

# Spiritual Warfare

The difference between deliverance and spiritual warfare is that deliverance is dealing with demonic bondages, and getting a person set free, whereas spiritual warfare is resisting, overcoming and defeating the enemy's lies (in the form of deception, temptations and accusations) that he sends our way. Deliverance involves the breaking up of legal grounds, the tearing down of strongholds (offensive spiritual warfare), and the casting out of demons. Spiritual warfare on the other hand, is dealing with three key things the enemy sends at us: temptations, deception and accusations.

This teaching will give you an idea of how spiritual warfare works. There are other teachings on this site that will go into more detail on certain areas of spiritual warfare.

## Offensive vs. defensive warfare

Spiritual warfare comes in two ways: offensive and defensive. Offensive warfare is tearing down the strongholds the enemy has formed in your mind through deception and accusations, and defensive warfare is guarding yourself against the tactics or schemes of the devil.

## The enemy's three primary weapons

There are three things that we can expect from the devil. The Bible tells us that we struggle not against flesh and blood, but against demonic forces. Ephesians 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." The three primary things we struggle against include:

**#1 Deception:** To deceive somebody means to make another person believe a lie or something that is not true. When the enemy sends deception your way, it is an attempt to deceive you into believing something that is not true, so you will fall into error. Strongholds are built through deception. A stronghold is formed when deception takes hold in a person's mind. A stronghold is an incorrect thinking pattern that stems from believing something that is not true. From the very beginning, Satan deceived Eve into believing that God's Word was not true. In Genesis 3:4, the devil told her that she will not surely die as God said she would in Genesis 2:17.

**#2 Temptation:** Temptation often follows deception. First the enemy tells us, "You won't surely die!", then he makes the fruit on the forbidden tree look good to us. Since Eve accepted Satan's deception (his lie), now the tree that she was not supposed to touch looked good to her. She was tempted (enticed) to sin, because she allowed herself to first be deceived. Temptation is when we are enticed or encouraged to sin in one way or another. In Matthew 4, Jesus was led out in the desert to be tempted by the devil. The devil tried to convince Jesus that it would be harmless to jump off a building. Often people will be so drawn to sex with their boyfriend/girlfriend when the enemy tries to convince them that it is all harmless and fun, when it's not harmless at all, but an open door to the devil. Jesus saw through Satan's deception, and resisted the temptation by speaking God's Word. King David said in Psalms 119:11, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." When the enemy tempts you, he's showing you the worm... but behind that worm is a hook. The Word of God helps you see the hook behind the worm.

**#3 Accusations:** The devil is known as the accuser of the brethren (Rev 12:10). He is known to take a believer who has done an embarrassing or gross sin in their past, and continue to rub it in their faces and beat them down with guilt and condemnation over their past.

## Dealing with deception

We have two weapons to deal with deceptions: the belt of truth (Ephesians 6:14) and the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17) which is the Word of God. Both are truth, which is found in God's Word, so why are they given two different names (a sword and a belt)? Because one is meant to be defensive (the belt), while the other is meant to be offensive (the sword). This means that the Word of God is both an offensive and a defensive weapon. A belt is something you wear to guard against an attack, while a sword is used to slaughter the enemy.

You use the belt of truth (God's Word) to guard against the enemy's deception (lies) he sends your way, while you use the sword of the Spirit (also God's Word) to tear down existing strongholds (deception that took hold) in your mind. In Romans 12:2, we are told to "be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." How do we renew our minds? By getting in God's Word! In Ephesians 5:26, this process is referred to as washing of water by the Word: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."

### **Dealing with temptation**

In James 4:7, we are told to resist the devil and he will flee from us. But it's not that simple; in the same verse, we are also told to draw near to God. Dealing with temptation is a two fold process of resisting the devil and drawing near to God. The closer you get to God and the more you become aware of His love, the less power temptation will have over you.

James 4:7, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (The context of those verse is clearly speaking of temptation).

In the teaching *Forgiven Sinner or Saint?*, it shows you how the power of sin (temptation) can be broken in our lives.

### **Dealing with accusations**

The fiery darts of the enemy in Ephesians 6:16 are accusations sent our way. For example, when the devil tries to accuse us of our past sins, we are to have faith in the work of the cross and know that they are forgiven and not to look back. Faith is what we use to put out the fiery darts of the enemy (Ephesians 6:16). We are not to meditate about our pasts, because they have passed away (2 Corinthians 5:17), and our sins have been forgotten (Hebrews 10:17).

Ephesians 6:14, "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth (knowing your sins have been forgiven through your faith in the work on the cross), and having on the breastplate of righteousness (not our righteousness obviously, but the righteousness of God through Christ Jesus);"

Our righteousness is as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6), but because of the work of the cross, we can receive the righteousness of God through Christ Jesus (Romans 3:22, Galatians 3:6). Therefore when the enemy tries to remind you of your past, tell him it's been washed away (2 Corinthians 5:17), your sins have been forgotten (Hebrews 10:17) and you have the righteousness of God (Romans 3:22)!

There are other teachings on this site that will specifically help you wage war against the enemy's accusations. They include *Condemnation versus Conviction*, *The Power of Your Thoughts* and *Dealing with Guilt*.

### **The tearing down of strongholds**

A stronghold is deception that's taken hold in a person's mind. It's an incorrect thinking pattern based on a believed lie. People can get incorrect perceptions of God by listening to Satan as he tells them how God doesn't love them, etc. People can feel like dirty old sinners when they believe Satan's accusations as he continually reminds them of their past (which has been washed away!). Strongholds are based on lies from the devil. They can come in the form of deception or accusations. Accusations always lead to guilt and the feeling of unworthiness, which weighs you down and tears you apart spiritually.

Since strongholds are built upon lies that we have been fed, the way we tear down strongholds is by feeding on the truth (in God's Word), which is the opposite of what the enemy has been feeding us. If the enemy has been feeding us a lie, we need to stop eating the lie and start feeding ourselves the truth. The weapon we use to tear down strongholds is found in Ephesians 6:17, "...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." A sword is an offensive weapon and is meant to tear down and kill the enemy's troops. Strongholds are the devil's assets in war, and he uses them against us. Take up the sword of the Spirit (God's Word) today, and start slaughtering the enemy's assets that he's been using against you!

[http://www.greatbiblestudy.com/spiritual\\_warfare.php](http://www.greatbiblestudy.com/spiritual_warfare.php)

# Strongholds

The process of deliverance often consists of three main parts: Tearing down strongholds, removing legal rights and then casting out the remaining demons. If you try to cast out demons without taking away the strongholds or legal rights that they are holding onto, then you can't really expect to achieve a complete successful deliverance. Removing these two blockages is vital in going about a complete and successful deliverance. There is a teaching specifically on Legal Rights too that you may want to go through as well.

## What is a stronghold?

A stronghold is a faulty thinking pattern based on lies and deception. Deception is one of the primary weapons of the devil, because it is the building blocks for a stronghold. What strongholds can do is cause us to think in ways which block us from God's best. For example, if you think you have to confess all your sins to everybody you've ever wronged, you'll feel just awful and guilty until you do all that, and even then, you'll probably feel guilty, because you probably forgot many people that you didn't confess your sins to. All unnecessary, and a waste of time, all because you were deceived and thought that you had to do something that you really didn't have to do.

An example of a stronghold at work: A common scene is somebody who is scared of God, and has a hard time feeling His love and presence. They view Him as a cruel taskmaster, and not as the God that is really is to them, and therefore, they put up there own wall which makes it hard for them to receive God's love, presence and draw close in their relationship with Him. If you saw your spouse as a rude and cruel dictator, you probably wouldn't be as apt to snuggle upto Him and love him as you would if you saw him as a loving and kind person who loves you and cares for you. If you see somebody as mean, it's hard to receive their love, isn't it? That's how our perception of God can hinder us from feeling His love and presence in our lives. It is VERY important to have a correct perception of God if we want to live victorious lives in Christ Jesus!

## Two very destructive and common strongholds

The first one, where you see God incorrectly: One of the most popular and devastating strongholds to have, is an incorrect image in your mind of who God is, and how He sees us. People who see God as a taskmaster, live their lives with an unhealthy fear of God. There's a good kind of fear of God, which is more like a holy respect for Him, but there's another kind of fear that is very unhealthy that the enemy wants us to have, and it's the kind of fear where we see God as a taskmaster, cruel, cold, distant, uncaring and would snap the whip at us the moment we step out of line. People who are afraid they've committed the unpardonable sin are almost guaranteed to have this stronghold. People who find it hard to feel God's love and presence, often have this stronghold too. If you feel God is distant and cold, or question if God loves you, then you need to get this stronghold torn down. One awesome book that will help you break down this stronghold is Blessed Beyond Measure by Gloria Copeland. It talks about the goodness of God, and it's impossible to read that book and be the same person when your done seeing the love and goodness that God wants to bless us with!

The second one, where you see yourself incorrectly: People who suffer from this have a hard time seeing the new person that they are now in Christ Jesus, and often suffer from low self-esteem. They don't understand what Christ did for them, and how it applies to their own life. Common symptoms of this stronghold are guilt feelings (questioning if you've really been forgiven of your sin(s)), low spiritual esteem (they feel like sinners, not saints), they lack spiritual confidence that we are supposed to have in Christ Jesus, they may still struggle with sin (Jesus said that if you keep in His Word, which tears down strongholds, you will be free from the power sin has over you - John 8:31-34), and overall you don't feel 'worthy' spiritually and lack the joy of the Lord in your life. If you even remotely struggle with this stronghold, the teaching Forgiven sinner or saint? is an absolute must-read!

One of the best books I've seen for tearing down this stronghold is Victory over Darkness by Neil T. Anderson. It will teach you of the new person you are now in Christ Jesus, and help you be victorious over the darkness through an understanding of your identity in Christ. I mention common other strongholds over on the Three Stages of Bondage teaching.

## How to tear down a stronghold

2 Corinthians 10:4, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." Strongholds are birthed and dwell in deception (which are lies and false beliefs), so naturally the cure is to bring the truth in God's Word on the scene. You debunk the lies of the enemy, with the truth, which is in the Word of God! The Bible says that our weapons are mighty for the tearing down of strongholds (2 Cor 10:4, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds."). What is our primary offensive weapon? The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Eph 6:17, "...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."). Truth dispels deception and lies, and therefore the more truth you bring into a situation, the more the darkness must flee. This is where it's important to grow in God's Word, is because it is your primary weapon for tearing down the strongholds of deception that the enemy has been feeding you.

In John 8:31-36, Jesus tells us that we can be held in bondage due to strongholds in our lives. And His solution was to, "continue in my word... and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (v. 32-32) Strongholds are torn down as we meditate on God's Word, which is truth!

A great list of Bible verses you can meditate on, which will help you tear down strongholds in your life can be found on the anti-stronghold Bible verses page: [http://www.greatbiblestudy.com/bible\\_verses.php](http://www.greatbiblestudy.com/bible_verses.php)

<http://www.greatbiblestudy.com/strongholds.php>