

Not Against Flesh & Blood



A Seven Week Series on Spiritual Warfare
Week Five: Sword of the Spirit

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”

Paul, Ephesians 6:12 NIV

Not Against Flesh & Blood

1. Creation & Chaos
2. Cruciformed Sovereignty
3. Prayer as Holy Resistance
4. Prayer in Imagination
- 5. Sword of the Spirit**
6. Worship as Warfare
7. Hell Will Not Prevail



Sermon audio & slides in PDF can be downloaded at:
www.christiansburgmennonite.org

Paul, Ephesians 6:10-13 NIV

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

“The church of Jesus Christ is the church militant. We are engaged in *spiritual* conflict and need to be equipped for this task. To be sure, the conflict is like no other form of battle and the weapons quite different from any other weapons. We must re-imagine our notions of warfare. Yet the analogy is valid. It would be a pity if embarrassment at the military language or misplaced political correctness were to deprive us of the challenge.”

Nigel Goring Wright, *A Theology of the Dark Side: Putting the Power of Evil in Its Place* (pg.180)

Ephesians 6:14-17 NIV

¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”

Hebrews 4:12 NIV

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.”
John 1:1,14 NIV

“You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.”
Jesus, John 5:39-40 NIV

“Then he [Jesus] opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.” Luke 24:45 NIV

Paul, Colossians 3:1-3 NIV

¹ Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

Meditating on the Word of God

“meditate on it day and night” Joshua 1:8

“Blessed is the one... who meditates day and night” Ps 1:2

“we meditate on your unfailing love” Ps 48:9

“consider all your works and meditate...” Ps 77:12

“meditate on your promises” Ps 119:148

*“I have hidden your word
in my heart...” Ps. 119:11*



Paul, Philippians 4:6-9 NIV

⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Paul, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NIV

³ For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Scripture... Jesus Was Full Of It

Jesus continually alluded to/quoted Scripture:

Matt 9:13; 10:35-36; 11:10; Mk 11:17; 14:21, 27; etc.

He had conversations around the Scripture:

Matt 19:1-11; 22:23-33; Mk 9:13; Lk 6:1-5; 20:41-44

He preached from the Scripture:

Matt 5:17-48; 10:34-36; 13:1-58; Lk 4:14-27

His identity was shaped by Scripture:

Matt 17:12; 24:30; 26:64; Mk 14:21; Jn 5:39

He used Scripture in resisting temptation/evil:

Matt 4:1-11; Lk 4:1-13; Mk 7:5-7

Matthew 4:1-4 NLT

¹ Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. ² For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry. ³ During that time the devil came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread.”

⁴ But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say,
‘People do not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from
the mouth of God.’ ^a”

a. Deut 8:3

Matthew 4:5-7 NLT

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city, Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple,
⁶ and said, “If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say,

‘He will order his angels to protect you. And they will hold you up with their hands so you won’t even hurt your foot on a stone.’^b”

⁷ Jesus responded, “The Scriptures also say, ‘You must not test the LORD your God.’^c”

b. Psalm 91:11-12

c. Deut 6:16

Matthew 4:8-11 NLT

⁸ Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ “I will give it all to you,” he said, “if you will kneel down and worship me.”

¹⁰ “Get out of here, Satan,” Jesus told him. “For the Scriptures say,

‘You must worship the LORD your God
and serve only him.’^d”

¹¹ Then the devil went away, and angels came and took care of Jesus.

d. Deut 6:13

“All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

Jesus, John 14:25-26 NIV

Giving the Mind a Bible Bath

Ways you can saturate the mind in Scripture:

- Take the time to read, meditate, and study
- Intentionally pray *as* you read
- Use your imagination when you read
- Listen to Scripture at home, in the car, etc.
- Sing Scripture! (hymns, praise & worship, etc.)
- Listen to expository teaching, preaching, etc.
- Guard the mind with key Bible verses

“For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.”

Paul, Romans 15:4 NIV

“The only sure rule is to remember that the Bible is indeed God's gift to the church, to equip that church for its work in the world, and that serious study of it can and should become one of the places where, and the means by which, heaven and earth interlock and God's future purposes arrive in the present.”

N.T. Wright, *Simply Christian* (pg.197)

Sword of the Spirit—*A Summary*

- Spiritual battle requires spiritual armor (e.g. truth, righteousness, gospel of peace, faith, etc.)
- The Spirit through the Scripture is our weapon!
- Saturating the mind with Scripture and “things above” (images) equips, sustains, and grows you
- Like Jesus, the Spirit will use your knowledge of Scripture to navigate life and resist evil
- Scripture is indispensable in the life of the Christian and the worship of the church

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