Spiritual Warfare

Charles F. Stanley - In Touch Ministries
For everything, a season, and in everything, prayer.
A VIGILANT PRAYER LIFE

If you were a soldier on the battlefield, would you walk outside your secured building alone, without any armor or backup? Would you skip your training and fitness sessions and ignore your leader’s commands and warnings?

Of course not, but that’s exactly what many Christians do when it comes to their spiritual lives. They try to go it alone, thinking they’ve got it handled. Eventually, they lose the desire to spend time in God’s Word and grow deaf to the Holy Spirit’s guidance. Becoming complacent, they forget they are even at war, and wake up one day to find that the enemy has infiltrated their hearts and minds.

This is exactly what the enemy wants us to do, but we need not fall victim to his deceptive tactics. By reading God’s Word and staying connected to Him through prayer, we place ourselves under the protection of the Almighty. He is the One with the power to save and to defeat the evil one. So if we are to win, we must surrender our lives to the Lord.

Despite the enemy’s attacks, we can live each day in the victory Christ has won for us. But our ability to stand firm will only be as strong as our relationship with God. That’s why we must stay vigilant in our prayer lives. Otherwise, we forfeit much of the power Christ’s sacrifice makes available to us. This booklet contains many of Dr. Stanley’s teachings on spiritual warfare and was created to enrich your prayer time with God. We pray He uses this booklet to strengthen your faith, protect you from the enemy’s attacks, and remind you of the victory we have in Christ.

From your friends at
In Touch Ministries

PREPARED FOR BATTLE

Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

EPHESIANS 6:10-17
A DECLARATION OF WAR

One of the most important lessons God has for us is found in the first book of the Bible. After the account of God’s creation in Genesis, we are given a description of the great deception that has affected every human being from that time forward. After Satan deceived Eve, both she and Adam disobeyed God, sin entered the world, and we’ve been at war ever since.

Satan used deception to launch a spiritual attack upon the entire human race, and he continues to use this tactic by convincing us of one basic idea: We can sin without consequences.

God had given Adam and Eve a clear command, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die” (Gen. 2:16–17). The account in Genesis 3:1–6 bears witness to the fact that no matter what anyone else says, no one can sin without suffering the consequences.

THE ENEMY

“Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.” (Gen. 3:1). This serpent was not like the snakes we know today because it probably stood erect and may even have been attractive since Eve was not repulsed when it started a conversation with her. Only after it was cursed by God for its part in the fall of mankind was it condemned to crawl on its belly in the dust.

This was a creature God allowed in the Garden to test Adam and Eve,
and he’s still around today. His goal was to convince Eve that what God had said was incorrect. He’s identified in Revelation 12:9 as “the great dragon” and “the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world.” Neither his goal nor his tactics have changed. He’s opposed to God and continually lies, trying to deceive mankind into believing sin doesn’t lead to death.

**THE PROPAGANDA**

In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had everything they needed or could possibly want. There was only one restriction given by God, and that’s exactly what the devil focused upon when he asked Eve, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’?” (Gen. 3:1).

Eve answered, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die’” (vv. 2–3).

The devil wanted her to desire what she didn’t have, and he directly contradicted God, saying, “You surely will not die!” (v. 4). He pointed out something else Eve lacked. “For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (v. 5). As she started considering the forbidden tree, Eve noticed it was “good for food” and “a delight to the eyes” and “desirable to make one wise” (v. 6).

Satan hides his deceptions in beautiful packaging that appeals to our natural senses and desires. The last thing he wants us to think about is the devastating outcome of sin. That’s why he tempts us to minimize our sin by claiming that “nobody’s perfect” or that we “just made a mistake.” We’ve also fallen for his deception when we only focus on the goodness of God and not on His righteousness and holiness, which require punishment for our sin.

**THE ENEMY’S TACTICS | SATAN’S DECEPTION IS PROGRESSIVE IN NATURE**

**STEP 1:** Doubt. He led Eve to question God’s words.

**STEP 2:** Denial. Doubt leads to the denial of truth.

**STEP 3:** Deception. Without biblical truth as an anchor, we can be easily deceived about His nature and commands.

**STEP 4:** Disobedience. We do what God has forbidden because we don’t believe Him about the seriousness of sin.

**STEP 5:** Destruction. We suffer the destructive consequences of our sin.
But if we are faithful to read God’s Word and rely on the Holy Spirit, He will warn us of the self-destructive and harmful nature of sin. The Lord’s commands are not harsh, but loving. He knows we’re fighting a spiritual war against Satan, and He wants to protect us from the damage that disobedience and sin will wreak in our lives. Our obedience to God and His Word is our protection and a witness to those around us.

Thankfully, people who are living righteously and obediently before God can recognize sin and deception and know what is right and wrong. Any form of disobedience in our lives will result in static in our souls; a feeling of distance that, if not corrected, leads to separation and spiritual decline. At this point the Lord may use circumstances, even calamity, to try and bring us back into fellowship with Him. If we don’t respond, eventually our spirit becomes hardened to the things of God.

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**DeFeAtInG tHe eNemy**

NO ONE CAN LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IN HIS OR HER OWN STRENGTH.

It took me a long time to learn this vital truth. For years, I struggled with how to live a successful, joyful, peaceful Christian life. I believed God had saved me, but I thought it was up to me to live a life pleasing to Him.

One day, Galatians 5:22–23 came alive to me in a way it never had before. It explains “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, [and] self-control.” God showed me that those qualities were not a consistent part of my life. I prayed desperately for Him to show me how to live a godly life. He used **THEY FOUND THE SECRET** by Raymond Edman¹, a little book consisting...
of 20 spiritual biographies. Through it, God opened my eyes to something I had never realized before: The key to the Christian life is to allow Christ to live His life through you. This truth absolutely revolutionized my walk with the Lord.

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THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

Before accepting Christ, no matter how good a person seems to others, Scripture says sin separates us from God. Until an unbeliever accepts God’s gift of salvation, he or she is dead spiritually. We “lived in the lusts of our flesh . . . and were by nature children of wrath” (Eph. 2:1-3). Every person without Christ is separated from the Father. Because He is holy, He cannot tolerate sinfulness, and therefore will not heed unbelievers’ prayers (Isa. 59:2) until they repent and accept God’s gift of salvation.

The process works like this: First, the Holy Spirit convicts them of their need for God’s forgiveness. Then, they confess—or agree with the Lord—that they have disobeyed Him, and accept Jesus’ death on the cross as forgiveness for their sins. Finally, they repent, or turn away from their old lifestyles to new life, which is a vital part of salvation (2 Cor. 5:17).

AT THE MOMENT OF CONVERSION, OUR SINS ARE WASHED AWAY. OUR NAMES ARE WRITTEN IN THE LAMB’S BOOK OF LIFE, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT SEALS US FOREVER AS HIS CHILDREN.

Once we are saved, our guilt is erased, and we are assured of eternal life. But we still have two problems. First of all, our world is full of rebellion, disobedience, corruption, and wickedness. It constantly challenges us to reject or ignore God’s best for our lives. Second, we still have what the Bible calls “the flesh,” or that part of us that desires to rebel against God. Because of these two things, we will never reach a point in our lifetimes where we never sin.
LIVING IN VICTORY

The key to godly living is relying on Jesus to live through us. The fact that we are “in Christ” makes us fit for heaven; “Christ in us” makes us fit for this life (John 17:22–23.) We died to our old selves and were raised to new life. This is one reason why Scripture refers to the salvation experience as being “born again” (John 3:3).

At the moment of conversion, the Spirit of God, also known as the Holy Spirit, came to live within us. His primary responsibility is to live the life of Christ through us. When we rely on Him, He helps us think, act, and react as Jesus would in our place. As we develop spiritually, we grow in our ability to allow Him to live through us. Galatians 2:20 puts it this way: “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.” (See also Col. 3:1–5 and Phil. 1:21.)

Each morning you and I can pray something like this: “Lord, it’s Your life—I’ve surrendered it all to You. Thank You for dealing with each issue I face today.” We will still experience temptation and adversity, but now we know it’s not our responsibility to face those things in our own strength. In His power, we can have joyful, confident, and productive lives.

This is not a one-time commitment; you will probably have to surrender to Him over and over. When you fail, remind yourself that you cannot live the Christian life in your own power—Jesus must live it through you.
Who is going to run your life—you or Jesus Christ who lives within you? If you are wise, you will allow the Son of God to direct you each day. Let Him give you guidance, direction, and power to make godly choices. Does that mean you will escape all problems, heartaches, and burdens? No. Nor does it mean that you will never sin again. But you won’t have to struggle on your own. Instead, you can walk in the power of the living God—and that is life at its very best.

SURRENDER: THE WAY TO WIN
WHAT STEPS SHOULD YOU TAKE IF YOU DESIRE TO LET JESUS LIVE HIS LIFE THROUGH YOU?

• **ADMIT YOUR FAILURE.**
  Acknowledge that you feel spiritually frustrated or defeated. You have tried to live the Christian life and been unsuccessful.

• **CONFESS YOUR INADEQUACY.**
  Realize that even if you were given countless chances, you could not achieve spiritual victory on your own.

• **ACKNOWLEDGE THAT CHRIST IS SUFFICIENT.**
  Since He is God, He has the ability to meet all your needs—wisdom for every decision, strength for every situation.

• **ABANDON YOUR LIFE TO HIM.**
  You must give Him permission to live His life through you. Let go of your own efforts to “be a good Christian” or “do enough” to please Him. Instead, surrender your life to Him and rely on His strength.

• **CONFESS IT TO BE TRUE.**
  In other words, state out loud, “Jesus, please live Your life through me. I surrender to Your will and yield myself to You.”

CALLING IN THE CAVALRY
BEFORE JESUS WENT TO THE CROSS, HE TOLD HIS DISCIPLES THAT HE WOULD SEND THEM A HELPER.

The Holy Spirit is a member of the Trinity along with the Father and the Son. Yet some believers may not understand that God in the person of His Spirit has taken up residence in them. Instead of living in the Spirit’s power and provision, they simply do the best they can in their own strength and wait for the day they can finally go to heaven. The result is a defeated and dissatisfied life filled with disappointment in God.

However, the problem is not God, but ignorance of the Holy Spirit’s presence and guidance in their lives. Therefore, let’s take a look at the many ways the Spirit of God “saves the day” for us.
WHY DID JESUS SEND THE HOLY SPIRIT?

• He knew we would be unable to follow His commands on our own. Without the Spirit’s help, we would be unsuccessful at living godly lives (see Acts 1:8).

“BUT THE HELPER, THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHOM THE FATHER WILL SEND IN MY NAME, HE WILL TEACH YOU ALL THINGS, AND WILL BRING TO YOUR REMEMBRANCE ALL THAT I SAID TO YOU.” JOHN 14:26

• He accomplishes His work here on earth by living through us. That doesn’t mean we will be perfect, but that we should “[strive] according to His power,” not our own (Col. 1:29).

THE HOLY SPIRIT . . .

CONVICTS US OF SIN. JOHN 16:8 | First of all, He makes us realize that we are sinners in need of salvation so that we will repent and turn to Christ in faith and receive forgiveness for our sins. And even after salvation, He continues to convict us when we fail to live as we should by reminding us that sin no longer fits us since we are followers of Jesus.

SEALS US. EPH. 1:13 | In biblical times a seal was used to authenticate, show ownership, and signify protection. The Holy Spirit seals us in Christ as children of God who are safe and under His divine care. This seal can never be broken—not by God, the devil, or us. However, this doesn’t mean we can sin without consequence. God’s conviction will continue, and if we do not heed it, His loving correction will follow.

INDWELLS US. ROM. 8:11 | The Holy Spirit is an eternal gift sent to live in us, and we are under His divine leadership and empowered to do whatever He requires of us.

TEACHES US. JOHN 14:26 | Because He is God, the Spirit is a teacher who surpasses all others. He guides us as we read scripture and helps us interpret it accurately. The Bible is an amazing treasure God has given us, and as we faithfully read it, asking the Spirit to teach us, He will help us comprehend it.

REVEALS TRUTH TO US. 1 COR. 2:12 | What is promised here is divine knowledge, which reaches far beyond ourselves and this universe, and it is found in God’s Word. We may not understand immediately what
a passage means or how to apply it, but if we’ll keep seeking and searching God’s Word, the Spirit will give us understanding. However, if we give up reading the Word, we’ll lack the wisdom that comes only from God.

GUIDES US. JOHN 16:13 | Our Helper is also our Guide. He helps us discern what is true and guides us in making right decisions. Instead of seeking other people’s advice, we should first ask the Holy Spirit to direct us.

BEARS FRUIT THROUGH US. GAL. 5:22-23 | Often the way positive character qualities are developed in us is through circumstances that might otherwise cause us to respond in an opposite manner. For instance, if we are having trouble loving someone, the Holy Spirit can change our attitude if we will ask Him for help and genuinely desire to walk in obedience to Him.

REMINDS US. JOHN 14:26 | Although Christ’s disciples had been with Him and heard Him teach for three years, they had only their memories after He was gone. To teach others about Jesus, they needed the Holy Spirit to help them remember. And even today, we need His help to bring to mind passages that apply to particular situations. If we’ll be faithful to read the Bible, the Spirit will help us recall it whenever we have need of it.

EQUIPS US WITH SPIRITUAL GIFTS. 1 COR. 12:4 | The Spirit gives us special abilities, enabling us to serve one another in the manner He desires.

EMPOWERS US. ACTS 1:8 | His strength enables us to accomplish whatever He calls us to do and equips us in every area of life.

FILLS US. EPH. 5:18 | This is a life governed and guided by the Holy Spirit and ever conscious of His indwelling presence. No believer has a legitimate excuse for not obeying God, because the Spirit has equipped each of us to do whatever He desires or commands.

All we need to live the Christian life has been given to us. If we are willing to yield ourselves to Him, we may freely draw on the resources of God’s Spirit. Our divine Helper is always there to attend to us in our need. At no point since trusting Jesus as our Savior have we ever been alone or helpless, even if that was how we felt. He is always present and actively working in our lives.
THE PRAYER OF A SPIRITUAL WARRIOR

DEAR HEAVENLY FATHER,

Thank You for being a God who protects and fights for His people. You will not let the enemy snatch us from Your hands (Rom. 8:31-39; Isa. 41:13). He is no match for You—You defeated him at the cross, once and for all. What he came to destroy, You preserve. You are our Rock and Fortress, a present help in times of trouble, our Savior in every way (Ps. 18:2; 46:1). Thank You for sending Your Spirit to live through us, that You might reveal Yourself to the world as the only good and holy God. All good things come from You (James 1:17). May we not fall prey to the enemy’s temptations, but stand firm in faith, trusting You to go before us and make a way. You keep us safe. You defeat the evil one. While he may seem to reign for a season, he will spend eternity in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10), and You will restore what he has taken away (Joel 2:25-32). Teach us to trust You, even when it looks like we’re losing, for You are our hope and giver of eternal life. Amen.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, VISIT INTOUCH.ORG/GOD OR CALL 1-800-789-1473

1The book THEY FOUND THE SECRET by Raymond Edman is available for purchase at intouch.org or wherever Christian books are sold.
One way many people meditate on God's Word is through Bible art journaling. It allows you to slow down and use your creative side to impress scripture upon your heart. If you're new to this activity, here's an easy and fun way to get started.

1. From your menu bar, select “File” then “Print.”
2. Select “Pages to Pages” and type #=#.
3. Select “Paper Size and Handling” and choose “Custom Scale” to make the images larger or smaller as needed. You may have to try a few different sizes to get the right fit for your Bible.
4. Print the pages.
5. Cut out each block of scripture.
6. Choose a scripture and the location you want to place it in your Bible.
7. Place the scripture behind the page. Because the pages of your Bible are thin, you can then trace the image that shows through the paper.
8. Color the page in your Bible as desired (colored pencils or water color paint work great!) You many need to keep the stencil under the page to minimize bleed-through.
9. Trace again with a darker marker or pen if necessary.
10. Enjoy your new Bible artwork!

Alternative Options: Print the following pages and cut out the blocks of scripture. Color and laminate them to keep as bookmarks! Not feeling crafty? That's OK. You can simply print, cut, and place these scripture verses wherever you need them to remind you of God’s power and protection.

FOR REFERENCE
https://embracingthelovely.com/coloring-pages-bible-journaling/
https://www.etsy.com/listing/286211253/4-bible-journaling-stencils-printable?ref=shop_home_active_9
IN ALL THESE THINGS, WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERERS THROUGH HIM WHO LOVED US. ROMANS EIGHT THIRTY SEVEN NIV

Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. JAMES 4:7 NASB

But the Lord is faithful. He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. 2 THESSALONIANS 3:3 NIV

"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the Lord of hosts. ZECHARIAH 4:6 NASB