

Spiritual Warfare Part 1
Pastor Wilson's Notes
Wednesday August 13, 2014

Key Verse

Ephesians 6:12

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers; against the rulers of darkness of this world; against spiritual wickedness in high places.

The Word says, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones," and as much as we would like to, we don't have the ability to do physical harm to the enemy. But just because satan isn't in corporeal form; just because we can't inflict physical harm on him doesn't mean we can't engage the him and his minions in warfare. Just because we can't give him a black eye, doesn't mean that we are helpless.

2 Cor 10:3, 4

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4 (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

Two Aspects

In any war, there are TWO overarching aspects, which MUST be considered. Effective warfare cannot be waged without the elements of both offense AND defense. Wars are typically long drawn out affairs, so the combatants cannot afford to focus exclusively on offense, because that tact CAN leave them exposed and vulnerable to attack where they are the weakest.

In fencing, or sword fighting, it is just as important to parry, as it is to thrust. In boxing, you cannot just swing, swing, swing, or jab, jab, jab—you must be able to bob, weave and duck. And you must to be able to throw up your forearms to brush aside a roundhouse punch, or to block an incoming jab to the face.

Defense MUST be considered and employed for an overall battle plan to be successful. *So it is with us; we must be skilled at defending ourselves*, as well as attacking the strongholds of the enemy. So, the first aspect of spiritual warfare we wish to focus on is defense. We will cover the elements and shades and nuances of offensive warfare later, as we go forward with these lessons.

DEFENSE

There are four components of defense that we want to call your attention in these lessons on spiritual warfare. Two will be covered in this lesson and the remaining

two in the next lesson. Of the two covered in this lesson, one is active defense, and the other is passive defense. Let's look at the active defense first:

Isaiah 58:6-8

6 *Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? 7 Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? 8 Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rereward.*

Calling your attention to vs 8, "the glory of the Lord shall be thy 'rereward'". Rereward is an old English way of saying "rear guard." In fact, the New International Version, The New English Translation and the English Standard Version all translate the word as "rear guard".

Fasting not only breaks spiritual bands of wickedness and undoes heavy burdens; it not only lets the oppressed to go free and breaks every yoke, but verse 8 says, "our light will break forth as the morning and our health shall spring forth speedily; our righteousness shall go before us and **God will protect our backside!**

The devil has no honor and he has no problem with stabbing us in the back; or ambushing us from behind, or of attacking us from the rear. **But if we will push away from the table; the Bible says God will guard our rear from the attacks of the enemy.** If we will deny ourselves a meal or two or three, God has promised to have our back!

FASTING

The overarching concern when we fast is to deny ourselves:

Matthew 16:24

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him **deny himself**, and take up his cross, and follow me.

Fasting helps us to deny ourselves; to take control and authority over our flesh; to bring our flesh into submission. Instead of letting our fleshly man control us, we exert control our fleshly man and show him or her who's the boss; instead of letting our belly rule us; we rule over our belly.

There are three different types of fasts with regard to abstaining from food. There is:

1. Sun up to sun down
 - a. With this fast one abstains from eating from 6am to 3 or 4pm

- b. Most people drink water or juice when not eating food, however, you can go without food and water. It's whatever your purpose in your heart
- 2. Sun up to sun up
 - a. A 24-hour fast from one day to the next.
 - b. Most people drink water or juice when not eating food, however, you can go without food and water. It's whatever your purpose in your heart
- 3. Protracted fast (3-day, 5-day, 7-day, 21-day or more)
 - a. Can be either sun-up to sun-down or sun to sun, or a combination. No more than 3 days without water if you go that route. Acts 9:9 records Paul fasting food and water for 3 days. Esther 4:15-16 also records the fasting of food and water for 3 days.

There are many ways we can fast, and *many things we can fast*. The bottom line is about denying ourselves and consecrating ourselves unto the Lord. We can deploy a very important aspect of bringing our defensive posture to bear if we simply fast on a regular basis, and thereby call upon the Lord to guard our back from the enemy.

Passive Defense

The second of the four components of defense is the one I called the 'passive' component of defense.

Psalms 121:1-8

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. 2 My help *cometh* from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. 3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. 4 Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. **5 The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.** 6 The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. 7 The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. 8 The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

When a warrior is swinging a heavy "broadsword" it's almost a full-body motion. The warrior is wielding the sword with two hands and he's cutting a mighty arc when he swings. When you're swinging the heavy blade, if you're not quick, or skillful enough, you can end up leaving your right side vulnerable.

This aspect of defense as 'passive' because it's more about what you **don't do, as opposed to what you do do!** You're not called upon to fast; you don't have to put on the armor of God; (Lesson 2). You don't really have to do anything proactive in deploying this type of defense.

This "passive" type of defense is about "staying in the boat." Golfers are familiar with the warning label in the golf cart, "Keep your hands and feet inside the golf cart." In

the latter part of the book of Acts, the Apostle Paul suffered shipwreck while on his way to appear before Caesar. In Acts 27:31 he gave this prophetic utterance:

Acts 27:31

... Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.

Psalms 121 is about employing defensive protection by simply trusting God. When the battle is raging hot and heavy; when those around you are throwing down their swords and deserting the battlefield, **YOU STAY ENGAGED IN THE BATTLE!** You stay in the Ark of Safety! Resist the temptation to run! "None can pluck you from the Father's hand," but that does not prevent you from jumping out! So stay in the ship! Look unto the hills from which cometh your help! The Lord which made heaven and the Earth will not suffer your foot to slip. He's not sleeping! He's not slumbering! Stay in the fight and keep your trust in Him and **He will be the shade on your right hand!**