

Spiritual Warfare -- What Are My Choices?

To be truly alive we must first invite God to come and live in us by His Holy Spirit. Our next choice gives God control of our lives on a daily basis. We decide that we will do those things that God affirms and stay away from those practices that God condemns. We will do what is good and pleasing to God. ***And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask? Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is.*** (Romans 12:1-2)

We all want that. We all work hard, especially early in recovery to see that become lived reality. And we all experience a tremendous battle in that process. It's much harder than it appears to live a Godly life. Why is that? The Bible also clearly tells us: ***"We are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against those mighty powers of darkness who rule this world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms."*** (Ephesians 6:12 NLT)

Through our sinful broken lives and practices we've welcomed all kinds of influence from the devil. There are clear connections between demonic activity and the abuse of mind-altering drugs. Similarly, we open the door to the devil through sexual immorality, heavy metal music, gambling, horror and violent movies, fortune telling and occultic practices, as well as through gluttony, lies, anger, envy, and fear ... the list is long. Others have opened doors through abuse and violence towards us. The devil never waits for much of an invitation. He's always lurking, waiting to steal, kill, and destroy.

Do not let your people practice fortune-telling or sorcery, or allow them to interpret omens, or engage in witchcraft, or cast spells, or function as mediums or psychics, or call forth the spirits of the dead. Anyone who does these things is an object of horror and disgust to the Lord He practiced sorcery, divination, and witchcraft, and he consulted with mediums and psychics. He did much that was evil in the Lord's sight, arousing his anger. (Deuteronomy 18:10-12, 2 Chronicles 33:6)

The wonderful news is that when we come to God, we get to break free from all the bondages that have been chained around us by these practices and thoughts and all our related choices. Did we understand what we were doing?

The devil never stopped to check that out. He just stormed into our lives at the first opportunity seeking to devour us.

Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil, your great enemy. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for some victim to devour. (1 Peter 5:8 NLT)

In Biblical times people had all kinds of idols that they bowed down to, worshipped and gave spiritual power to. We have some of those in our world today, statues of Buddha, dream catchers etc. However, far more likely to be found in our lives as idols are people with whom we are in wrong relationship, money, power, and so on. Whenever we "have to have" that person or thing and we have to have it now, we have raised up an idol that will get in the road of living in peace with God.

You cannot drink from the cup of the Lord and from the cup of demons, too. You cannot eat at the Lord's Table and at the table of demons, too. (1 Cor. 10:21 NLT)

Dear children, keep away from anything that might take God's place in your heart. (1 John 5:21 NLT)

So, even after we have given our lives to God, the devil will assert his "rights" to various parts of our mind and body that we knowingly or unknowingly gave him through our past actions. What we now have power and authority to do is to cut ourselves free from the power of the devil. Once again, we must assert the choice, make the pronouncement, and God will do the spiritual work.

We are human, but we don't wage war with human plans and methods. We use God's mighty weapons, not mere worldly weapons, to knock down the Devil's strongholds. With these weapons we break down every proud

argument that keeps people from knowing God. With these weapons we conquer their rebellious ideas, and we teach them to obey Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NLT)

Jesus, I have chosen you as my Saviour and my Lord. I now have power authority over all the schemes and attacks of the devil. Jesus, I ask for your forgiveness and cleansing for my involvement in (name any known areas where you've participated in things that might have opened a door to Satan). I turn away from every sin and turn to You. Lord Jesus, I renounce any & all connection I have to any idols in my life (name any person, place, thing that has been or is an idol for you). Jesus, forgive me and cleanse me from my sin. Strengthen me by Your Holy Spirit to obey You and stand firm against this problem(s) when I am next tempted. Remove all of these sinful behaviours from my life. I give you permission.

And now in the name of Jesus Christ, I cut myself free from every person and every spirit that was involved with me in when I committed these sins. I cancel all contracts made with the devil and any evil spirits. I take back all areas of my life that I gave away through my sinful behaviours. I stand free in the power and authority of Jesus Christ who loved me and died for me and who now lives in me by the power of the Holy Spirit.