

# Spiritual Warfare

Spring 2022

## Lesson 4 – Our Power and Authority

One of the primary strategies of Satan in keeping us from growing in Christ and to stunt effectiveness in ministry is to keep us **ignorant** of the power and authority we have in Jesus. Satan is **jealous** of us. He had a place of **authority** prior to his fall and humans were given authority over the created, material world (Gen. 1:26 and Ps. 8:5). Satan hates God and therefore hates who God loves.

One of the enemy's primary areas of attack is our **self-image**. Satan does not want us to discover who we are. Charles Kraft writes,

I work with victimized, abused, and defeated people whose lives are often characterized by severe hopelessness or depression. Yet they are often brimming with hidden **talents** and untapped spiritual **gifts** given to them by God at conception. The enemy, knowing what these gifts and talents are, has done his best to keep these people from knowing their **abilities**. And he has destroyed—or nearly destroyed—their **perception** of who they are intended to be. (Kraft, *Evangelical's Guide to Spiritual Warfare*)

Occultists who have converted to Christianity report that most Christians don't realize the power they have in Jesus, and if they do, they don't know how to use it.

The satanic kingdom wants us to **fear** it. Fear is an **instrument** used by the powers of darkness to keep Christians blinded from our power and authority in Jesus. Understanding our power and authority in Jesus diffuses that fear.

The power of the demonic depends completely on the **garbage** off which they feed and live. Removing the garbage of sin and getting healing for damaged emotions **weakens** the powers of darkness. One of the best ways to exercise our power over darkness is by getting rid of garbage.

### Our Identity in Christ: Sixth Truths

1. We are created in God's **image**. We share in the likeness of God. Like God, we are spiritual beings with **understanding** and free will. We are political beings with **authority** over the creation. We are moral beings capable of righteousness and **holiness**. God is love

and we are made with love and for love. We are knit together in the womb by God (Ps. 139:13). God is all-knowing. He knows all the facts, figures, calculations, formulas, and solutions. God understands everything. He not only knows *what*, but also *how* (Ps. 147:5). His knowledge is comprehensive, integrated, and perfectly appropriated and ordered. God has perfect wisdom. His decisions and judgements are perfectly sound and lack nothing. He does not make **mistakes**, overlooks no variables, and has no lapse in **judgment**. This God, *this God*, made you.

2. God has **redeemed** us. Christ's redeeming work was effective. There is nothing that prevents us from God's immediate presence. By his wounds we are healed (Is. 53:5). Christ's blood is sufficient to atone for all sins and heal all wounds.
3. We are children of God (1 Jn. 3:1). We belong at God's table. We have been grafted in. We have all the rights and privileges of being children of God.
4. Christ shares his **authority** with us. He says, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven" (Lk. 10:18-19).
5. The Holy Spirit **indwells** us. Because Christ's atonement was effective, the Holy Spirit can fill us *in every part*. He can fill us completely and entirely. He can uproot the very disease of sin from our nature. The Holy Spirit in us is greater than the devil (1 Jn. 4:4).
6. God has redeemed humanity, but not the **fallen angels**. Humans and angels both rebelled against God, but God has only created a way of redemption for humans.

## Hindrances to Power

1. Emotional Wounds and **Reactions**. We all have emotional wounds, usually from childhood or adolescence. Wounds cause a reaction, usually anger, resentment, fear, or similar negative emotions. These reactions can be appropriate or inappropriate. The problem is when we **hang on** to these emotions and **wallow** in them. These emotions become pillars to our identity. The idea of doing away with them is scary because we find security in them. We need to release or discharge these emotions. Our physical bodies

discharge what they do not need. If we don't discharge, it creates dangerous blockages that create fatal health problems. We get poisoned from the inside. The same is true spiritually and emotionally. We must give our poisonous emotions to Jesus (Matt. 11:28). This brings health and freedom.

2. **Self-Image** Problems. American culture is hyper **individualistic** and therefore very competitive. We are trained to constantly **compare** ourselves—including what we do, how we look, how much money we make, how many friends we have—to others. This leaves us feeling like we fall short. We feel like **failures** who will never achieve the actualization of our best selves. We feel unacceptable and unworthy. We must see ourselves as God sees us. We are image-bearers, redeemed, loved, and accepted by God on the basis of Jesus (Ps. 113).
3. **Theology** Problems. Satan lies to us about God (Gen. 3). He deceives us by telling us that God is not trustworthy and does not love us. This hardens our hearts. To get a true picture of God, look at Jesus and the cross.

### The Silver Bullet of Spiritual Warfare

Our greatest weapon in fighting satanic influence is **intimacy with Jesus**. Jesus was intimate with his Father and didn't waver, never faltered, and never failed. Intimacy with Jesus does the following regarding spiritual warfare:

- Jesus gives us right, clear **theology**. Jesus is God in flesh. The Enemy lies about God. We know a lie when we see one because we are intimate with God and know what he's really like. When you're close to Jesus, the lies of the Enemy about who God is won't **fool** you.
- Jesus gives us a clear view of **our selves and others**. The Deceiver lies to us about who *we are*. He attacks our self-image. Jesus affirms who we are. He relates to us on the grounds of the reality of our redemption in him. He affirms us as the brothers and sisters that we are according to his own **righteousness**.
- Jesus takes the burden of **garbage**. Jesus is the only one who can appropriate our damage. He can take it into himself and redeem it. He is the wounded hearler. Because of his sacrifice, he has all authority to properly place evil in the world.