

## Doctrine of Spiritual Warfare

### Introduction

While the concept of a just war is debated among the affairs of men there is at least one war divinely justified. It is being waged spiritually between the Saints and Satan and his allies: the world, the flesh, and death. The Word of God has much to say about this conflict which demands that every believer become a soldier for the Sovereign. David said, "*He teacheth my hands to war*". We want the Lord to teach our hands to fight as well. Concerning this spiritual warfare the Bible has much to say.

1. The warfare of the saints is not after the flesh but after the spirit.
  - *2 Corinthians 10:3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:*
2. It is a good warfare in that it is for an honorable cause.
  - *1 Timothy 1:18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; 19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:*
  - *1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*
3. The warfare is against the devil.
  - *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.*
  - *2 Corinthians 2:11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.*
  - *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.*
  - *James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*
  - *1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*
  - *Revelation 12:17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

4. The spiritual warfare of the believer is to be directed against the allies of the devil.

□ The flesh.

- *Romans 7:23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*
- *1 Corinthians 9:25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: 27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*
- *2 Corinthians 12:7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.*
- *Galatians 5:17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*
- *1 Peter 2:11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;*

□ The world.

- *John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*
- *1 John 5:4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*

□ Death.

- *1 Corinthians 15:26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*
- *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; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

5. Some spiritual opposition comes from friends or relatives.

- *Micah 7:6 For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house.*
- *Matthew 10:35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. 36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.*

6. The spiritual battle is to be carried on in the following manner.

- Under Christ, as our Captain
  - *Hebrews 2:10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*
- Under the Lord's banner
  - *Psalms 60:4 Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah.*
- With faith
  - *1 Timothy 1:18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; 19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:*
- With a good conscience
  - *1 Timothy 1:18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; 19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:*
- With steadfastness in the faith
  - *1 Corinthians 16:13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.*
  - *1 Peter 5:9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.*
- With earnestness
  - *Jude 3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*

- With watchfulness
  - *1 Corinthians 16:13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.*
- With sobriety
  - *1 Thessalonians 5:6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.*
  - *1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*
- With endurance of hardness
  - *2 Timothy 2:3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*
  - *2 Timothy 2:10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.*
- With self-denial
  - *1 Corinthians 9:25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: 27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*
- With confidence in God
  - *Psalms 27:1 The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? 2 When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. 3 Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.*
- With prayer
  - *Psalms 35:1 Plead my cause, O LORD, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me. 2 Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help. 3 Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.*
  - *Ephesians 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;*

- Without earthly entanglements
    - *2 Timothy 2:4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*
7. Mere professors are not able to endure the battle and so run away from Christ.
    - *Jeremiah 9:3 And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD.*
  8. Because all saints are engaged in the spiritual conflict individuals must stand firm in the faith. Faithfulness is enhanced by words of exhortation in diligence.
    - *Philippians 1:30 Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.*
    - *Ephesians 6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;*
  9. The promises of God and the knowledge of His divine strength encourage the heart during dark days in the spiritual conflict. The Lord will comfort and protect His own.
    - *Psalms 118:13 Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the LORD helped me.*
    - *Isaiah 41:13 For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.*
    - *Psalms 140:7 O GOD the Lord, the strength of my salvation, thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.*
    - *2 Corinthians 12:9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*
  10. Christ shall deliver His own from ultimate failure and sanctify His people.
    - *2 Timothy 4:18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*
  11. Because of this divine certainty thanks is to be given to God for every victory.

- *Romans 7:25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*
- *1 Corinthians 15:57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

12. For the spiritual warfare, the Lord has provided spiritual armor called the "the armor of light,"

- *Romans 13:12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.*

13. The individual pieces of the spiritual armor are given.

□ There is a belt of truth

- *Ephesians 6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;*

□ There is a breastplate of righteousness

- *Ephesians 6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;*

□ There are shoes for the gospel of peace.

- *Ephesians 6:15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;*

□ There is a shield of faith

- *Ephesians 6:16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.*

□ There is a helmet of salvation.

- *Ephesians 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:*

□ There is the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

- *Ephesians 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:*

14. The triumph of the believer's warfare is certain because of the victory of Christ over the grave.

- *1 Corinthians 15:57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

15. Faith is the ground from which spiritual victory grows.

- *Hebrews 11:33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. 35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: 36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: 37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;*

16. There are many rewards for those who fight a good fight of faith

- The privilege of eating hidden manna
  - *Revelation 2:17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.*
- The right to eat from the Tree of Life
  - *Revelation 2:7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*
- New garment of white raiment
  - *Revelation 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.*
- A place in the temple of God
  - *Revelation 3:12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.*

- ❑ The honor of sitting with Christ on His throne
  - *Revelation 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*
- ❑ The reception of a white stone
  - *Revelation 2:17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.*
- ❑ Power over nations
  - *Revelation 2:26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:*
- ❑ The name of Christ will be written on the body
  - *Revelation 3:12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.*
- ❑ God will be know as Father
  - *Matthew 6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.*
- ❑ There will be the reception of the Morning Star
  - *Revelation 2:28 And I will give him the morning star.*
- ❑ The conquering saint will be honored by God.
  - *Revelation 21:7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.*
- ❑ The victorious Christ will never have his name blotted out of the book of life
  - *Revelation 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.*