

PASSING THE BATON NUMBER 18
Spiritual Warfare Part II

27th September 2008

Introduction:

The role of the prophet in any generation is to turn the hearts of God's people back to Him.

If you study the Old Testament prophets, you will see that they were always urging the people to turn to the Lord with all their heart, and live out their covenantal destiny with Him as the wife of Jehovah. Time after time you see them agreeing to keep the marriage covenant, and time after time you see them breaking covenant with God.

The role of the New Testament prophet is the same, evangelizing the unevangelized parts of the believer's hearts. Graham Cooke's website bears the inscription '*reaching Christians for Christ.*' Calling God's people to Him at an ever-deepening level - teaching them about the way He likes to do things - encouraging them to walk ever closer with Him. So, the role of a New Testament prophet is to teach and inspire God's people to follow Him and Him alone, as well as to prophesy.

Recap:

In our first study on spiritual warfare, we majored on our regaining the *inner territory*, the war which Paul described as being waged "in our members", particularly, wrong attitudes which, if undealt with can open us up to severe oppression and affliction by the enemy physically, emotionally, and mentally.

It is absolutely vital that we win the *internal* battle first or we will be of no use on the battlefield.

Romans 12:1,2 exhorts us to be *transformed* by the renewing of our minds – this is the word 'metamorphose' in Greek – a complete change – like a chrysalis to a butterfly.

The enemy's strategy is to knock you out of the race; to do a knee-cap job on you that will disable you from running and fighting. If he can get you occupied with being discontented with the church and your fellowship and other believers, he has effectively taken your focus. You are no longer focussed on God, but on circumstances people and situations, and what you think should be happening.

We may believe we are perfectly justified in thinking and feeling as we do because of what others did to us, when in fact, every time we are intolerant, or have a bad attitude, react rather than responding, "*I know something about you too, Pal!*" - or have a bad thought life, it's an opportunity for invasion of the enemy, into our space, *given* to him by us. He's just disabled you. Accusation, demoralisation, and defeat; downward spiral.

Many of us have probably never actually cleared out the attic space of our minds, which is

where he maintains his strongholds over our thinking and therefore our lives, and it is not so much an invasion as he has never been dislodged in the first place.

We examined last time what warfare looked like in our everyday lives and circumstances, and saw that we are always in alignment with something, either God or the enemy, there is no in between; and the Bible speaks a lot about **putting off** the old man and **putting on** the new man; so what we are welcoming into our lives is really important in terms of maintaining the spiritual integrity that enables us to go up against the enemy when we need to.

Last time we earthed our warfare in our everyday lives, circumstances and relationships and saw how it worked out and how our part in all this is to make quality choices not to move against opposition to us in the flesh, but to move in the Spirit.

When we do this, *everything* we do is offensive to the **kingdom of darkness**.

We saw that is our job as Christians, to be an offence to the world. Not an offence to **people**, but to the powers of darkness.

We saw that every act of **kindness** is an act of warfare; every time we do not retaliate when someone upsets us; it's warfare, every time we show our love and kindness to our husband/wife/kids; the other drivers on the road; the people in the supermarket - its warfare.

Every time we get to work on time and put in a good day's work without grumbling and complaining – that's warfare. The enemy hates marriage, he hates good relationships, he hates peace and tranquillity – he is the author of chaos and confusion, spite, hatred, division, deception, and every evil work.

God is **unceasingly magnificent** - we really have to get hold of that - and **we** are the glorious eternal companion of this **incredible** King.

While we are here on earth, we are His Warrior Bride; we are to share His throne for eternity. We are joint heirs - a joint heir cannot work alone; they can only act in partnership with another. Heirs of God, joint heirs with Jesus. We should be constantly declaring *"I am the highly favoured one of God. I am the glorious companion of a magnificent and incredible King."*

Payback:

We are coming into a time when the church is going to be in a 'payback' situation.

Payback.

For everything the enemy has stolen from us, we are going to demand payback.

Proverbs 6:30, 31 The Passion

"You can almost excuse a thief if he steals to feed his own family. But if he's caught, he still has to pay back what he stole sevenfold; his punishment and fine will cost him greatly."

However, to position ourselves for this is going to mean training; right now 1,000 of us probably couldn't take out one – we need to start to reverse that so that one can take out 1,000.

Preparation is vital in order for us to take up our battle positions. There is an acceleration according to God's determined purpose for us.

Without enduring the training, we will miss the opportunity of a lifetime to make the enemy pay.

There needs to be a mindset change about **Whose we are, where we are** and **Who He is** as He reveals Himself to us as the Warrior King.

We need to develop a determination to allow Him to be Lord of the **whole** of our lives, not just part.

If we have settled for partial involvement, now is the time to rectify that and step forward fully into God's eternal purposes.

For too long we have lived as though we are the tail and not the head. God did not make us the tail. He made us the head, **in Christ**. Everything we have, everything we are, is **in Him**. **In Him** is our righteousness, **in Him** is our victory, **in Him** is our peace, **in Him** is our rest, **in Him** is our joy. He **is** our peace, He **is** our rest, He **is** our joy, He **is** our strength. We are learning to live our lives in the unbounded confidence of Who God wants to be for us in our current situation.

Outside of Him there is nothing. He is life's summum bonum. He is our all sufficiency.

I had a recurring dream whilst I was preparing this session, in it I was in a shopping mall demonstrating to the people there that they couldn't prepare a certain dessert without a specific ingredient, without which the dessert would have no substance, it wouldn't set.

The ingredients looked the same, milk and pink powder, but one when mixed, wouldn't set, it just poured. The other ingredients when mixed had **substance and set**.

The ingredients looked the same at a quick glance, but one wouldn't set because it lacked the **active** setting ingredient.

The people watching were not very interested, and I knew that I didn't have their attention because they stood some way away from me, and I couldn't see their faces, some even walked away.

The night before the second occurrence of the dream, someone was going to bring us a cheesecake, but despite their best efforts, it had to be thrown away because they had forgotten to put an ingredient in, and the dessert was useless because it *wouldn't set*.

She threw it away.

I didn't think anything of this, until I had the dream a second time.

As I prayed on the dream, I felt the Holy Spirit was saying to me, the **active ingredient** that will make this dessert 'set' that will give it **substance** – is **Me**, without Him we can do nothing.

Nothing will 'set' nothing will 'gel' the dish will not be edible it is fit only to be thrown away. Jesus said *"Without Me, you can do nothing"*- that is nothing of eternal value.

You can do things, but it will be in your own strength and not the strength and power of Almighty God.

Excuse the pun, but it's food for thought!

Winkie Pratney has adapted a poem that speaks to the Bride's tendency towards being seduced by the world –

"The church and the world walked far apart on the changing shores of time, and the world was singing a charts rock tune, but the church a hymn sublime 'Come, give me your hand' called the laid-back world 'and dance with me this day' but the love-cleansed church hid her blood bought hand and solemnly said 'No way! I will not give you my hand at all, and I will not walk with you. Your way is the way of eternal death and your words are all untrue'.

'Ah walk with me! Just a little way' said the world with insistent air, the space I'm at is a pleasant place, and the night-life is magic there. You've been battling with me for far too long and let's face it, you've been so alone, don't you think it high time that we called a truce, and you found some place here for a home? Your life is so narrow and thorny and tough, see how mine runs so easy and smooth, why be so repressive and out of it? In the finest circles I move...my way, you see, is a fun, fast one, and my gate is so broad and so wide, there is room enough for you and me, to travel side by side...

Half shyly the church approached the world, and gave him her hand of snow, and the fake world grasped it and drew her close, and whispered in accents low – 'Your dress is too simple to please my taste. I've got all kinds of things you can wear, see these silks and chiffons and synthetic stones and this dazzling disco gear?'

The church looked down at her plain white robes, and then at the glittering world and she blushed as saw his superstar style and his smile contemptuously curled. 'I can change my dress' she said to him 'After all, I am under grace' - and her pure white garments were stripped away, and the world gave her wealth in their place.

'Now your house is passe' said the proud grey world 'let me build you a place like mine with a barbecue pit for the parties we'll throw and a mirror tiled bedroom so fine...so the parties began and the dancing went on in the place that was once made for prayer, and the church felt relief that the battle was over and that she at last had no care...

But an angel of mercy flew over the church and whispered "I know thy sin..." then the church looked up, and anxiously tried to gather her children in, but some were down at the discotheque, and others were off at play, and some were drinking in gay night bars, so she quietly went her way.

Then the sly world gallantly said to her 'Your children mean no harm, just having some fun' he said, and he smiled, so she took his proffered arm and smiled and went back to gathering flowers, as she chattered and walked with the world, while millions and millions of precious souls to the horrible pit were hurled...

Then the church sat down in her ease and said 'I am rich and in goods increased, I have nothing I need and nothing to do, but to laugh and to dance and to feast.' And the sly world heard her and laughed within, and mockingly said – aside - 'The church has fallen, the beautiful church, and her shame is her boast and her pride'.

A voice came down from the hush of Heaven, from Him who sat on the throne I know your works and what you have said, and I know that you have not known, you are poor and blind and naked and sick with pride and ruin enthralled, the expectant Bride of a heavenly groom, now the hooker of all the world."

That is a shortened version of the poem, but it makes the point I think. For those of you who are not familiar with American English - a hooker is a prostitute.

The enemy isn't silly, he knows that he doesn't have to *fight* the Bride; all he has to do is to draw her away; to seduce her; romance her, with the things of the world; to cause her to dress; seek after and desire all the things the world admires and pursues.

As she runs this way, she is drawn away to someone, or something other than her Bridegroom.

In that way, the enemy renders her out of alignment with her Bridegroom, her destiny, and her inheritance.

Without that alignment and inheritance, she has no **power** or **substance** she is like the desert in my dream, useless and inedible, fit only to be cast aside.

She is so like the world that no-one would ever know the difference, and she is embarrassed to even name her Bridegroom.

We are called to be a culture which is **counter** to that in the world; literally that which is opposed to that which is in the world.

We are a counterculture.

We are *in* the world, but not *of* it.

"Salt", Jesus said, "when it has lost its saltiness is fit for nothing but to be thrown away and trodden underfoot."

Don't misunderstand me; I am not saying you can lose your salvation, what you can be in danger of losing as the world swallows you up, is your inheritance, both in this life and the life to come.

In these days God is holding out to us the opportunity to live a life less ordinary, to become part of something so glorious, so unimaginable, so amazing as He presents Himself to us and

says – *“Will you have Me, in My fullness, in your life as your Beloved? Will you live your life here on earth as citizens of another Kingdom? Will you be ambassadors for Me in a country which is not your home?”*

All things are yours...

From the beginning God has been looking for a people who would be totally and completely wholehearted in their love for Him; in their relationship with Him; and in their love and relationship with God’s people.

John 6 - people were asking Jesus for a sign because they didn’t believe that He was One. We do exactly the same thing.

John 6:41 some people grumbled about Him and His words, that He was only Joseph’s son and they argued verse 52. Critical point; many withdrew from Him and would not walk with Him any longer. **John 6:66**.

This challenge always comes.

Loving intimacy is His sole intention.

Bridal partnership.

The purpose of the Bride is to become the beloved of the Most High God - El Elyon, the One of Whom Melchizedek spoke to Abram.

The Possessor of heaven and earth.

Everything in your life is designed to drive you into God.

You do not go marching out against what is coming against you. You go into God. He is a refuge for us. You go into your refuge and come out of your fortress. He then does something on the inside. You don’t come out of the same door you went in!

You get into the face of God, into the Presence of God and He becomes to you what ***He wants to be***.

When you come out you are a different person.

First of all, you have to learn to come into the Presence of God and learn how to be with Him. It is a discipline of life in the Spirit; we are learning how to be with God and learning how to let God be to us, what He wants to be.

He wants to be your security,

He wants to establish your identity; and He wants to totally convince you that you belong to Him, and to no other.

You are His peculiar possession.

He is very jealous over you.

You belong to Him, and He takes it as a personal affront when the enemy comes against you.

But He allows this so that He can establish you in Who He is, and who you are.

He will use every crisis to establish something in you.

He will allow the enemy to contest the ground so that He can **establish** the truth in you.

When the enemy is *contesting* something; God is always *establishing* something.

He always has a purpose, He always knows what He is doing, and there is no need to panic.

Nothing can work against you.

Anything that comes against you is designed to establish security, identity and belonging so you need to learn how to respond to God as your refuge. You need to learn to hide in God. When you stay in Him, nothing can touch you. It's there, but it can't touch you.

The thing you are going to have to choke down is your ability to panic.

There is no place of fear in agape; but you are going to have to learn that yourself. Responding to God as your refuge. He is your security, your identity and your belonging.

He will face you with every fear you have in your life - in order that you will overcome it and find **Him** as your refuge – that particular thing will then have no power over you ever again.

If you don't allow God to do this work, you will find yourself going over the same things again and again and again until finally, you co-operate – and go through. Every time this takes place there is a deposit of peace placed on the inside – but to obtain that deposit, you must go through, not around the issue.

Spiritual maturity is abiding in Who God *is* for us.

A definition of abide is - to continue to be present with and be embraced by.

Ask to be present with Him in any situation you encounter and to know and be sensitive to the Holy Spirit in that situation.

Abiding is holding on to God when there is nothing and no-one else.

He ***is*** your all sufficiency.

Plus, nothing.

God has love planned for you in every situation you encounter.

Even in the contradiction of your circumstances. God has made provision for it.

God's very ***nature*** is your promise in every situation.

Who He actually is, Who He declares Himself to be for you, that is your promise for life and of life.

*So, right now, take a moment; ask God Who He wants to be for you right now, because that is your **promise** for life and of life.*

Security, identity and belonging:

Because God has placed you in Him, and He has graciously given to you – **all things, in Christ**

1 Corinthians 3:21-23

*“²¹Therefore let no one glory in men. For **all things are yours**. ²²Whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world, or life or death, or things present or things to come – all are yours. ²³And you are Christ’s and Christ is God’s.”*

All things belong to you; and you, you belong to Christ; and Christ, well, He belongs to God.

You have to say **‘Yes’** to who the Father says you are – *“I am the beloved of God”*.

It is vital to **believe** everything in God’s heart towards you is true.

Your **identity** in Christ is so important because your **inheritance** follows.

It is your inheritance In Him to **overcome**.

It is your inheritance in Him to live a life of **victory** over the enemy and over your circumstances.

It is your inheritance to come into all that Christ died to give you.

These are not triumphalist words, they are the truth.

The enemy has consistently blinded the church to who she is, the glorious eternal companion of an incredible King, she is a woman of destiny.

His woman.

We were chosen from before the foundation of the world to receive a royal inheritance to be seated in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus.

The Holy Spirit is releasing eye salve for us to see and understand *Whose* we are and *who* we are and also *where* we are positionally.

When the eyes of our heart become enlightened, our sensitivity to the Holy Spirit enables our inner eye of the Spirit to see what God is saying.

Let’s stop waiting for God to do something – He’s already done it.

Let’s stop looking for the next wave, the next move of God’s Spirit and start living in the reality of what is already ours.

You are **in Christ**; the romance has begun.

Find your place in it, the next move, is yours.

Everything in Christ is “Yes” and “Amen”.

So, what’s your problem?

As you continue to press into God, expressing your confidence in Him and telling Him Who He is, you will find that *‘Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him’* will become yours - experientially.

Everything you experience should result in a deposit within you; if you have gone through something and not received that deposit within you, guess what, you’re going to have to go through it again.

God is always placing treasure within us, always adding to our internal storehouse.

Trouble is with some of us we lack the ability to stick with it. I prayed for years as a young Christian for the gift of what I called ‘stickability’ – the gift of staying the course, pressing in when everything looks contrary, trusting God, telling Him He was going to come through for me because of Who He is.

I haven’t stopped doing that.

We have to develop a mindset that says *“I am in this for the long haul not the short sprint.”*

We live in a world of instant gratification; if we can’t have it now, we don’t want it – whatever it is.

There is a real need for the body of Christ to develop stability and stickability in their dealings with Almighty God. An *‘I will not let you go until you bless me’* mentality. The Jacob syndrome! Determine this day that you are going to stay the course, whatever it costs.

We can see from the history of Israel, she never learnt her lessons; she learnt nothing from being in slavery for four hundred years; she learnt nothing from being in captivity or carried away in the five cycles of discipline; her rebellion against God and her disobedience consistently resulted in defeat. Time and again she was overtaken by her enemies; indeed she was given over to her enemies by the Lord; but her obstinacy and rebellion always prevented her from gaining her freedom and her inheritance. What a tragedy.

It is a terrible thing that largely she will not see or recognise her Messiah, even now, until she goes through the Great Tribulation which is to come upon the earth. Stubbornness, recalcitrance, and rebellion are not virtues, though to hear some talk you would think that they are. Never be proud of your rebellion against God.

We cannot qualify to become warriors if we remain resistant to Him and His wooing. God will not allow it. He does this out of love for us, because if He allowed us to go on to the battlefield in that state, we would be annihilated.

Rebellion makes us vulnerable to the enemy in a warfare situation.

First rule of warfare, you can't take ground from the enemy if he's got ground in you; whatever it is in you that is not surrendered to Jesus, abandoned to Jesus, is food and a camping ground for the enemy. He puts a cross there and it is a landing pad and in he comes.

God is incredibly longsuffering with us; He is absolutely amazing with us in His patience and grace towards us. The very least thing we can do is to develop an attitude of gratitude towards Him for His grace towards us. Beloved, whatever your understanding of being a Christian and part of the church is, it is about to change - radically.

Why am I saying all that?

Because when it comes to spiritual warfare we really do have to be in a place of absolute surrender to the sovereignty of God in our lives, because our lives and the lives of others may well depend upon it. We only have to look at Israel's history, a sorry tale of consistent defeat in the face of their enemies. God is so brilliant you know, He only counts the years they were in fellowship with Him, He never remembers the years they were out of fellowship. How's that for grace?

We are engaged in an unseen battle and every one of us is a soldier whether we like it or not. We are engaging with a malevolent foe who hates us with a passion, and we have no choice but to fight.

We cannot afford to be presumptuous in our dealings with him, neither can we afford to sit on the sidelines, hoping someone else will come along and do the fighting for us. We are all called to be at least foot soldiers if nothing else.

Warriors are those who will break through and take the ground, but they need support coming in behind from the foot soldiers in order that the ground which is taken may be held. Always two battles, one to gain ground the other to keep it, and sustaining a breakthrough is almost harder than getting the breakthrough in the first place, this is why we must develop a long haul not a short sprint, mentality.

Soul versus Spirit - winning the internal battle:

Never allow yourself to be drawn into the **human** element of the drama that is being worked out around you. Circumstances will come to cause you to shake, rattle, and roll – their purpose is to dislodge you from the place God has put you - in Christ.

The enemy cannot touch you whilst you remain in your secret place, so the whole of his warfare against you is to get you out of there, by any means. He will provoke you to get involved with personalities; with gossip; with personal opinion; and the observations of the natural eye. Isaiah said that the Messiah '*would not judge by the seeing of the eye or the hearing of the ear,*' and '*...as He is so are we in this world.*' **Isaiah 11:3,4, 1 John 4:17**

We must learn to look **beyond** the circumstances and situations, in which we find ourselves to get a heavenly perspective. We learn to withdraw into God and ask questions like - what is the conversation in heaven about this situation. Remember Jesus will be interceding for us long before we get there! '*He ever lives to make intercession for us*'. Nothing is coming as a

surprise to Him so Father, what is my part in this? How do I pray Father? Do I say it or pray it? The dialogue begins, in your spirit man.

Your soul on the other hand, always *reacts*, knee jerk, fires from the hip. Your spirit - always responds because your spirit is always at peace. Your soul is always *feeling* something 'I don't feel like this, I feel tired,' I feel this, I feel that.

When you are in your soul, you get attacked in your mind.

The enemy **wants** you in your soul because if he can get you out of your spirit; out of your place of abiding; into your soul, he can touch you and bring you down.

This is his hunting ground. Your soul is your mind your emotions and your will. So, he will try to touch your mind, he will try to touch your emotions, as a result, a lot of the time you don't **feel** like doing anything, he's just got you out of your spirit, into your soul, and effectively knocked you out of the battle and out of the race.

Your spirit only ever sees God; your soul sees everything and reacts to everything; has an opinion about - everything.

Your soul is like Martha and your spirit is like Mary.

Martha was distracted by so many things; Mary was just resting in the presence of God. Rest and peace are both weapons Jesus said, 'My peace, I give you, not as the world gives, give I you'.

His peace builds a bypass around our understanding; it builds a bypass around our ability to worry or be anxious or fretful. Just imagine a map, there's the city centre, all noise and exhaust fumes, now look at the bypass that runs around the outside. Brilliant.

If we are to win the internal battle, we have to learn to live from our spirit man, not our soul - from the inside out. Jesus said of Mary 'she has found that which is needful and it will not be taken away from her'. In her position at the feet of Jesus she sought His heart and mind on everything.

In warfare the enemy will seek to intimidate; there is a language of intimidation; so we absolutely need to learn not to **react** from our soul; not to bite that word when it comes, but to **respond** from the place of rest in our spirit man. We are learning to live from the inside to the outside. That place of no distractions as our spirit comes into ascendancy and lives constantly before God in an attitude of submission and adoration. Your spirit is always in the Presence of God; it always wants a crack at the enemy; it is always up for the fight, but it is always *submitted* to His agenda and timetable.

When you learn to live from your spirit, your mind is renewed and refreshed because your spirit only ever lives in the Presence of God. So we learn to stand before God in our spirit man - in the inner man of the spirit - and we learn to present ourselves to God, to hear His viewpoint on what is happening, so that we are '*renewed in the spirit of our mind*', **Romans 12:1,2.**

When we occupy this position, we will not be carried away by circumstances, we will see beyond the natural into the supernatural realm, and peace will always be our umpire. We will cease to operate in the gift of suspicion towards others, which attributes hidden agendas to everyone else but ourselves, and we will live in a place of peace, above the clatter of the rational mind.

There isn't a day goes by that the enemy isn't looking for some kind of weakness in your armour, a chink where he can get in, where he can get you to agree with his viewpoint. So, you have to learn to live your life in 'day tight' compartments as Graham Cooke calls them. Living one day at a time. Keeping those accounts short. Using **1 John 1:9**, confessing your sins, daily at least, being active in God reviewing your day, seeing how you could have said/done things differently, getting God's viewpoint – the Holy Spirit loves to be your tutor.

When you lose it with your husband/wife/boss/kids/other drivers on the road, apologise to God and apologise to them if you can. It doesn't *matter* about who was right and who was wrong, God will vindicate you, give **no place** to the devil, this is what it means, keep a clean sheet before God and men. Ephesians *'and do not let the sun go down on your wrath'* very good rule of life if you have a problem with anger.

Let me tell you, you will only care about being right, if you are in your soul – weigh it up, am I going to want what is left if I win this battle? Is it really worth it for the sake of the relationship? You may win the battle but lose the relationship. You will only be displaying your carnality for all to see if you go that way.

Your spirit man will be at rest, leaving God to judge; we have to learn to absorb the failures of others remember - they are absorbing yours on days! While you are busy having that internal (or external) argument Jesus is saying, *'Father forgive them, they don't know what they are doing.'*

That's the truth because you are unwittingly doing the work of the enemy. If you aren't in alignment with God, guess who you *are* in alignment with? In everything we are either covenanting (aligning) with the enemy or covenanting (aligning) with God, there is no grey area.

Develop the philosophy that **yesterday** was good, whatever I can learn from it I'll learn; things I can thank God for I'll thank God for; things I can change I will; otherwise, forget it.

I'm not thinking about **tomorrow** because I want to live today, one day at a time.

And **today** while it is still called today, I want to serve the Lord. I want to bless Him. I don't want to disappoint Him; I want to be doing the things that I should be doing this morning; and this afternoon I'll do the things I should be doing; and this evening, I'll be doing the things I should be doing this evening; and so on. In this way you are learning to live *'in the moment'* with God, squeezing everything out of every situation for profit, and incidentally you are learning to live after the Spirit, not after the flesh. We have to win this internal battle.

What is spiritual warfare?

So, what is spiritual warfare? I want to repeat that there *isn't* a war going on between God and Satan. Satan is a created being, the highest of the angelic beings, very beautiful and extremely clever. But created, nonetheless.

If you read the introduction to the book of Job, you will see clearly Who is in control. The Lord says, *"Have you considered My servant Job?"* In your travels through the earth, have you had a look at him? He's a **righteous** man. And the testing of Job begins, at God's invitation – why? Because God is the One who is in control; the enemy can do *nothing* unless God allows it.

When we explain everything by blaming it on the devil, the devil did this and the devil did that, all we are doing is attracting him to our lives and negating Jesus' work on the cross. You know Bob Mumford's story of the dear one in his fellowship who came up to him and said, *"Oh Mr Mumford, the devil's said this and the devil's said that, the devil's doing this and the devil's doing that"* and Bob replied *"Sweetheart, there's not enough light in you to attract a used demon!"*

Job's **light** made him a target, allowed by God - he was a righteous man – God said so.

Just remember please, we aren't talking about deliverance issues here, we are talking about attacks and harassment in our everyday lives. **You** guard your thought life, don't let him in, close the door on his insinuations and accusations; don't buy the lie about yourself or other people, seek heaven's viewpoint.

God is the One who is in charge and who is allowing the enemy access to you – and He has a purpose in this – that you might see, maybe, that what you are thinking and/or doing is putting you in the enemy's camp, not God's. *"Guard your heart with all diligence for out of it is the wellspring of life"*. **Proverbs 4:23**.

The most powerful weapon of spiritual warfare is a daily walk of obedience to the Lord.

That's it.

The most powerful weapon of spiritual warfare is a daily walk of obedience to the Lord. Submission to His authority in your life automatically gives you authority over the evil one *"Submit to God, therefore, resist the devil and he will flee from you."* **James 4:7,8**.

Jesus has very real power over the enemy - He's **destroyed** all his works, **undermined** his authority, **disarmed** him, **humiliated** him, **rendered him powerless** and He gave us that victory so that we are **always** led in triumph, **not**, I hasten to add, triumphalism – which is a display or feeling of often excessive pride in having achieved a victory or having been proved right.

We are led in the triumph of **Christ's** victory on the Cross.

What does that mean? It means we fight **from** victory, not towards it.

We don't fight to get victory; we fight because we **have it**.

Victory has to be **received**; it cannot be achieved.

Victory has been given to us, it cannot be earned.

But we have to be in the right place to **receive** it from God.

Those words don't just relate to God's ultimate victory over the enemy but to our life now, as inheritors of His kingdom, that **His** Kingdom may come, and **His** will may be done in earth in exactly the same way as it is in heaven. That's why we pray this prayer asking for His sovereign will to be done in this physical earth and we are the means by which it gets done, through us, as citizens of a heavenly kingdom.

We are His representatives here; therefore, we must live a life different from those around us. We are strangers and aliens here; we are **ambassadors** for Christ in this world. Definition of ambassadors: diplomatic officials of the highest rank sent by one country as its long-term representative to another; official representatives of an organisation or movement visiting the country as an ambassador for an organisation dedicated to saving endangered species. That's us in a nutshell – we're here to save an endangered species - mankind. Because of this, we are caught up in the crossfire between God and the enemy.

God has always promised His people that He would drive out their enemies before them and lead them in power and triumph to possess the land that He has given them. This is why we see so much about warfare and taking territory in the Old Testament. But they had to be in the right place to both receive it and hold it.

Israel was commanded to destroy everything in their path, or it would destroy them – they never achieved this. And as a result, they lost what had been given to them. It slipped from their fingers. To this day they are still fighting for the right to stay in the physical land they never wholly possessed and thus lost.

Unlike Israel the 'land' we are to possess, and hold is our *inner territory*, this is why we have the ministry of the Holy Spirit, Who is the Minister of the Interior, our interior, to enable us to regain that which was lost at the Fall, and keep it. This is our primary area of warfare.

As we saw before, if we cannot rule our own spirit, we cannot engage with the enemy because *"you cannot take ground from the enemy if he has ground in you"*.

Basic, fundamental, number one rule of warfare.

Rule number two; don't get drawn into the human element of what is happening around you, seek God's perspective on what is occurring. Find out what the Father and Jesus are saying – what's the conversation in heaven about this?

So, much of our time and our energy goes into winning the **internal battle** for supremacy – that the Holy Spirit may be ruling us, not our flesh. Surrender to God is not something you do once; time and again He will face you with choices.

"Submit to God, resist the devil, and he will flee draw near to God and He will draw near to you" James 4:7, 8 says.

Life in the Spirit is about advancing from one level, to another, as we grow in submission and authority, beating the devil on the level we are on; God moves us up and the whole process starts all over again.

Everything takes us further in to the heart of the One who loves us to distraction. He is so careful with us, He will not take us on until He is satisfied with our progress and growth – He doesn't measure time, He measures growth. He will not expose us to anything that is not necessary for our welfare and growth; He sets a jealous guard over us.

Submission to His authority and rule in our lives is a prerequisite of real warfare or you will find yourself becoming an unnecessary casualty.

We are learning constantly every day always to embrace the finished work of Christ. **Because where Jesus finished, is where we start.** We are saved, we are being saved, and we will be saved, the rebirth is just the start of our journey into the heart and purposes of God and the fullness of what Jesus won for us on the cross.

1 John 3:8

*“For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might **destroy** the works of the devil.”*

Jesus **submitted** to the cross in order to **destroy** all the works of the devil and undermine his authority.

Colossians 2:15

“Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.”

Jesus disarmed the enemy and made a public display of him in triumph.

Hebrews 2:14

“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil.”

Jesus has rendered the enemy powerless. That means he has brought to nothing, made of no effect, his power against believers.

1 Corinthians 15:57

“But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

It is **God** who gives us the victory in Christ.

You don't get it yourself, it's a gift, otherwise it would be works, not grace.

2 Corinthians 2:14

*“Now thanks be to God who **always** leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us, diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.”*

God **always** leads us in triumph, in Christ.

Why do we have to fight then? If it is all ours, it's all done, what's all this battle stuff about?

To understand that we have to see that God hasn't changed the way He does things.

In the Old Testament we continually see Him telling the children of Israel, *“I have **given** these things into your hand”*, and then they had to go out and fight for it! The territory they fought over was literal ground, ours is always the internal battle of flesh versus spirit.

*“The battle is Mine, I am the Warrior King, the Lord of Sabaoth, **go in and possess**”.*

He promised them the land of Canaan, houses they hadn't built, vines they hadn't planted and wells they hadn't dug. But when they got over the Jordan, they had to fight. It seems paradoxical, on the one hand the land is being given to them, on the other, they have to fight for it.

On the one hand we are 'in Christ' and the victory is His, on the other we are in a battle, and we have to fight on days. And the biggest battle we will have is with our own carnality. Until that is subdued, we cannot go out against the enemy.

God promises Abraham the land of Canaan and in due time the Israelites cross over the river to take possession. It's interesting that the Bible freely admits that the land belonged – in the natural – to someone else, the Canaanites, but it was God's to apportion, He is the one great Territorial Spirit, and it was His good pleasure to give it to them. Their task was to *possess the land*.

Joshua at Jericho. *“I have given it into your hands”* God says, they have to do the pot, the trumpet and the marching in silence and finally the shout for the walls to fall. They also had to put to death everything and everyone inside the city.

We have to fight.

Everything has been given to us in Christ but just as possession of the land depended on Israel's responses, so possession of everything Jesus won for us on the cross is governed by *our* responses.

Their role was active, not passive, and so is ours, the fullness will not jump into our laps.

God acted on their behalf as they loved Him, were loyal and obedient to Him and moved forward in response to His word. All the time they were loyal to God as that One Master, they were winning. When they changed their allegiance, disaster struck them. Jesus draws the same connection between loyalty and love in -

John 14:15

"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments".

A quick read of the book of Judges shows how God gives His people victory when they are in alignment with Him. Time and time again, Israel turned away from the Lord and worshipped other gods and followed the customs of the people around them, but when they cried out to the Lord, He sent Judges among them – raised them up for the specific purpose of warfare, to enable them to defeat their foes and live at peace.

It says in the beginning of the book of Judges that God left Israel enemies ***in order that they might learn*** to fight, because this generation had no knowledge of warfare.

Judges 2:10 and 3:1, 2

"When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know the Lord nor the work which He had done for Israel."

Judges 3:1, 2

*"Now these are the nations which the Lord left, that He might test Israel by them, that is all who had not experienced any of the wars in Canaan (this was only so that the generations of the children of Israel might be **taught to know** war, at least those who had not formerly known it)."*

This is the love, goodness, and kindness of God in operation, He knows they live in a fallen world, and they would need to be able to defend themselves from outside attack and He constantly gave Israel the opportunity to learn to walk with Him properly.

Every act of the enemy is an act of war to get you out of the Spirit and into the flesh. Into your natural thinking. Every single thing he does is towards that end, ***that he might accuse you.***

Every act of *God* is designed to keep you in the Spirit in the covenant care of your God.

The battle we are talking about is the age-old battle of the flesh versus the spirit.

In deliverance, everything we have we must fight to get and fight to hold. One battle to get free another battle to stay free. We cannot rest in the fact that we have won in a particular area. Those of you who know me know that I was drinking heavily when I was saved, I was dry for ten years, then the whole thing started all over again. It was at that point that I realised I had to hold the ground that God had given me because the enemy was after taking it back again, and he will just wait his time to take that ground, *"be sober, be vigilant for your adversary the devil walks about seeking whom he may devour"* . One battle to get free, another battle to stay free.

If you read the letters to the churches in **Revelation chapters 2 and 3** you see some hard words calling for change and repentance, why – so that the churches would be ***overcomers***. Every one of the churches receives a word about overcoming and the rewards of standing fast.

The basis of power is the cross of Jesus.

He has overcome and we are learning to live in His overcoming nature.

So, we embrace His finished work and we say like Paul, *"thanks be to God Who always leads us in triumph in Christ."* Thanks be to God Who gives us this victory, in Christ. This is not a tub thumping, triumphalist, knee jerking, charismatic response. It's a quiet, emphatic, faith-filled perspective which tells us where to focus our attention.

On Jesus not on self.

Thanksgiving is a major part of warfare. Listen to this testimony which I received from Graham Cooke's office on 21st August 2008:

"Just before our son left for Iraq, we listened to Graham teach about the power of personal worship, thanksgiving and praise. It was the last thing we listened to together.

Forrest felt led to send his son his guitar, not knowing if it would even get to him, but it did. A week or so later, his son returned from a 20-hour, exhausting patrol. There was a great deal of violence increasing in the area and for the first time, he felt real fear in the camp.

He laid down to finally rest and the Holy Spirit said, "Take your guitar, stand on the roof of the barracks and worship Me." The son desperately wanted just to sleep, so he tried to ignore it, but the Spirit became more persistent and yet had such a "kind" tone. He remembered that Graham had said that God was the kindest person he ever met and decided that it must be God.

He got his guitar and went up on the roof, feeling a bit foolish - but began to worship. Suddenly, he could actually see angels with his natural eyes. While he had been raised in a Spirit filled household, he had never had anything even close to this happen. The angels were in a fierce battle with demons over the camp. The more he worshipped, the more peaceful he became and he suddenly remembered what Graham had said: "Rest and worship are weapons".

Apparently he worshipped for about two hours, all the while watching the battle about 100 feet above the camp. The angels prevailed and the demons fled. He sensed a tangible peace and the Holy Spirit simply whispered, "Thanks son...thanks for coming up here." The next day, the fear in the camp was replaced by peace and an extreme confidence that all was well."

Do we need any more proof about the fact that thanksgiving, praise and worship is vital, when the enemy attacks?

This is what our role on earth is, being a force for **good**, touching heaven, touching earth. Ambassadors for Christ. Beloved, we have a job to do.

When we know we are under attack, we must learn to retreat into God to give Him thanksgiving, praise and worship. You aren't giving thanks for what you are experiencing, you

are giving thanks for the fact that He is **with you in it**. This is why Paul says in Thessalonians, “give thanks in **all** circumstances for this is the will of God for you.”

So, what do we do when we suspect that we are under attack? The first thing is that we need to establish is that we **are** being attacked. We do this by asking the Lord a few questions – those who were with us at the first teaching on warfare will be familiar with these – the purpose for these questions is that we **must** find out who is doing what to whom, a lot of us rush into ‘spiritual warfare’ when it isn’t the enemy at all but God who is bringing about the circumstances – so -

Question Number 1 – am I reaping what I’ve sown?

Question Number 2 – Are You nailing something in my life? Are you killing my carnality? In other words, is this the cross at work? God and the devil both have the same agenda, they both want to kill you.

Question No. 3: Is this training for reigning? Lord, are you using this to toughen me up in some way? Most often we are not on the battlefield, we are at boot camp, square bashing, going through manoeuvres depending on our maturity in the Lord.

Question No. 4: Is this You?

Question No. 5 : Is this the devil?

It is worth asking all five of these questions because sometimes it is a little bit of each. So, the next time you run into a circumstance and start to blame the devil, run those five questions before the Lord before you do anything else. This is so that we know whether we must submit to God in this instance, or whether we have to resist the enemy. Simple.

Discerning of spirits:

A gift we really need to employ at this time too is the discerning of spirits. This is a vital gift in terms of raising our spiritual awareness about the opposition around us in life.

The gift of discerning of spirits is **not** primarily so that we can detect the enemy, because every gift that God gives us is always focussed on Him. The gift of discerning of spirits prime purpose is to tell you what is of God and what is not. Whether what you are up against is of God, or whether it is of human or demonic origin.

First question - is this God? We are **not** discerning demons. The gift of discerning of spirits is that that we know if ‘**this is God**’. We focus on God. Always.

If you can’t discern God, the next thing the gift will do is tell you, is if this is **human** opposition. And the last thing we are left with, by a *process of elimination*, is this is the enemy.

Sometimes, as I said, things happen, and everyone is quick to blame it on a demon. Sometimes you have to know what is the hand of God, what is just the hand of people, and what is the hand of the enemy.

So, we need to know if it is God - **to submit**; if it is people - **to be gracious**; and if it is the enemy - **to fight**.

In this way we don't end up fighting the wrong thing, we don't end up trying to bind the cross or getting cross with people, or binding people even, or demonising people around us but we know, this is a demon, because by a process of elimination we have discovered this is the case.

Sometimes the Holy Spirit enables you to short circuit all of this and you know instinctively this is demonic, but don't just go out there and assume this of everything that is against you, because that is just not true.

So, presuming you have established that you are, in fact, under attack, the first thing is to come and **submit** your life afresh to God. If you aren't sure, go back to where you last submitted to Him and stand there, and ask Him if there is anything that you have not done which He has asked you to do.

The most powerful weapon of spiritual warfare is that daily walk of obedience to the Lord.

That's it. The most powerful weapon of spiritual warfare is a daily walk of obedience to the Lord.

There is just no substitute.

So now we come, and we spend time in the Presence of God we are waiting until **He** sends us out against the enemy.

We are in the place of loving submission to Him and His Lordship.

The battle is the Lord's, it is **always** His.

So, you have submitted to God and in that place, you begin to thank Him that He is with you in this and you go into worship.

Sometimes by the time you have been there a while the enemy has given up and gone away. He likes a quick kill, and he loses interest.

But always your first recourse is to God Himself. Never ever, ever, ever go out against the enemy without first going to God.

The armour of God:

Ephesians 6 – armour of God. Most of us have been brought up with the teaching that we need to be conscious of the armour. And we go through the routine of putting it on – bit of a pantomime I always think - but what are we doing? What do we mean? This is one of the things I have been questing with the Lord recently, having been subjected to various ideas

about what the armour is and isn't, what it does and doesn't mean and nothing really having hit the spot for me.

First thing you need to have is the **knowledge** of your protection. Your protection is in the armour you wear.

The traditional view of wearing the armour generally is that the helmet of salvation protects our thoughts, we are girded by the belt of truth which holds our weaponry, we are covered by the integrity of the breastplate, and we're walking in peace. We are protected by the shield of faith which we have to keep in place, and our mind is renewed by using the scripture as a sword. There's nothing wrong with this, and I'm sure you have other versions yourselves which are equally valid.

The thing to remember is the enemy has specific targets he wants to seek and destroy and the first thing that he will try to take out is **your mind**. Therefore, the very first thing he will do is lie to you. Did God really say?

It is imperative that we have revelation from God at this point to undergird our ability to fight. In other words, we need to hear a word from God for this particular situation that we can obey, to do this we need to practice stillness and peace in the face of the conflict.

I had a nasty situation at the end of last year. When I finally got still the Lord spoke to me and said *"I need you to go through this"*. It didn't make it any easier, I still had the problem, but in His grace, He was showing me, this is part of your growth, this is part of your training, and it is vital that you go through it. That word saw me through. It was my revelatory word for my situation.

The belt of truth:

So, looking at the armour, the **belt of truth** is what God is *specifically saying* to us in our current circumstances, the rhema word – we need this revelatory knowledge not just the general truth of scripture. You need a revelation about the circumstance you are in, and the fight that is against you, **that** is your belt of truth, revelation knowledge, straight from the Throne, specific to your particular circumstance or problem. An example of this would be -

Jehoshaphat and the enemy coming up the hill at Ziz.

This is not a good situation, they are surrounded, and facing annihilation and Jehoshaphat is desperate to hear from God about what they can do. There they all are, such a poignant moment, all there with their little ones too, totally helpless, looking to the Lord as Jehoshaphat says *'Neither know we what to do but our eyes are on you'*

2 Chronicles 20:5 – 19 NKJV

"Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court,⁶ and said: "O LORD God of our fathers, are You not God in heaven, and do You not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, and in Your hand is there not power and might, so that no one is able to withstand You?⁷ Are You not our God, who drove out the

inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever? ⁸ And they dwell in it, and have built You a sanctuary in it for Your name, saying, ⁹ 'If disaster comes upon us—sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine—we will stand before this temple and in Your presence (for Your name is in this temple), and cry out to You in our affliction, and You will hear and save.' ¹⁰ And now, here are the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir—whom You would not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them and did not destroy them— ¹¹ here they are, rewarding us by coming to throw us out of Your possession which You have given us to inherit. ¹² O our God, will You not judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You."

¹³ Now all Judah, with their little ones, their wives, and their children, stood before the LORD.

¹⁴ Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly. ¹⁵ And he said, "Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you: 'Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's. ¹⁶ Tomorrow go down against them. They will surely come up by the Ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the ^lbrook before the Wilderness of Jeruel. ¹⁷ You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the LORD is with you."

¹⁸ And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the LORD, worshiping the LORD. ¹⁹ Then the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with voices loud and high."

The first thing he does is to go to God and remind Him of what He has done in the past, then he calls upon this Sovereign God to help them in their distress, then he tells the Lord they are powerless without His help. God loves this, total dependency on Him with the result that Jahaziel gets the prophetic word that wins the battle, which incidentally, isn't theirs, it is the Lord's, and they end up in worship.

With that revelatory knowledge, his rhema word, the battle was won with ease.

So, you need to get your word for the situation first.

The breastplate:

The next thing we will have to deal with are the enemy's accusations - against our faith, against our weaknesses. We have to learn how to put condemnation off quickly, because that will come, and we do that by focussing on God's righteousness **imputed** to us as a platform for our faith. So, the **breastplate of righteousness** is the covering of God Himself, we do not stand in our own righteousness. The enemy will want us to focus on our **performance**, which he will tell you is pretty dire, and I can agree with that – but the breastplate allows me to

focus on my **acceptance** as a child of God because of Jesus' work on the cross. As we appropriate by the exercise of our **faith**, the finished work of the cross, during times of stress and difficulty, you will see how you come into more and more of the fullness Christ won for you and your heart will lift and your spirit will soar. Faith is a choice, you either *choose* to believe in the finished work or you don't.

You will always find this battle between your performance and your acceptance – **the breastplate of righteousness** is your acceptance before God and in the righteousness of Christ you are **accepted** in the Beloved, so it is about your acceptance not your performance, and you **stand unmoved** in that, no matter what you feel like.

Gospel of peace:

That your **feet are shod** with the preparation of the gospel of peace means that you know how to rest on the battlefield. We operate from a place of peace and rest because rest is a weapon against the enemy that he cannot penetrate, this is why it is imperative that you believe God when He says you are His and you are in the Beloved. There may well be an onslaught, there may be a backlash, you have got to be prepared for God's peace to make a difference to you. So, you have to **look** for peace, **stay** in peace **stand** in peace. Where's my peace, it's round here somewhere.

You know how to rest, so you are on the battlefield with your sword in your hand, and God spreads a table for you in the presence of your enemies, **Psalm 23**. You have to learn rest in warfare. The enemy wants you hopping all over the place, panicky, anxious, fearful, but rest is a weapon; and it's a discipline that we develop day after day, after day, working at our peace level in all the situations life throws at us. This is an ongoing discipline.

This is why it is imperative that the first thing that we do in warfare is always **towards God**, we step back into God, and in so doing, we step back into His peace. You do not go up against the enemy, or anything else, until you are in peace. No point. You have to wait, learn how to wait. That is why waiting in God is such an important discipline.

I understand that when a lion hunts, he gets as close to his prey as possible and then he moves with a short explosive burst of power, but he has no stamina for running. A lion can only run in short bursts, maybe 100 yards maximum. If he doesn't catch his prey in that time, he loses interest and wanders off. *"Just like de debbil he wander away."*

Graham Cooke tells a story of when he went into the bush with a tracker and an assegai spear, a bottle of water and very little else. His tracker, who he said could track over concrete, told him about the lion likened and it to the devil. The devil has no patience. Has no stamina. He wants a quick kill, easy victory, an easy target. So we are in the Lord, absorbed with Him and the enemy, *'he wanders away.'* He has no stomach or stamina for a long fight. He wanders away.

If you find that you are tripped up by him over the same issue time and time again, maybe it is time you stepped back into God and asked Him what heaven is saying about your situation. One thing you of which you can be certain, it won't be negative, no matter how difficult or

besetting your problem is. God wants to be something for you in your current struggle where the enemy is having lamb sandwich for lunch.

It's always a question of position:

Ephesians 1:18 -2:7. You see from this scripture that it is a question of position. You have established this is a warfare situation, and now you need to know where to place your feet. How do I stand? So many times, God told His people to "stand and see" so before we face the enemy, we need to learn to stand in the face of God.

This enables our minds to be **set** on God so our vision is restored; we see straight: then we can plant our feet in the truth; and we are in a position to confess with our mouth what God is speaking to us in the circumstances. *'Stand still and see the salvation of your God'*.

In warfare, we **submit to God first**, all our activity is always God centred and God based before we go out against the enemy. As with the individual, so with the corporate. There is a vital routine that the Holy Spirit will always take us through before we join the battle. We need to know -

the assurance of victory,

the cover your position affords you and

your support from heaven.

The Holy Spirit will always promote the work and the person of Jesus in your life. You have to let Him do His job. It is foundational to our success in warfare the doctrine of being 'in Christ' and 'in the body' because whatever is in Jesus is in His people.

Every believer is **in** Christ, united with Christ in His death, His burial, His resurrection, and His ascension to the Father. God raised up Jesus to a place of supreme authority, far above all rule, all authority, all dominion, and He seated Christ in that place **Ephesians 1:20** and He made us sit with Him, **Ephesians 2:6**.

Therefore, whatever is under His feet is under our feet also.

And because we are in Christ, *we fight from victory*, not towards it.

We don't ask for **victory**, we thank God that we have it, we are in Christ, and we partake of all the power and significance that He is releasing, so we have **cover** because of our **position** in Christ. We are planting our feet in Him, and the Holy Spirit gives us power to stand, He also gives us power to be *seated* in heavenly places. Our inheritance is not just a geographic place, it's a Person, and His name is Jesus.

He is our inheritance, and we are His.

And as we stand **in Christ** and enter our spiritual inheritance, then God sets the boundaries of what's going to happen.

In warfare there is always something to be gained.

God is enlarging us in distress, and there is both increase and multiplication, that is what the fight is all about. It isn't fighting for the sake of fighting, it is because God wants to give us something, wants to increase us, wants to multiply to us. God is a God of multiplication, not division but of increase and multiplication. You will always come out of a fight with something in your hand, it's brilliant.

We need the spiritual **reality** of our inheritance in Christ, Who is made unto us so many things in God, then we come into the physical position of working out our salvation in battle against the world, the flesh and the devil.

To do that effectively, you have to speak the same words that God is speaking. You have to see yourself the way God sees you and come into agreement with him about your destiny and purpose. You match his intentionality towards you with yours towards Him.

So, our mind is set on God, our feet are planted in Christ, our mouth has to be opened by the Holy Spirit, so confession is a critical part of warfare. We have to confess towards God first, "You are the Lord, we are your people, there is a confession towards God before we even get into anything against the enemy, you have to confess your position to God, it's part of your praise. Remember what we saw with Jehoshaphat -

*"Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD before the new court, and he said, "O LORD, the God of our fathers, **are You not God in the heavens? And are You not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Your hand so that no one can stand against You. "Did You not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel and give it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever?"***

This is Who You are, this is who we are. "You are the Lord; we are your people". We confess Who He is, He is Lord, He is sovereign, He is King – **Ephesians 6:10** "be strong in the Lord" strength comes by agreement. **Amos 3:3** "can two walk together unless they be agreed?" We are **agreeing** with Him who He is, we are **agreeing** with Him who we are, we are standing before Him in absolute confidence that *He will hear us and respond to us.*

And the Holy Spirit helps us to pray, **Romans 8:26, 27.** He's, our helper. Jesus ever lives to make intercession for us.

In every spiritual attack our first response is to know God and come to Him. To be occupied with God, to be filled with the Spirit, to embrace all that God is and all that Christ has done and co-operate with all the Holy Spirit is doing. All those things taken together is the basis of spiritual power which leads us into the next phase of what we are doing, which is then the outworking of that spiritual power as we face the enemy.

So, we are focussing on God as an urgent priority. When you focus on God the Spirit of truth comes, that means we can't be deceived. Because when you get into real worship the Presence of God comes and truth comes with Him and we can learn to be strong in the Lord

and in the power of **His** might and these words become a reality to us, not just words on a page.

Intimidation in warfare:

One of the primary weapons the enemy uses in warfare is the weapon of intimidation. You only need a casual read of **1 Samuel 17** to see that intimidation was a method used by the Philistines against Israel to great effect.

The method of warfare seems to be who can outdo the other in their breathing out of threats and curses, remember Paul when he was Saul was *“breathing out threats and curses”*. At this point in the story, Israel were trembling in their boots in the camp when David arrives, and his brothers are less than pleased to see him - in fact they are particularly noxious towards him, accusing him of having a hidden agenda and neglecting his father’s sheep never mind about the cheese sandwiches he has brought them.

As the story unfolds, we see David’s **declaration** about the living God. He persistently says *“who are these uncircumcised Philistines that they should speak this way about the Living God?”* He keenly feels the insult that is being thrown towards Israel about God’s inability to deliver them and he desires to have crack at the enemy.

Saul offers him his armour – man’s way of doing things – and David, after giving it a try, declines. He will do it God’s way, or he won’t do it at all. Meanwhile, Goliath is breathing out threats – intimidation.

When you come into warfare the enemy will breathe out threats – “what if,” “did God really say?” At this point you will remember he is a liar. He’ll be questioning the Living God, he doesn’t change his tactics.

Possibly one of the places you will find the most intimidation is within the body of Christ itself.

We are not used to warfare and people will try to dissuade you, if like David, you look like wanting to take the enemy on. Nevertheless, David marches out and does some intimidating himself – just look at the language. *“Oh yeah pal, I’ll tell you something too, before the day is out I will have your head off your shoulders, how do you like those apples?”* And as Goliath comes towards him, he **runs** towards this giant of a man!

David’s confidence is not misplaced, the Living God who delivered him from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear, delivers Goliath into his hands with one sling shot and it’s, *“David, David, show us the head”* time, as Graham Cooke would say, and he’s carrying this thing around in a Safeway bag showing anyone who asks!

One with God is a majority. David had *already been trained in warfare* having been left alone when the bear and the lion had threatened the flock and he *“caught it by the beard and killed it”*. In other words, he was *trained* in battle.

This boy was not wet behind the ears when it came to taking on the enemy. It is David who says in the psalms *“It is **God** Who trains my hands for battle and my fingers for war”*. **Psalm**

114:1.

And for us, it is the Holy Spirit who trains our hands for battle, and when the Living God sends us out, victory is assured.

The final point is that intimidation is part of warfare that is why when God gives us our **word** for the situation in which we find ourselves, we use it as a sword of authority against the enemy's threats and intimidation and we use it with confidence knowing that the Living God is with us, and the battle is His.

Faith or presumption: needless casualties of war:

To end I want to say a little about faith versus presumption.

Faith is when God tells you to do something impossible and you move out and do it, presumption is when **you** move out and do something without battle orders.

When we look at spiritual warfare, we must remember that the Captain of the Host is Jesus and there is a real difference between faith and presumption. Sometimes what we think is faith, is actually presumption and presumption can get you into a whole heap of trouble.

Let's look at an example from the scriptures -

Numbers 13 – 14:45. Moses has sent the spies out to look over the Promised Land. God has said it is theirs and they have just returned from going in to have a look. However, ten of them have brought back a bad report which has caused the whole congregation to murmur against Moses. Joshua and Caleb are the only two who say

"Let us go up at once and take possession because we are well able.."

Caleb speaking in **Numbers 13:30.** He knew God had given them the Promised Land, and he was prepared to go in and possess it. This is rank unbelief, disobedience, and rebellion on the part of Israel -

Numbers 14:9 Joshua speaking -

"Do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread."

He recognises that to not go in is **disobedience**, because God has given them this land to possess. But the people refuse to go up and rebel as a result God brings a plague on them.

The first ones to go are those who brought a negative report verse 37. The survivors realising that they have blown it with God, hasten to put the situation right and go up, **presumptuously**, against the people in the land – they are trying to repair the damage they have done by their own efforts – Moses says verse 42 *"Do not go up, lest you be defeated by your enemies, **for the Lord is not among you.**"*

Chilling words.

They were soundly defeated.

The lesson here is that disobedience in a battle situation invariably brings distress.

They were needless casualties of war.

So, I want to recommend a book to you by John Paul Jackson '*Needless casualties of war*' written nearly ten years ago now but as relevant now as it was then, perhaps even more so.

The premise of this book is that people are going out there, doing things *in presumption* and becoming casualties. If you are going out there attacking the enemy when God has not given you **permission**, what you have just done is opened a door for the enemy to attack in your own life and sometimes in the lives of others.

Many people are living in a backlash that should never have happened if they hadn't moved out in presumption. If you are moving in the authority and within the parameters God has given you, 'presumption', 'backlash' should not be in your vocabulary.

When we are in a warfare situation, we *always* follow the orders of our Commanding Officer. We **have been given** authority to tread on snakes and scorpions. But, if you are not living in the reality of Christ and you're moving out against the enemy, you are on really shaky ground.

Intercessors are particularly vulnerable here, the time for storming the ramparts has gone and the time for Bridal intercession has come, so if your intercessory group is still storming the ramparts, they need to think about retiring to the Throne Room for counsel and guidance from the Lord. We are in a season where God desires intimacy with us.

This book talks about the parameters of authority, about warfare in the second heaven, it gives practical guidelines for warfare, but it is also cautionary. Because as much as we hate the enemy, we need to *respect* him also, and there is a profound lack of respect generally in the body of Christ.

Satan is a powerful enemy. He is a liar; he is a deceiver but he's a very powerful liar and a very powerful deceiver. But he has power, and we need to respect that, whilst magnifying the Lord Jesus.

I have known people afflicted physically because they have been disrespectful towards the enemy. Once we discovered their sin and they repented, healing came. Just be aware, the battle you are engaged in is very, very real, and any help we can get we really do need! I highly recommend this book.

So, everything that God give us must take us onto the battlefield or it is useless. If what you gain from God doesn't teach you to fight, doesn't put a greater deposit within you, I question it. If it doesn't cause you to stand up on the inside want to move against the enemy, I question it.

As well as having a passion for Jesus, an intense love for Christ, we must have an equally intense hatred of the devil and all his works. It's the two together that takes us out onto the

battlefield. Just having a passion for Jesus will keep us in the Temple, it won't get us out into the war. We need to have a hatred of the devil - just really want to spoil his day by being the very best that we can be, by spreading the goodness of God around us.

We are caught up in a global war; we are still learning. Whatever God tells us in our own experience, has got to be backed up in scripture. And if you cannot earth it in the scripture – don't do it. I am serious – if you can't earth what you are proposing to do in scripture – don't do it. Because that is our boundary. Anything outside of that means that we are probably going to step into presumption in one way or another.

I want to close today with giving you the opportunity to do a 'practical' on the things I have just spoken about, and to recommend a book by Graham Cooke – 'God's Keeping Power' – in the introduction he says that *"unless we know God as the One with power to save and keep us in the critical moments of life, we will never contend against the enemy or set foot on the battlefield where danger is present."*

As you are beginning to see spiritual warfare is primarily about your relationship with God and secondarily with those around you – you cannot aspire to being a warrior unless your relationships are right.

I have adapted an exercise from the end of Graham's book – there are eight - they will keep you busy if you apply yourself to them and will certainly form Christ in you.

As always, I am indebted to Graham Cooke for his teaching on this subject.

Thanks for listening, part III of Spiritual Warfare in January. Amen.

NB you can obtain copies of Graham's book by contacting www.brilliantbookhouse.com where you can download it as an e.book or order a copy.

The exercise mentioned above is on the next page if you wish to complete it.

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Exercise:

Read the following scriptures:

- **John 15:9**
- **Romans 12:10**
- **Colossians 3:12 – 17**
- **1 Corinthians 13: 1-13**
- **1 Peter 4:8**
- **Matthew 5:21-24**

God is not performance driven. There is nothing we can do to make Him love us more, and there is nothing we can do to make Him love us less. He loves because of Who He is. His love towards us never changes – therefore how can we be less than loving towards each other? Abiding in His love for us enables us to be true to one another and love one another even in the difficult times.

Think of your relationships. Family, friends, work colleagues, acquaintances. Align your feelings towards these people with the following:

Love means being patient and expressing kindness. Do you?

Love does not hold offences, grudges or keep a record of wrong. Do you?

Love is unselfish and thoughtful. Are you?

Love bears all things and thinks the best of others at all times. Do you?

Forgiving and forgetting offences is the hallmark of the love of God at work in us. Is it in you?

Love is not easily provoked and does not seek vengeance. Do you?

Love shows in its actions towards others. Do you?

Love allows people to change and develop. Do you?

Love allows people to be different – and enjoys the variety. Do you?

Can you think of a situation recently when you did not fully express the love the Holy Spirit was wanting you to show? Do you need to make amends in some way? 'Phone them, write to them, speak to them, be reconciled.

Act on what He is showing you.

Be blessed.

