

Our Personal and Corporate Vulnerability to the Enemy

Introduction

- A. The reality of two kingdoms with the battleground in the life of believers.
- B. The importance of understanding the power and subtlety of the enemy.
- C. The importance of understanding the victory of the Lord Jesus over His enemies.
- D. The importance of personal and corporate involvement in spiritual warfare.
- E. The importance of personal responsibility regarding error/sin and warfare.

I. OUR VULNERABILITY TO THE KINGDOM OF SATAN.

- A. Because we are basically spirit -- our greatest needs are in the area of spirituality.
- B. Because we are fallen and sinful the temptation of the demonic is very powerful.
 - 1. The Fall deprived us of our divinely ordained source of fulfillment: The Lord God.
 - 2. We are now looking for love and acceptance in all the wrong places.
 - 3. As insecure and fearful people we often seek security and control in sinful ways.
 - 4. As self-centered people we are often demanding, manipulative, and self-protective.
 - 5. As religious people we often interpret and practice the Bible in peace providing ways.
 - 6. As largely untaught people we often live in ignorant disobedience -- grieving the Spirit.
- C. The evidence of our vulnerability to error/sin, and therefore to the enemy, is clearly seen in our anger, grudges, jealousy, pride, ethnic and religious elitism, workaholism, materialism, manipulation for control, self-protection, and unceasing search for fulfillment.
- D. Some Scriptural warnings regarding our vulnerability.

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. I John 2:1

He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy. Prov 28:13

Put off falsehood ... In your anger do not sin ... do not give the devil a foothold ... steal no longer ... do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths ... and do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God ... Eph 4:25-30

Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

II Tim 2:25,26

II. INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCES OF GIVING FOOTHOLDS TO THE DEVIL.

A. For the believer: slowness in spiritual growth, inability to experience God's love and love Him with all the heart, bondage to anger (all of C above), and a lack of the joy of the Lord, and of delight and power in worship, fellowship, prayer, Bible study, and evangelism.

B. For the Church the consequences are:

- 1. It weakens the Church through grieving the Holy Spirit.
(The Church is then left to serve under a limited anointing.)**
- 2. It brings the Church into disobedience and so under the discipline of God.
(The blessing of God is somewhat forfeited and experiences chastisement.)**
- 3. It produces confusion, spiritual blindness, and apathy in the Church.
(The Church becomes characterized by passivity, Legalism, and Phariseism.)**
- 4. It reduces Godly leadership to a mere maintenance role.
(The leadership lives/serves under hindrance and harassment.)**
- 5. It leads to an overemphasis on doctrine, tradition, ceremony more like a religion.
(The staff and membership fail to experience the joy and power of the Holy Spirit.)**

III. THE DIVINE PROVISION FOR DELIVERANCE AND FREEDOM.

A. Understanding the defeat of Satan by the Lord Jesus Christ as our Representative.

And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. Col 2:15

And his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. Eph 1:19-21

Comment: This victory over Satan has been given to every believer. We are seated in the heavenlies (Eph 2:5,6), we have the use of the name of the Lord Jesus (Luke 10:17-20), given armor (Eph 6:11-18), and a weapon of great power in the Word of God (Eph 6:17).

B. Understanding the Biblical instruction regarding living in freedom.

- 1. We must honestly confess and repudiate our past and present sins, Eph 4:27.**
- 2. We must honestly practice truth in faith and love, Eph 6:10-18.**
- 3. We must honestly and aggressively resist the work of Satan, I Peter 5:8,9.**
- 4. We must honestly wear the armor and live accordingly, Eph 6:11.**
- 5. We must honestly acknowledge our inner needs and receive healing, James 5:16.**

Conclusion: How do we know we are bondage to the enemy? The Bible teaches that Christianity works -- if one cannot live in measurable freedom, with love for God and one another, and with some joy and power -- then we are in bondage.

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