

The First Thing You Should Do When You Encounter Spiritual Warfare

The first principle of spiritual warfare is humility. Whenever we notice we are in a situation of spiritual warfare, the first thing we need to do is to humble ourselves. Most people associate spiritual warfare with aggressive prayer and shouting at the devil. That may be true, but if we do not understand the role of humility and submission, our spiritual warfare will turn into a massacre.

“‘God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’ Therefore submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ... Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up” (James 4:6-7, 10).

Notice in these verses that submission and humility are a necessary part, or prerequisite, in resisting the devil. The resisting of the devil is dependent upon the parallel activity of humbling ourselves.

The reason for this is that the very character of the devil is tied up with pride. Pride is the motivation of the devil. Therefore, it is also the area in which he is an expert. If you have pride, you have an open door for the strategies of the devil. Your pride becomes an easy target for the devil’s attacks.

When the devil came to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, he appealed to them through spiritual pride (“You will be like God” [Gen. 3:5b]), and intellectual pride (“Knowing good and evil,” [Gen. 3:5c]). Intellectual and spiritual pride are still the roots of demonic activity today. When we resist these two kinds of pride by humbling ourselves and submitting, we close the door to the devil’s activities.

That demonic pride can lead to rebellion and division. The Bible tells us that when Satan decided to attack God, his rebellion was fueled by his pride.

“Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you have corrupted your wisdom” (Ezek. 28:17).

The word for “lifted up” here is *gaavah*, and is similar to the root of the word pride, *ga’avah*. Pride can lead us into bad attitudes towards those around us, especially those in authority over us, eventually causing division. Most division in the church is caused by pride. If one of the parties will humble themselves, the divisions become minimal.

Give No Place to the Devil

Yeshua taught us that any kingdom divided against itself will fall (Luke 11). The devil wants to make God’s kingdom fall. He does this by inspiring division and rebellion. Division and rebellion find their source in pride. Pride is the fertile ground for the devil’s seeds. When we humble ourselves, we deny the devil that ground.

Often pride is a cover-up for personal insecurity, or fear of rejection. When a person is insecure, he may puff himself up like a blowfish to compensate for the lack. A person who can humble himself is actually reflecting a degree of psychological wholeness and inner strength.

One of the symptoms of pride covering up insecurity is the tendency for a person to become “offended.” Sometimes a person wants to hide his pride and insecurity by saying “I’m very sensitive.” It’s hard to find a word for “offended” in Hebrew. One way to say it is “wounded pride” or “honor insulted.” A person who does not have much pride is not easily offended.

Sometimes the person who is so sure that he is right, is the very one who is in pride and being the source of the problem. The offended person, the smartest one, the most anointed one

or the one causing a division may be the one through whom the devil is working. If this fits you, get off of it. {eoa}

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