



Women of Grace
Session 1

Spiritual Warfare – Beginning the Battle

I. Why can't we solve the basic problems of human life, including our own? Because we ignore the impact of a whole unseen world – Ephesians 6:10-13

II. The Bible describes life as it really is.

- A. We are constantly exposed to illusions mingled with reality. We live in two worlds-the earthly realm and the heavenly realm.
- B. The Bible sets all reality before us.
- C. The crucial question – “Am I to accept the word (solutions) of the world or the word of Christ?”

III. The basic characteristic of life is “Struggle.”

- A. Conflict, combat, a continual wrestling
- B. We prefer romantic idealism but reality always intrudes.

IV. The nature of our battle is fluctuating struggle – “when the day of evil comes...”

- A. All times are not evil, some are worse than others. Evil days are when:
 - 1. Pressures are intense.
 - 2. Problems seem unsolvable.
 - 3. Everything seems to be coming at us all at once.
- B. The reason we are not under pressure all the time is due to the grace of God.
 - 1. God restrains the powers against us.
 - 2. We should be thankful.

V. The conflict is not against flesh and blood.

- A. It is not a human problem.
- B. It may be a struggle “within” a woman, but it is not between women.
- C. An important spiritual question – “What is the thing that gives you the most difficulty in life; what does the struggle of your life consist of?”
- D. Our problem is deeper than flesh and blood. There is a hierarchy of evil spirits.
 - 1. Evil rulers
 - 2. Authorities of the unseen world
 - 3. Mighty powers in this dark world
 - 4. Evil spirits in the heavenly places
- E. A clear understanding of the reality of an evil hierarchy can only be found in the Bible.

The Bible has an answer for evil, the world doesn't.

- 1. Secular psychology – “Let’s talk about it.”
 - 2. Education – “Let’s think about it.”
 - 3. Science – “Let’s fix it with technology or chemicals.”
 - 4. Materialism – “Let’s forget about it.”
 - 5. Legislation – “Let’s outlaw it.”
 - 6. Environmentalism – “Let’s change the exterior.”
 - 7. Addiction – “Let’s numb the pain.”
- F. The proof of futility – “Is the human race less evil now that it was 2,000 years ago?”

VI. Three reactions to the kingdom of evil by the people of the world

- A. Rejection of any kind of spiritual kingdom. When they reject:
 - 1. They reject the testimony of millions of Christians.
 - 2. They reject the testimony of Jesus.
 - 3. They reject the spiritual answer to the problems and conundrums of life.

- B. Acceptance of the kingdom of good but rejection of the kingdom of evil
 - C. Distortion of the kingdom of evil-superstition
- VII. The only ones who can successfully battle against the dark forces are Christians.
 “For we...” Ephesians 6:12
- A. The worldling struggles on the level of flesh and blood – they can only be victims.
 - B. The Christian wrestles against evil rulers and authorities – we can be victors.
 - C. The worldling cannot fight the kingdom of darkness because she is a part of it (actively or passively). **“A kingdom divided itself cannot last.” Luke 11:17**
 - D. Deliverance can only come from an outside, intervening force. Luke 11:21-23
 - E. Who is stronger than the strong man? Jesus! Luke 11:22
 - 1. The victory of Christ made available and personal to individuals by faith breaks the power of the strong man.
 - 2. We are born into a society which is under the control of the satanic mind. Only the mystery of the cross of Jesus and the power of His resurrection can set us free. There is a great host of witnesses to this power. Many people have been set free:
 - a. Prostitutes
 - b. Alcoholics
 - c. Drug addicts
 - d. Temper
 - e. Lust
 - f. Self-righteousness
 - g. Bitterness
 - h. Pride
 - i. Fear
 - 3. Christ breaks the chains around our mind, our heart and our soul. (1 John 3:8; Colossians 1:13; Acts 26:16-18)
 - 4. Often the greatest antagonism against God is from the educated mind. (2 Corinthians 4:4; Romans 1:22 – blinded and darkened minds)

5. Setting men free is the primary purpose of the gospel.
 - a. If it is first channeled to a social concern, we lose its purpose and power.
 - b. The beginning of the battle is to receive the power of the “stronger one.” (His death; His resurrection)
 - c. When the gospel is used for its primary purpose, it will ultimately find its way to all areas of human life, social and otherwise.
 - d. A Christian has not only been forgiven but has been delivered from the power of darkness.

VIII. No neutral ground is possible. Luke 11:23

- A. Christianity is more than morality, more than religion.
- B. Christ divides women into two groups.
 1. Those that are with Him.
 2. Those that are against Him.
- C. The evidence of which kingdom you are part of is evidenced by the influence of your life. What is it? (Self-givingness)
 1. If you are with Him, you have a gathering influence.
 - a. Breaking down divisions
 - b. Uniting hearts
 - c. Reuniting families
 - d. Bringing harmony
 - e. Healing wounds
 - f. Bringing people together
 2. If you are against Him, you have a dividing (scattering) influence. What is it? (Self-centeredness)
- D. The great question of life is: “What is basically the character of your life?”
 1. Self-centeredness
 2. Self-givingness
 3. Do you heal or do you divide?

4. Are you a victor or a victim?

IV. You can win the fight!

A. You have a call to intelligent combat.

B. You have a call to be women of faith.

1. Fight the good fight.

2. Stand strong in your faith.

3. Be strong in the Lord.

V. The arena is your soul. This is the heavenly realm where you do battle.

A. The realm of thought and ideas.

B. The realm of feelings and reactions.

C. The realm of decisions and choices.

Questions

1. What was the most important thing you heard?
2. Why are Christians the only ones who can successfully battle the kingdom of darkness?
3. What victory in your life has the resurrection of Christ made possible?
4. What is the influence of your life?
5. Have you received the power of the “stronger one”?