

Spiritual Warfare - Part 1

Sermon Delivered on February 5th, 2017

By: Pastor Greg Hocson

Text: [Genesis 3:1-15](#)

Introduction

[Romans 8:36](#) As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. [37:](#) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

The word conqueror implies at least two things - we are at war and we have enemies? As Christians, we face three enemies: the world, the flesh, and the Devil.

“**The world**” refers to the system around us that is opposed to God, that caters to “the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life”.

[1 John 2:15](#) **Love not the world**, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. [16:](#) For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. [17:](#) And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

“**The flesh**” is the old sinful nature that we inherited from Adam, a nature that is opposed to God and can do nothing spiritual to please God.

By His death and resurrection, Christ overcame the world ([John 16:33](#); [Gal. 6:14](#)), and the flesh ([Rom. 6:1–6](#); [Gal. 2:20](#)), and the Devil ([Eph. 1:19–23](#)).

In other words, **as believers, we do not fight for victory—we fight from victory!** The Spirit of God enables us, by faith, to appropriate Christ’s victory for ourselves.

But the question is **how did this warfare get started**. When did this warfare start? Who is our enemy? What is he like? What are his tactics? In any warfare, if we are to conquer, it is vitally important to have accurate information concerning the enemy’s plan of attack. This is also true in spiritual warfare. In our warfare we are against Satan, it is important not to be ignorant of his devices and to know how to successfully resist him. **It is hard to defeat the enemy if you do not know who the enemy is, where he is, and what he can do.** Throughout the entire Bible, God instructs us about the enemy, so there is no reason for us to be caught off guard.

[2 Corinthians 2:11](#) Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

[1 Peter 5:8](#) Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Be alert and watchful of our enemy's desire to destroy us.

But before we proceed and we must remember to approach this subject:

1. Prayerfully

Let us approach this subject prayerfully knowing that Satan does not like his methods exposed.

2. Confidently

Let us approach this subject confidently knowing that ...

[1 John 4:4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.](#)

We can approach this subject with confidence because we read in the Book of Job chapters 1 to 2, that the Devil cannot approach and touch a believer without the permission of God.

3. Carefully

We must be careful not to be preoccupied with the Devil. One of Satan's devices is to draw our attention away from God and to himself, even if that focus is for the purpose of fighting against himself.

The secret of victory in spiritual warfare is to begin by focusing on and drawing near to God
[James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8: Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.](#)

The Devil's ultimate goal is to get your focus off of God and onto himself. He cares little whether you bless him or curse him so long as he has your focus off of Christ.

So, how did this warfare get started? The story begins in the Garden of Eden. It was a place of perfect peace. There were only two people in the garden: Adam and Eve. They were at perfect peace with God, perfect peace with each other, and perfect peace with themselves.

[Genesis 1:31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.](#)

God created everything and everything was very good. No sin, no sorrow, no sickness, no pain and no death. Then we come to Genesis 3, and something happened.

I - The Devil's Declaration

He came declaring war against God and attacking the crown of God's creation - mankind. He came throwing fiery darts of temptation and he still does.

[Ephesians 6:16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.](#)

The Devil assaults men daily with his "fiery darts" of temptation. The temptation in the Garden is like Osama Bin Laden and his cohorts attacking the Twin Towers. Satan sneaked in and declared war against God and humanity.

God made everything good and beautiful but the Devil seeks to destroy and to corrupt it. He is clearly evil. Listen to what Jesus says of him in ...

John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a **murderer from the beginning**, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for **he is a liar, and the father of it.**

II - The Devil's Devices (Methods, Tactics)

Here in Genesis, the veil as it were is pulled away and we see clearly Satan's method of attack. The Christian cannot afford to be "ignorant of his devices". There is no excuse for being ignorant of his device because God instructs us about the enemy.

1. The Devil Attacks in Disguised

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtil (crafty, tricky, deceptive) **than any beast of the field** which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

Satan attacked in disguised so as to cause the unsuspecting to fall. Like a cowardly terrorist, he attacks, when, how and through whom we least expect.

2 Corinthians 11:14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

He does not come as the Red Devil with a tail and horns, he masquerades as an angel of light and seeks to blind men's minds to the truth of God's Word.

Satan is a deceiver. He is subtle, and we fight against "the wiles of the devil."

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Wiles means "trickery, trap, devices, cunning, crafty arts, stratagems meant to fool".

2. The Devil Attacks with Doubt

Satan begins by casting doubt.

a) Satan wants us to doubt the Word of God

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, **Yea, hath God said,** Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

He questions its **accuracy**. He suggests that God did not mean what He had said. So it is today. Every effort that is being made to deny the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures, every attempt put forward to set aside their absolute authority, every attack on the Bible which we now witness in the name of scholarship, is only a repetition of this ancient question, "Yea, hath God said?"

Satan casts doubt on the exact wording of the Bible. Satan added the word, "every" to God's command.

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, **Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?**

Look at the original command:

Genesis 2:16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, **Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:** 17: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Every tree but one.

The original command seems to have been given to Adam who then passed it to Eve. Satan causes Eve to doubt whether she received exactly what God really said.

Then he questions its **authority**.

If he cannot get you to doubt its accuracy, he will get you to doubt its authority.

Genesis 3:4: **And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:**

We see the same principle illustrated in the first two parables in Matthew 13. The Lord Jesus goes forth sowing the seed which is the Word of God, and then the Evil One immediately follows and sows his tares. And the sad thing is that while men refuse to believe the Word of the living God, yet they are sufficiently credulous to accept Satan's lies. So it was at the beginning, and so it has been ever since.

b) Satan wants us to doubt the God of the Word

He then casts doubt on the character of God. He **dares to cast reflection upon God's goodness**, and to call in question His perfections.

Genesis 3:4 **And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:** 5: **For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.**

In other words, the Devil here suggests, that God was despotically withholding from man something which would be advantageous to him, and he presents as his bait the promise that, if only Eve will believe his lie rather than God's Word she shall be the gainer, and the obtainer of a knowledge and wisdom previously denied her.

He tempts men to think of God as overly strict and oppressive. He makes people think that He is holding out on them. Satan always tempts men to think that God is robbing them of good things when he forbids sinful pleasures. God is actually protecting us from destructive things and providing for us good things by His commands.

Satan's method has not changed. He wants us to doubt God's love and trustworthiness. He wants us to think that God does not have our best interest at heart.

3. The Devil Attacks with Our Own Desires

Genesis 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

Satan uses good and beautiful things which are part of this created world **to draw us toward sin**. He takes the God-given natural desires and perverts and turns them into evil desires. He perverts the pure and holy desire for marital love into the sinful desire for premarital or extramarital lust. He perverts the normal desire for food into gluttony. He perverts the God given desire for satisfaction into the desire for hedonistic pleasures. He perverts the God given desire to work and provide for our family into the love of money.

III - The Devil's Defeat

The Devil came to attack, deceive and destroy the crown of God's creation, man, by throwing his fiery darts of temptation. But we see here in Genesis 3, the prophecy of the defeat of Satan.

Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

There will be intense hatred between Satan and the offspring of the woman, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ will crush the head of Satan, while suffering heel wound in the process. The Devil came to steal, and to kill, and to destroy but the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to give life and to destroy the works of the devil.

1 John 3:8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, **that he might destroy the works of the devil.**

The cross is the place where Satan was defeated. It is the place where Christ redeemed men from the power of Satan. Satan held men captive because of sin; but on the cross the Lord Jesus paid for our sins.

When the Lord Jesus died on the cross, it seemed as though the powers of darkness were victorious over Him. But on the third day He arose from the grave with a mighty triumph over Satan and the powers of darkness.

Hebrews 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; **that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;**

Conclusion

The Battle is not over yet. But Satan is a defeated foe. One day, he and his evil spirits will be cast into the lake of fire, and they will never again cause trouble. But meanwhile, he is very active. Satan goes about "as a roaring lion" tempting, deceiving, and destroying. No child of God is able in himself to cope with this terrible foe. Only through Christ can we overcome him. God's Word tells us,

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

We are not to be strong in ourselves, but we are to be strong in the Lord. Through Jesus Christ we are more than conquerors and we are to be strong in Him.

Is your hope in Jesus Christ? Are you fully trusting in Him and His atoning sacrifice on the cross? If your hope and trust is not in Christ, you are not more than conqueror.

2 Timothy 2:25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; 26: And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

If your hope and trust is not in Christ you are conquered, you are a captive of the enemy the devil. You are under the power of Satan. Cry out to God. Flee to Him who came to destroy the works of the devil.

AMEN!