

## Following Jesus: Into Warfare (a teaching guide)

by Jim Sayles

### Summary:

As born-again believers we have an enemy, Satan, who hates us and opposes the will of God for us in the world. Satan is also an enemy of all mankind, even those he controls and empowers.

#### 1 Peter 5:8

*Be self controlled and alert. Your **enemy** the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*

(Comment: This passage applies to Christians, not non-believers who are unknowingly aligned with Satan.)

The “kosmos” (observable world order of governments and institutions, including aspects of organized Christianity) is primarily under Satan’s control, and is set against the will of God for man.

#### John 12:31

*Now is the time for judgment on this world; now **the prince of this world** will be driven out.*

The “flesh” or remnants of the old sin nature, when allowed to control our thoughts, words, and actions, resists the will of God, and is easily influenced by Satan and by the kosmos under his control.

#### Romans 8:7

*...the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so.*

We are commanded and empowered **by grace through faith**, to overcome the flesh, the kosmos, and Satan in order to experience God’s will operating in us and through us, which is to follow Jesus as he destroys the devil’s works and sets the captives free. Our faith, thus demonstrated, glorifies God and manifests Christ through our obedient faith responses.

#### John 16:33

*“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

1 John 5:4,5

*For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.*

1 John 3:8

*The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's works.*

The battle is won or lost in the souls of men.

\* \* \*

In this age, the “kosmos” (observable world order) is primarily under the authority of the “god of this age”, aka the “prince of the kosmos,” and believers, who were once under his control in the “dominion of darkness” a.k.a. the “beast kingdom” are now citizens of the Kingdom of God and aliens and strangers in the kosmos. We were once strangers to the covenants of promise. We are now participants in the covenants of promise. We were once enemies of God. We are now enemies of Satan and both Ambassadors and warriors for Christ.

The nature of the conflict:

At the very moment of our salvation we were thrust into the conflict in a new way, because our escape from the dominion of darkness into the Kingdom of God, angered Satan, the enemy of our souls, who is now determined to oppose the will of God in our lives. This campaign is like an anti-terrorist action, rather than open warfare, because Satan's chief weapon is not power but deception and subterfuge.

Satan has been overcome by the blood of Jesus Christ, but just as the sin nature of the believer has to be practically defeated through the operation of faith in our individual lives, we also overcome Satan in our individual and corporate lives through the operation of faith. Satan's complete and final destruction takes place as he is cast into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:10).

Q: Why wasn't Satan thrown into the Lake of Fire immediately after Jesus died on the cross and was resurrected from the dead?

A: The final judgment of Satan also brings about the final judgment of unbelievers. If Satan was cast into the Lake of Fire at the moment of his spiritual defeat, then only the Old Covenant saints and those few who were already New Covenant believers would have been redeemed.

Matthew 25:41

*"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.*

(Comment: The Lake of Fire was not prepared for mankind, but for Satan and his followers. It was not God's will for men to suffer hell. But those who have followed Satan will suffer his fate.)

Satan's "Power" vs. Satan's "Authority":

Satan has no **authority** in heaven and no authority in the Kingdom of God. (Luke 10:19; Isaiah 14:12; Revelation 12:3-9) Wherever the Kingdom of God is established...in a life, in a home, in a church, in a ministry, or in a man...the destruction or nullification of the devil's works is demonstrated and the captives are set free.

Satan has no **authority** in hell.

Satan is not the "tormentor". He will be the "tormented".

Revelation 20:10

*And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be **tormented** day and night for ever and ever.*

The "gates of Hades" is neither an offensive nor defensive position. No attack on the church can be initiated from Hades. Hades is not the habitation of Satan or his demons. "Gates of Hell" is an Old Covenant euphemism for "death". It is death, then, that will not overcome the church in this passage.

Matthew 16:18

*And I tell you that you are Peter, [ 16:18 Peter means rock. ] and on this rock I will build my church, and the **gates of Hades** [ 16:18 Or **hell** ] will not overcome it. [ 16:18 Or not prove stronger than it ]*

Satan does have **authority** over the fallen angels.

Revelation 12: 7-9

*And there was war in heaven... (Not a reference to the dwelling place of God, but to the spiritual realm)... Michael... the archangel of the covenant... and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and **his angels** with him.*

Romans 6:12 Amplified

*For we are not wrestling with flesh and blood [contending only with physical opponents], but against the despotisms, against the powers, against [the master spirits who are] the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenly (supernatural) sphere.*

Satan and his demons have spiritual “powers”:

They can travel instantaneously through space, but they are NOT omnipresent.

They can send their thoughts, like radio waves, to one another and to men (under certain circumstances), but they are NOT omniscient.

They have the ability to control the thoughts, emotions, and physical functions of a man or a woman when that man or woman has knowingly or unknowingly given access.

They have the ability to manifest a physical presence and manipulate the natural world (i.e. weather, moving physical objects, etc.).

Satan can infuse men with certain “powers” just as the Holy Spirit infuses believers with power *by grace through faith.*)

Satan’s “authority” in the world is through man. He has no authority of his own.

Mankind was given authority over the kosmos through Adam, and Satan USURPED **authority** over the kosmos through the fall of Adam. He is called “the god of this age,” because he has authority over fallen men through deception. He is called “the prince of this world” (kosmos), because fallen mankind inadvertently yields to his authority.

The Lord's victory over Satan through His life, death and resurrection established kingdom authority in the kosmos through the "second Adam" (i.e. "the kingdom is at hand...").

Hebrews 2:14,15

*Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil-- and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

Those who are "in Christ" are, therefore, removed from Satan's authority and placed under kingdom authority. They are also, subsequently, **given** kingdom authority through the operation of faith. (Luke 10:19; Matthew 28:18-20)

Matthew 28:18

*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*

**Therefore go...**(in My name, in My authority, in My power)...

(Comment: Luke 10:19 – the 72 disciples were instructed not to rejoice that the demons were subject to them but that their names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life.)

Matthew 16:19

*I will give you the **keys of the kingdom of heaven**; whatever you bind on earth will be [ 16:19 Or have been ] bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be [ 16:19 Or have been ] loosed in heaven."*

(Comment: This is the activity of faith, not self-initiated authority. We bind and loose IN HIS NAME and IN HIS AUTHORITY, as the Spirit directs, through the activity of faith. i.e. *by grace through faith...*)

The Kingdom of God is present in the kosmos wherever believers are present, and the kosmos is now the battleground. The Kingdom of God is advanced as men are removed from the dominion of darkness into the kingdom of light, and Satan aggressively (and often effectively) opposes the advancement of the kingdom of light. (1 Peter 5:8,9; 2 Thessalonians 2:10; 2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 4:1; 2 Timothy 2:22-26)

Matthew 13:38,39

*The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and **the enemy** who sows them **is the devil**.*

The flesh resists the reality that, as disciples, we, who manifest the life of Jesus Christ *by grace through faith* in the kosmos, are engaged in a continuous struggle as Ambassadors for Christ and ministers of the gospel, but the revelation of God and the experience of those who have followed and are FOLLOWING Jesus in true discipleship, is that we are and will continue to be engaged in **urgent spiritual warfare** all our lives.

This is a radically different attitude than commonly found in the Body of Christ where the most common attitude seems to be..."now that we are Christians we try to be good people, meeting our religious obligations and trying to convince others to join us until we finally go to heaven."

In Matthew 10:24 Jesus said, "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword."

1 John 3:8b Amplified

*The reason the Son of God was made manifest (visible) was to undo (destroy, loosen, and dissolve) the works the devil [has done].*

Therefore, as we lay down "our" lives, submitting our wills to the will of God to follow Jesus, we WILL be **aggressively engaged in spiritual conflict with the enemy** as we destroy or nullify the devil's works and set the captives free.

John 16:33

*"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*

1 John 4:4

*...the one who is in you...(Jesus Christ)...is greater than the one who is in the world...(Satan as the spirit of antichrist)*

1 John 16:33

*In this world you will have trouble. **But take heart! I have overcome the world.** And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." AMEN*