

8/28/22 - The Enemies Of The Soul

SPIRITUAL WARFARE - As we come to the Lord and strive to live for God, the one thing that we need to recognize and understand and never forget is that we are in a BATTLE!

It is **not physical** by nature, **but spiritual!**

Ephesians 6:12 NASB - *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

We are not merely spectators but participants – we're locked in its stream of violence and we can't escape it!

It's an age-old conflict between God and Satan

- It began when Lucifer was cast out of heaven into the earth
- Those **who've made a decision to live for Christ** -
- Have become **the target of attack.**

The stakes are high,

- This battle is being fought **for the eternal SOULS** of mankind.
- It's **YOUR SOUL** that's at stake!

Genesis 2:7 NASB - Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living (soul) person.

The reason your SOUL is so important is because it's the only thing you possess that's ETERNAL!

- ***Souls have a "birth" but not a "death"; "born" but never "die".***

2 Corinthians 4:18 NASB - *while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are TEMPORAL, but the things which are not seen are ETERNAL.*

It's because of your SOUL that the battle rages!

When you begin to walk with God -

- One of the first things you realize is –
- That something or someone ***isn't*** happy about it!
- The moment you TURN toward God you become the object of attack.

Enemies you've never encountered begin to make a concerted effort – **to detour, distract, disrupt, and separate you** from the love of God!

When it comes to our enemies –

- We need to know who they are,
- Where they come from
- And the power they possess

The reason we have 21 Epistles in the N.T. is to **help us COMBAT the enemies** that seek to destroy our soul!

Whatever battles we face in life can all be traced back to one or all of *the enemies of the soul!*

I. The Flesh...

1 Peter 2:11 NASB – Beloved, I urge you as foreigners and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the SOUL.

Flesh – our human carnal nature with its frailties and passions.

This Adamic Nature - (the rising of a body in air by supernatural means) had its birth in the garden **when Adam fell from grace**, and **through his blood-line** *it's been transmitted to the entire human race.*

Romans 5:12 NASB - Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all mankind, because all sinned

- **When God saves us, though we become “new creatures”, the FLESH doesn't go away!**

In fact it remains our CONSTANT enemy:

Romans 7:22-23 NASB - For I joyfully agree with the law of God in the inner person,²³ but I see a different law in the parts of my body **WAGING WAR** against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin, the law which is in my body's parts.

Romans 8:6-7 NASB - ⁶ For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, ⁷ because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so,*

When the "flesh" is allowed to have it's way –
It results in what Paul called the **"Works of the Flesh"**

Galatians 5:19-21 NASB - ¹⁹ Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: sexual immorality, impurity, indecent behavior, ²⁰ idolatry, witchcraft, hostilities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

The **"Works of the Flesh"** are in direct opposition to the "Fruit of the Spirit"

Galatians 5:22-23 NASB - ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

When we're filled with the Holy Spirit there are 2 natures we then have to contend with (flesh & Spirit), of which both want to rule and be our master.

Paul described the struggle in **Galatians 5:17 NASB** - ¹⁷ For the desire of the flesh is against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, in order to keep you from doing whatever you want.

Scripture gives us 7 contrasts to help us understand the nature of our struggle:

- 1. Two Births – one natural and one spiritual.**
 - The flesh – The Spirit

2. **Two Natures – one carnal and one divine.**
 - **Carnal** – by birth we have a human carnal nature.
 - **Divine** – because we’ve been born again we’re made partakers of Christ’s nature.
3. **Two Walks – the walk referring to behavior or conduct.**
 - **Walk** in the flesh.
 - **Walk** in the Spirit.
4. **Two Laws – the law meaning a principle.**
 - **The law of sin and death** – original law we inherited at the fall.
 - **The law of the Spirit of life** – makes us free from the law of sin and death.
5. **Two Fathers – from which we inherit our nature.**
 - **Adam** – the father of the human race through which came sin.
 - **Christ** – our heavenly father through which we are begotten unto a lively hope.
6. **Two Minds – refers to intellect, wisdom, knowledge that seeks to direct our path.**
 - **Carnal Mind** – which is “enmity” against God.
 - **Spiritual Mind** – brings life and peace.
7. **Two Men – not two bodies but beings.**
 - **Old Man** – which is carnal, sinful and born that way.
 - **New Man** – which needs to be renewed day by day.

What the Bible says about the flesh:

1. The flesh is not to be trusted.
2. The flesh is not to be leaned upon.
3. When we sow to the flesh we’ll reap corruption.
4. The flesh spots our garment of righteousness.
5. The flesh profiteth nothing.
6. The Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.

II. The World...

Matthew 16:26 NASB - *For what good will it do a person if he gains the whole world, but forfeits his **SOUL**? Or what will a person give in exchange for his **SOUL**?*

The “world” is that spirit, force, and power that moves contrary to, and against God and His Word.

In one place Jesus said, “For God so loved the world”, then in another He said, “Love not the world, etc.”

The “world” that’s our enemy is the one that Satan promotes and exists separate and independent from God!

As the God of this world he’s in control of its philosophy, psychology, government, culture, education, science, art, music, entertainment, media, and the religions of this world.

What is the “world” 1 John 2:16 - For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

- **Lust of the flesh** – impure desires, sinful pleasures, sinful gratification.
- **Lust of the eyes** – coveting or lusting for things which are attractive to the eye but forbidden by God.
- **Pride of life** – the spirit of arrogance, pride, and self-sufficiency that doesn’t recognize God as Lord or His Word as final authority.

The conflict comes from the fact that the “church” and “world” are totally different:

- One stands for godliness and the other unrighteousness!
- One belongs to God and the other is under the dominion of Satan.
- One is on its way to heaven, the other hell!

Don’t think you’re going to skip your way **through this world without a battle!**

John 16:33 - *These things I have spoken to you so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.*”

Though we’ve been “called out” of this world we still live and struggle with the power and influence of its pull!

- The world is our enemy and it’s after our soul!

III. The Devil...

Matthew 10:28 - ²⁸ And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but are unable to kill the **SOUL**; but rather fear Him (***THE DEVIL***) who is able to destroy both **SOUL** and body in hell.

What makes him so powerful is **he works through the other two** to bring us **under his influence and control**. The FLESH & The WORLD

Satan's original name was Lucifer.

- He was a beautiful angel created by God to love and worship Him.
- **Because of pride** he was cast out of heaven along with a third of the angels.

Since then he's become the **ENEMY of God and His creation** –

- He worked through the serpent **to deceive Eve**
- And since that time **he's tried to destroy every soul** he can.

We already know how it's going to end - - -

Revelation 20:1-3 –Satan Bound -Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. ² And he took hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he threw him into the abyss and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time

Revelation 20:10 - And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

- Until then **he remains our enemy!!!!**

He has **many names** in scripture:

- Lucifer - Dragon - Satan - Serpent - Adversary - Devil - The Wicked One

1 Peter 5:8 – Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. YOUR ADVERSARY, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

He'll use whatever means He can to destroy me: Problems - Trials – Sickness – Temptation – Failures – Mistakes – Understandings – Misunderstandings - **He'll use it all!**

- **“We're not ignorant of his devices” – I know what the devil wants!**

John 10:10 - *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came so that they would have life, and have it abundantly.*

Close:

What are we to do?

1 Timothy 6:12 – a. Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called,

- **FLESH –**
- **Mortify (kill) the deeds of the body.**
- **Abstain from fleshly lusts which **war against the soul.****
- **Refuse to allow the flesh to have its way –**
- **Feed the Spirit and starve the flesh.**
- **Walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.**
- **Cleanse yourself from all the filthiness of the flesh**
- **And perfect holiness.**

- **WORLD –**
- **Love not the world – turn your affections toward God and His Word.**
- **Be not conformed to this world but transformed.**

Romans 12:2 - And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

- **Die out to the world.**
- **SATAN - Neither give place to the devil.**
- **Cast down every imagination and thought *that's not of God.***
- **Resist him steadfast in the faith.**
- **Submit yourself to God, resist the devil and he will flee.**

James 4:7 - Submit therefore to God. But resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

- There are “enemies” of the soul –
- but “*if God be for us WHO can be against us?*”

PRAISE TEAM:

We can win the battle over *the flesh, world, Satan!*

1 Corinthians 15:57 - but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.