

SPIRITUAL WEAPONS

Your spiritual enemies are the world, the flesh, and the devil. The world is all the anti-God earthly ideas pervasive in the counterfeit culture around you. The flesh is all the sinful thoughts that reside within you, the lusts and pride that drive you to want what you want. It's how your brain has been trained by the world to think independently of God instead of depending on Him. And the devil is a personal spiritual enemy.

1- WHO: Define your spiritual adversaries. One Satan's favorite tactics is get you to believe he is a joke, a fractured figment of your imagination, a ghoulish cartoon character. The devil is no caricature, but a definable evil enemy. Scripture describes him as a deceiver, a tempter, a murderer, and opposer. He is a created angelic being who rebelled against God. He leads a host of fallen angels called demons, who are engaged in active rebellion against God in the spiritual realms of reality, as well as here on earth. The evil one is a finite limited creature who leads a host of demons who seek to disrupt God's people.

2- WHAT: Determine your spiritual weapons. God's truth and God's power are constant companions of all Christians "in union with Christ." Satan's strategy is to twist God's truth, to trick you. This includes deceiving you regarding his actual limited powers. But the truth and power of Christ are infinitely greater. The war is already won by Christ. Yet just as enemy soldiers continued to fight in WW2 after armistice was signed, Satan and his demons refuse to stand down as they await the return of Christ. This means believers are still in battle with the evil one and his minions. As CS Lewis said, "*If you haven't met Satan recently, you are probably going his way.*" But three things are on your side: the Lord, light, and limits.

A- **LORD** - As promised in Genesis 3:15, Jesus Christ definitively defeated Satan. And 1 John 3:8 says, "*the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.*" Hebrews 2:14 says, through His death Jesus destroys "*the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, to deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.*" The wages of sin is death. The only escape is the sacrifice of Christ. Colossians 2:15 says He "*disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, triumphing over them*" in the cross.

B- **LIGHT** - and truth overcome evil. Jesus is both Truth and Light. John 1:5 says "*the light shines and the darkness has not overcome it.*" Jesus is the light of the world, who said, "*take heart, I have overcome the world.*" 1 John 2:14 says about believers, "*you are strong and the word of God abides in you and you have overcome the evil one.*" 1 John 4:4 says "*you have overcome them, for He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*" This is the promise of the power of the armor of light in Romans 13:12. God's truth in Christ is the light that overcomes the limited power of the darkness and the devil.

C- **LIMITS** - evil has limited power. Evil is not the absence of good, but is rather the twisting of truth. This is the speciality of Satan. Man-made myths project a duality or balance of good and evil. But the Bible declares evil as limited and defeated. The evil one is only one, with legions of evil servants. And they are subject to the spiritual authority of God (Job 1:12) and of Christ. In Luke 9, He gave His twelve disciples power and authority over demons and diseases, and sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God.

In Luke 10, Jesus sent out seventy disciples, who returned with joy, saying "*Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name. He said to them, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold I give you authority over all the power of the enemy.*" Then He re-focuses their zeal: "*nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.*" This is spiritual warfare. Your objective is proclaiming God's truth in Christ, so people are saved. This authority was given Jesus and passed on to all His disciples as part of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

3 - HOW = Deploy your spiritual strategies. You have defined your adversaries as the devil and his demons. You have determined your weapons as God's truth, the Holy Bible, and God's power, the Holy Spirit. Now your daily duty is to deploy these weapons. *Next time, we'll explore how you live moment by moment under God's protection and provision, in the armor of Christ - as you "trust and obey."*