

1. Know The Situation!

Unbeknownst to most people, we all live our lives within two distinct **Realms**. One *visible*, the other *invisible*. One *physical*, the other *spiritual*. One *temporal*, the other *eternal*. And unless and until Christians learn to live victoriously in both, they will never experience all that God intends for them.

Everyone is familiar with the first ... the **Physical Realm**, but not as many are familiar with the second ... the **Spiritual Realm**. It is *imperative* for us as Believers to understand the *nature* and *authority* of each, for within them exists **Kingdoms** which are waging *war* for the *souls* of all people who have and who will ever live.

Christians, whether they know it or not, are *participants* in this *war*. Our ignorance will spell our defeat and failure, so it is of utmost importance that we *educate* and *prepare* ourselves to engage in the battles and emerge *victorious* for our **King** to Whom we *belong*!

The **Apostle Paul** describes the situation in this manner.

Ephesians 6:12

"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."

What does Paul mean when he points out that "our struggle is not against flesh and blood"? _____

What is Paul is saying in this verse? _____

So often we struggle against other people, be they our *boss*, our *parents* or our *spouses*. But Paul is saying look beyond them, for our enemy is *not* that person, but the *spiritual entities* that are working through them to steal God's Joy and Peace from our lives. So if you ever thought your boss was the 'devil', you're not too far off! But we need to view the world through God's eyes in order to detect our true adversaries. They dwell unseen in the *Spiritual Realm* and are dedicated to our demise! **Beware!**

The Kingdom of God

God's Kingdom exists wherever He alone is Sovereign, where His Will is done ... whether it be within an entire Realm as in Heaven, or within an individual's life ... evidenced by His Joy, Holiness and Peace.

The Kingdom of Darkness

The Kingdom of Darkness exists wherever God's Will is defied and His Rule denied ... whether it be within an entire Realm, nation or life.

Christians Belong to God

"Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?"

"For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body."

1Corinthians 6:19-20

Ephesians 6:12 (Observations)

Underline what our 'struggle is not against'.

Circle all the things it is against.

Underline where wicked spiritual forces dwell.

The words Paul uses to refer to the spiritual entities in this passage were commonly used words to describe those in positions of authority, such as governors and judges. This implies that just as those exercising authority in our physical world are organized by responsibility and power, the same is true in the **Spiritual World**.

"Spiritual forces of wickedness" are given *jurisdictions*, or *territories*, within which they exercise their power, ranging from those assigned to specific *individuals*, to entire *cities* and *nations*, all the way up to satan who '*prowls*' around the world over which he rules as god. We stand against an *organized army of spiritual beings*, which is why Paul gives instruction on how we can and must resist ... instructions which we will cover in following Lessons.

You may not have had enemies in your life before, but as a Christian, you have them now!

1 Peter 5:8

"Be of sober spirit, be on the alert.

*Your adversary,
the devil,
prowls around like a roaring lion,
seeking someone to devour."*

Describe what it means to be "sober" and "alert". _____

How should Peter's description of the devil affect the way we live?

If we choose to live our lives oblivious to the *Spiritual War* being waged against us, our lives will not reflect the presence of God within it. In fact, we will begin living like any non believing person would.

Ephesians 4:

- 17** *So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord,
that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk,
in the futility of their mind,*
- 18** *being darkened in their understanding,
excluded from the life of God
because of the ignorance that is in them,
because of the hardness of their heart;*
- 19** *and they, having become callous,
have given themselves over to sensuality
for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.*

Why does Paul describe the Gentile's (non-believer's) mind as futile?

Why does a futile mind and 'darkened understanding' lead to a life of 'sensuality', 'impurity' and 'greediness'? _____

1 Peter 5:8 (Observations)

Circle the two things we should be.

Circle who our 'adversary' is.

Circle what he is like.

Underline what he is seeking.

Peter's instructions for us to be '*of sober spirit*' and '*on the alert*' are in the form of **commands**. In our war against Spiritual Forces of Wickedness, Christ has given us an *order* through His Apostle, and we must obey.

In Western Culture, *demons* and *witches* are relegated to *fairytale*s and *movies*. But in the **Third World**, they are *very real* occurrences. In **Papua New Guinea**, the Christians I knew could *see* the demons. I could only *sense* their *presence*. There, *witches* may be family members. *Mothers* could *fly* and deliver dinner to their children attending school *hundreds of miles* away and return the same night, and never enter an aircraft. *Medicine men*, *death curses* and *werewolves* were all there. **It's real!**

Ephesians 4:17-19 (Observations)

v17

Underline how we should no longer 'walk'.

Underline how the Gentiles walk.

v18

Circle where they are 'darkened'.

Circle from where they are 'excluded'.

Underline the two reasons why.

v19

Circle what they have become.

Underline what their callousness has caused them to do.

Underline what they practice.

Ephesians 4:17-19 describes what a life without an awareness of God often becomes ... a life focused completely on the *Physical Realm* including its '*sensuality*', leading to all kinds of '*impurity*'. Perhaps you can identify with Paul's description, and remember the futility that this kind of life brings. If we, as Christians, fail to live *soberly* and *alertly*, we will fall back into this kind of lifestyle, focused on our feelings and the *Physical Realm* instead of faith in **God** and His **Kingdom**.

The previous passage revealed the battle ground of **Spiritual Warfare** ... our **Minds**. As it showed, if our thinking becomes *futile*, and our understanding *darkened* and *divorced* from **God**, we will be in danger of slipping into the *abyss* of a life consumed by 'sensuality' and all kinds of *lusts*. **But we are not defenseless!**

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

- 3 *For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh,*
- 4 *for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.*
- 5 *We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,*

What kind of 'speculations' do people raise up against God today?

How do we take 'every thought captive to the obedience of Christ'?

God addresses the battle of our Minds through the *Apostle Paul* in *Romans 12:2*.

Romans 12:2

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."*

*The word translated 'transformed' **commands us to continually transform ourselves completely from within**. It is a continuous process that we have a part in. What is the significance of this?*

How does the 'renewing of (our) mind result in a 'transformed' life?

"for as he thinketh in his heart, so is he."

Proverbs 23:7

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

(Observations)

v3

Underline how 'we do not war'.

v4

Circle what our 'weapons' are not.

Circle what our weapons are.

Underline for what reason.

v5

Underline what we are destroying.

Circle what they are raised up against.

Circle what we are taking captive.

Underline to what.

The Greek word translated 'speculations' is 'logismos'. It doesn't take a Greek scholar to figure out that it is where we get our word 'Logic', and refers to *ideas* and *beliefs*. **Satan** and **this world** have raised many *arguments* against God, His existence and the Christian Faith. We must capture these false ideas and counter them with **God's Truth!**

Romans 12:2 (Observations)

**we will examine this first phrase in a later lesson.*

Circle what we are to be.

Underline how.

Underline why.

Circle the three words describing God's will.

As indicated from the start, the Christian must learn to live victoriously in both the **Physical** and **Spiritual Realms**. This requires a **complete transformation** in the way *perceive* things, especially in the unseen world. This can only occur with a complete *transformation* of our Minds as we *continually renew our minds* with **God's Word** by the **Power of His Spirit** in order to *think* and *live* in accordance with **God's Truth** and see things as they are. Then we will not be *deceived* by the forces of darkness!

Application

Review this Lesson and Answer the Following:

1. Describe the "Situation" of the Christian.

2. What Specific Things Will You Do to Apply What you Have Learned?
