

Warfare Prayer – Part 2

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / Sunday, Sept. 18, 2022

See Ephesians 6:10-20

I. You're in a War You Didn't Start and Cannot Win on Your Own

If you want to do well on a horizontal level with people around you, you better understand there's an equally real vertical level of spiritual warfare that is raging in the midst of all our earthly relationships.

As you try to live out the Gospel day after day in your home and in the marketplace, the key players are never just the ones you can see with your naked eye.

II. Warfare Prayer Recognizes Where the Real Battle Begins

A. Your Flesh and God's Spirit are at War with Each Other

Galatians 5:16-17 "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do."

Romans 7:18 "For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out."

B. So, You Better Be Filled with the Spirit

Ephesians 6:18 "Praying at all times in the Spirit with all prayer and supplication..."

Ephesians 5:18 "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit."

When you're filled with the Spirit, you realize the biggest war is inside you and not just all around you! It's that internal war within you that leads to external wars around you with other people.

C. There's a War Inside You Long Before War Breaks Out Around You

James 4:1-3 "Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? ²You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures."

NIV: "you ask with wrong motives"

III. Warfare Prayer Recognizes Who's Really in Control

A. Warfare Prayer Sees God in the Midst of Persecution

See Acts 4:23-31

God never promised us that clever legal action, large sums of money, or well-organized protests were going to change this world. He called us to pray, to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to lift high the cross!

We have access to the very throne of God, and yet so often we just ignore it and pass right on by, killing ourselves to try and affect change the same way the world tries to get it done.

When you look at the early church, you'll see that their first response to almost every situation was to pray!

B. Warfare Prayer Worships God in the Midst of Pain and Suffering

If you're serious about following Jesus Christ, it means you're standing right near the "front lines" of spiritual warfare, and you're either feeling the hits right now or it's coming.

See Job 1:6-22

1. Satan is Accountable to God for What He's Doing in this World

Job 1:6-7 “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. ⁷ The LORD said to Satan, ‘From where have you come?’ Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.’”

Satan is wicked, but he's not a loose cannon. He does not have free reign over this universe or your life. He's limited, he's on a short leash, and he has a short time.

2. Satan Has to Get Permission from God to Afflict Any of His Children

Job 1:12 “And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand.’ So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.”

Job 2:6 “And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Behold, he is in your hand; only spare his life.’ So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.”

Job knew enough to recognize the hand of God ultimately behind the trouble that was raging all around him. Job cried out to God because God is ultimately in control, not Satan.

Job 13:15 “Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him...”

ESV “*Though He slay me, I will hope in Him...*”

Job 1:21 “...Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”

Don't make Satan the focus of your life and prayers, even in the midst of intense spiritual battles! Satan uses people and circumstances around you, but God controls what comes into our lives.

3. Warfare Prayer Includes Worshipping God in the Dark

Job 1:20 “Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped.”

“I was that person who prayed when in trouble or overwhelmed. It left me unsatisfied. Then I prayed all the time, but selfishly for my own desires. And that left me more unsatisfied. I realized I was trying to use Jesus as my drive-thru server, taking my orders, and that just didn't end well. But having cultivated a relationship with Jesus through prayer now, I have learned to use prayer as a form of worship, communication, relationship, and counsel. I wish I'd known this so much earlier in my Christian life but I'm so thankful for it now. I do still ask the Lord to heal me but more so now I'm asking Him to use me however He chooses...and so far, it hasn't been the way I want.”

~ GFC Member

Worship doesn't have to look happy, it just looks upward and it refuses to walk by sight! It refuses to let go of everything we know about who God is, what He's done, and what He's promised to do for us in Christ Jesus!

Fix your eyes on God, not the enemy. Satan is on the prowl, but God is on the throne.

Job 42:2, 5-6 “I know that You can do all things, and that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted... ⁵ I had heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You; ⁶ therefore, I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”