

Spiritual Warfare & the End Times

Not My Problem?

World Outreach Church
Sermon Discussion Guide
Sunday Sermon: **August 12, 2023**



The Bible reveals some characteristics of the end of the age so we might be better prepared for their increasing prevalence. In this discussion, we're going to talk about spiritual warfare and its implications for our lives. So, I want to put some questions before you. Do you have an imagination that you have a responsibility, an assignment, a role to play? Or is it something to be endured? Do you just hope that you understand how to receive God's blessings—that if you don't really pay attention to what is happening, perhaps it will just be okay? In this session, we're going to get a bit of "Basic Training" with some essential and fundamental components that will help us biblically understand what's happening in our world and what our responses can be ...

I. BASIC TRAINING

A. Avoidance, Appeasement or Apathy Is Not an Effective Strategy

Matthew 27:24 *When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. "I am innocent of this man's blood," he said. "It is your responsibility!"*

Matthew 20:25–28 ²⁵ *Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ²⁶ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

1. In what ways have you seen avoidance, appeasement, and apathy lead to spiritual conflict?

B. Unexpected Gifts from God

Romans 1:28–32 ²⁸ *Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. ²⁹ They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice.*

They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; ³¹ they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. ³² Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

2 Corinthians 12:20–21 ²⁰ *For I am afraid that when I come I may not find you as I want you to be, and you may not find me as you want me to be. I fear that there may be quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder. ²¹ I am afraid that when I come again my God will humble me before you, and I will be grieved over many who have sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual sin and debauchery in which they have indulged.*

2 Timothy 3:1–8 ¹ *But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. ² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, ⁴ treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.*

⁶ *They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, ⁷ always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth. ⁸ Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men oppose the truth—men of depraved minds, who, as far as the faith is concerned, are rejected.*

2. As a believer, what are some practical ways that you can help prevent yourself from falling into a depraved mindset?

C. Good News!

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

Revelation 1:5–6 ⁵ *from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶ and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.*

D. In This World...Spiritual Warfare

John 16:33 *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*

2 Corinthians 10:3–5 ³ *For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

Matthew 16:18 *...I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.*

1 Timothy 1:18–19 (HCSB®) ¹⁸ *Timothy, my son, I am giving you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies previously made about you, so that by them you may strongly engage in battle (fight the good fight), ¹⁹ having faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and have suffered the shipwreck of their faith.*

2 Timothy 2:3–4 ³ *Endure hardship (suffering) with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs—he wants to please his commanding officer.*

2 Timothy 3:10–12 ¹⁰ *You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, ¹¹ persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. ¹² In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.*

3. How would you define spiritual warfare? Where have you seen it in our culture today?

Increase Your Effectiveness

1 Peter 2:20–24 ²⁰ *But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. ²¹ To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.*

²² *"He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."* ²³ *When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.*

4. What is the biblical solution to the evil at work in our world today? In what ways can you better prepare to stand against the enemy?

5. Pastor Allen said, "let the fruit of your life be the declaration that in Christ we have the victory." Share some of the fruits of your life and examples of triumph.

6. Spiritual attacks in our lives have many times been blamed for poor planning, lack of effort, or being unprepared. Describe a time in your life when you found this to be true.

PRAYER

Father, thank You for Your great love and mercy expressed towards us in Jesus. Lord Jesus, we thank You for Your faithfulness—that, in Your love for us, You offered Yourself as a sacrifice so we might be delivered from the kingdom of darkness. We praise You for it today and give You glory and honor. Lord, we come in humility to acknowledge our own sins, those places where we have made choices that were dishonoring and disobedient. Forgive us. We weren't confused or distracted. It wasn't a lack of understanding. We were willfully rebellious, and we repent. Lord, for those we need to forgive—who, through words or actions, brought pain or hardship or difficulty—Lord, we release them today. We cancel every debt. We turn them loose so that, just as You have forgiven us, we forgive them.

We pray for those in our midst who have great needs today—physically, emotionally, relationally—whatever the challenges may be, thank You that Your power is present to heal, restore, deliver, and renew. In whatever way You deliver, thank You that we will live in those experiences of Your faithfulness and provision. Thank You that greater is He who is for us than all those things that are arrayed against us. And we praise for awakening Your Church to be a triumphal procession of our victorious King, for Your glory to be made evident throughout all the earth, for the name of Jesus to be extended and exalted, and for Your Kingdom of God to be expanded. In Jesus' name, amen.