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THE PRINCIPLES OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE

When we experience spiritual warfare in a practical way, there are several basic principles which we must keep:

A. Not Using Fleshly Weapons

The first principle of spiritual warfare is that we cannot use fleshly weapons. The Apostle Paul tells us this clearly in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, which we have quoted already. He says, "Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh)." These fleshly weapons not only refer to the losing of temper, but include all human schemes and natural methods. For example, we may feel that a certain brother is in error and that this error has already become a problem in the church. We want to correct him, yet we feel that to do so is inappropriate. Later we remember that there is another brother who is rather intimate with him; so we ask that brother to go and talk with him. Even this kind of maneuvering is a fleshly weapon; it will eventually prove futile in solving the spiritual problem. In society and the business world, many such schemes are employed, but on the spiritual battlefield we cannot use schemes. Whenever we use the schemes of our flesh, we have already fallen into the hands of the enemy. How then shall we be able to deliver others from the hands of the enemy?

We see that Paul was a man who never used fleshly weapons. In his dealings with the churches and his contacts with the saints, he was perfectly straight—as straight as an arrow. He would rather be treated as a fool than employ ingenious scheming for a moment. For this reason he could be "mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds," and thereby gain the victory in the spiritual warfare. In the same manner, if we wish to win the victory in all our spiritual works and be effective, we must forsake all fleshly weapons. For example, in preaching the gospel it is all right to use illustrated tracts as helps for presentation, but if we continually rely on various methods or use material benefits to attract people, that is using fleshly weapons. The most it can do is to help people become church members; it cannot deliver them out of the hands of Satan. Therefore, the

first principle of spiritual warfare is to forsake all fleshly, carnal weapons.

B. Keeping the Position of Ascension

The second principle of spiritual warfare is to keep the position of ascension. We have spoken much concerning spiritual warfare; in fact, however, there is only one kind of people who can engage in spiritual warfare—those who have received salvation, have been raised from death, and are now sitting with Christ in the heavens. Only this kind of men can attack the enemy in the air from a transcendent position in the heavens. Therefore, in order to engage in spiritual warfare we must keep the heavenly position. Whenever we are not heavenly enough, whenever we lose our heavenly condition, everything is finished. If our gospel is powerless, it is because we are not heavenly enough; we ourselves are earthly, and we are using earthly methods or fleshly weapons to preach the gospel. As a result, we may get some saved, but their condition will be muddled, and they will be unable to be completely delivered out of the power of Satan. If we really desire to deliver men out of Satan's power so that they are not only saved, but completely delivered from the hands of Satan, we who are preaching the gospel must be men who are sitting in the heavens and keeping the ascended position.

The same principle applies in edifying the saints. If we lose the position of ascension, we can neither supply nor help the saints. If the messages we preach are mere doctrines and the fellowship we give mere knowledge, containing no element of warfare, the most we can impart is teachings for the mentality and stirring in the emotions; we cannot deliver people out of the power of Satan and turn them to God in a practical way. Therefore, if we want our work to have the effect of war, work which is able to deliver men from Satan's hands, we must keep the position of ascension and live continually in the condition of the heavens. This is an extremely important secret.

Since many of us have not yet reached the realm of ascension in our experience, why then is it possible that we can lead people to be saved and love the Lord? This is due to the fact that, after all, there is still a part in us that is heavenly or bears the heavenly condition; therefore, through that portion we are able to help others and edify them. Although we are defiled with sin, love the world, and mind the flesh, yet part of our condition is still heavenly; thus, we are able to chase away part of the power of darkness in men and cause them to turn to the

Lord and love Him. Hence, the principle remains the same. Only those who live in the realm of the heavens can deal with the power of darkness in the air and chase the devil out. The help, the deliverance, which we afford others is based solely on that part which is of the heavenly nature in us. The extent to which we chase out the power of darkness is directly dependent on our heavenly condition. If we have more element of the heavens, we can engage more in spiritual warfare. If we have only a little element of the heavens, we can by no means have much element of spiritual warfare. The two are in direct proportion to one another. When a man has utterly reached the heavenly realm, his whole being, living, works, and actions are spiritual warfare. He is able to chase out the power of darkness from every place to which he comes and from all the people whom he meets. Therefore, when we in our experience have reached the position of ascension and are able to reign, that will be the time we can fight for the kingdom of God, recover the lost earth for God, and bring in the kingdom of God.

C. Using Spiritual Weapons

The third principle of spiritual warfare is that we must use spiritual weapons. When engaging in spiritual warfare, it is not enough to merely keep the heavenly position; we must be able to actively employ the spiritual weapons. Spiritual weapons refer to the “whole armor” mentioned in Ephesians 6:10-17, which includes the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. All these weapons are spiritual, and when we use them we must be in spirit. We can say that the basic principle of employing the spiritual weapons is that all our activities must be of the spirit. Preaching the gospel, edifying the saints, and administering the church are of the spirit. Whatever kind of activity we are engaged in, every one must be of the spirit and every one must release the spirit. Anything which is not of the spirit, anything which is according to our own view, our own idea, our own wisdom, or our own intelligence, is unavoidably a kind of human scheme and thus a fleshly weapon, not a spiritual weapon. Therefore, when we are fighting, all our activities must be of the spirit, touching the feeling from within our spirit. This also is an extremely basic principle.

D. Praying Fighting Prayers

The fourth principle of spiritual warfare is to have fighting prayers. After the Apostle mentioned the various kinds of spiritual weapons in Ephesians 6, he straightway

said, “Praying at every time in spirit” (Gk.). Spiritual warfare cannot neglect prayer, for spiritual warfare largely depends on prayer. What Satan fears most is the saints’ bended knees before the Lord, or the prayer of the church before God. Even in the Old Testament we can see a few examples of warring prayers. For example, when Daniel prayed, there was action on the throne. But when the answer came down from the throne, it met resistance in the air. Daniel prayed continually. His prayer was a kind of warfare. A person who keeps the position of ascension reigns in heaven. He can also employ spiritual weapons, and the prayer which comes forth from him avails much; it can touch the throne of God and affect the power of Satan. God desires His saints to have such kind of prayer to work together with Him and fight for Him.

E. Through the Blood, the Word of Testimony, and Not Loving the Soul Life

In spiritual warfare, besides forsaking the fleshly weapons, keeping the position of ascension, employing the spiritual weapons, and offering fighting prayers, we must also apply the blood, testify the word, and love not our own soul lives (Rev. 12:11). This is also a very important principle in spiritual warfare.

Burdens for Church Prayers

- Pray for the English-speaking testimony and gospel preaching on West Valley College campus.
- Pray for the burden of raising up next generation for building up of the body of Christ.
- Pray for YP that they will be companions with one another to pursue the Lord together.
- For GOW training: Vital groups be raised up, attending prayer meeting, prophesying on Lord’s day by daily enjoying His word and pursue the truth.

Announcement

- Morning Revival: 2012 Summer Training Msg #6.
- Bible Reading Schedule, Daniel: M.7:1-28. T.8:1-27, W.9:1-27, Th.10:1-21, F.11:1- 45, S. 12:1 - 13.
- Tuesday (10/16) prayer meeting at Campbell meeting hall.
- Thanksgiving conference Oklahoma City, Oklahoma from Thursday, November 22-25
- 2012 Winter Training, 12/24-29, Anaheim, registration deadline:11/1, registration fee \$155.
- Fall YP retreat at Redwood Alliance Nov 9-11, registration fee:\$105, registration deadline:10/28.
- GOW training, 10/20, 9:00am-1:15pm, at Santa Clara meeting hall.