Spiritual Warfare

Chapter 3 – How to Fight



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HOW DO WE FIGHT?

Whenever I purchase a book that promises to teach me something, this is usually the chapter I turn to first. I want to know: How do I do this? Give me the instructions. Give me the practical steps. Give me a list, a framework, a formula, or a checklist I can follow. I want to know how to take the information and actually apply it to my life. Unfortunately, I am often disappointed for one of two reasons.

#1 — There is no "how-to" chapter.
The book contains valuable information about the subject. It explains why the topic is biblical, important, and necessary. The concepts may be true and helpful, but there is no practical explanation of how to actually walk them out. The reader is given knowledge but not necessarily a pathway for application.

#2 — There is a "how-to" chapter, but it is too vague to be useful.
The author may provide general principles, but after reading the chapter, I am still left wondering, *"What does this actually look like in my life? How do I put this into practice?"* The information sounds good, but it does not provide enough clarity to help someone take action.

So, with that in mind, I want to approach this chapter differently.

Now, as a disclaimer, when we are dealing with spiritual matters, we must remember that we cannot reduce the work of the Holy Spirit to a formula, a method, or a checklist. God is not a machine that responds to a specific sequence of actions, and spiritual warfare is not about performing certain steps perfectly in order to force a desired outcome.

The Holy Spirit leads, guides, empowers, and works uniquely in each situation. However, Scripture does reveal patterns. Throughout the Bible, we see principles and practices that are consistently connected with spiritual victory. We can identify these as essential components of effective spiritual warfare—not as a formula that controls God, but as biblical principles that bring us into alignment with Him.

The goal of this chapter is to move beyond simply understanding that spiritual warfare exists and begin examining what it looks like to actually engage in it.

Some of the principles discussed in this chapter may appear elsewhere throughout the book. That is intentional. Certain truths are foundational and deserve to be revisited because they are central to learning how to stand, resist, and overcome. Understanding the battle is important.

But knowing how to fight is essential.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOD'S WORD IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE

I cannot overemphasize the importance of the Bible in spiritual warfare.
A deep knowledge and understanding of the Word of God gives the believer a tremendous advantage in battle. Scripture reveals who God is, what He has accomplished through Jesus, what belongs to us through the New Covenant, and the authority we have because of the blood of Christ.

Without the truth of Scripture, we have no reliable standard by which to evaluate our experiences. We may accept things as normal that God never intended for us to endure, or we may fail to recognize when the enemy is attempting to gain access to areas of our lives where he has no rightful place.

The Word of God allows us to identify when something is contrary to His purposes. When God has declared that something should be a certain way, and our experience does not align with that truth, we should not simply accept the discrepancy. We should investigate, pray, and determine whether we need to engage in spiritual warfare.
Let me give some examples:

➢ If you are dealing with sickness in your body, this is contrary to what God says He has accomplished for us through Jesus.

By His stripes we were healed. 1 Peter 2:24

This does not mean that every believer will never face sickness or that every situation will unfold exactly as we desire. But it does mean that healing is part of what Christ purchased for us, and we should not simply surrender to sickness without seeking God and standing on His promises.

➢ If you are dealing with anxiety, depression, or other forms of mental torment, this is contrary to what belongs to us as followers of Jesus. We know that:

He has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. 1 Timothy 1:7

And we are instructed:

Rejoice always. 1 Thessalonians 5:16

Again, this does not minimize the reality of emotional struggles or the need for wisdom, support, and appropriate care. But as believers, we must recognize that torment, fear, and hopelessness are not the inheritance Christ purchased for us.

➢ **If your children are bound by addiction or destructive patterns, Scripture gives us promises concerning our households and our children.**

We find:
Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.
Acts 16:31

For I will contend with him who contends with you, and I will save your children.
Isaiah 49:25

These promises give us hope and a foundation upon which we can pray, stand, and contend.

The point is this: when we know what God's Word says about our lives, we become able to recognize when the enemy is attempting to establish influence, oppression, or destruction in areas where he has no authority. At that moment, we have a choice. We can ignore it and accept it as normal. Or we can pick up the weapons God has given us and engage in the battle.

But if we do not recognize the enemy, we will never resist him. And what is not resisted is often allowed to continue. Where there is no fight, there is no victory.

The enemy gains ground when he remains hidden, unrecognized, and unchallenged. But when the light of God's Word exposes his activity, we can stand with confidence, take our position, and fight from the victory that Christ has already secured.

 Practical steps:
Begin building a list of these things from Scripture. What should characterize the life of a believer? What things should not have authority over us?
Here is a small example to get started:

SHOULD	SHOULD NOT
Power	Fear
Love	Heaviness
Sound mind	

Keep this list close as you continue reading through the Bible, and allow it to grow as the Holy Spirit highlights additional truths from Scripture. As you discover new promises, principles, and descriptions of the life God intends for His people, add them to your list. It is especially helpful to record the Scripture reference beside each one so that you always have the foundation of God’s Word supporting it.

As you do this, I believe you will begin to recognize things you may have accepted as "normal" in your life that God never intended to be your reality. Many times, we become accustomed to certain struggles, patterns, fears, limitations, or bondages simply because we have experienced them for so long. But familiarity does not mean something is God's desire for us.

The moment we discover what God has said, we are faced with a choice. We can continue accepting things as they are, or we can begin contending for the reality of what God has promised. As your understanding of God's Word increases, your faith will be strengthened and your heart will be stirred with a desire to see every area of your life brought back into alignment with His purposes.

God's Word does not simply reveal what is wrong—it reveals what is possible.
And once we see what He has made available, we can begin to pursue it with faith, confidence, and determination.

SPEAKING AND PRAYING THE WORD OF GOD

One of the primary ways we engage in spiritual warfare is by speaking and praying the Word of God.

In the famous passage describing the armor of God in Ephesians 6, Paul identifies one offensive weapon given to the believer:

"the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" Ephesians 6:17

The Word of God is a weapon. It is a sword. But a sword is only effective when it is taken up and wielded by someone who knows how to use it. A sword sitting in its sheath does not defeat an enemy. It must be drawn, held firmly, and used with skill and confidence.

The same is true of Scripture. Simply owning a Bible or knowing that God's promises exist does not automatically result in victory. We must know the Word, believe the Word, speak the Word, and stand upon the Word when we face opposition.

This means we must identify passages of Scripture that reveal what God has provided, what He has promised, and what He desires for the lives of His people. Then we pray in agreement with those truths.

This point is critical: We pray in agreement with the Word of God—even when our current circumstances contradict it. We do not allow our circumstances to redefine God's promises. We do not come into agreement with fear, sickness, bondage, hopelessness, or defeat simply because those things are currently present in our lives. The Word of God carries the final authority. When something in our lives does not align

with what God has spoken, our response is not to lower our expectation of God's truth. Our response is to take hold of His Word, stand upon it, and contend for its reality in our lives.

Does this language sound too aggressive? Does it make you uncomfortable to say that we can "insist" upon the reality of God's Word?

Let me assure you: God is not offended by faith that takes Him at His Word. He is not frustrated when His children confidently believe His promises. What grieves Him is when we passively accept a life that contradicts what He has provided and fail to stand upon the truth He has given us.

Many believers have become so concerned about the excesses and errors associated with the "name it and claim it" message that they have moved to the opposite extreme—avoiding specific prayers, avoiding bold faith, and hesitating to believe God for anything beyond the most general requests. But biblical faith is not presumption. It is agreement with God.

God cares about the needs of His children, and throughout Scripture we see that He invites us to come to Him with confidence and faith. It is not wrong to believe God desires to answer prayer. It is not wrong to stand boldly upon His promises.
In fact, Jesus repeatedly encouraged His followers to believe Him, ask in faith, and trust the goodness of the Father.

When we speak and pray the Word of God, we are not simply repeating phrases and hoping that something happens. That is not faith—that is superstition. This is the kind of thing found in occult practices, where people believe certain words or formulas have power in themselves. That is not what we do. We do not speak our own words and attempt to create reality. We speak God's words because His words are reality.

The same God who brought creation into existence through His word is still actively working through His Word today. When we speak Scripture in faith, we are not releasing our own power—we are agreeing with the authority, character, and promises of the Almighty God.

The sword of the Spirit must be taken up.
The Word must be known.
The Word must be believed.
And the Word must be wielded.

Because a weapon that remains unused cannot win a battle.

 Practical steps:
To see some examples of how to pray the Word, see the Appendix at the end of this chapter

PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

Ephesians 6:18 instructs us to be: *"praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit."* There has been considerable discussion and debate regarding what exactly it means to pray in the Spirit. I believe in the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the biblical gift of speaking in tongues, and I believe this passage includes praying in tongues as one expression of praying in the Spirit. However, I do not believe praying in the Spirit is limited exclusively to praying in tongues.

Praying in the Spirit means praying in alignment with the heart, purposes, and will of God. It is allowing the Holy Spirit to influence, guide, and empower our prayers. The Holy Spirit can bring discernment, reveal things we would not naturally know, and place specific burdens or desires within us that lead us to pray according to God's purposes. This also is praying in the Spirit.

Paul explains this ministry of the Holy Spirit in Romans:

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Romans 8:26-27

The Holy Spirit is our great Helper in prayer. He knows what we do not know. He sees what we cannot see. He understands the purposes of God beyond our limited perspective and can lead us into prayers that go beyond our natural understanding. This is especially important in spiritual warfare because we are not simply fighting according to human knowledge or emotion. We need the Holy Spirit to reveal what is happening in the unseen realm and to guide us in how we should pray.

 Practical steps:
If you have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit and pray in tongues, then I encourage you to make praying in the Spirit a regular and significant part of your prayer life. Many people become excited about the possibility of praying in tongues until they actually begin. Then, because it does not always feel dramatic or emotionally intense, they lose interest and rarely practice it—or only pray in tongues for a brief period of time. But spiritual growth requires discipline.

I would challenge you to intentionally set aside time each day to pray in the Spirit. Begin with fifteen minutes a day and gradually increase that time as the Lord leads you. Work toward developing a consistent habit of praying in the Spirit for extended periods. This will require discipline, but as you continue, you will discover that your spiritual sensitivity increases. Your ability to discern the things of God will grow. Your awareness of the Holy Spirit's leading will become stronger.

SUBMISSION AND RESISTANCE

Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. James 4:7

This verse gives us two essential components of spiritual warfare:

- Submission to God
- Resistance toward the devil

Both are necessary. Spiritual warfare is not simply about confronting the enemy; it begins with being properly aligned under the authority of God. Our ability to stand against darkness flows from our willingness to first surrender ourselves to Him. Let's look at these two principles more closely.

Submission to God

The word *submission* means to obey, to be subject to, to be subordinate to, and to yield to. It is more than a statement of belief or an outward confession—it is the practical acknowledgment that God has the right to direct our lives.

Submission means choosing His ways when they conflict with our own. It means allowing Him to redirect our plans, correct our attitudes, and reshape our desires according to His purposes.

Often, this happens through the quiet leading of the Holy Spirit. He may prompt us to change direction, release something we are holding onto, forgive someone who has hurt us, or take a step of obedience that requires faith. A submitted heart learns to recognize His voice and respond without resistance.

This kind of surrender is foundational to spiritual authority. We cannot effectively stand against the kingdom of darkness while resisting the authority of God in our own lives. Our confidence in battle comes from knowing that we are standing under His authority, not operating independently from Him.

Resistance Toward the Devil

James tells us to resist the devil, and the meaning of this word is important. To resist means to stand against, to oppose firmly, to refuse to yield, and to remain steadfast under pressure. This is the posture we are to take when the enemy attempts to gain influence in our lives.

Scripture warns us:

Do not give place to the devil. Ephesians 4:27

This verse reveals an important truth: the enemy looks for opportunities to establish a foothold. He seeks access through deception, temptation, fear, unforgiveness, and other areas where we allow him influence.

Our responsibility is not to ignore his activity or assume that resistance is unnecessary. We are instructed to recognize his strategies and refuse to cooperate with them.

Resistance requires intentionality. It means taking the promises of God seriously, rejecting lies that contradict His Word, and standing firm when circumstances or emotions attempt to convince us otherwise.

 Practical steps:

<u>Submission to God</u>

➢ **Develop a listening ear that responds with quick obedience.**
Spend time with God. Learn to recognize His voice. Quiet the distractions and noise around you that can drown out the gentle leading of the Holy Spirit. (Psalm 46:10) When God speaks, respond. Delayed obedience is still disobedience. A heart submitted to God does not continually negotiate with His instructions—it responds with trust.

➢ **Yield your will and desires to His.**
In every decision, every plan, and every desire, we should bring our lives before God in prayer. Submission means allowing Him to shape what we want rather than simply asking Him to bless what we have already decided .The wonderful promise is that God does not merely demand that we surrender our desires; He transforms them.
For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Philippians 2:13 As we submit to Him, He works within us to create a desire for the very things that please Him.

➢ **Develop a consistent pattern of obeying God even when you do not fully understand His instructions.**
One of the greatest challenges of faith is obeying when we cannot see the entire picture. We must remember that God is not obligated to explain every detail of His plan before asking us to obey. He sees what we cannot see. He understands what we cannot understand. Our responsibility is not to have complete knowledge of the plan. Our responsibility is to respond to Him with obedience because we trust Him, even if we don't fully understand His plan.

Submission to God protects us. When we willingly place ourselves under His authority, we also place ourselves under His care and protection. The safest place we can be is within the will of God, surrendered to His leadership and walking in obedience to His Word. A submitted life is not a restricted life. It is a protected life. And from that place of submission, we can confidently resist the enemy and stand firm in victory.

RESISTING THE DEVIL

James tells us to resist the devil, but effective resistance requires more than simply knowing that we have an enemy. We must understand how he operates and learn how to respond when his strategies are directed toward us.One of the primary ways we resist the enemy is by learning to recognize his lies, reject his suggestions, and replace his lies with truth.

Recognize His Lies

How many battles have never been fought because the lies of the enemy were mistaken for the voice of God? When we know Scripture, we become familiar not only with what God has said, but also with who He is. We learn His character, His nature, His priorities, and His heart toward His children. Through the Word, we discover what God loves and what He opposes. We understand His promises, His purposes, and what Jesus purchased for us through His death and resurrection.

This knowledge becomes a safeguard. When a thought, accusation, or suggestion comes that contradicts the nature of God or the truth of Scripture, we can identify it for what it is. The enemy's voice will always be inconsistent with God's character.

Reject His Suggestions

Once we recognize the enemy's lies, we must refuse to accept them. A significant portion of spiritual warfare takes place in the mind. The enemy often attacks hrough thoughts, accusations, fears, and suggestions—the "fiery darts" described in Scripture. These thoughts may come suddenly, but they do not have to be entertained or given permission to remain.

We cannot afford to be passive toward thoughts that contradict God's truth. If we allow them to remain unchallenged, they can eventually influence our emotions, decisions, and actions. The moment a lie is identified, it must be rejected The longer we allow ourselves to meditate on lies, the greater the possibility that they will gain influence, acceptance and power in our **lives.**

Replace Them with the Truth

Rejecting a lie is necessary, but it is only part of the process. If we simply remove the false thought without replacing it with truth, we leave an empty space that can easily be filled with another lie. The enemy's lies must be displaced and replaced with the truth of God's Word.

Jesus demonstrated this when He was tempted by Satan in the wilderness. Each time the enemy presented a lie or distortion, Jesus responded with the truth of Scripture: "It is written." This is our pattern as well.

When fear says, "You are alone," we answer with the truth of God's presence. He will never leave us or forsake us. (Hebrews 13:5)

When condemnation says, "You are beyond forgiveness," we answer with the truth that if we confess our sins He is faithful to forgive them. (1John 1:9).

When hopelessness says, "Nothing will ever change," we answer with the promises of God that all things are possible with Him. (Matthew 19:26)

The truth does not merely silence the lie—it replaces it with something stronger. Remember this simple pattern as you resist the devil:

Recognize. Reject. Replace.

- Recognize the lie for what it is.
- Reject its influence over your thoughts and emotions.
- Replace it with the unchanging truth of God's Word.

FAITH

Faith is a word we use frequently, often without taking time to consider what it truly means. We describe ourselves as people of faith. We talk about the prayer of faith. We say that we walk by faith. Yet these phrases can become so familiar that we fail to examine the depth and importance of the faith we claim to possess.

This is especially important when discussing spiritual warfare because faith is not simply an encouraging concept or a religious expression. It is a necessary component of how we engage the battle. The fight we are called to is described in Scripture as:

"the good fight of faith" 1 Timothy 6:12

To understand the role of faith in warfare, we must first understand what biblical faith actually is. The Topical Lexicon defines faith as: "the God-wrought conviction that rests on His self-revelation and responds with personal trust and obedience. 'So faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ' (Romans 10:17). It entails both believing that God is who He says He is and committing oneself to Him in reliance on His promises (Hebrews 11:1)."

True faith begins with God's revelation of Himself. It is not merely optimism, confidence in our own abilities, or a determination to achieve a desired outcome. Biblical faith is a response to who God is and what He has said.

There are many things people place their faith in. Some trust in themselves, their knowledge, their religious accomplishments, their spiritual leaders, or their own ability to navigate life's challenges. But the faith that produces victory is faith directed toward God Himself. When we are confident in His character, we can trust the promises He has made.

Faith and the Word of God

In 1 Thessalonians 2:13, Paul commended the church because they received the message he preached not as the word of men, but as the Word of God. He then made a powerful statement about the effect of that Word:

The Word "effectively works in you who believe."

This is a truth worth carefully considering. The Word of God is powerful, but Paul identifies those in whom that power is actively demonstrated: those who believe. Many people read Scripture, study Scripture, teach Scripture, and listen to Scripture being preached, yet the transforming power of the Word is experienced by those who receive it with faith. Faith is what allows the truth of God's Word to move beyond information and become a living reality in our lives.

Faith in Spiritual Warfare

The role of faith in spiritual warfare cannot be overstated. Spiritual warfare is not simply a collection of prayers we repeat or a formula we follow in order to obtain a desired result. It is a lifestyle of standing against the influence of darkness because we have become convinced, through the revelation of God's Word, that certain things are contrary to His purposes.

Faith gives us the confidence to continue standing when circumstances appear to contradict what God has spoken. There will be seasons when we pray, believe, and contend, yet nothing around us seems to indicate that change is coming. During those moments, our confidence must remain anchored in God's word rather than in what we can see.

Without faith, prolonged battles can produce discouragement. The enemy often attempts to wear believers down—not necessarily through a sudden defeat, but through prolonged resistance that causes them to question God's promises and abandon their pursuit of what He has provided. In those times, we must be able to say ' BUT GOD HAS SAID!"

Faith allows us to remain engaged in the battle because our trust is placed in the faithfulness of God rather than the uncertainty of our circumstances.

 Practical steps:

This is probably the most difficult to provide practical steps for. How does one increase faith? The Bible tell us this:

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Romans 10:17

So clearly, the way to increase our faith is to increase our intake of the Word of God. However, this does not simply mean reading a greater quantity of Scripture. Faith does not grow merely by accumulating biblical knowledge or completing more chapters. The Word must move from our eyes to our hearts.

We must approach Scripture intentionally, thoughtfully, and with a willingness to allow the Holy Spirit to reveal its truth and establish it deeply within us. As we meditate on God's promises, understand His character, and see His faithfulness displayed throughout Scripture, our confidence in Him grows. Practice the steps below.

- Read the Word
- Meditate on the Word
- Pray the Word over yourself
- Speak the Word
- Refuse to believe or think on anything contrary to it

Set aside an entire day that you will purpose in your heart that you are going to monitor your thoughts, making note of the areas that you are prone to thoughts that are carnal, worldly and not in line with God's word. Practice taking those thoughts captive, refusing to meditate upon them, and finding a truth in God's word that will bring you in alignment with heavenly realities.

PERSISTENCE

In a microwave, drive-through society, persistence has become a rare virtue. We have become accustomed to immediate results, quick solutions, and instant gratification. Yet almost everything of lasting value requires perseverance.

Consider the gold medal gymnast who spends years training for a few moments of competition. There are countless days when she must choose discipline over comfort, practice over entertainment, and long-term goals over temporary enjoyment. She continues because she has fixed her eyes on something more valuable than the momentary sacrifice required to reach it.

This is the foundation of persistence: knowing what you are pursuing and keeping your focus on the reward ahead. Hebrews 12:2 reveals the source of Jesus' endurance in the face of rejection, suffering, and the agony of the cross:

"who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Jesus was able to endure because He looked beyond the suffering of the present moment and saw the purpose and victory that would come through it. Spiritual warfare is also a lifelong journey. Some battles are won quickly. Others require continued prayer, faith, and perseverance over an extended period of time. Some breakthroughs happen suddenly, while others unfold through a process of standing, trusting, and refusing to give up.

One of the greatest challenges of delayed breakthrough is maintaining our passion while we wait. The intensity we begin with can gradually fade if we allow disappointment, fatigue, or discouragement to take over. Prayers that began with confidence and expectation can slowly become expressions of frustration rather than declarations of faith.

Persistence requires intentional effort. There will be moments when we must stir ourselves, remind ourselves of God's promises, and choose to continue even when the outcome is not yet visible. Jesus gave us this perspective:

And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. Matthew 11:12

The kingdom of God is not advanced by passive faith. There are moments when we must contend, persevere, and refuse to surrender what God has promised.

 Practical steps:
When you identify an area of your life where you are engaging in spiritual warfare, take time to clearly define your vision. Write down the answers to these questions:

➢ **What is the problem you are fighting?**
Be specific. Clearly identify the area where you are seeking God's intervention.

➢ **What Scriptures are you standing on?**
Find the promises and truths from God's Word that apply to your situation. These Scriptures become your foundation as you pray and contend.

➢ **What results do you expect to see?**
Write down what you are believing God to do. Allow your faith to become specific rather than remaining vague.

➢ **How will your life change when breakthrough comes?**
Spend significant time on this question. Describe in detail the impact this victory will have on your life, your family, your relationships, and your ministry. Allow yourself to imagine the freedom, purpose, and fruit that will come from seeing God's promises fulfilled in your life.

Return to this vision often, especially during seasons when the battle feels long and the breakthrough seems distant. Let the joy of what lies ahead strengthen you in the present. This is the same principle we see in Hebrews 12:2—the joy set before us gives us the strength to endure what is in front of us.

I am convinced that many people give up during the final stages of a battle. They stop praying, stop believing, and stop contending when their breakthrough may have been closer than they realized.

Persistence keeps us engaged until the victory comes.

ENGAGE YOUR HEART

Cultivate a heart that fights
Many times, the reason people lack strength in spiritual warfare and passion in their prayers is because the things they are praying about have not truly captured their hearts. Prayers are often offered out of obligation—because prayer is simply something believers are expected to do. Yet if we are honest, we may have to admit that many of our prayers are not accompanied by a deep longing for God to move. To be blunt, it wouldn't matter much to us if many of the things we prya for don't get answered.

There is a difference between casually asking God to intervene and becoming deeply burdened by the things that burden His heart.

If we are going to engage in spiritual warfare with endurance and passion, we must allow ourselves to recognize the seriousness of what the enemy is doing. We should be moved by the suffering, bondage, and destruction that affect the lives of people around us. When we become genuinely grieved by what is happening, our prayers will no longer be routine requests—they will become passionate appeals for God's kingdom to advance.

We sometimes see this kind of response throughout Scripture.

An Outraged Response to Injustice
Genesis chapter 34 tells the story of what is often referred to as the "Dinah incident." Dinah was the daughter of Jacob, and after Jacob's family settled in the region of Canaan, she went out to become acquainted with the women of the land. During this time, she was noticed by Shechem, the son of a local ruler, who violated her.

When Jacob's sons learned what had happened to their sister, their response was one of outrage. Shechem and his father, Hamor, attempted to resolve the situation by proposing an agreement between the two groups. Jacob's sons agreed to a treaty on the condition that the men of the city be circumcised. They accepted the terms, and while the men were recovering from the procedure, two of Jacob's sons attacked the city, killing the men and taking the women, children, and possessions as plunder. They also rescued Dinah from Shechem's house. When Jacob confronted his sons about their actions, their response revealed the emotion that motivated them:

"Should he treat our sister like a harlot?"

Their words reveal a sense of outrage. Something had happened that was deeply wrong, and they refused to simply ignore it. Their response was driven by the belief that some things are too serious to leave uncontested.

A Leader Whose Heart Was Moved

We see a similar response in 1 Samuel 11. Saul had recently been anointed as king over Israel when Nahash the Ammonite and his army prepared to attack Jabesh Gilead. Knowing they were outmatched, the people of Jabesh attempted to make a peace agreement with Nahash, even offering themselves as servants. Nahash agreed, but only on the condition that he could put out the right eye of every man in the city. His stated purpose was to bring disgrace upon all Israel. Nahash's goal was not merely military victory. He intended to humiliate, oppress, and shame the people of God. The men of Jabesh sent an urgent message to Saul, and Scripture records Saul's response:

"The Spirit of the Lord came upon Saul when he heard the news, and his anger was greatly aroused." 1 Samuel 11:6

Saul was moved by what was happening to his people. His anger was not selfish or prideful; it was a righteous response to the enemy's attempt to destroy and dishonor others. That holy indignation stirred him to act. He stepped into his authority as king, gathered an army, and delivered the people of Jabesh Gilead.

People are rarely inspired to follow someone who has no passion for the mission. Saul's zeal awakened courage in others and united them around a common purpose.

The Danger of Losing Spiritual Urgency

Now consider the opposite example. When the city of Sodom was about to be destroyed, God mercifully sent angels to rescue Lot and his family before judgment came upon the city. Lot went to warn his sons-in-law, who were married to his daughters, about the coming destruction.

"So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, 'Get up, get out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city!' But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking." Genesis 19:14

Why did they not take him seriously? What was it about Lot's life that caused his warning to sound unbelievable? Was there a lack of urgency? Had his years of compromise and familiarity with the culture around him diminished his credibility? Whatever the reason, the result was tragic. His family members did not respond to his warning, and several were swept away in the judgment that came upon the city.
A life without spiritual urgency affects more than just the individual living it
.

Keeping the Fire Burning

Every believer faces things that can slowly extinguish spiritual passion. Often, it is not obvious sin that creates the greatest danger. More commonly, it is the ordinary responsibilities and distractions of life. Work demands, family responsibilities, financial pressures, household concerns, and the endless maintenance required by everyday living can gradually consume our attention. These things are not wrong in themselves, but if we are not intentional, they can slowly crowd out our hunger for God and our awareness of spiritual realities.

A fire that is not maintained will eventually go out.

Our spiritual lives require continual attention and fuel. We cultivate spiritual passion through worship, prayer, Scripture, fellowship with God's people, and other opportunities to encounter His presence.

One of the clearest indicators of spiritual decline is not simply a lack of activity, but a lack of concern over a heart that is growing cold. A person can become comfortable with spiritual apathy and no longer recognize that anything is missing. A lukewarm life requires little sacrifice, but it also produces little kingdom impact.

When our hearts are not engaged with the things that matter to God, our influence diminishes. Those around us may never see the reality of Christ's transforming power because our lives fail to reflect the urgency and beauty of the kingdom we claim to represent.

If we want to fight well, we must first allow God to awaken our hearts. Spiritual warfare requires more than knowledge—it requires a willingness to contend for the things that matter to Him. It requires fire.

 Practical steps:

Before engaging in spiritual warfare on behalf of a person or situation, take time to prayerfully reflect on what you are confronting. Allow yourself to see beyond the

surface and recognize the pain, bondage, and destruction that the enemy is bringing into people's lives.

A heart that is moved with compassion will produce prayers that are filled with greater passion and perseverance. When we begin to feel what God feels about the things that oppose His purposes, our prayers become more than requests—they become an expression of His heart and a sincere desire to see His kingdom come.

Appendix 1

Prayer Based on 2 Timothy 1:7

Father,

You word tells me that fear does not come from You. When anxiety rises and doubt tries to settle in my heart, I remember that You have given me something greater.

You have given me power—strength through Your Spirit to stand firm, to obey, and to walk boldly in my calling. You have given me love—a steady, selfless love that casts out fear and reflects Your heart. You have given me a sound mind—clarity, discipline, and self-control in the midst of pressure.

Lord, I reject the spirit of fear and all its attempts to dominate my life. I receive Your power to walk in boldness. I choose to walk in love. I declare clarity over my thoughts and peace over my mind.

Where fear has tried to silence me, I receive courage from the Lion of the tribe of Judah.
Where confusion has tried to cloud me, I receive soundness of mind…the very mind of Christ.
Where timidity has tried to compel me to shrink back, I receive the power of the Holy Spirit to live as an overcomer in this life.

Let my life reflect the confidence that comes from knowing that You are mine, that I am Yours, and that You are with me.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.

Prayer Based on 1 Peter 2:24

Father,

Thank You that Jesus bore my sins in His body on the cross. He carried what I could not carry. He took the weight of my wrongdoing, my shame, my failures, and He nailed them to the tree.

I recognize that His work on the cross provided forgiveness of my sins and healing of my body. The stripes He received on His back were for the wholeness of my mind and body. Regardless of the symptoms I may experience in my body or any doctor's report I have received, your Word is a higher reality and I cling to that as my portion.

I reject every suggestion of sickness and disease. I reject every diagnosis that has been spoken over my body or my mind. I resist every demonic force that has attacked my health and firmly stand in faith on the Word of God. You are the Lord who heals me (Ex 15:26)

I receive the healing power of God in every area of my life as part of my covenant blessing through the blood of Jesus. Thank you Father for restoring every part of my mind and body that has been damaged or afflicted by sickness, disease or infirmity of any type.

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I am so grateful for the salvation that was purchased for me by Jesus. Today I choose to put on the helmet of salvation. Guard my mind with the assurance that I belong to You. Protect my thoughts from doubt, fear, condemnation, and deception. Let the truth of my salvation steady me and give me confidence in every battle.

Let the sword of the Spirit, Your living and powerful Word, be always firmly in my hand. Teach me to know it, to love it, and to use it skillfully. When lies come, let me answer with truth. When temptation rises, let me stand on the truth of the Scripture. When discouragement attempts to lure me away from you, let Your Word speak louder.

Sharpen my understanding and strengthen my faith. Help me not only to hear Your Word, but to wield it with wisdom and humility.

Clothe me in Your protection and equip me with Your truth, so that I may stand firm and walk victoriously in the strength You provide.

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Prayer Based on Isaiah 61:3

Father,

You are the One who exchanges ashes for beauty. You take seasons of loss, disappointment, or brokenness in my life, and bring complete restoration.

Where mourning has threatened to overtake my heart, pour in the oil of joy. Not a temporary emotional relief, but deep, abiding joy that comes from Your presence. Lift the heaviness that weighs on my spirit and clothe me with a garment of praise.

Teach me to praise You even in the rebuilding. Teach me to worship You in the waiting. Replace despair with hope and discouragement with confidence in Your promises.

Make me a tree of righteousness—strong, rooted, and firmly planted by You. Let my life bear fruit that glorifies Your name. Even in seasons of testing, let my roots go deeper in faith.

You are the God of divine exchange. I give You my ashes. I receive Your beauty. I lay down heaviness and put on praise.

Be glorified in my life, Lord.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.

When you identify an area of your life where you are engaging in spiritual warfare, take time to clearly define your vision. Write down the answers to these questions:

➢ **What is the problem you are fighting?**
Be specific. Clearly identify the area where you are seeking God's intervention.

➢ **What Scriptures are you standing on?**
Find the promises and truths from God's Word that apply to your situation. These Scriptures become your foundation as you pray and contend.

➢ **What results do you expect to see?**
Write down what you are believing God to do. Allow your faith to become specific rather than remaining vague.

➢ **How will your life change when breakthrough comes?**
Spend significant time on this question. Describe in detail the impact this victory will have on your life, your family, your relationships, and your ministry. Allow yourself to

imagine the freedom, purpose, and fruit that will come from seeing God's promises fulfilled in your life.

Return to this vision often, especially during seasons when the battle feels long and the breakthrough seems distant. Let the joy of what lies ahead strengthen you in the present. This is the same principle we see in Hebrews 12:2—the joy set before us gives us the strength to endure what is in front of us.

I am convinced that many people give up during the final stages of a battle. They stop praying, stop believing, and stop contending when their breakthrough may have been closer than they realized.

Persistence keeps us engaged until the victory comes.

ENGAGE YOUR HEART

Cultivate a heart that fights

Many times, the reason people lack strength in spiritual warfare and passion in their prayers is because the things they are praying about have not truly captured their hearts. Prayers are often offered out of obligation—because prayer is simply something believers are expected to do. Yet if we are honest, we may have to admit that many of our prayers are not accompanied by a deep longing for God to move. To be blunt, it wouldn't matter much to us if many of the things we prya for don't get answered.

There is a difference between casually asking God to intervene and becoming deeply burdened by the things that burden His heart.

If we are going to engage in spiritual warfare with endurance and passion, we must allow ourselves to recognize the seriousness of what the enemy is doing. We should be moved by the suffering, bondage, and destruction that affect the lives of people around us. When we become genuinely grieved by what is happening, our prayers will no longer be routine requests—they will become passionate appeals for God's kingdom to advance.

We sometimes see this kind of response throughout Scripture.

An Outraged Response to Injustice

Genesis chapter 34 tells the story of what is often referred to as the "Dinah incident." Dinah was the daughter of Jacob, and after Jacob's family settled in the region of Canaan, she went out to become acquainted with the women of the land. During this time, she was noticed by Shechem, the son of a local ruler, who violated her.

When Jacob's sons learned what had happened to their sister, their response was one of outrage. Shechem and his father, Hamor, attempted to resolve the situation by

proposing an agreement between the two groups. Jacob's sons agreed to a treaty on the condition that the men of the city be circumcised. They accepted the terms, and while the men were recovering from the procedure, two of Jacob's sons attacked the city, killing the men and taking the women, children, and possessions as plunder. They also rescued Dinah from Shechem's house. When Jacob confronted his sons about their actions, their response revealed the emotion that motivated them:

"Should he treat our sister like a harlot?"

Their words reveal a sense of outrage. Something had happened that was deeply wrong, and they refused to simply ignore it. Their response was driven by the belief that some things are too serious to leave uncontested.

A Leader Whose Heart Was Moved

We see a similar response in 1 Samuel 11. Saul had recently been anointed as king over Israel when Nahash the Ammonite and his army prepared to attack Jabesh Gilead. Knowing they were outmatched, the people of Jabesh attempted to make a peace agreement with Nahash, even offering themselves as servants. Nahash agreed, but only on the condition that he could put out the right eye of every man in the city. His stated purpose was to bring disgrace upon all Israel. Nahash's goal was not merely military victory. He intended to humiliate, oppress, and shame the people of God. The men of Jabesh sent an urgent message to Saul, and Scripture records Saul's response:

"The Spirit of the Lord came upon Saul when he heard the news, and his anger was greatly aroused." 1 Samuel 11:6

Saul was moved by what was happening to his people. His anger was not selfish or prideful; it was a righteous response to the enemy's attempt to destroy and dishonor others. That holy indignation stirred him to act. He stepped into his authority as king, gathered an army, and delivered the people of Jabesh Gilead.

People are rarely inspired to follow someone who has no passion for the mission. Saul's zeal awakened courage in others and united them around a common purpose.

The Danger of Losing Spiritual Urgency

Now consider the opposite example. When the city of Sodom was about to be destroyed, God mercifully sent angels to rescue Lot and his family before judgment came upon the city. Lot went to warn his sons-in-law, who were married to his daughters, about the coming destruction.

"So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, 'Get up, get out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city!' But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking." Genesis 19:14

Why did they not take him seriously? What was it about Lot's life that caused his warning to sound unbelievable? Was there a lack of urgency? Had his years of compromise and familiarity with the culture around him diminished his credibility? Whatever the reason, the result was tragic. His family members did not respond to his warning, and several were swept away in the judgment that came upon the city.
A life without spiritual urgency affects more than just the individual living it
.

Keeping the Fire Burning

Every believer faces things that can slowly extinguish spiritual passion. Often, it is not obvious sin that creates the greatest danger. More commonly, it is the ordinary responsibilities and distractions of life. Work demands, family responsibilities, financial pressures, household concerns, and the endless maintenance required by everyday living can gradually consume our attention. These things are not wrong in themselves, but if we are not intentional, they can slowly crowd out our hunger for God and our awareness of spiritual realities.

A fire that is not maintained will eventually go out.

Our spiritual lives require continual attention and fuel. We cultivate spiritual passion through worship, prayer, Scripture, fellowship with God's people, and other opportunities to encounter His presence.

One of the clearest indicators of spiritual decline is not simply a lack of activity, but a lack of concern over a heart that is growing cold. A person can become comfortable with spiritual apathy and no longer recognize that anything is missing. A lukewarm life requires little sacrifice, but it also produces little kingdom impact.

When our hearts are not engaged with the things that matter to God, our influence diminishes. Those around us may never see the reality of Christ's transforming power because our lives fail to reflect the urgency and beauty of the kingdom we claim to represent.

If we want to fight well, we must first allow God to awaken our hearts. Spiritual warfare requires more than knowledge—it requires a willingness to contend for the things that matter to Him. It requires fire.

 Practical steps:

Before engaging in spiritual warfare on behalf of a person or situation, take time to prayerfully reflect on what you are confronting. Allow yourself to see beyond the surface and recognize the pain, bondage, and destruction that the enemy is bringing into people's lives.

A heart that is moved with compassion will produce prayers that are filled with greater passion and perseverance. When we begin to feel what God feels about the things that oppose His purposes, our prayers become more than requests—they become an expression of His heart and a sincere desire to see His kingdom come.

Appendix

Prayer Based on 2 Timothy 1:7

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