

This Unhealthy Mentality Gives the Enemy More Power in Your Life

How did we come to be like this? Have you ever thought about that? In so many ways. both society at large and our personal lives bear only a slight resemblance to how God originally intended us to be and live. We are too often broken, sick and miserable. That may sometimes be the case even for those of us who are committed believers in Jesus.

We hold on to our wounds, our destructive behaviors, our insistence on doing life our own way, and our world continues to become darker as a result. That's a picture of sin, and it causes us trouble—sometimes right away, sometimes in the future and sometimes in ways we don't even realize.

When our lives are out of alignment with God and His plans for us, fear and anxiety are a natural result. It may be God's way of shouting, "You don't have to live like this!" It is also a symptom of the larger sin problem—the cosmic conflict between the kingdom of God and Satan's kingdom of darkness.

There are at least two ways spiritual warfare may add to your psychological distress as a Christian: the topic itself and experiencing attack. First, the topic itself: using terms such as "battle," "victory," "enemy" and "weapons" sounds violent. And indeed it is. Just read the Bible; there's plenty of violence there.

War may naturally breed fear and anxiety. If you focus on the fight, you'll probably feel more upset rather than less. How do you overcome this? Make sure your focus is not on the battle, but on Jesus. Thinking about the devil too much can actually give him more power in your life. Jesus never looked for a fight with Satan. One large part of His ministry was

“healing all who were oppressed by the devil” (Acts 10:38). His focus was not on the devil, but on doing the will of His Father. That’s where you need to focus too.

Another way in which spiritual warfare may be affecting your psychological well-being is the possibility that your mind itself may be under attack from the enemy. Sometimes such distress is caused by a direct attack from the kingdom of darkness. When that happens, Jesus has made available a pathway for you to be free. It’s not magic; it’s part of the restoration He wants for all His children.

You are being prepared for eternity! Spiritual warfare is never an end in itself. It’s a way of understanding the realities that God has revealed about His grand scheme and where we fit into it. Along the way, you will experience brokenness and healing, sorrow and joy, tears and gladness, weakness and strength. You will experience what feels like temporary defeat and failure, but you will also experience true victory and success.

Remember that Jesus promised us both trouble and peace (John 16:33). We can expect both trouble and overcoming in this life. What God has promised is that we can live fully alive—in every aspect of our lives (John 10:10). This will involve God growing your character, which may sometimes feel uncomfortable. It will involve Him stretching you to become more than you thought you could be and you being poured out in meaningful service for something bigger than yourself. {eo}

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passage is an excerpt from her book Overcoming Fear and Anxiety Through Spiritual Warfare.