



## 4 • THE DISCIPLE'S VICTORY

Consistent victory is experienced IN Him. (John 16:33)

*Ephesians 6:10-13 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles (scheming) of the devil. 12 For we 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. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

*2 Corinthians 10:3-6 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For 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,...*

*Galatians 5:16-18 Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*

### SUGGESTED READING

*Penetrating the Darkness: Discovering the Power of the Cross Against Unseen Evil* by Jack Hayford and Rebecca Hayford Bauer

*Pulling Down Strongholds* by Derek Prince

*The Spiritual Warfare Answer Book* by David Jeremiah


*The Spiritual Warfare Handbook: How to Battle, Pray and Prepare Your House for Triumph* by Chuck D. Pierce, Rebecca Wagner Sytsema

### SPIRITUAL WARFARE

1. Although Satan should never be the center of our belief, it is important that we understand his place in Scripture and in the unfolding of God's ultimate plan. No other individual is given such a place from the Bible's beginning to its end as the character we know as Satan, or the devil. (Genesis 3:15 to Revelation 20:10)

2. Many people refer to the devil as a “metaphorical personification of evil,” or accuse those who believe in a real devil as fanatics (and there have been unscriptural beliefs and activities). The refusal to acknowledge Satan’s existence, however, works to his advantage and allows him to easily deceive mankind to accomplish his plan. Because of this, Satan has been successful in deceiving and enveloping entire nations and cultures in darkness, base superstitions and practices.
  - A. 2 Corinthians 4:4 *The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*
3. Effective ministry today demands that we recover the knowledge and experience of the “spirit world” that the early church possessed. God wants us to learn spiritual warfare.
  - A. Judges 3:1-3 *These are the nations the LORD left to test all those Israelites who had not experienced any of the wars in Canaan (he did this only to teach warfare to the descendants of the Israelites who had not had previous battle experience)...*

### THE BIBLE CLEARLY MENTIONS SATAN

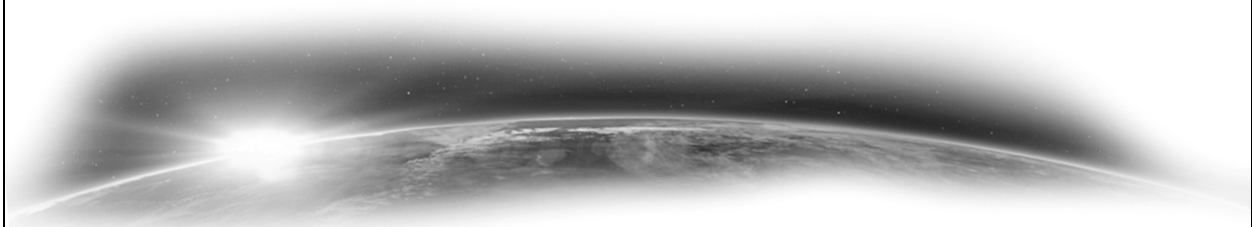
1. The Bible is clear about the creation of Satan, his fall, his character, work, influence and his ultimate judgement and destiny.
  - A. John 10:10 *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy...*
2. Satan is not his original name. It is Lucifer (Isaiah 14:12-15) and in the Hebrew it means “shining one” or “morning star.” The main titles or names for the devil in the Old and New Testaments are Satan (the adversary) and the Devil (the accuser, slanderer). Satan or the devil is specifically mentioned 72 times in the New Testament alone and gives many instances of his evil deeds. Here are a few instances in the Old Testament.
 
  - A. In Ezekiel 28:11-19, he is the covering cherub in Heaven.
  - B. In Genesis 3:15, he is seen as the serpent who deceived Eve in the Garden.
  - C. This the first mention of the name Satan, meaning adversary, is in 1 Chronicles 21:1 *Now Satan stood up against Israel, and moved (enticed, provoked) David to number Israel.*
  - D. He appears twice in Job 1:6-12 and 2:1-7 “...when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them” and began the dramatic confrontations against Job resulting in life altering trials. (Job 42:10-17; Romans 8:28; 1 Peter 1:6-9)
  - E. Satan is seen in Zechariah 3:1-2 *when Joshua the High Priest stood before the Angel of the Lord with Satan, who was accusing, attacking and resisting him.*
  - F. A few other titles include Angel of light, 2 Corinthians 11:14; Father of lies, John 8:44; a lying spirit, 1 Kings 22:22; unclean spirit, Matthew 12:43; Power of darkness, Colossians

## THE ISSUE OF THE “(RE)CREATION”

**Genesis 1:1-2** *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness (was) on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.*

1. Created – (1254 bara) The initiation of an object, creation out of nothing.
2. Without form – (8414 tohu) A desolation, a desert, wilderness, desolate city, worthless, confusion, an empty place thing. This word has a very negative connotation.
3. Void – (922 bohuw) To be empty, a vacuum, an undistinguishable ruin.
4. Darkness – (2821 Chashak) To be dark, withhold light, cause darkness, hide.
5. Hovering – (7363 rachaph) To brood, to be relaxed, flutter, shake.

**Genesis 1:1-2** *In the beginning God initiated the creation of the heavens and the earth out of nothing. The earth was (became) a desolation, and an undistinguishable ruin; and darkness withheld light on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was brooding, relaxed, fluttering, and shaking (bringing order) over the face of the waters.*



1:13; Prince of this world, John 14:30; Serpent, Genesis 3:4, 16; 2 Corinthians 11:3; the Dragon, Isaiah 27:1; Revelation 20:2

## THE REBELLION IN HEAVEN

Satan began his rebellion against God in Heaven as Lucifer, translated as “the morning star.” As a created being and Anointed Cherub, he was perfect in beauty. Because of this, Lucifer lifted himself up with pride against God.

1. Ezekiel 28:11-19 is a lamentation (prophetic warning) against the King of Tyre. In this warning we see Lucifer’s glorious position in Heaven and resulting fall.

*You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created. You were the anointed cherub who covers;... Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor;...*

2. Ezekiel 28:11-19 and Isaiah 14:12-15, we see a provocation or judgement against the King of Babylon and Lucifer's rebellion against the LORD Almighty in Heaven. In Isaiah 14:12-15 he declares five "I wills" against God's authority.

*How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer (Day Star) son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High."*

- A. **I will** ascend into heaven — There are three heavens: the earth and its atmosphere, the cosmic, spiritual heaven (Daniel 10:12-14), and the highest Heaven where God's Throne is (2 Corinthians 12:1-4). Lucifer desired God's place and throne in Heaven.
  - B. **I will** exalt my throne above the stars of God — The "stars of God" refers to the angels in Heaven (Job 38:7; Jude 13; Revelation 12:3-4, 22:16). Lucifer wanted to rule over all the angelic beings.
  - C. **I will** also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north — This seems to indicate a desire to know hidden things known only to God (Isaiah 2:2; Daniel 2:35). This may also indicate rulership -- Kings would sit when they had conquered.
  - D. **I will** ascend above the heights of the clouds — God's Divine Glory or Presence is often described as a cloud, a divine visitation of the presence or dwelling of God on the earth. (Exodus 40:34-38; 2 Chronicles 5:13-14) Lucifer wanted this glory.
  - E. **I will** be like the Most High — This is the pinnacle of the other four desires — to BE God. All of these desires represent independence from God and a willful, personal ambition against God's Person, glory and power.
3. Revelation gives us the account of Satan's fall from Heaven and ultimate end.
- A. Revelation 12:3-4 says that his "tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth" and possibly alludes to one third of the angels who also lost their place in Heaven and then became the demonic army in the earth.
    - Revelation 12:7-9 *And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*
  - B. The final and eternal end of Satan and the demonic hordes — Revelation 20:10 *The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

## THE RESULTS ON EARTH

Read Genesis 3, the account of the entrance of sin into the world and the resulting fall.

1. When Lucifer was cast out of Heaven, he brought his rebellion to the Garden of Eden and to

Adam and Eve. In this way sin and destruction entered the human race.

Romans 5:12-21 *Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people,...*

2. **Key thought:** Satan's sin originated within himself before he was cast to the earth. Man's sin originated from an internal response to an external tempter and temptation.
3. As Adam and Eve responded to Satan's deception and took from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, the glory of God left. They realized their own nakedness and sought covering from things other than God's Presence. (Genesis 3:7)
  - A. When Moses came down the mountain his face shone like the sun because he had been with God. (Exodus 34:29-35). Adam and Eve walked and lived in the glory of God. This fellowship enhanced their physical bodies and they shone as "bodies of light" (biophotonic). This phenomenon would certainly have applied to Adam and Eve who *lived* in the Presence of God!
4. Their relationship with God changed! Instead of running *to* God, they hid *from* Him. (Genesis 3:8-10) This brought a curse on the woman, the man and the earth (Genesis 3:14-19) and brought death upon the entire human race. (Romans 5:12)
5. However, God has never allowed Satan ultimate victory!

## UNDERSTANDING OUR ENEMY, THE DEVIL/SATAN

Many times when "Satan" is referenced, it is referring to the entire evil kingdom: Satan, his demon lords and all the evil, unclean spirits interfering in human life. (Ephesians 6:11-13)

1. Our enemy, the devil, still uses the same approach today as he did in the Garden in Genesis 3:4.
  - A. He challenges the authority of God's Word.
  - B. Satan perverts (calls into question) the character of God and His motives.
  - C. He minimizes God's standards.
  - D. He tempts us with human autonomy, "*you will be like God...*"
2. He is deceptive, crafty, calculating and scheming — 2 Corinthians 2:11 *...in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.*
3. He is a spirit being but with limitations — Job 1:12, 2:6 *The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger."*
4. He is fully committed to evil and destruction. He is a thief, a murderer, a liar, and the father of all lies.
  - A. John 10:10 *The thief comes only to steal and kill (slaughter, sacrifice, slay) and destroy (ruin with death and destruction);...*

- B. John 8:44 ...*When he lies, he speaks his native language, because he is a liar and the father of lies.*
5. He is able to influence and seduce us. 1 Chronicles 21:1 *Satan rose up against Israel and incited (seduce and stimulate) David to take a census of Israel.*
6. The hook is baited and vulnerable areas are attacked. He appeals to our sensual desires and cloaks (hides) the consequences.
- A. James 1:13-15 *When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. (2 Samuel 11:2-3)*

### **Satan's kingdom is highly organized**

1. Satan operates a highly organized kingdom according to Matthew 12:26-27, *If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand?*
2. Paul mentions three heavens in 2 Corinthians 12:1-10. They are the earth and its atmosphere, the cosmic, spiritual heaven (Daniel 10:12-14), and the highest Heaven where God's Throne is (2 Corinthians 12:1-4). This seems to be implied in Ephesians 6:12 *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*
  - A. **Rulers:** "Arche" — That which is first, at the beginning, possibly the prince of this world. (Matthew 4:8-11)
    - John 12:31 *Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince (Archon) of this world will be driven out. (John 14:30)*
  - B. **Authorities:** "Exousia" — The power which receives authority from delegation (Matthew 8:5-9). This seems to be a "second" layer of rulership over nations.
    - Daniel 10:12-14 *...But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.*
    - Note: the two Greek words for "power" are exousia (authority as in Mark 6:7; Luke 10:19) and dunamis (dynamic power as in Acts 1:8).
  - C. **Powers:** "Kosmokrator" — A world ruler of darkness. This layer implies the delegation dealing with issues of philosophies darkening the minds of people.
    - 2 Corinthians 4:4 *The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*
  - D. **Spiritual forces of evil:** "Poneria" — Spiritual forces of evil that induce sinfulness and lawlessness in individuals, unclean spirits, infirmities, premature death, etc. While high ranking demons may operate in the second heaven, these demons infiltrate our

environments at home, work place, recreation and even the church.

- Matthew 4:24 *News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and he healed them.*

## DEFEATED AT THE CROSS!

Colossians 2:13-15 *And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.*



1. Christ disarmed (stripped) the devil, he has no power! His ONLY recourse is to deceive us to act upon his influence.
  - A. 1 John 3:8 *He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy (to loosen, break up, dissolve, melt) the works of the devil.*
2. Being involved in a supernatural war with powerful, invisible enemies, we must understand that we are fighting a war against an already defeated foe. This changes how we see and engage our enemy!

## HOW JESUS DESTROYED THE POWER OF THE DEVIL...

1. The fulfillment as the prophesied, coming Messiah in Genesis 3:15.
2. During His “silent years” at home, before His public ministry began. (Luke 2:51)
3. His baptism and the Father’s commendation at His baptism. (Matthew 3:13-17)
4. In the wilderness through His temptation and victorious battle against the devil. (Matthew 4:1-11)
5. During His public ministry. (Matthew 4:17, 8:16-17, 12:15, 15:30-31)
6. At the cross, crucified in our place for our sin. (John 16:11; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
7. At the Resurrection from the dead. (Hebrews 2:14-15)
8. In the lives of His followers. (Mark 16:19-20; Romans 16:20; Colossians 1:13)
  - A. Satan has no authority (or power) over the person who is submitted to the Lordship and under the blood covering of the risen and exalted Christ.

## AREAS OF SPIRITUAL CONFLICT

Paul likens our spiritual conflict as wrestling, a competition between two or more competitors who attempt to gain and maintain a superior position.


Ephesians 6:12 *For we 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.*

Our enemy targets our weaknesses, which range from our thought life, our unsubmitted flesh nature, the world and relationships (especially within the church). With this in mind let's take a look at the areas or channels he uses.



1. The MIND, our thinking and our paradigm, or the way we view the world.
  - A. Because Satan knows us, he bombards our minds with thoughts of doubt, fear, insecurities, offenses, etc. Through time these thought patterns can develop into strongholds.
    - A stronghold is an entrenched pattern of thought, an ideology, value or behavior that is contrary to revealed, Biblical truth, emanating from the human, carnal nature, and exploited by satanic forces. -- Tom White
  - B. Three ways the enemy uses our thoughts:
    - Deception means to believe a lie. Actions based on deception create destructive endings. (Genesis 3:1-7; 2 Corinthians 11:3)
    - Temptation often follows deception. The enemy deceives us about God's Word/His commands and makes the "fruit on the forbidden tree" look good. Temptation is first pleasing, then easy, then frequent, then habitual. (Romans 8:5-6)
    - The devil is known as our false accuser, our slanderer. He accuses you to God, God to you, you to others and you to yourself. (Revelation 12:10)
  - C. **Our weapon** -- 2 Corinthians 10:3-6 *For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For 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. The FLESH, our unsubmitted self. (Romans 7:21-23, 8:5-8; Galatians 5:17; James 4:7)
  - A. When the Bible speaks of the sin nature it is referring to that natural inclination to sin and the seat of willful defiance and rebellion against God's authority. Galatians says it well in AMP version.
    - Galatians 5:17 *For the sinful nature is opposed to the Spirit, and the desire of the Spirit opposes the sinful nature; for these are in direct opposition to each other and are continually in conflict,...*



- B. All of us have a sinful nature inherited from the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden.
- Romans 5:12 *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.*
  - Romans 3:23 *...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,...*
- C. Satan has authority in our lives through areas we have not given over to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. But those areas which are given to His Lordship produce victory! Jesus said it this way in John 14:30 *...the prince of this world is coming and has no hold over me,...*
- D. The “handle” principle. The acts of the sinful nature in **Galatians 5:16-21** (grouped into moral, spiritual and social sins) are like the handle of a cup and are unsubmitted areas of weakness where the enemy has authority in our lives. He effectively uses these “handles” to manipulate and torment us. By conquering these areas (breaking off these handles) the enemy has no hold on us as well!
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- The “Velcro” principle — Temptation from without has no power until there is a corresponding desire within! By dealing with internal desires the world has no power over us. James 1:13-15 *When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.*
- E. **Our weapon** -- Galatians 5:16-18 *I say then: Walk in (step with) the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*
3. The WORLD conforming us to its pattern. 1 John 2:15-17 *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*
- A. Our old, flesh nature wars against us to conform us to the pattern and sensual value system of the world which is fueled by the god of this world.
- B. The lust of the eyes is to be captivated by outward show without inquiring into the real value or motivation.
- This is the attitude which sees nothing without wishing to acquire it. It proclaims that happiness lies in the things which the eyes can see and money can buy. Examples are Eve in Genesis 3:6; Achan in Joshua 7:21; King David in 2 Samuel 11:2.
- C. The pride of life is the behavior of the “self-sufficient person who boasts of his or her own independence and abilities. Everything is judged by the appetites of the sinful nature. He is the slave to pretentious display of ability and possessions. He makes himself bigger than he really is.” -- Barclay

- D. **Our weapon** -- Romans 12:1-2 *I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind (by God's Word),...*
4. The CHURCH, the enemy's focus to make the church a powerless force by...
- A. Dividing relationships. Ephesians 4:30-32 *And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*
- B. Exchanging our first love for something else. Revelation 2:4-5 *Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love...*
- C. **Our weapon** -- Hebrews 10:24-25 *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.*
- 1 Thessalonians 5:11 *Therefore encourage each other and build up one another, just as you also are doing.*

### THE DIVISIVE POWER OF OFFENSES WITHIN THE CHURCH

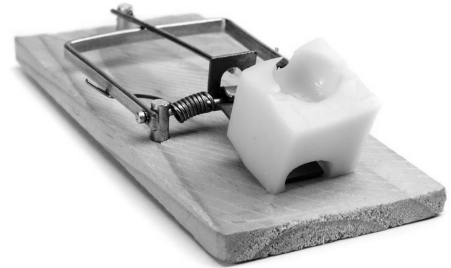
1 Peter 5:8-9 *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.*

1. One of our enemy's greatest weapons against the church is to use opportunities to cause us to be offended with one another. Although this may seem like a small thing (for many it's become a way of life) it is, in reality, a spiritual life threatening emotion that leads to other destructive behavior.
  - A. Matthew 18:6-9 *Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes! If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. (Luke 17:1-4). Jesus is using hyperbole to stress the importance of dealing with this attitude and behavior!*
  - B. Matthew 24:10-13 *And then (in the end time) many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.*
2. Following are a few Biblical examples where an offense led to betrayal and hatred.
  - A. Cain and Abel in Genesis 4:1-8 — Cain was offended that God accepted his brother Abel's sacrifice. This led to the first murder recorded in the Bible!
  - B. Joseph and his brothers in Genesis 37-50 — Joseph's brothers were offended by his dreams. Joseph's coat given by Jacob only added "fuel to the fire."

- C. Absalom in 2 Samuel 13-19 — Absalom's offense toward Amnon, his half brother and against his father, King David, caused him to divide the Kingdom and bring tremendous destruction to Israel, ultimately costing his life.

### The meaning of the word

1. The word for offense in Matthew, Luke and many other places in the New Testament is the Greek word "skandalon" and refers to the part of a trap to which the bait is attached.
  - A. A modern day mouse trap is a great example. The opportunity for offense is the bait (cheese). When the bait is taken, the trap stick/trigger is released and the bar slams down, killing its victim. In the same way, our enemy, the devil, provides us with an opportunity for offense (the bait). As we take the bait and act on our offense, we are caught in the devil's trap to do his will! (Matthew 18:34)
2. Ancient people built walls around cities for safety against their enemies. The stronger the wall, the greater the safety. Similarly, offended people build walls around themselves.
  - A. Proverbs 18:19 *A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, and contentions are like the bars of a castle.*
  - B. Offended people are introspective and filter everything through hurts, rejections, offenses. They ultimately find it impossible to believe God and others who are not "on their side."
3. Notice the condition of society in the last days. Many (a great number, most) will be (constantly) offended.
  - A. Matthew 24:10-13 *And then many will be offended (skandalizo: creating a snare for others), will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.* An unchecked offense leads to betrayal and betrayal leads to hatred. (2 Timothy 3:1-5)
4. The parable of the unforgiving (offended) servant in Matthew 18:21-35 reveals the terrible consequences for acting out an offense.
  - A. **The offense** — Even though he was in great debt (millions of dollars by today's standards), he was unconditionally forgiven! However, he quickly found someone who owed him a very small amount (about \$50 today). Not able to pay him back, he had him thrown in jail until the amount was paid.
  - B. **The consequence** — The unforgiving man (who had been forgiven and released) was handed over to the tormentors! An offense, allowed to stay, will grieve the heart of God and will bring torment upon OUR life, not necessarily on the one who offended us.
    - Matthew 18:35 *So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.*



## Joseph's example of overcoming an offense

1. The Bible states that offenses **WILL** come (Matthew 18:7; Luke 17:1). However, the Bible also states that we CAN live above things that cause us to stumble, sin or be offended! Psalm 119:165
2. Genesis 37-50 -- By human standards, Joseph had cause to be greatly offended and angry with his brothers who wanted to kill him but instead, sold him into slavery. Then, when Joseph was in Egypt, he was slandered, mistreated and forgotten in prison. But God saw his righteous spirit and delivered him with a great deliverance, making him second to Pharaoh himself! When he finally had the opportunity to reveal himself to his brothers he made a very dramatic and freeing statement.
3. How Joseph forgave his brothers. Genesis 50:19-21 *Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones."
  - A. *Joseph said to his brothers, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God?"*
    - Joseph understood that vengeance was God's responsibility. (Romans 12:19 quoting Deuteronomy 32:35)
  - B. *"But as for you, you meant evil against me;"*
    - Joseph dealt realistically with the motive of his brothers. (2 Timothy 4:9-18)
  - C. *"...BUT GOD meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive."*
    - Joseph understood God's powerful and creative ability to bring His purpose out of an evil situation and saw the greater picture from God's perspective. (Romans 8:28)
  - D. *"Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.*
    - Joseph overcame evil with good, one of the most powerful principles in God's Word. (John 3:16-17; Romans 12:9-21)*

By obeying God's Word and being filled with His Spirit, we are able to be victorious over offenses. For a deeper study on living victoriously over offenses and how not be affected by someone else's offense go to [DiscipleshipDevelopment.org](http://DiscipleshipDevelopment.org) and type "offenses" in the search box, or scan the code.



## OUR BATTLE DRESS: THE ARMOR OF GOD

The Bible speaks of God's people in military terms such as Paul's word to Timothy, *You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles (braids) himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.* (2 Timothy 2:3-4)



God's Word commands us to be strong in the Lord and in HIS mighty power. (Ephesians 6:10-13) A real sickness has been politically enflamed to create fear on a pandemic level, political hatred in our own country, fires, unrest, attacks on churches... That "day of evil" has come! If the church is under attack, are we going to safely stand by or are we going to "Put on the full armor of God," take our stand against the devil's schemes, and engage ourselves in the battle?

The armor of God is not necessarily the pieces of the armor, but the characteristics they represent in order for us to be victorious in a spiritual battle, fighting powerful, invisible enemies. Character, not brute force, wins the spiritual battle.

### 1. The Belt of TRUTH

- A. Aletheia: The unveiled reality lying at the basis of and agreeing with an appearance. Notice how Peter and the disciples did not have a correct perception of what was taking place in Luke 22:47-51.
- B. **Point:** A key in winning the spiritual battle is to have a true understanding of reality, what is *really* taking place. In confusion we may attack each other. (2 Chronicles 20:22-23; John 18:10-11)

### 2. The Breastplate of RIGHTEOUSNESS.

- A. Diakaios: Conforming to God's rightness, to fulfill God's claims in contrast to the lawlessness of this world. In essence, it is obedience to God's Word and to His ways, doing right. (1 Samuel 15:22-23; Song of Solomon 2:15; Psalm 19:13-14; John 14:30)
- B. **Point:** Satan has authority over a life which is not submitted to God and filled with sin. David cried out to God after his horrific sin with Bathsheba and Uriah and asked that he be restored and filled with God's Spirit. (2 Samuel 11-12; Psalm 51) The warrior's character and right behavior growing from a right heart is a great defense.

### 3. The Footwear of READINESS.

- A. Hetoimasia: Preparation, adjusted, to be ready (Matthew 25:13; Mark 14:32-42; 1 Corinthians 16:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:6; 2 Timothy 2:21; Revelation 16:15) Our readiness

includes an internal peace and readiness to obey.

- B. Because Peter was asleep and not ready to stand against what was about to take place (the soldiers coming to arrest Jesus just before the crucifixion), he not only reacted against the soldiers but did not have the power to stand with Jesus that night. The result was that he denied the Lord and fell away. (Matthew 26:69-75)
- C. **Point:** Being ready requires that we are *always* ready. 1 Corinthians 16:13-14 *Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong. Do everything in love.*

#### 4. The Shield of FAITH.

- A. Pistis: To be persuaded in belief and in action, choosing to believe God and His word in the face of conflicting reality. (2 Chronicles 20:20-24; Hebrews 11:1-2, 6, 32-40)
- B. **Point:** Satan's arrows are his lies, deceptions, and perversions of reality. True faith in God is active (James 2:17-26) by standing firm in the battle.

#### 5. The Helmet of SALVATION.

- A. Soterion: The confident and anticipative hope of salvation, past, present *and* future. (1 Thessalonians 5:8-9)
- B. **Point:** The helmet protected the soldier's head (mind) and provided a striking symbol of military victory. With His helmet we can block out the lies of the enemy and place our focus on God's Word and winning the battle. Salvation is our hope in the battle and our victory is a spiritual and public statement over the devil!

#### 6. The Sword of the Spirit, which is the WORD OF GOD.

- A. **Read Matthew 4:1-11** -- Jesus, in His weakest physical state, used (Old Testament) Scripture to utterly defeat Satan in the wilderness. We, too, can defeat our enemy by using God's Word accurately. The key is in the difference between the two words for "Word." One is Logos, the expression of God (Jesus, the Bible, etc.). The other is Rhema, the personal revelation of God's Logos that has become real to us and a specific passage used against a particular lie of the enemy. Romans 10:17 *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word (Rhema) of God.*



- Satan's temptation: *"If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."*
- Christ's response: *"It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"* (Deuteronomy 8:3)
- Satan's temptation: *"If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'"* (Satan used the Logos in Psalm 91:11-12)

- Christ's response: *"It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"* (Deuteronomy 6:16)
- Satan's temptation: *Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."*
- Christ's response: *"Away with you, (get behind me) Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"* (Deuteronomy 6:13)

B. **Point:** The battle is spiritual and MUST be fought IN God's strength, WITH God's Word. When God's Word is used with personal understanding and genuineness, we have a powerful weapon!

7. Then, in the armor of God and in the power of His strength, *PRAY in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.* (Ephesians 6:18) Prayer is the initial engagement with the enemy.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SPIRITUAL CLEANSING AND RENEWAL

2 Timothy 2:3-4 *You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.*

Psalm 139:23-24 *Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

A dictionary definition of renewal is to "make new; restore freshness, life, or quality." Renewal is a continual process for the believer (Psalm 51:12). Even as believers, we are still prone to sin and it is important for the discipline of renewal to become a ongoing practice.

Use the **Personal Cleansing and Renewal**, included at the end, as a guide when you put aside an hour to prayerfully (and honestly) bring those areas before the Lord. As the Spirit highlights certain areas dwell on that area in prayer. Repent and ask Him to make that a very real part of your life. We realize that this is certainly not an overnight accomplishment. It's designed to help you wash your spirit on a regular basis. And REMEMBER, there is NO condemnation. EVER! (Romans 8:1)

## PRAYER-WALKING

**Prayer-walking** is praying on-site (location) with insight (cognitive observation) and inspiration (Holy Spirit revelation). Three aspects are:

1. It is prayer beyond the walls of the church.
2. It is talking to God about people rather than talking to people about God.
3. It is preparing the land for a visitation and revival.





**Always be sent by God.** Many well meaning believers have experienced challenges and even defeat. Many began prayer-walking with a lack of understanding of the enemy's power and their approach was not based on God's direction but a human zeal and even pride. Notice the important attitude even the Archangel had about combat against the devil: *But even the archangel Michael, when he disputed with the devil over the body of Moses, did not presume to bring a slanderous judgment against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"* (Jude 9)

1. **Identificational intercession** is the motivation for any prayer-walk or journey. This is when we identify ourselves with the sins of the people among whom we live and to ask God for His forgiveness and blessing on their behalf.
  - A. Ezekiel 22:30 *So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.*
  - B. Nehemiah's intercessory prayer for Israel in captivity in Nehemiah 1 *...that You may hear the prayer of Your servant which I pray before You now, day and night,... and confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against You. Both my father's house and I have sinned...*
2. **Praying on location...**
  - A. Stand before God on behalf of the people and Pray for the needs of people and places that you see.
    - Genesis 13:14-17 *...(Abraham) Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you."*
    - Joshua 6:2-5 *And the Lord said to Joshua: "See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor. You shall march around the city, all you men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days...*
3. **With insight and understanding...**
  - A. Spiritual mapping is researching the history of an area, city, etc. and ask what has happened here and what is God's desire for the community or area.
    - Numbers 13:16-20 *Then Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said to them, "Go up this way into the South, and go up to the mountains, and see what the land is like: whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, few or many; whether the land they dwell in is good or bad; whether the cities they inhabit are like camps or strongholds; whether the land is rich or poor;... And bring some of the fruit of the land."*
4. **Clothed in the power of the Spirit...**
  - A. Be attentive during moments of silence, allowing the Holy Spirit to help you see with His eyes and pray in accordance with His heart. Pray in the Spirit. Quietly pray in your Heavenly language as the Spirit moves.
    - Luke 10:1-23 *...Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves... Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on*



*serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you...*

- Ephesians 6:10-13 *...Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

## 5. For the advancement of God's Kingdom...

- A. Isaiah 40:3 *Prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth; the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,....*

## 6. When finished, seal what happened in prayer and receive God's blood covering (protection) when the prayer walk/journey has ended.

Luke 10:17 *Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.... Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."*

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**A FEW OF THE GREAT VICTORIES** and miracles God performed because of prayer outside the walls of the church: first time prayer on the Hopi Reservation, planting a church in an ALL-MORMON town, a global New Age event was stopped through miraculous prayer, purchasing land and the rice mill in Cambodia, repeated prayer at Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China.



A disciple must have a conviction, a determination, to maintain a pure lifestyle before the Lord and a passion for His Kingdom (Revelation 2:1-7). To do this we must regularly come before Him in prayer for spiritual renewal.

Psalm 139:23-24 *Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*



The following areas are not intended to bring condemnation (Romans 8:1) but to guide us through an honest evaluation followed by prayerful cleansing from the Holy Spirit.

Set aside time specifically dedicated to this. Go through each area and confess the area of need as God reveals it to you. Be willing to make it right and to forsake it, then praise God for His cleansing through the power of the Holy Spirit.

1. **Genuine salvation** John 3:3; Romans 10:9-10; 2 Corinthians 5:17
  - A. Was there a time when I genuinely repented and forsook my sins?
  - B. To the best of my knowledge, have I completely surrendered my heart and my life to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord?
2. **God's Word** Psalm 119:97, 140
  - A. Do I love to read and meditate on God's Word?
  - B. Do I consistently read my Bible?
  - C. Do I apply what I read to everyday life?
3. **Holy Spirit control** Galatians 5:22-25; Ephesians 5:18-21
  - A. Do I allow the Holy Spirit to lead and control my life?
  - B. Is there consistent evidence of the fruit of the Spirit?
4. **Sensitivity** 1 Samuel 3:10; John 10:4
  - A. Am I sensitive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit?
  - B. Do I quickly respond to the Holy Spirit's prompting?
5. **My first love** Philippians 1:21-23; Revelation 2:4-5
  - A. Am I as much in love with Jesus as I was when I first believed?
  - B. Is Jesus Christ the most important Person in my life?
  - C. Can He prioritize your life even it means sacrifice for you?
6. **Prayer** Matthew 6:5-15; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; 1 John 5:14-15
  - A. Am I faithful to a consistent life of prayer?
  - B. Is my prayer life filled with joy and intimacy?
  - C. Do I specifically and fervently pray for renewal in my own life, in members of my family, in my church, in my city, state and nation?

7. **Submission** 1 Samuel 15:22; Hebrews 13:17
  - A. Do I consistently obey God?
  - B. Do I genuinely obey human authorities that God has placed over my life?
8. **Sacrifice** Proverbs 11:25; Malachi 3:10-12; Hebrews 13:6; Philippians 3:7-8
  - A. Am I a giving person?
  - B. Am I willing to sacrifice whatever it may take to see a move of the Spirit of God in my life and in the church?
9. **Humility** Isaiah 57:15, 66:2b; Matthew 23:12; Colossians 3:12; Philippians 2:5-11; 1 Peter 5:6
  - A. Am I quick to admit I am wrong?
  - B. Do I rejoice when others receive praise even though my accomplishments may go unnoticed?
10. **A pure heart** Matthew 5:8; 2 Corinthians 7:9-10; 1 John 1:5-10
  - A. Do I keep “short accounts” with God?
  - B. Do I consistently search my heart for hidden issues that displease God?
  - C. Is repentance (a change of thinking with a corresponding change of lifestyle) a part of my life?
11. **Moral purity** Matthew 5:27-30; 2 Corinthians 10:3; Ephesians 5:3-5
  - A. Do I aggressively keep my mind and my spirit free from input that stimulates immoral fantasizing?
  - B. Is my lifestyle pure and above reproach (not able to be accused)?
  - C. Am I accountable to someone who can correct me?
12. **Forgiveness** Matthew 6:14; Mark 11:25; Acts 24:16; Colossians 3:12-14
  - A. Am I harboring resentment, unforgiveness or bitterness toward anyone?
  - B. Am I quick to forgive?
  - C. Am I willing to release offenses and be reconciled to God and the person with whom I am offended?
13. **Motives** Matthew 6:16-18, 10:28; Acts 5:29; Proverbs 21:2
  - A. Am I more concerned with how God thinks of me than what others think?
  - B. Do I live a life of integrity? Is my public life the same as my private life?
  - C. Do I love and serve God and His people unconditionally?
14. **Values** Proverbs 6:16-19; Ephesians 5:16
  - A. Do I love what God loves and hate what God hates?
  - B. Are my affections fixed on eternal values?
  - C. Do I internally pursue worldly possessions.

15. **Priorities** Exodus 20:3; Matthew 6:31-34, 22:37-38
- A. Are the things which are important to God important to me?
  - B. Does my schedule, spending, etc. reveal that God is first in my life?
  - C. Are key relationships in life more important than tasks, success, etc.?
  - D. Am I consistently in a mentoring relationship (a “Paul,” “Barnabas,” and a “Timothy”)?
16. **Family** Joshua 24:15; Ephesians 5:25-28, 6:4; 1 Peter 3:7
- A. Am I sensitive to my spouse and do I respond to his or her needs?
  - B. Do I model Godly, eternal values to my children?
  - C. Is my family a trust from God?
17. **Evangelism** 2 Corinthians 5:20; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8
- A. Do I have a burden for people who do not know Christ?
  - B. Am I reaching out to the lost with the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ?
  - C. Am I discipling (mentoring) others to follow after Christ?
18. **Eternity** Psalm 39:4; Psalm 90:12; Matthew 25:20-23; Romans 14:8; Philippians 1:21
- A. Do I view my eternity with anticipation and joy or with fear?
  - B. Am I ready (relationally, emotionally, and spiritually) to step into Glory today?

## QUESTIONS

1. As a disciple my entire being is to be open to Christ. Are there areas in my life where God’s absolute Lordship may not yet be a reality? List the areas that the Holy Spirit is highlighting? (Write the number and letter)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What steps must I take to open those areas in submission to His Lordship?

## WEEKLY ACTIVITY SHEET Ephesians 5:16 ...redeeming the time...


1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

2. My accountability partners are \_\_\_\_\_

3. Journal and write the memory verse from memory before class.

4. Assignment

- Memory verse
- Read the assigned lesson and/or book.
- Special assignments.
- Use the Weekly Time Sheet.
- Meet with your accountability group.

Check  each box below as you do the activity for that day.

ACTIVITIES	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED
Personal Prayer Time							
Bible Reading							
Lesson Reading							
Fasting							
Scripture Memorization							
Journaling							
Sunday AM							
Accountability Meeting							
Volunteer Service (specify below)							