

Spiritual Warfare Tactics to Defeat the Enemy Within

Have you ever asked yourself, “Why do I do what I do? What’s wrong with me?” I know I have. I’ve often tried to stop doing things that were not healthy spiritually. However, I felt like Paul in Romans 7:18, where he said, “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwells no good thing, for the will to do what is right is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.”

I’m convinced that many Christians spend the majority of their lives living beneath God’s intent. We wrestle with so many issues that prevent us from experiencing our full potential, never realizing what is at the root of our struggle. And if we do recognize the root issue, we don’t know what to do about it. Spiritual attacks are demonic assaults on the mind, body or spirit. These attacks threaten God’s will for your life and can manifest in a variety of ways, including in the form of sexual, drug or alcohol addictions; depression; anxiety; or low self-worth.

Spiritual warfare is an attack from the inside out. If you don’t understand that, you will attempt to fight it from the outside in. Demons have always sought a vessel to invade. Satan entered a snake in Genesis and continues to seek refuge in us.

This is why you have to be careful of the portals you keep open in your life. These portals allow demonic access and encroachment. It is very important that you understand that Christians cannot be possessed by demons. A demon cannot invade where the Holy Spirit resides. Only in unbelievers is this possible. Yet as believers we have to be aware that the enemy can suppress us. The enemy can use warfare to frustrate the plans of God for our lives. In both instances, the enemy

seeks access.

How Interrogation Happens

One common attack the enemy employs is interrogation. When Satan, in the form of a serpent, approached Eve in Genesis chapter 3, Adam was not around. With no one nearby, Satan had the opportunity to question the word God had given Adam, which ultimately led to Eve's failure to recognize God's authority over their lives.

The enemy is aware of the power of God's Word, which is why he will attempt to dilute the word of God that has been sown in your life. If he succeeds, you will not have the faith to fight the attacks leveled against you. This is why you must not be discouraged by what you see. What you see can cause disillusionment. You have to shift from focusing on what you see to walking in what you know.

David said in Psalm 119:11, "Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You." The more Word you hold onto, the less power the enemy will have against you.

Satan's interrogation technique included tempting Eve with the possibility of being elevated, telling her, "and you will be like God" (Gen. 3:5b). In his response to Eve, Satan also introduced her to three temptations we all must beware of: "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—[which are] not of the Father, but [are] of the world" (1 John 2:16).

These temptations are of this world, not of God, and Satan introduced them to gain entry into the minds of God's people. Satan always will attempt to gain access to your body through your mind by getting you to succumb to one or all of the temptations of sin.

We see this interrogation technique again when Satan tempted Jesus in Matthew 4:1-11. Jesus had been fasting and was

presumably physically weak, and that's when the enemy interrogated Him concerning the Word. Jesus' counter to the interrogation was to declare, "It is written." By overcoming the temptations of sin Satan presented, Jesus reset humanity's response to satanic interrogation techniques, exposing them for what they truly are. Jesus was able to identify Satan for who he was and not engage the adversary in a disguised state.

Respond to Satan's lies with what God has spoken. And when you declare the Word, decree that it is established. You cannot be timid when speaking God's Word over your situation. You must do so with authority, knowing the words you speak are the promises of God. Proverbs 18:21 reminds us, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit."

Too many people speak death over their lives rather than declaring the living Word.

When I lost my first wife, the enemy taunted me in isolation. There were moments I would question my anointing. Satan said to me, "You've prayed over others and they recovered. Why didn't it work with your wife?"

On the day she passed, Satan questioned me concerning the legitimacy of God's Word. The interrogation occurred daily, with the sole purpose of causing me to lose focus and flirt with depression. But I remembered the words of Job when he was experiencing his personal ordeal and found the strength to declare as he did, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him, but I will defend my own ways before Him" (Job 13:15).

Interrogation is designed to make you feel inadequate and convinced that you failed. I had moments when I questioned my call and the anointing upon my life. Can you imagine preaching for years and telling people God can heal, only to have your own wife die of sickness?

Satan wanted me to believe my prayers weren't enough to

prevent the death of my wife, and there were Sundays when I didn't want to go to the pulpit because I lived in shame. I felt people doubted the authenticity of what I preached and believed. This is how interrogation works. It seeks to weaken your witness and cause you to second-guess your faith.

You can't beat yourself up and allow Satan to cause you to live in a constant state of blame and shame. You have to remember what God's Word has promised you regardless of what the demons attempt to say to you. Remember to talk back to the enemy, knowing that God's Word is more trustworthy than any words the enemy is speaking to you during warfare.

When you are experiencing this level of attack, you have to understand that the enemy wants to control your mind, body and spirit. For the man in the tombs, at some point in his life, something went awry on the inside. After the unclean spirit took up residence inside him, he no longer had control over the workings of his mind or the actions of his body, and his spirit became governed by demons, which means he was disconnected from God's Spirit.

Recognize the Attacks

I've heard it said that we should be careful and pay close attention to the acronym HALT because whenever we are hungry, angry, lonely or tired, the enemy looks for opportunities to attack us. The enemy wants to exploit us in our weakest moments. When you've poured out, it's critical that you take the time to allow the Lord to pour back into you so you are not left exposed to the plots and schemes of the enemy.

The demonic spirits that have you in a state of interrogation may come in different forms. You may not be living on the outskirts of the city like the man in Mark 5 or placed in physical restraints, but the internal conflict resulting from your engagement with the devil will leave you ostracized to some degree. This may mean you are excluded from social

activities, and people distance themselves from you in social settings. It may also be evident in the way your friends, family and coworkers communicate with you, especially if the interrogation has caused you to become defensive and think every encounter you have with others is an interrogation as well.

If every time someone asks, "How are you doing?" you respond with suspicion or combative questions, you will be placed on the outskirts of your social sphere, which will bring further emotional damage. This distancing from others will also cause spiritual harm because believers are strengthened by being in community with others.

To those who are in the midst of interrogation, please know that everyone is not out to get you. If you are in a space of constant fear, frustration, doubt and disillusionment, you may need to be freed from the clutches of the enemy, who is conducting an illegal interrogation process on you.

Legal experts have told me of illegal interrogation techniques that cause suspects in cases to confess to things of which they may not be guilty. These techniques include accusing, yelling, invading the individuals' space and lying about evidence against them. Just as these types of threats are illegal in our own justice system, Satan's interrogation of you in your dark places is illicit. Satan uses this illegal approach to push you into a place where you feel so threatened by the forces coming against you that you accept a life sentence of torment you were never meant to serve.

If you are in a state of interrogation, there is hope. You can be freed from being perpetually accused and badgered for mistakes that have already been forgiven. The key to deliverance is to demonstrate authority when it comes to encountering the unclean spirits. Every spirit that is not the Spirit of God must leave you and those around you. The enemy cannot interrogate where the power of God resides.

The Enemy Within

The enemy is truly in me. It's difficult to deal with an internal struggle because what most people see is the external manifestation. They see the anger, bitterness, low self-esteem or the emotional instability. It's easy to make judgment calls when you see a particular action. But the real enemy is within.

When I was a kid, my father told me to sweep down the spider webs on the side of our home. I swept every wall, gate and object that was in sight. After clearing all the spider webs, they were back the next day. My dad told me that sweeping spider webs is a futile exercise. It doesn't matter how careful you are while sweeping: If you don't kill the spiders, you will constantly deal with their webs.

We live in a world that is consumed with treating symptoms while neglecting to address the source. We can suppress a symptom, but that does nothing to eradicate the cause.

Within us all, there are things that have gone unaddressed. You can know they are there but not know how to address them. This is how the enemy interrogates you. You can function at high levels and create an image while struggling within with a spirit that constantly torments you. These enemies within could be pornography, substance abuse, or other addictive or ungodly behaviors that threaten your destiny. When these enemies are active in your life, Satan, who is the enemy of all believers, uses your entertainment of the enemies within you to bring accusations against you.

The internal civil war that Paul describes in Romans 7:14-25 is not unfamiliar to any of us. It's easy to point to an enemy on the outside, but the enemy is really within. This spirit attaches itself to carnality, where it is more comfortable manifesting. It dwells in your carnality to weigh down your spiritual life and hides within you in an attempt to avoid

accountability. By dwelling in your carnality, this spirit is aware that you will not have strength to fight off other spirits, because it will cause your carnal nature to overpower your spirit.

I am convinced that carnality works from the inside out. It starts in the mind and manifests in our members. In Galatians 5:17, Paul helps to shed light on this internal battle, stating, "For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. These are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please."

The internal struggles and interrogations we experience are quite common among believers. The assumption is often that Christians don't have these struggles. Many people go through life pretending they don't exist. It's easy to present a perception about yourself and an image to feed it. Many of the moral casualties we have experienced in the kingdom could have been prevented had people felt comfortable dealing with the enemy within them.

Because the church has a tendency to make some sins seem worse than others, people often are not inclined to address their internal demons until it's too late. The moral hierarchism tragically at work in the church allows people to condemn others while seeking grace for their own sin. Paul courageously shared his experience in Romans 7 so all of us could find a point of identification. Paul demonstrated that, as the young people say, "the struggle is real." If we continue to allow this unclean spirit to torment and interrogate us, we will never experience the freedom Jesus has come to bring.

Maybe you are experiencing the spiritual warfare of interrogation right now. The unclean spirit is telling you, "You will never be free" or "Accept this as your new normal." You have to believe the report of the Lord concerning your life. When spirits have invaded your life, true deliverance

can never occur unless you allow God's Holy Spirit to fill you completely, making no room for the enemy.

When I was young, I learned a powerful lesson from a simple life experience. There were specks of debris in my glass of water. I was attempting to get them out with my hand, but I was painfully unsuccessful. When my father saw my frustration, he helped me remove the debris. He put the glass under the faucet and let the water run into the glass until it overflowed. As the water continued to run into the glass, the debris rose to the top and came out.

The only way the spirits within us will be exposed and brought out is if we allow the Holy Spirit to fill us completely, until we overflow with presence and power and there is no room for anything unlike Him to take up residence in our lives. No matter what you have been facing and no matter what the enemy has told you during his interrogation, you can be victorious because the Scripture says, "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4). {eoa}

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