

Spiritual Warfare 101

I. INTRODUCTION: SPIRITUAL WARFARE IS REAL

- A. Anyone who attempts to live for the Lord is going to experience some level of spiritual warfare in his life. People who attempt a greater impact for Jesus than normal will experience an even greater level of warfare. The reason is because the enemy wants to attempt to stop you from doing what you are doing, through discouragement, setbacks, attacks from different directions.
- B. We must take time to prepare ourselves for spiritual warfare on a regular basis through prayer, putting on the armor of God, and dwelling in the “Secret place” in order to stand in victory (Psalm 91:1). [Secret Place: Place of permanence, a shelter, place to gain strength].

II. UNDERSTANDING WHAT WARFARE PRAYER IS

- A. One expression of prayer is known as “spiritual warfare prayer” because it contends against spiritual strongholds affecting our personal situations, the culture we live in, and the governments of specific cities, regions, and nations.
- B. Paul exhorted us to pull down spiritual strongholds; three strongholds are commonly identified. Paul used the analogy of a stronghold, or fortress, to describe how we overcome Satan’s attack. A stronghold in the ancient world was a fort or fortified city, which was often surrounded by a large stone wall. The purpose of a fortress wall around an ancient city was to keep an invading army out.
⁴For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 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. (2 Cor. 10:4-5)
- C. Spiritual demonic strongholds are established when people in a city individually or collectively open the door to Satan through embracing ungodly belief systems, values, or actions. When people receive demonically energized lies, it results in their lives or city being held in bondage. Certain large cities, regions around the globe “house” territorial spirits that become the expression of certain demonic strongholds.

III. 3 AREAS WHERE STRONGHOLDS CAN GAIN ACCESS

- A. ***Personal strongholds***: Strongholds in our mind start as ideas that are in agreement with Satan and contrary to the Word of God.
- B. ***Cultural strongholds***: Strongholds in regions of culture consist of beliefs, values, actions, and laws in specific regions that are in agreement with Satan (the arch-enemy of God) and against God’s righteousness. Repenting for these actions and laws, along with interceding for God’s mercy, is one way to dismantle cultural strongholds. There are many ways in which people agree with Satan, keeping evil values in power. These must be dismantled through prayer and spiritual warfare.
- C. ***Governmental strongholds***: Governmental strongholds are caused by demonic principalities in the air that assault cities and nations with a focus on attacking and influencing government leaders.

1. These evil spirits are called principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age, and spiritual hosts of wickedness (Eph. 6:12).
¹²We 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. (Eph. 6:12)
 2. They are high-ranking demonic beings that dwell in heavenly places (in the air), not in human beings (Eph. 2:2). These “*disembodied demonic spirits*” powerfully affect humans, but are different in function from demons who *dwell in humans*. These “forces” affect the mind and cause individuals to be taken captive in order to accomplish the will of the evil principality until people in geographical regions are taken captive by it.
²...you once walked...according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience...(Eph. 2:2)
 3. A un-regenerated individual (someone who has not made Jesus Christ Lord of their life) who functions in the place of government will not understand this level of warfare, and will be taken captive to carry out the desire of the wicked forces unless awakened to the spiritual battle they are involved in. A Spirit-filled believer however, has all authority through Christ to take these spiritual powers captive and to do battle.
- D. Just as there is a human hierarchy in the government of nations, so there is a demonic hierarchy of above each region of the earth that affects the city and/or nation under them (Dan. 10:12, 20-21). These spirits are sometimes referred to as “territorial spirits” since they influence specific areas.

IV. 3 WAYS WE CAST DOWN “HIGH THINGS” IN CULTURE

- A. Whole cities, nations, or geographic regions can be affected by the same lies and assaulted by the same demonic activity. We are to cast down every high thing that exalts itself against God. Demonic powers exalt themselves by seducing people to believe lies that attack the truth about God.
1. ***We proclaim the truth about Jesus Christ:*** We publicly proclaim the truth of who Jesus Christ is: His supremacy, victory, leadership, promises, values, etc. We expose the lies lodged in the culture about Him. The declaration of truth is essential in dismantling cultural strongholds.
 2. ***We do the works of the kingdom:*** We act in the opposite spirit of the evil that permeates a geographic area by doing godly deeds, calling the people and lawmakers in that region to repent of lies that they embrace as reflected in their ungodly beliefs, laws, values, and actions.
 3. ***We pray, asking the Father to intervene with His power and great mercy*** as we prophetically declare the truth of Jesus’ supremacy, victory, leadership, and promises. We pray the prayers of the Bible as our textbook, remind God of His promises, and make prophetic decrees related to the supremacy of God and His purposes (Isa. 44:3, Joel 2:12-17, 2:28-29, Isa 62:4-7). ***“Not by might, nor power, but by My Spirit (Zech. 4:6).***