

Joyce Meyer: How to Know Your Enemy and Win the War

The Bible teaches us about spiritual warfare and that we have an enemy, the devil. First Peter 5:9 says to resist the devil and stand firm in our faith in God. And Ephesians 6:12 (NIV) tells us about the armor of God that helps us overcome our struggle “against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”

Some people deny the existence of the devil and of hell. They don't believe a loving God would really send anyone to a place of eternal torment. But the Bible teaches us that we do have an enemy and there is a place called hell, so we're deceiving ourselves if we refuse to believe it.

The Bible also says that God is patient, “not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9b). And John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

The Truth About Our Enemy

An effective strategy to gain victory over any enemy is to know who he is and how he operates. The Bible has a lot to say about the devil.

John 8:44 says, “He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.” And 1 Peter 5:8 tells us to “be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”

Deception is the devil's primary strategy to keep us from growing spiritually and fulfilling God's purposes for our

lives. To be deceived simply means you believe a lie. This is dangerous because if you believe a lie, then it will become your reality even though it isn't true. For example, you can believe someone doesn't like you and be upset about being rejected when the truth is they haven't thought one bad thing about you.

Everyone is affected to some degree by lies they believe. I used to believe I would be able to have a second-rate life because my father had sexually abused me and I was "damaged goods." If I hadn't come to know the truth about God's love for me and how He could heal and restore my soul, my life would be much different than it is today. I seriously doubt I ever would have become a Bible teacher who is helping others discover how they can know God and become everything He has created them to be in Christ.

We need to pray for God to reveal any deception in our minds because every lie we believe represents something the devil is stealing from us that God wants us to have. I'm talking about real peace and joy, freedom from constantly feeling guilty about something you've done, the ability to have healthy relationships, or any of the other promises God gives us in His Word.

Be Liberated by the Truth

Our thoughts are so important, and that's why I teach about the "battlefield of the mind." We need to be more diligent to think about what we're thinking about and choose on purpose to think in ways that line up with God's Word. Jesus said, "If you abide in My word ... you are truly My disciples. And you will know the truth ... and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31-32, AMP).

The key here is to "abide" in God's Word. To abide means to live and remain in it. As we spend time each day meditating on Scripture, rolling it over and over in our minds, we will gain

freedom from wrong mindsets and beliefs.

Here's a practical way to apply this principle. The next time you're feeling discouraged or having a pity party, ask yourself, "What have I been thinking about?" You've likely been mulling over thoughts about what people don't do for you, what you don't like about yourself, what you don't have ... and on and on.

The solution to turning your attitude around is by thinking about God and what He says about you.

Romans 5:8 says God loves you unconditionally and that while you were still a sinner, Christ died for you.

Psalms 139:14 says that God created you by His own hand in your mother's womb and you are wonderful.

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV) says you are "God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance" for you to do.

And Romans 8:37-39 says you are more than a conqueror through Christ, and there is nothing that can separate you from God's love.

I want to encourage you to spend time studying these Scriptures, praying for God to help you get these truths rooted in your heart. You can also get more encouraging teaching or submit a prayer request by contacting our ministry at . We love you and want to help you gain victory over the enemy in every area of your life! {eo}

For more on this topic, order Joyce's six-teaching CD series Battle Strategies for a Victorious Life. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, Enjoying Everyday Life, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting .

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times' bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries Inc. She has authored more

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