with the latest current trends, and that is always so, because I don't base what I think or say, on popular book, or popular teachings emanating from popular sources. The golden boy preachers on TV. Have nothing to teach me, that I can't find in a far better form in the Bible. So, I'm not always too vogue in my mentality. That's why I constantly rub people the wrong way. I wish I didn't have to keep explaining everything, but it seems that everything I say, sounds foreign and strange to most people, because they get their ideas from the popular stream, and not from the Bible. I don't need to quote from so called "definitive textbooks" and authors who are supposed experts in their particular branches of theology, because they cannot improve upon what the Holy Spirit is able to teach me in the Bible. Do I read other sources, and try to keep myself informed? Absolutely, but they are secondary, and will always be secondary. Human's cannot improve God's word. I'm one of them! I know that many of you derive significant help, and insight through my books, and my website, which is crammed with Bible studies and theological materials, but guess what? I am a human, and I make mistakes all the time. I write what I write, in the way that I write it, not so that you

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<sup>1</sup> I know that this rubs some of you wrong, because you imagine that Christ has given you "authority" over the Devil and His angels. That is a very dangerous delusion to have, when Christ Himself has not yet put all things under His feet! Nothing in the Scripture supports that idea, including the verses that tell us to cast out demons in his name. Those passages are about Christ's authority, not ours. We have no authority over Satan or his minions. If Satan, could "take" Christ where he wanted him to go, in order to tempt Him (Matt. 4:5), then I guess he can do pretty much whatever he wants to do with you as well! Is the servant greater than his master? God often allows Satan to do just that...read the book of Job! It's not there to teach us that believers command the Devil! It's there to teach us that God often permit's the Devil to do all kinds of horrendous things to believers. The lesson of faith in Job, is not about our power over Satan, but about our power to be victorious without doing anything against him! Let him do what he wants...we will trust in the Lord! Oh "But greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." That's right, so obey what he say's then! If Christ is so great, that you quote that verse, then do what he tells you! Because he is great in our obedience, not in our imaginary pride against the Devil. He say's to put on a bunch of armor, which He has designed and provided for us, and when we have done that, we will "Stand", and we quench all the "fiery darts of the Devil". It has nothing to do with you, or your imagined authority. It has to do with obedience to the Sovereign Lord. We do not stand by fighting, we stand by faith.

will learn the Bible through my writings and teachings; but simply to drive you to your Bible. You need to learn the truth that's in those pages, not the tidbits of it that I might be dishing out in my corrupted writings. I don't want you to study me, I want you to learn Christ! And the only way, is for you to be driven to God's Holy Word.

- BIBLE READING IS AT AN ALL TIME LOW!

When you think I'm speaking weird, or strange, or radically, it's only to get you to throw away all the "in teachings" and "new materials" and get you to open your Bible. I have to relate this story, because I find it a sort of mirror of what happens in churches everywhere. When I went off to Bible college in 1969 as a new Christian who felt the call of Christ leading me into ministry, I can remember how that when I got to my dorm, and settled in with all the other aspiring ministers-to-be, how few of them ever read their Bible. They all listened to sermons. They imagined that someday, they would be preaching just like the great preachers they listen to. They all read page after page of textbooks, notes, outlines, theology books, discourses, lessons and study guides, but very few of them ever cracked their Bibles, other than to look up an occasional proof-text. I'm not making this up, I'm sure that any seminary student could confirm the same thing to you, if they were honest. I used to have to fight with my workload, my activities, my homework and my church commitments, to find even 10 or 15 minutes a day to read the Bible! It's shocking, I know, but it's true! WHAT'S WRONG HERE? If that's how it is for people going into the ministry, who are daily being immersed in the things of God, then how on earth is it, in the homes and lives of ordinary, everyday, normal, run of the mill, Christians, who are being daily immersed in the cares of this world? How does a dad working 60 hours a week, with 3 kids and wife who all have time demands on him...How does he find time to read Gods Word? Or the single mom, how does she do it?

This is a huge problem, and Satan knows it, in fact he is partly responsible for it. Keep them too busy, to read the Bible. Do everything possible to keep them out of it! Convince them that reading about it, in a condensed, speeded up version, is just as good as reading the real thing. Convince them that listening to bits and pieces of it while they are speeding down the highway in their car, is just as good, if not better than spending hours alone someplace, meditating on the actual Bible. Convince them that they are ignorant and cannot understand it without the use of aides, commentaries, tapes, books and other mental gadgets. Convince them that they need to follow prominent television personalities in order to understand the Bible. Get them to send money and call it "investing in spiritual growth", to these charlatans and traffickers in souls. Get them to believe that they are getting "returns on their investments" by listening to garbage which mangles the Bible rather than teaching it's truth. Get them to think that any sort of intelligent grasp of the Bible is way beyond them, and they can never know what is true, and what isn't. Get them to think that attendance at a Bible study, or discussion group is the same things as actually studying the Bible.

Convince them that they are growing in Christ, even though they do not hunger and thirst after God's Word, or study it diligently. THIS IS EXACTLY WHERE SATAN HAS MILLIONS OF CHRISTIANS RIGHT NOW! Feeding on the husks that the swine do eat...off in the far country of darkness, lies and deception, and that's where they have been led by the demons, who are over active in this day in which we live. Boy, that's really a bunch of effective, Spirit -filled Christians! Isn't It? Filling their bellies with the devils husks! That's right where you want to be as a child of the king! Eating at the Devil's pig trough. But that's what millions of Christians, who don't read their Bibles, do daily! And the sad part is: they think this is "the normal Christian Life"! Maybe you're one of them.

- FALSE DOCTRINE IS AT AN ALL TIME HIGH!

These two things are the twins of spiritual apathy. When Bible reading goes down, heresy goes up! When men no longer understand the truth, they become confused and believe lies, thinking that the lies are really the truth. That's how it works, because the Bible is the only corrective to false doctrine. Let God be true and every man a liar. And that's basically how it works. The Bible is true, and men are prone to be attracted to lies. Truth is in the word of God, but lies come from sources far and wide.

People tell me that doctrine is not important, and that the only thing necessary is to love passionately Jesus. We should indeed passionately love Jesus. But, if you love Jesus, you will keep his commandments (Jn. 14:15). "Obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken better than the fat of rams" (1Sam 15: 22). You cannot hearken, and you will not obey, if you do not know Bible doctrine! Bible doctrine informs us about the Savior whom we Love. We can know nothing about Jesus apart from the Bible's teachings concerning him. It is impossible to love Him, without knowing about Him. It is doctrine, and only doctrine, which teaches us about Christ. And doctrine in the soul, is what flames, the passionate love for Christ which we are supposed to have. It's not just about warm and fuzzy feelings, when we think about Jesus, it's about actually knowing Him as He reveals Himself in the Bible. If we say we love Christ, but the Christ that we love, bears little or no resemblance to the Christ of the Bible, than we may be madly in love with a False Christ! Bible Doctrine is the only way you can know for certain you are worshipping the true Jesus. Buddhist's get all warm and fuzzy about Buddha, just like some Christians do about Jesus, and the fact is, that without doctrine, you might as well worship a false God, because your passions and imagined love are simply false feelings, based on fleshly whims. They are not based upon truth, if they have no rooting in the doctrines of scripture.

### **3. The truth about "Defensive Warfare"**

Ephesians 6 clearly presents our warfare as a simple defensive posture. We do

not attack. We do not storm the enemy. That's what they do to us, but that's never what we are to do to them. Our enemy carries out offensive strategies against us, but the role that God has given to us is a simple one...STAND!

"Stand against the wiles of the Devil" v. 11

"withstand in the evil day" v. 13

"having done all to stand" v. 13

"stand therefore" v. 14

Naturally this all seems way to simple. We would prefer to imagine that we are soldiers in a rout, or generals on the advancing battle front, but the truth is that Jesus is the general, and He has already obtained our victory for us! He has seized the high ground, and He has placed the there. Now he commands us to stand. That's it! It's not complicated, and it's not offensive.

But what about the "wrestling" part?

**Eph 6:12** For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.

"Wrestling", surely that's not just standing, is it? The word simply means "our fighting", or "our struggle". Nobody is denying that we are in a conflict with Satanic forces, as verse 12 clearly describes. What this indicates however, is that the principles of warfare, through which we resist the enemy, are not flesh and blood principle, but spiritual principles, which are designed by god to achieve His objectives in the warfare. We wrestle, or fight the struggle this way, and no other way. The method of our resistance is through proper defense.

But what about "the sword"? Surely that is not just a defensive weapon? Swords can be used offensively, can't they?

**Eph 6:17** And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Yes, swords are offensive weapons, as well as defensive, and this one is no different in that sense. But here is the difference that you have to see. This is "the sword of the Spirit". It belongs to Him, and it is His weapon, not ours, we are simply told to take it with us. He does the rest. This sword is wielded directly by God Himself, all we do is carry it with us as we stand. And what is it? It is "the Word of God, which is alive and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:12). "Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against Thee" (Ps. 119:11).

Satan, the arch deceiver, wants to pull us from our "standing" on the high ground of victory in Christ, which victory Christ has secured through his blood, and not

through our fighting. His craft and power are great, and armed with cruel hate, he is always trying to dislodge the saints from the high ground, and wrestle us from our divine position.

But we know this, because God has told us all about it! We do not need to be clever. We do not need to devise strategic battle plans. We need only to stand where God has positioned us. "Having done all to stand, stand therefore!" The battle, the victory, our position, and our standing has all been designed by Christ and secured by His victorious finished work. There is nothing for us to do, because he has already finished everything! "It is finished". Our battle is His battle, and we are simply commanded to "Stand" on the high ground where He has placed us.

I know that this don't sound like the complex battle plans and strategies that the "spiritual warfare" gurus have mapped out in their books and tapes. But that's because they are simply wrong again. They are always wrong, because they get their information from the demons themselves, and not from truth of scripture. God's plan is simple, so even the simplest Christians can understand it, and be fully capable of quenching "all the fiery darts of the devil". Any other plan is destined to fail. Any other plan is part of the enemies scheming to defeat us!

This is not something new. In fact, it is a recurring theme throughout all of Paul's writings.

"... This grace wherein we stand..." (Romans 5:2).

"... You stand by faith..." (Romans 11:20).

"... The gospel ... wherein you stand" (I Corinthians 15:1).

"... Stand fast in the faith ... be strong" (I Corinthians 16:13).

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5:1).

"Stand fast in one spirit ..." (Philippians 1:27).

"... Stand fast in the Lord ..." (Philippians 1:4).

"... Stand perfect and complete in all the will of God"  
(Colossians 4:12).

"... Stand fast in the Lord" (I Thessalonians 3:8).

"... Stand fast ..." (II Thessalonians 2:15).

The battle is the Lord's. We are simply to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. God has always fought His battles like this, and if anyone tells you that it's up to you to win the victory, he is lying. You cannot contribute anything. You are a helpless, mortal, man. Don't think too highly of yourself, because pride is a deadly snare.

**1Sa 17:47** And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle *is* the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands.

## 4. Paul, and example for us.

Paul, knew all about warfare and weapons. In fact before, he became a Christian, he was a centurion himself, and he was responsible for persecuting and killing Christians. But after Paul got saved, he laid aside the weapons of warfare, and turned his heart to the truth, and God showed him an entirely different way to fight. Paul knew that he could wrestle against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and win against them every time, without ever lifting a finger. God taught Paul the principle of passive defensive warfare, and that's why he penned Ephesians 6.

What I want you to notice, however, is how Paul implemented these strategies in His own life. There is an amazing account in the book of Acts, just one of many from the life of Paul.

**Act 16:22-26** And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat *them*. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.

There is no explanation for this amazing scene, other than the fact that Paul simply stood by faith in Christ. He did not resist the soldiers who arrested him. He did not resist the torture, the mocking, the jailor, the putting of his feet in the stocks. He just went along with the flow, and started singing! Why is this? Because, he knew that he was secure in Christ's victory, and that the most that any man could do was kill his body. They could do nothing to his soul! So he endured this trivial stuff, and stood with his feet firmly planted on the high ground. That's all we have to do. Paul is a wonderful example, of his own teachings. Paul had on his armor. Paul did all to stand, and in doing so, God fully took care of Paul. God fully takes care of us as well. We cannot improve upon God's methods or plans. So don't even try. Just live by faith, and the victory is yours. There's nothing else to do. Believe it! It works. Ask Paul.