

Sermon Series: Waging Victorious
Spiritual Warfare

THE SCOPE OF THE BATTLE

2 CORINTHIANS 10:3-5

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NASB)

- ◆ “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh,
- ◆ ⁴for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- ◆ ⁵We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ...”

I. Satan's Four Fronts of Attack

- ◆ *The Individual Front*
- ◆ 1 Peter 5:8 (NIV), *"Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."*

Satan's Four Fronts of Attack (cont'd)

- ◆ *The Family Front*
- ◆ We see this in the Garden when Satan tempted Eve in Genesis 6.

Satan's Four Fronts of Attack (cont'd)

- ◆ *The Church Front*
- ◆ Satan understands that God does not work in a context of disunity. There must be harmony in the body of Christ if we are going to see the power of God in action.

Satan's Four Fronts of Attack (cont'd)

- ◆ *The Society Front*
- ◆ We get a glimpse of Satan's activity in the society at large in Daniel 10:13-14, where an angel reveals to the prophet Daniel that Satan is the energizing force behind the rulers of the nations.

II. Satan's Method of Attack

- ◆ *1. An Attack of the Mind*
- ◆ 2 Cor. 10:3-5 tells us that Satan targets his attacks on our minds. We know that because Paul talks about "speculations/arguments" "the knowledge of God," and "taking every thought captive" (2 Cor. 10:5).

Satan's Method of Attack (cont'd)

- ◆ 2. The Formation of Partitions
- ◆ How is Satan able to pull off this kind of influence in a Christian's mind?
- ◆ He does it by raising up "lofty things" (2 Cor. 10:5).
- ◆ A lofty thing is a partition, a wall.

Satan's Method of Attack (cont'd)

- ◆ Satan's partitions are "raised up against the knowledge of God" (2 Cor. 10:5).
- ◆ Satan wants to block divine information from crossing over to the other side of your brain.
- ◆ He wants to block the knowledge of God in your life, to keep it from infiltrating the other side of the room.

III. The Goal of Our Counterattack

- ◆ *1. Tearing Down Fortresses*
- ◆ Back in 2 Cor. 10:4, Paul says our spiritual weapons can destroy Satan's fortresses.
- ◆ Weapons such as prayer, reading the Word, obedience, meditation on Scripture, fasting and service can blow up the devil's strongholds.

The Goal of Our Counterattack (cont'd)

- ◆ *2. Destroying Partitions*
- ◆ We also need to pull down those lofty partitions (v.5). These include “speculations,” those rebel thoughts that take us far away from the knowledge of God.
- ◆ We must say, “This thought is from the devil. I judge it in the name of Jesus Christ. Partition, come down.”

The Goal of Our Counterattack (cont'd)

- ◆ *3. Taking our Thoughts Captive*
- ◆ That's the idea behind Paul's statement about "*taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ*" (2 Cor. 10:5).
- ◆ This is war language. When the enemy sends us one of his thoughts, we need to grab that thought and take it hostage.

IV. The Method of Our Counterattack

- ◆ This is the question we always face: Are we going to use human or divine methods?
- ◆ ***1. Come to God in Faith***
- ◆ The apostle James has some solid advice for us when we are facing a difficulty in life. If you need wisdom for your problems, James says to ask God (1:5). But you need to ask in a certain way:

James 1:6-8 (NIV)

- ◆ *"But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. ⁸ Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do."*

The Method of Our Counterattack (cont'd)

- ◆ *2. Go to the Root*
- ◆ If we are going to counter Satan's attack with an offensive of our own, we need to address the root cause of the problem, not just the symptoms.

The Method of Our Counterattack (cont'd)

- ◆ The symptom is what you do. The root is the thinking that makes you do it.
- ◆ James 4:8 (NIV) says, *“Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”*

The Method of Our Counterattack (cont'd)

- ◆ *3. See Sin God's Way*
- ◆ How do we deal with the real problem? How do we fix our thinking? How do we cleanse our hearts?
- ◆ James 4:9-10 (NIV), *"Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up."*

The Method of Our Counterattack (cont'd)

- ◆ When we begin to see sin the way God sees it, then we will experience what the psalmist means when he said, *"The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves those who are crushed in spirit"* (Psalm 34:18).
- ◆ The Lord says in Isaiah 66:2, *"To this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My Word."*

The Method of Our Counterattack (cont'd)

- ◆ *4. Practice Warfare Praying*
- ◆ Warfare praying is praying God's Word back to Him and standing on it for victory in spiritual battle.
- ◆ God' has such a high view of His Word that if you ever learn to pray His Word back to Him, you'll have the power in prayer you never knew existed.

Invitation