

Prayer Focus This Week

Spiritual Warfare - The Armor

The first piece of armor we are told to put on is **truth**, which is probably **the** most important weapon we need to battle the enemy. Satan is a "...liar and the father of lies," twisting and distorting the truth, just like he did with Jesus after His forty days of fasting in the desert. Every time the devil tempted Him, Jesus engaged in spiritual warfare, defeating Satan, not by power nor by might, but by simply countering the lies of the devil with the truth of God's word. In Mark 4:13, it says the devil left Him until "an opportune time," which should be a warning to us that we need to keep our guard up at all times. We will ultimately win the war, but until Jesus comes back, our battles will never end!

Before we talk about putting on **any** armor, let's look at Acts 19:13-16 - the account of the seven sons of Sceva. These sons had observed the disciples casting out demons in the name of Jesus, and thought they'd try their hand at it. They said to a demon who had possessed a certain man, saying "In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out. One day the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but **who are you?**" Then the man, used by the evil spirit, jumped on and attacked the young men, giving them a severe beating, sending them away "naked and bleeding."

The sons of Sceva had no power because as one commentary says, they were "itinerant Jewish exorcists" trying to imitate what Paul was doing - they did not have a relationship with Christ, and therefore, had no authority over the evil spirit. We need to know **who we are** in Christ if we are to be successful in spiritual warfare! We are sons and daughters of the most high God! We are "...a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God..." In Luke 10 Jesus was talking to the seventy two He had sent out and told them "...I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you."

We, as Christians, are representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ, and wherever we go, and whatever we do, as long as we are walking in right relationship with Him and speaking the truth according to His word, we are walking in God given authority! We have the right, even the obligation, to confront evil, and the authority to overthrow it. But there's one more point to make before moving forward - we have to **know** what the word of God says! What if someone became a policeman with all the authority that position carries, but didn't know what the laws were? How could he enforce the laws if he didn't understand them? He couldn't!

In the NIV, 2 Tim. 2:15 says "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, ("Study to shew thyself approved unto God..." KJV) a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who **correctly handles the word of truth.**" If we read and study the Bible, asking the Holy Spirit to enlighten us and help us understand it as we read, we will see the lies and deception of the enemy much easier, and defeat them with the **truth!**