

# Course 130 Prayer & Spiritual Warfare

## A teaching of the Global School of Ministry

This course presents fresh insights to the issue of Prayer and Spiritual Warfare. This is one ministry and spiritual activity which has been abused and wrongly applied to give the Christian faith a bad name. We therefore find it necessary to present a biblical understanding of this vital ministry. The core questions to be answered are:

- What is Prayer?
- What are the linkages between prayer and the will of God?
- In what way can we rightly describe intercession as the birthing of the will of God or partnering with God to bring to pass His counsel?
- What kind of example did Jesus leave us in the ministry of prayer?
- What is the pattern of prayer He instructs?
- Why is Christendom torn between setting aside the pattern He taught and making it a rigid religious construct?
- What is spiritual warfare?
- How do we distinguish between spiritual, spiritist, soulish and devilish operations in the arena of prayer and spiritual warfare?
- What are doctrines of devils (demons) in the ministry of prayer and spiritual warfare?

### Lesson 1.

#### A. Definition

Prayer is the life and act of communicating with God in order to worship Him and draw down His enormous strength and power onto events on earth.

This implies that Prayer is not just talking to God because this will imply dumping our needs on Him and hurrying out. It implies rather that, by prayer, we take a posture of coming to Him to forge a strategic partnership through which His strength combines with our legal mandate as His assigns on planet earth to cause things to shift in line with His ultimate will. These scriptures cohere to usher us into a whole new dynamic in the arena of prayer and spiritual warfare: **Genesis 1:26 – 29, Genesis 2:15; Psalm 115:16; John 19:30; Matthew 6:10**. Mankind is the legal assign of God to manage and rule the affairs of the earth. That legal right was stolen by the Devil through subtlety when he deceived Adam and Eve. At the Cross, Jesus broke that legal right Satan plucked off man and restored us to pre-eminence. As long as our lives are under submission to God and as long as His Word is our will, we will pray prayers that are after His heart and we will receive His hearty positive response. It is for this reason that the Holy Spirit helps the infirmities of saints who may have allowed clutter and cares of this life to side track them. **Romans 8:26, 27**.

To pray therefore is to exercise confidence and trust in God and to rely wholly on His ability to take care of the issues we bring to Him!. Whatever therefore that keeps us away from communing consistently with God in prayer is actually part of the web of intrigue spun by Satan to make saints lose their precious axe head! It is time to recover the axe head and begin to grow our prayer life to the degree that we all – regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity or socio-economic status - can literally demonstrate the Kingdom wherever we are on planet earth! The Kingdom to which we are called is not in words but in power so much so that the word “impossible” should never feature in the lexicon of saints. This is serious business, saints: we must rise up from slumber and go forth as Ambassadors of

the King of King with the trade mark ability to call forth things that be not as if they were and see them manifested, because we dare to pray with importunity and unwavering faith, an inheritance from Abraham. **Romans 4:12 - 24**. When we consider the import of the story Jesus told of the needed who needed favour from his friend because of an urgent need at mid night **Luke 11: 5 – 13** and the widow who refused to take no for an answer from the unjust Judge **Luke 18: 1 – 8**, it is obvious that God expects us never to give up on any matter we bring to Him that does not contradict His will and nature. He who called us commends prayer in and with faith on a pedestal of righteousness as the principal means of receiving all that pertains to life and godliness which is part of our rich inheritance in Christ Jesus!

## **B. Components of Prayer**

In order to pray effectively, it is important that these 7 components be present:

**1. Knowledge of the Will of God concerning the matter we want to pray for.** The will of God is revealed through two principal avenues:

- **The Word of God.** The Word of God is the express, revealed will of God with no shadow of turning. Knowing the Word of God therefore implies knowledge of the will of God on a broad range of issues. That is why we are encouraged to study, meditate on and apply the Word to every day life. When the Word is made flesh in us, we have an internal compulsion to pray according to the will of God. If any thought or idea for prayer crosses our mind which is contrary to the Word of God, the Holy Spirit will not allow us to proceed to ask and our conscience will not be at peace. It makes sense therefore to diligently search the scriptures and base our desires and needs on what is written and steadfastly refuse anything which is contrary. These scriptures reveal the vital necessity of the Word of God: **Psalm 1: 1- 3; Psalm 119; John 15:7; Colossians 3:16**.

- **Fresh revelation from the Holy Spirit.** The Holy Spirit is still speaking today, bringing forth the mind of God to His own people. We need to keep our lives fresh and wholesome so that the Holy Spirit will find them fit as His dwelling place. When He is resident, the outcome is obvious: He guides us into all truth **John 16:13** reveals the mind of God to us and guides our decision making process. He is able to quicken scriptures and turn general promises for all saints into specific divine plans for our lives. He ministers and speaks to us in various ways: **Audible voice; Prophecy; Word of Knowledge; Word of Wisdom; Burden laid on our heart; Impression on our spirit man; Quickening or Illumination of Scriptures or just the simple way of ordering our steps into the will of God, among many other ways He speaks**. Understanding the specific ways the Holy Spirit ministers to you is essential to true spiritual growth and a victorious Kingdom life where all things are possible. **John 10: 27**.

*In sum therefore, to pray according to the will of God is to be certain that the blessings asked for are already granted! **1 John 5:14, 15**. In effect, the highest ideal of the redeemed is to be used of Him to birth the will of God. If this is so, we enter the realm of full righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit when we stop asking for what catches our fancy. We thus become mature sons of whom the world awaits our manifestation when our highest ideal is simply to see His will come to pass – whether convenient to us or not and for His Kingdom to come! **Matthew 6:10; Romans 8: 18 – 23**.*

**2. Understanding the Nature and Power of God that inspires Trust and Confidence in Him**

The truth is that you simply cannot pray with certainty unless you first come to an understanding of who He is and the awesomeness of His power to do all things and answer as it pleases Him! Hebrews 11:6 says he who comes to God must first believe that He is who His Word says He is (the Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent and Omni benevolent One!). This inspires us to trust Him wholly and bring our causes with confidence to His Throne of Grace. **Psalm 37:3-7; Proverbs 3: 5- 7; Jeremiah 33:3; Jeremiah 32:27.**

### **3. Release of Faith in what we are assured by His Word and the Holy Spirit is His will for us.**

Faith is specific, quantifiable apprehension of the things we desire of the Lord. **Hebrews 11:1.** In the Kingdom, whatever is not of faith is sin. **Romans 14:23.** It is our duty therefore to overcome wavering and double mindedness to hold on to what we have received as ours by the Word and ministration of the Holy Spirit. The Word warns against double mindedness in **James 1:5 – 8.** On the other hand, we see through the ways Jesus ministered that He placed a great premium on faith of those who came to Him to receive what they desired. In **Mark 11: 22 – 24**

### **4. Accept God's invitation to Pray!**

It is interesting that the God of the whole earth beckons us to come and pray. He wants us to pray all kinds of prayer appropriate for all situations. He invites us in very clear language to make our relationship and communion with Him and His perspectives the hub on which everything about our lives and circumstances revolve! This is an awesome privilege which the redeemed of the Lord should not shun in any way. In **Jeremiah 33: 1 - 3**, God introduces Himself and calls on us to pray and even receive answers beyond the scope of what we asked for! To this agrees **Ephesians 3:20.** In **Jeremiah 32:27**, He asks the question "is anything too hard for me?". In **Jeremiah 29: 11 – 13**, we see that fervently prayers are the key to secure our destinies! In **Matthew 7:7, 8**, the Lord calls on us to **ASK; SEEK and KNOCK!**

To illustrate the seriousness of the divine perspective, Jesus in **Luke 11: 5 – 10 and Luke 18: 1 – 8** **exhorts us to importunity! Jesus Himself exhorts us to remain in the steadfast faith until the breakthrough of that which we need from our heavenly Father comes through.** Surveying the uniform testimony of scripture, we should never take this as a license to bring our wish lists to God and expect Him to be stampeded to rubber stamp them. **James 4: 1 – 4.** Saints, we have no excuse to spend our productive hours in unproductive activities which weary soul and body – chatting, texting, speaking on phone, complaining, gossip, office and church politics, stoking tension in the home, watching TV, video games, reading newspapers in disproportionate periods of time daily while there are issues that confront us which need to move. God says we should cast all our cares on Him **1 Peter 5:7.** Dare to remove clutter from your life and make your time with God the central spindle or hub on which everything else rotates. Give God quality time to cultivate an intimate relationship with Him in prayer, study of the Word, meditation and petition and intercession and see how great changes will come!

Build your prayer life on your constitution. If you are an early bird, don't change that nature. By all means go to bed early and wake up early like Jesus did to command the day **Mark 1:35.** If you are one who stays up late, free yourself of unproductive activities by 9.00pm and spend quality time thanking God for the day as well as possessing the incoming one. If you are able to possess the gate of 12 midnight, by all means do so, provided you will not be knocked out in the morning.

## 5. Express Gratitude to God

Because we walk by faith and not by sight, we are able to receive things in the Spirit, knowing assuredly that manifestation is coming, in due season. **2 Corinthians 5:7**. For this reason, as we pray, according to His will, assurance of answers received should move us from requesting to thanksgiving mode. **Philippians 4:6, 7**. Practice of this principle will take our faith to a whole new level. Whenever we make the transition in our hearts from desiring to receiving what we asked for in the spirit, we have the sure evidence of faith **Hebrews 11:1**. As **Mark 11: 22 – 24** declares, this is an extremely important factor in drawing down the blessings!

## 6. Receiving Answers.

Prayer is incomplete until the answers are manifest. It may be immediate or it may take time. However, one thing is clear: one day, what we asked for will be made manifest! Praying without expecting answers is engagement in dead religious works! Come off religion and get into the Kingdom life where our prayers are powerful and effectual as were those of saints of old who walked with God. Consider the prayer life of Elijah, a man of like passions. **James 5:17 – 18**. For this reason, the true Church must come into its own heritage which is the manifestation of the Kingdom of God in all situations. **James 5: 13 – 15**.

## 7. Ascribing all the glory to God.

No matter how much we pray, it is essential that we do not touch the glory of God by claiming credit for the miracle. Ultimately, it is the Lord who is the author and finisher of all the miracles we desire and receive! Let us therefore learn to give Him unrestrained praise out of a grateful heart. **Psalms 103: 1 -6**. Many times, prayer warriors and intercessors inadvertently claim credit for the miracles they prayed for. The result is that they heap up a reputation for being men and women of prayer on themselves with weaker brethren looking up to them, rather than God for blessings. The reality is that such reputation is enough reward and will cause God to back off. **Matthew 6:5**. Even five fold leaders and ministers generally must go out of the way to train the people they lead to cultivate an independent prayer life rather than make them their hope. John the Baptist knew that Christ, rather than himself was the Bridegroom to whom the Church is betrothed. He therefore gladly pointed his disciples to Christ and took the back seat! **John 3: 26 – 36**. May we do likewise or else idolatry will set in when the people we lead see us and our prayers as the solution to their problems.

## Inquiry Prayer

Where we do not have an idea of what the will of God is, the right thing to do is to go into inquiry mode. In inquiry prayer, we desist from clutching at any position or opinion. Rather, we come before the Lord in a child like manner to ask what His will is. If we cultivate the habit of hearing and knowing His voice, the Lord will speak expressly and we will hear it. David was a man who God approved greatly. Part of the reason He found favour with God is, we believe, his constant tendency to inquire of the Lord whenever he was between two directions. The life of David teaches us an important principle of enquiry prayers: never take His will for granted and never rely on an old pattern for a fresh challenge or assignment. **1 Samuel 23: 1- 5; 6-13; 1 Samuel 30: 1 – 8**.

It is important that those who form the habit of reading and applying instructions on prayer and spiritual warfare based on the experience of a mere human being, no matter how mightily used of God, that are documented as prayer manuals, to realize that they can be easily led astray. It is far better to understand the Word of God and have it made flesh in us so that when we are faced with peculiar challenges, no matter how similar to our past, the Holy Spirit alone becomes a reliable compass to interpret the whole counsel of God already in our spirit and soul to chart the way forward. Let us therefore build our faith on the Word and the Holy Spirit rather than the opinions of mere mortals! **John 14: 15 – 18, 26; John 16: 12,13.**

### **The Big 5 of Prayer.**

**Five core factors cohere to make prayer effective. They work together to create the synergy we need:**

**1. Right Relationship with God and fellow humans.** This is the basis on which we are able to approach God in the first place. For sinners, the very first need is to come into right relationship with God through the Blood Shed by Jesus Christ at the Cross of Calvary **Psalm 66:18; Proverbs 28:13.** Coming to God to ask for any blessing that is not based on a right relationship with Him or fellow humans will only produce a religious ritual. This is why **Hebrews 12:14** urges us to follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. We may not be able to dictate how fellow human beings will act towards us but the Word enjoins us to do as much as lies within us to live peaceably with all men. If they pursue the path of enmity with us, we should diligently guard our hearts and ensure that no root of bitterness takes hold, lest we be defiled. **Hebrews 12: 14, 15.** Further texts include **Psalm 1: 1 – 3; Psalm 15: 1 – 5; Psalm 24: 3-6; Matthew 5:8; Matthew 6:12,13.**

**2. Knowledge of the Will of God.** The will of God is crucial in prayer because asking outside His will is mere wearying of our souls and vexing of our spirits. God has a personality and will. Therefore, it makes great sense to know His will concerning all that we should ask. **1 John 5:14, 15.**

**3. Knowledge of the Word of God.** The Word of God is a reliable storehouse of His will. The Scriptures are essentially a documentation of the will of God for mankind. Studying and meditating on the Word is an extraordinarily healthy spiritual exercise that provides ground to walk in tandem with God.

**4. Faith.** Faith is active reliance on the Word of God. It is the grasping on His Word as true and certain, even when there is nothing physically manifested. The attitude of faith is this “If it is in the Word, then I receive it”. Interestingly, our faith is increased with hearing and studying of the will of God. **Romans 10:17.** This is not the exercise of mere positive confession. It is rather standing on the sure promises of God as true and reliable.

**5. Prayer.** Prayer brings all the above together. In prayer therefore, we come with a penitent heart to God by the way of the Blood, receiving mercy and grace to rely on the sure Word of God; standing on the received will of God to ask in faith and hang in there before Him in importunity until we receive that which He says is ours! **Matthew 7: 7, 8; Mark 11: 22-24.**

### **C. The Model Pattern of Prayer – Inside The Jesus School of Prayer**

In the book of Luke 11: 1, the disciples of Jesus pleaded with Him to teach them how to pray just as John taught His own disciples. Knowing that what they desired of Him was right and proper, Jesus proceeded to lay out a frame work of how saints should pray. He was by no means telling them a ritual to recite or a religious box to be trapped in. The focus of Jesus neither was to show His disciples, by practical illustration, that a man's life does not consist in the abundance of goods accumulated nor should man live by bread alone. Thus, it is needful to examine what is now called the Lord's prayer in detail to see the point He was making and the way He wanted His saints to think outside the box of cares of this life.

To do justice to this prayer, we shall break down and examine all the constituent parts therein from the lenses of the man who was the assigned biographer, Matthew the ex-customs officer.

Matthew 6: 9: "In this manner therefore pray" – Let this be a model or pattern of what to cover in prayer.

**1. Our Father in Father in Heaven** – This speaks of relationship. He who comes to God must understand that we are called to a life of relationship with God. We are not called into a dead religious system which relates with a cold, distant uncaring God. Ours is a God we have a personal relationship with based on the blood that was shed by Jesus Christ. In Him, divinity became humanity so that sinful mankind can be restored back to the glory lost when Adam and Eve lost their first estate in Eden. If you are a redeemed of the blood therefore, your Father beckons you to come boldly to His Throne by the way of the Blood. **Hebrews 2: 10 – 18.** You are not just invited to come. You are asked to come in faith and trust. God says if earthly fathers know how to give good gifts to their children, how much more would He who is the Father of lights bless His own? **Matthew 7: 7 – 11**

**2. Hallowed be Your Name** – We commence prayer in reverence of God. That we have the privilege of having Him as Father should in no way detract from our approaching Him with an attitude of worship and humility. Furthermore, we need to develop the holy habit of learning how to exalt His Holy name before asking for any needs.

**3. V.10.a Your Kingdom come** – Here, Jesus is asking us to align ourselves with the ultimate purpose of God which is to finally consummate His Kingdom on earth one day. The Kingdom at this present time is in the realm of the hearts of the redeemed of the Lord. One day, at an hour which no one knows, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords will return to finally establish the fullness of the Kingdom. We must constantly live in remembrance of the fact that this event needs to happen. Our attitude should, like John, **Lord Jesus, come quickly. Revelation 22:20, 21.**

**4. V.10.b Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.** This is the heart of this model prayer. The highest ideal of the redeemed is to see a shifting that will cause every authority and person to be wholly submitted to the will and purpose of God. The will of God is thus the dwelling place of the saints!

**5. V.11 Give us this day, our daily bread.** Deep down in the body of the model prayer, only one verse and line is focused on our daily needs. Interestingly, the pattern is to ask for the needs as they come daily. There is no room in the Kingdom for covetousness or for piling up goods for a rainy day. The wisdom of the Kingdom is that of absolute trust in God. The economic principle was first enunciated in the wilderness when Moses commanded Israel to fetch enough manna and quail for the

day. Those who had much more than they needed invariably gave to those who had less so that there was equality.

The lesson here is this: In the Kingdom, God has enough for all our needs but not enough for our greed! The Lord is calling on His own to get into the Kingdom economic model which requires us to focus on the Kingdom and its righteousness, trusting our heavenly Father to provide all that we need. The redeemed of the Lord were not designed to chase after stuff. Stuff is rather ordained to chase after us. It is strange therefore that so called poster men of the Kingdom message in the Western world are simply men and women who have craftily used the sneak peek they claim to receive into the Kingdom to pile up ungodly wealth for generations unborn; men and women who charge satanic fees for highly condensed superstar appearances called Kingdom conferences; men and women who price their so called revelations of the Kingdom in books and tapes out of the reach of ordinary saints! God have mercy.

**6. V.12 Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.** Here is a simple two edged sword. We need to have any debts and sins forgiven. In the same measure, God requires us to have a heart which freely forgives any offence inflicted by other people. You cannot approach God for mercy when you refuse to show mercy to people. Ephesians 4: 28 – 32.

Even in matters of financial and other debts owed us, we are called upon to release people from yokes of debts which they cannot repay. The principle of Jubilee is not just an Old Testament construct. Leviticus 25: 1 – 38; Deuteronomy 15: 1-6. The hardness of heart with which believers pursue their debtors is amazing! We ought to give some people the jubilee treatment! Let us let them off the hook and write off those debts. As they breathe the air of freedom, so shall the joy of the Lord flood our hearts. In every situation where I obeyed God and did this, there were amazing visitations of financial breakthrough and more importantly, a great peace and joy in my heart! Try it saints, for it works!

**7. V.13 Do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.** Here Jesus wants us to realize that Satan is a present threat to the earthly pilgrimage of the redeemed. To deny the reality, power and craftiness of Satan is to walk in denial. If Satan could tempt Jesus sorely and dogged His steps till He hung on the old rugged cross, so shall he seek to tempt us out of the will of God. Jesus wants us also to walk in the understanding that God has all the power to order the affairs of His creation. On the basis of this, Jesus wants us to recognize that though temptation can be very devastating, the best defence is to proactively ask the Lord to deliver us from situations that may lead to falling apart from Him.

**8. V.13 For yours is the Kingdom and the Power and Glory, amen.** The Lord wants us to recognize that God is not a hard task master who will save us and leave us to our own devices. He is establishing the Kingdom to which we have been called and which will be fully manifest in due course of time. All the power and glory is ascribable unto Him. Saints should walk in a 24/7 consciousness of this reality.

It is interesting that Jesus began the model prayer with exalting the name of the Lord and ends it with a similar theme. We need to emulate Him.

#### **D. Hindrances to Prayer and How to overcome them**

One thing that should be obvious to all saints is that getting into a consistent prayer life often seems to be quite a struggle. The reason is that two forces work together to create all manner of hindrances and blockages. The first is that we have a cunning adversary who knows that prayer is the vital tool with which saints can unleash against Him what was purchased for them at Calvary. If he can get the people of God busy with a thousand and one seemingly justifiable activities and they end up not praying, he sits tight in the corner of the world assigned to them to occupy for Jesus!

Secondly, the flesh of man – the combination of his soul and body – have a natural tendency to love what is easy and convenient. The soul is the realm of the mind, the will and the emotion. This is an active realm of life which often gets in the way of faith and prayer. It is the realm where thoughts wander, where inconvenient desires and even vivid solicitations of sin can flash when a weak believer is in prayer. It is the realm that wants to gather its thoughts and frame the prayer requests in beautiful language which ends up causing more weariness. It is also the realm where ought against fellow saints and other people are stored. The soul is the realm of expression of our humanity, preferences, likes and dislikes. It is the engine room which when cluttered by so much non essentials, causes little foxes to roam the unguarded vineyard!

The flesh is thus weak when it comes to the holy estate of prayer. Even Jesus Christ in His humanity acknowledged this truth as He wrestled with the unpleasant cup of death at the Garden of Gethsemane. See Matthew 26:36 – 45, especially verse 41.

1. Sin. Psalm 66:18; Proverbs 28:9,13; Isaiah 1:15; Isaiah 59: 1,2; Psalm 24:3 – 6; Hebrews 12:14

Any day, any time, un-confessed and un-repentant sin will hinder prayers. If you live in sin, the truth is that the heavens above will be closed. Whoever can pray freely in spite of un-repentant sin is a hypocrite, unfortunately deceiving none else but him or her self. A saint who falls into sin of any type is expected to run towards and not apart from God in penitence and receive His abundant mercy. 1 John chapter 1 and 1 John 2: 1,2 .

2. Unforgiving Spirit. Matthew 5: 23, 43 – 48; Matthew 6:12, 14, 15; Mark 11:25, 26; Colossians 3:12,13.

The Lord is a God of equity. He who forgives sins and debts we owe requires us to willingly do likewise to fellow men. Whoever hardens his heart and refuses to forgive fellow humans denies him or herself the privilege of access to the Throne of Grace and Mercy. It is therefore in our best interests to forgive those who offend us and to guard our hearts from becoming evil due to bitterness, spirit of vengeance and all sorts of negativity.

3. Disobedience of the Word of God or His revealed will. 1 Samuel 15: 23; John 15....; 1 John 3:22; 1 Peter 3:12

Going to God to ask afresh when you are living in active disobedience to His word or expressly revealed will is abominable in His sight. God requires you to do the first works, obey what He has already spoken so that you will have access to His throne. Whoever will hear and refuse to do the will of God is in an active state of rebellion.

4. Family dysfunction Malachi 2: 13 – 17; 1 Peter 3:1 – 7



There is a divine order in marriage which when maintained by the saints causes the home to be an oasis of love and care. When a woman pursues a life of rebellion against the authority of her husband, the heavens above the couple close. In the same vein, where a man oppresses and treats his wife despicably, he releases a negative force which closes up the heavens. The result is that the couple struggle and cannot find favour with God. It is in our best interests to heal our marriages to reflect the picture of Christ and His Church which is graphically outlined in Ephesians 5: 21 – 33; Colossians 3:18-25; Ephesians 6:1-4.

5. Misuse of Authority and rebellion of workers in the Market Place. Ephesians 6: 5 – 9.

It is wrong to mistreat workers, pay them starvation wages or delay their just and timely salaries. Their cries closes the heavens above their employers! James 5: 1 – 6. On the other hand, Christian employees who do wrong, steal or do not put in their best are actually raising spiritual forces which will hinder their prayers. 1 Timothy 6: 1 – 5; 1 Peter 2: 18 – 21.

6. Covetousness and Idolatry. 1 Timothy 6: 6 – 10; Ezekiel 14: 1 – 3.

A covetous heart will not hear from God because it is a terrible form of idolatry. Covetousness includes love of money or possession. A lusting after things will block our ability to hear and know the real will of God, Colossians 3:5

7. Impure Motives James 4: 1 – 3

8. Unbelief James 1: 5 – 7

9. Confusion. Romans 8: 26

10. Wrong Priority. Matthew 6: 23 – 34

11. Bypassing the Authority of the Name of Jesus, our only valid legal ground of praying effectively. John 16; 24

12. Self Righteousness, Pride, Hypocrisy Matthew 6:5; Luke 18: 10 – 14.

13. Refusal to abide in Christ and His the Word of God. John 15:7

14. Stingy spirit and absence of compassion for the needy. Deuteronomy 15: 7 – 11; Proverbs 31: 13. Matthew 25: 31 – 46; Luke 6:38; 2 Corinthians 9: 6-7

15. Satan and his cohorts. Daniel 10: 10 – 13; Ephesians 6: 12

As children of God, we need to cooperate with the Holy Spirit who will show us the particular hindrances at work in our lives. Laying hold of the promises of God, especially the power of repentance, we can rend our hearts and obtain mercy from God. As Christians we must learn the concept of justification. Any time a sin is genuinely repented of, God forgives and wipes the slate clean with the blood of the Lamb! Micah 7: 18 - 20

This is why God calls us to let go and allow Him to take over our prayer life. The greatest antidote to prayerlessness is to walk in the fullness and overflow of the Holy Spirit who knows the mind of God and knows when He can use our weak vessels to pray great prayers!

### **Praying in the Spirit**

If we are willing and yielded, the Holy Spirit undertakes the serious assignment, when we yield completely to Him, to take over the exercise of praying from us! This is what is referred to as praying in the Spirit. Here, the Holy Spirit – who knows the mind of the Father on the Throne of Grace – comes upon the saint in earnest prayer mode, borrows the vocal cord and brings forth prayer in unlearned tongues which ascend with express speed to God and receives speedy response. The Holy Spirit may also choose to bring forth the words of prayer in deep groaning that cannot be uttered. Whatever is the case, one solid fact is that in this dimension of prayer, we are able to bypass satanic opposition because he and his agents have no idea what is happening! Oh, that we may learn to give way to the Holy Spirit! Then He will simply bypass our mind, the seat of reasoning and simply speak through our tongue. No wonder there is such a refreshing, peace and joy whenever we pray in the Spirit. There is no tiredness because the prayer was not done by might or by power of the flesh. We

also pray in the Spirit when we forgo our agenda, let go and surrender our entire will to the Holy Spirit to lead us on as to what to ask for. In this state, we are so sensitive to His promptings that we do not exceed the circumference of the prayers He charts for us! He thus ministers to us what we need to ask for in prayer. **Romans 8:26, 27; 1 Corinthians 14: 14; Jude V.20.**

## **Spiritual Warfare. Ephesians 6:10 - 18**

### **Definition**

Spiritual warfare is the act of standing on the finished work of Calvary to war against the devil and his evil forces and in so doing, enforce the ordinances and purposes of God. Spiritual warfare can be defensive or offensive.

### **Offensive Spiritual Warfare**

Offensive spiritual warfare is when we are proactive in taking the battle to the gates of the enemy. Here, we lay hold of our redemptive inheritance as the spiritual seed of Abraham. Genesis 22:17. Matthew 16:18 implies that Satan will definitely attempt to snuff life out of His Church but victory is already assured when the saints rise up in the dimension of spiritual warfare to dismantle all his plans and dislodge all his strongholds.

#### Features of Offensive Spiritual Warfare

1. Necessity of constant vigilance. Here the watch word is to “watch and pray”. Many saints do one level of praying or the other. Very few however live in a state of watchfulness or vigilance. Vigilance implies being on a look out or watch tower to see what kind of cloud is forming in the horizon. It involves spotting things when they are in the formative stages before they develop into problems. We do not wait for those things to mature, but rather dismantle and dislodge them before they threaten our peace and joy.

2. Walking in full understanding that we have enemy and evil forces intent on undoing what God has done for us. We need to come to a full understanding of these critical truths:

**i) Who Satan is.** Satan is a created being who once worked very close to God as worship leader that served at the centre of the Throne of Grace. Filled with wisdom and beauty, he was wired to produce music. Pride and vaulting ambition caused him to err and seek to seize the Throne of God, leading to his transmutation from Lucifer to the Devil. Because he was an arch angel, he had access to much of the mysteries of life and in his fallen state has twisted for dark purposes to make men to switch loyalty from God to himself. Isaiah 14: 12 – 17 tells us the origin of the fall of Lucifer while Ezekiel 28: 11 – 19 goes further to describe how Lucifer was when he was created and assigned as Chief worship leader of the heavenly choir.

Satan tries to suggest otherwise but he does not have the immutable attributes of God. He is not Omni Potent, Omnipresent, Omniscient or Omnibenevolent. However, because he is the master of

deception and lies, he has organized his dark kingdom in such a way that his agents represent him at all strata of life so effectively that the unwary are led to believe that he is everywhere. It is critically important to Satan that the saints have a distorted view of who he actually is and the true extent of his power and operations. Once you underestimate Satan, you are set up for him to deal with you. If you overrate him to the degree of ascribing to him qualities that belong to God alone, you open a door of oppression for yourself. For this reason, we must pray for revelation to have a proper understanding of this enemy of God and of our souls. The truth is that Satan is not everywhere at the same time, a quality ascribable to God alone! He rather wanders throughout the whole earth. Job 2: 1 – 2. He also walks about like a roaring Lion seeking who to devour. 1 Peter 5:8. Like a thief, he is constantly seeking who and what to steal, kill and destroy John 10:10

ii) Satan achieves his ubiquity of presence with the presence of his vast army of cohorts spread across the world. On the day of his fall, Satan was able to deceive multitude of angels to follow him in his rebellion. It is estimated that as much as one third of the angels were part of that rebellion. Revelations 12: 3,4. Satan has organized them into a powerful, well knit kingdom of darkness with each disciplined officer holding down a specific territory and representing him as his agent. Some demons (name of fallen angels) have specific assignment over individuals while others are assigned to families, communities, mountains of society (Family, Schools, Arts/Literature, Culture, Media, Government/Politics; Business/the Professions; The Military to supervise their activities and lead them to flow according to his pattern and will. Christians should desire discernment to understand the nature and mode of operation of demonic spirits functioning in their spheres of influence.

#### **Kingdom of darkness: Levels of authority and circumference of operation.**

Ephesians 6: 10 – 12 outlines the hierarchical structure of the Kingdom of darkness.

At the Apex is Satan himself directing the operations of his agents.

**Principalities are ruling territorial demons which have charge over large areas and vast number of people.** Principalities are assigned to enforce the ordinances and plans of Satan in their spheres of influence. They are also assigned to ensure that people in those areas have a distorted view of God and to see no need for Him in their affairs. Just as there was a Prince of Persia trying to hinder the prayers of Daniel, there are Princes of nations and territories today. Daniel 10: 1 – 21. It is interesting that the Prince of Greece was also mentioned in that scripture (Verse 20).

**Powers are ruling demons that exercise influence over all thrones from which human rulership is exercised.** Every throne on planet earth there is an assigned demon which seeks to cause the human rulers to forget that they are ministers of God. With this deception, such human rulers go into delusions of grandeur and forget that they are created beings, until it is too late when sickness or death cuts them down.

**Rulers of the darkness of this world.** These are demons whose principal assignments are to inflict all manner of pain, suffering and crises upon mankind. The idea is to make people, in the heat of intense pain, to “curse God and die” as the wife of Job suggested in Job 2:9. There are such demons which instigate wars, release and spread diseases; cause people to forget important appointments; occasion wrong speech; occasion misunderstanding of intent; rouse people into stubbornness and insubordination; make children headstrong, self-willed and wild; cause people to tend to criminality and indeed all kinds of evil. The natural is engineered from the spiritual. For this reason, virtually

every imaginable evil that can come upon mankind have their roots in the infernal hearts of Satan and his agents.

**Spiritual wickedness in high places. 2 Corinthians 4: 3,4.** These are religious demons whose chief assignments are to cause humans to worship false gods and to draw their hearts away from the only true God. They promote the myriads of false religions that litter the universe. They appear as angels of light to cause men to receive extraordinary "light" from above which draw multitudes towards hell while believing they are serving God.

Even within the Christian faith, these demons are responsible for all the falling always that have occurred since the days of Jesus Christ when only 120 heeded His instruction not to go forth until the Church was officially birthed at Pentecost. Every false doctrine including that causes Christians to live carelessly, oblivious of the imminence of the return of the Lord and tendencies to eat and drink and forget the Great Commission are instigated by spiritual wickedness in high places. These demons twisted divine prosperity out of context to promote covetousness as prosperity message with saints piling up treasure for generations to come while the Kingdom needs within their localities and other parts of the world went unmet.

Today, they have penetrated the Kingdom message movement to promote a false and toxic gospel which depreciates the person of Jesus Christ to be a mere (undefined) King and not God. At the same time, these demons have twisted scripture out of context to tell saints that they are of equal rank with Jesus Christ since He is only our senior brother so that they will no longer have awe for God. The demons on assignment study the Word of God and turn their essential meanings upside down in order blinded the eyes of those they deceive.

The most outstanding assignment of these demons is to cause men to walk in ignorance of who Jesus Christ is. As the pivot of the salvation of man, inability to grasp the reality of His being God implies rejection of the divine plan of salvation. **2 Corinthians 4:3, 4.** By deny the only Lord that bought them, some of these folks have embraced a reprobate state.

### **Waging Spiritual War.**

The basis of spiritual warfare is this: all things in the natural are engineered in the spiritual realm. Whoever has mastery of the spiritual realm therefore will have mastery of the natural realm. This applies to virtually anything on planet earth. It is instructive to note that human beings are first and foremost, spirits; having souls as realm of self expression( The Mind; the will and the emotion) housed in a body. The essential man is therefore his spirit and his soul.

While the body is confined to one location at a time, the spirit and soul can apprehend in real terms, people, activities and objects that are in far flung locations. Humans can, by the force of imagination, see what is several miles and even years ahead (the basis of innovation and inventions). In other words, in the realm of the spirit, humans are able to "see", "hear"(perceive what is said about them even when they are not present. When we are alert in the spirit and watchful, we can pick up signals that are positive or negative concerning plans of the enemy and his natural and human agents.

This is why Jesus commanded us to watch and pray. By watching, we are able to pick up strains of Satanic activity so that we can address them appropriately in prayer and spiritual warfare. It is

important to distinguish between these two spiritual activities. In prayer, you are dealing with God – petitioning Him for some blessings or to intervene in some ways.

In Spiritual warfare however, you are enforcing the ordinances of God. You already know or have discerned the will of God and armed with the spring board that is His will, you launch out to resist the devil and to snatch from him anything he stole from you or the saints! It is important however to ensure that you are under right alignment with God and any authority He placed over you, if you are to wage successful spiritual warfare. Furthermore, it is imperative that you who would wage spiritual warfare have first also successfully dealt with all strong holds in your mind so that you can see clearly and according to the mind of God. 2 Corinthians 10: 3 – 6. Philippians 4:8. Spiritual warfare can take many forms. These include:

**1. Binding and Loosing. Matthew 16:19. Luke 11: 21 – 22.** Here, we receive the assign of Jesus Christ to bind every demonic spirit at work in every circumstance before us. In the same way, we loose people and situations from demonic oppression which may manifest as sicknesses or other forms of disorder. We do not engage in this spiritual war on our own merit and ability. We do so in the name of Jesus Christ at which every knee shall bow in all realms of existence. Matthew 18:19, 20; Mark 16:17; Philippians 2:9, 10; Revelation 3:7. Note that Satan is not yet due for binding. He has license to roam around at this present time. Binding Satan therefore is a meaningless activity. You can however bind his works and effect of his presence, in the name of Jesus Christ.

**2. Casting out evil spirits – Luke 11: 14 – 24. We have the authority to discern, bind and cast out evil spirits that are the root causes of problems. Jesus most of the time identified the nature of the demons at work and addressed them by name.**

**3. Resisting the devil from every negative activity** with steadfast or unwavering faith so that he has no option than to flee as we submit ourselves to God. James 4:7; 1 Peter 5: 8, 9. We need to do this also in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**4. Overthrowing Satan himself by the Blood of the Lamb** backed by the testimony of our lives as witnesses of Christ. Revelations 12:11. Do not ever try to deal with Satan when there are unconfessed and unrepentant sins in your life. You can end up as the seven sons of Sceva.

**5. Passing decrees that are prompted by the Holy Spirit** or derived from the Word of God against any situation or the demonic powers that are behind them. Job 22: 27,28. John 14: 12 - 14. These decrees are not to be issued lightly but as inspired by the Holy Spirit. That is why it is wrong to use prayer books in spiritual warfare. Every activity and circumstance is different. At the grave of Lazarus, Jesus passed a decree for him to come forth, after worshipping the Father. John 11: 38 – 44.

**6. Angels of God can be called forth, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,** to fight unseen spiritual wars, when you exhaust your capacity. Daniel chapter 10 offers an interesting account of angelic intervention. Angels are spirit beings assigned by God to wait on us and enable us fulfil the divine assignment. Hebrews 1:14.

***Take note that the Word of God is a critical resource in spiritual warfare...Luke 11: 27 - 28***

## **Defensive Spiritual Warfare**

It is defensive when we lay hold of the right spiritual equipment to hold what belongs to God and His Kingdom which is assigned to us, individually or severally to keep. Jesus gave an express command to the Church that the gates of hell cannot prevail over His Church. Matthew 16:18 **Examples of defensive spiritual warfare.**

1. Battling for the destiny God has unfolded for us which the enemy and his agents seek to plunder or deflect.
2. Fighting to prevent Satanic attempts to take over the hearts and minds of children through worldly amusements, drug and substance addictions.
3. Fighting to safeguard such core institutions as the marriage, family and the church from the onslaught of the enemy.
4. Fighting to defend the health, finances and general well being of saints of God from onslaughts of the wicked one.