

Section 11: Spiritual Warfare Prayer

Lesson 51

IN THE BEGINNING, WHEN GOD SPOKE ALL LIVING THINGS INTO EXISTENCE ON PLANET EARTH, HE CREATED ADAM AND EVE INTENDING THAT THEY WOULD RULE ALL THINGS.

All living things were given for man's use and his stewardship. Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." —GENESIS 1:26–28

Then God told the first family to be fruitful and multiply, to increase in number and to fill the earth. The implication was that their children were to have dominion over the earth as well. The psalmist wrote, "The highest heavens belong to the Lord, but the earth he has given to man" (Ps. 115:16).

The Lord placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to care for it. He gave them only one restriction—they were warned not to eat of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" or they would die.

Three of the saddest words in Scripture appear in Genesis 3:1, "Now the serpent . . ." In this beautiful, pristine garden where God walked and talked with man, Satan appeared... as a serpent . . . and he immediately began to question the integrity and veracity of God. He essentially accused God of lying to Eve. He told her, "God is lying to you. You won't die if you eat of the forbidden tree. You'll actually become like God! That's why He doesn't want you to eat of the tree."

Man was given rule of the plants and animals, not each other. Ruling man was God's role. Man was simply to obey God. Man ruling man was a result of the Fall. (Read Genesis 3:16.) Since the fall of Adam, Satan has used human rulers to control and bring misery to men.

RELINQUISHING THE RULERSHIP

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, followed the serpent and ate of the tree, sin was born on Planet Earth. At that moment they relinquished the rulership of earth to Satan. That is why Paul refers to Satan as "the god of this age [world]" (2 Cor. 4:3–4). John writes that "the whole world is under the control of the evil one" (1 John 5:19).

Thousands of years later, Christ would be born of Mary. God clothed Himself in human flesh and stepped onto the stage of earth to live and to confront Satan as a man. In Luke 4 we find Jesus in the Judean wilderness—being tempted by the devil. Satan showed Jesus the kingdoms of the world (man's rulership of men as directed by Satan). He told Jesus, "I will give

you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want." Interestingly Jesus didn't deny Satan's claim of rulership; He simply rejected Satan's offer. In essence, Satan was offering Jesus a short-cut.

He was suggesting that Calvary wouldn't be necessary if Jesus would only bow down and worship him. Jesus knew that if worshipping Satan was required to receive the kingdoms of men, then worshipping Satan would be required to keep them!

Question: What does this statement mean: "Jesus knew that if worshipping Satan was required to receive the kingdoms of men, then worshipping Satan would be required to keep them"?

THE TIMELINE OF SATAN'S RULERSHIP

Here is the time line of Satan's rule on earth:

- The whole world belongs to God. (Read Psalm 24:1–2.)
- Rulership of the world was given to Adam and Eve. (Read Genesis 1:26–28.)
- Adam and Eve relinquished rulership to Satan temporarily. (Read Genesis 3:6.)
- Christ rejected Satan's offer of rulership. (Read Luke 4:8.)
- Christ defeated Satan at the cross. (Read John 19:30.)
- Christ disarmed Satan and regained the authority of rulership. (Read Colossians 2:15.)

When Adam and Eve (mankind) fell, they relinquished rulership of the earth to Satan, a fallen angelic being.

Spiritual warfare is the reversal of that procedure. It is the unseen power encounter between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness. Through prayer, fasting and exercising the authority of Christ and His cross, believers indwelt and empowered by the Holy Spirit are forcing angelic beings to relinquish rulership of the earth!

Question: Can you give an example of a time when you or someone you know used spiritual authority to force demonic spirits to relinquish rulership in some specific area?

SATAN'S GOAL

Satan's goal in all of this has been simple. He dreams of being God. (Read Isaiah 14:14.) When I (Eddie) was pastoring in northwest Houston several years ago, Mary, a young Satanist, walked into my office for counseling. Accompanying her was a swirling, palpable mass of demonic spirits, like a million angry hornets. The temperature in the room seemed to drop ten degrees. In fact, poor Mary sat down shivering as though she were in a deep freeze.

"Do you realize what just came into my office with you?" I asked her.

She sorrowfully dropped her head and nodded.

"Do you mind if I get rid of them?" I asked.

I will never forget the look on her face as she questioned, "You can do that?"

I nodded and said in a normal tone of voice, "OK. That's enough. All of you... get out . . . now." Suddenly, it was as if the tide rolled out. The swirling mass of evil energy (demons) left the room. It was peaceful. In fact, Mary was no longer shivering. She was utterly surprised at the demonstration of Christ's authority.

In the peaceful quiet of the moment I said, "Mary, that was good... wasn't it?" She nodded her agreement. I said, "Would you like to see something better than that?" Again, she nodded.

I said, "Holy Spirit, I invite you to come and rest upon Mary right now." As quickly as the demons had left, so quickly God came and settled on her. She was wrapped up in the warm embrace of God. She was again amazed.

I said, "Mary, that's God's Spirit resting on you. And I have good news—you can have His Spirit in you. But before we talk about that, has anyone ever told you what your god calls my God?"

Curious, she shook her head no. "Read this for me then."

I turned to Isaiah 14:14, and she read, "I will make myself like the Most High." "Mary," I continued, "why would you worship a wannabe god when you can worship the true and living God?"

Yes, Satan has marshaled his forces to help him ascend, to help him be served and worshiped and to prevent God from being worshiped and served. He is out "to steal and kill and destroy" (John 10:10)—and he is no novice. He's had thousands of years of on-the-job training. Jesus told Simon Peter, who was already a fisher of fish, that he would become a fisher of men. Well, Satan is also a fisher of men. He uses his skills to lure men away from God.

Perhaps you heard about the fisherman who kept coming in off the lake with boatloads of fish. The locals were so concerned they reported him to the game warden. The next day the game warden came out to investigate and asked if he could fish with him. "Sure," the man said, "hop in my boat."

When they arrived at the choice fishing spot, the man pulled out a box of dynamite. Taking a stick in his hand, he lit the fuse and was about to throw it into the lake when the game warden stopped him. "Why, you can't use dynamite to catch fish!" he yelled.

With a smile, the fisherman threw the game warden the lighted stick of dynamite and asked, "Are you gonna just sit there and talk, or are you gonna fish?"

Satan lures men from God like a fisherman lures fish. He had lured young Mary into worshiping him. However, if fishing with lures fails . . . he dynamites! Never forget—to Satan, all's fair in love and war!

Question: Describe a time when Satan "dynamited" your life with an all-out demonic attack. What did you learn from the experience?

SATAN'S TACTICS

Satan's primary tactic is the oldest rule of war: divide and conquer. He wants to keep us from God and to keep us from each other. His primary methods are accusation and deception.

He accuses us to God. (Read Job 1.) He accuses us to each other. (Read Revelation 12:10.) He deceives us by keeping us ignorant of the truth. When we do learn the truth (mentally), he keeps us blind to the truth (spiritually).

SATAN'S VICTORIES

Satan's ground-level victories are seen in the lives of people who submit to his temptations to sin, who become habitual in their sin, and in those who tragically become indwelt by demonic spirits (demonized). (Read Matthew 8:16–17; Mark 1:38–39.)

Satan's territorial victories are seen in nations and territories where the majority of the people are being held in spiritual darkness, unable to spiritually hear and respond to the message of the gospel of Christ. (Read Acts 16:16–26; Acts 19:23–36; Ephesians 6:12.)

Question: What are some of the spiritual territorial victories that are being won by Satan around the world? How can you respond as a Christian to these tactics?

See you next week! Hey! You are about to graduate. Congratulations!

Eddie and Alice

"America's prayer coaches"

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