“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:18-19)

**Obedience to the Great Commission requires that we engage in spiritual warfare.** How do you think about spiritual warfare? What does church planting have to do with it? In view of our RAK and Sharjah church plants, whether you go or stay, your eyes need to be fixed on the one who conquered Satan and death on the cross.

*Be prepared with this issue of The Herald.*

**THIS ISSUE:**

1. Church Planting as Spiritual Warfare - Wes Pastor
2. Strategies for Fighting Sexual Sin - John Piper
3. The Devil is in The Details - R.C. Sproul Jr.
4. Three Ingredients for an Evangelistic Church - Mike McKinley
I've never fought in a war, but I've read my share of war stories, watched my share of war documentaries, and visited my share of war memorials. Every war had some objective, some overriding purpose that drove men to sacrifice their lives.

Spiritual warfare is no different. What is the overriding goal of spiritual warfare? To plunder the enemy. Spiritual warfare is about rescuing sinners enslaved to Satan and his kingdom. It's about conversion—the transfer of precious souls from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of God's beloved Son (Col. 1:13-15).

Plundering Satan's kingdom is the mission of the church and of the church planter. When Jesus charged the apostles to "make disciples of all the nations," they responded by preaching the gospel and planting churches, plundering the enemy's kingdom one soul (or 3,000) at a time (Acts 2:40-47). And we'll be plundering our enemy until Christ returns, when converts from every tribe and tongue and people and nation will worship the Lamb forever and ever.

**Church Planting and False Conversions**

If church planting is to be ultimately about conversion, church planters must be more than good neighbors. We must be faithful gospel heralds and competent soul physicians.

Most of you reading this article have already embraced the need for gospel clarity. But why all this talk about conversion? Isn't conversion a matter between the individual and God? Don't we believe that, once saved, always saved? Will not God save his elect?

Yes, yes, and of course, yes. And yet, Jesus and the apostles spoke often about true conversion. They knew what was at stake, and they wanted their listeners to be clear. They warned the people against false faith—unfruitful faith (Mark 4:1-20), spurious faith (John 8:30-58), vain faith (1 Cor. 15:1-4), devil faith (James 2:14-26). They warned them not to be deceived—about themselves, or about anyone else (see Gal. 5:19-24, 1 Cor. 6:9-10, 1 John 3:4-10). And then there's that most haunting warning, in Matthew 7:21-23:
Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many miracles?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from me you who practice lawlessness."

Church Planters as Soul Physicians

Church planters must be clear on the nature of conversion because false conversions abound, and precious, eternal souls are at stake. Jonathan Edwards was right when he said there is no question of greater importance to mankind.

And, for pastors and church planters, the question takes on particular importance, as they will one day give an account for the souls in their flock (Heb. 13:17).

The battle rages on, but the objective remains unchanged: rescuing precious souls from the kingdom of darkness. Pray that we will become better warriors for the soul.

BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

available at the UCCD book table at the Friday service
As we proclaim the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ by planting gospel preaching churches, we must pursue sexual purity and holiness.

Here John Piper explains the verses from scripture that will help you wage war against Satan, your flesh, and the world.

1. Recognize that sexuality is a good gift from God.

*Genesis 2:24-25*

For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

*Proverbs 5:18-20*

Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice in the wife of your youth. As a loving hind and a graceful doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; Be exhilarated always with her love. For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an adulteress, And embrace the bosom of a foreigner?

2. Recognize that Biblical prohibitions are intended to protect something precious not deny something pleasant.

*Exodus 20:14*

You shall not commit adultery.

*1 Corinthians 6:18*

Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.

*1 Corinthians 7:2*

But because of immoralities, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.
1 Thessalonians 4:3

For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;

Deuteronomy 10:12-13

And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require from you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the Lord’s commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?

3. Believe God is for you.

Psalm 84:11

For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly.

Romans 8:32

He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

Mark 10:29-30

Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel’s sake, but that he shall receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life.

4. Ponder the eternal danger of lust.

Matthew 5:27-29

I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

5. Think often that God has given you even now many good things.

Genesis 39:7-9

And it came about after these events that his master's wife looked with desire at Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, with me here, my master does not concern himself with anything in the house, and he has put all that he owns in my charge. There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great evil, and sin against God?"
6. Preach to yourself that there is more joy in God's presence than in sin.

Psalm 4:7

Thou hast put gladness in my heart,
More than when their grain and new wine abound.

Psalm 16:11

Thou wilt make known to me the path of life; In Thy presence is fulness of joy;
In Thy right hand there are pleasures forever.

Psalm 73:25-26

Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And besides Thee, I desire nothing on earth.
My flesh and my heart may fail, But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

1 Peter 2:2

Like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

7. Realize that lust disables and weakens our capacity for higher spiritual joys with God.

1 Peter 2:11

Abstain from fleshly lusts that wage war against your soul.

Mark 4:19

The desire for other things enters in and chokes the word and it becomes unfruitful.

8. Don't ask, What's wrong with it? Ask: Does it maximize my experience of the power of Christ, my enjoyment of his fellowship, my perception of his beauty, my reflection of his glory?

Philippians 3:12

Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

9. Cultivate a passionate devotion to the honor of God's name.

2 Samuel 12:10, 14

"Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. . . . However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die."
10. Develop a worldview that views absolutely everything in relation to God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Colossians 3:17

And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

11. (For singles) Recognize that sexual relations are not essential to full personhood and happiness.

Jesus was single and chaste and fully human.

Isaiah 56:3-5

Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the Lord say, "The Lord will surely separate me from His people." Neither let the eunuch say, "Behold, I am a dry tree." 4 For thus says the Lord, "To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, and choose what pleases Me, and hold fast My covenant, 5 To them I will give in My house and within My walls a memorial, and a name better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which will not be cut off.

12. (For the married) Recognize that God designed marriage to be a living parable of his commitment to the church.

Ephesians 5:21-32

Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body.

13. Be vigilant over your eyes. Avoid unnecessary stimulation.

Job 31:1

I Have made a covenant with my eyes; How then could I gaze at a virgin?
Romans 13:14

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

2 Timothy 2:22

Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

14. Look on the opposite sex as eternal persons. Realize that lust inevitably depersonalizes and despiritualizes people.

John 5:28-29

Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

Matthew 25:46

And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

2 Corinthians 5:16

From now on we recognize no man according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer.

15. Think often that Christ suffered agony for your purity. Fight image with image. Christ crying in agony.

Titus 2:14

Christ gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

1 Peter 1:18; 2:24

You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, [but with the precious blood of Christ]. He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

1 Corinthians 5:15

He died for all, that they who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

Hebrews 10:29

How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

3 John 9
I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say.

17. Do not be excessively alone.

18. Get in a group where you exhort one another every day against the deceitfulness of sin.

Hebrews 3:12-13
Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

19. Memorize many scriptures.

1 John 2:14
I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

Psalm 1:2
But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night.

Psalm 119:11
Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee.

20. Stockpile your thoughts with good things.

Philippians 4:8
Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.

21. Read the great literature of devotion, biography, etc.

When I read the stories of how much others have suffered and fought and struggled and achieved measures of joy and holiness and fruitfulness in fellowship with God it makes me want to give my all to this quest and settle for nothing less than all that a saved sinner can be for the glory of Christ.

22. Never assume that you are above suffering or that you deserve relief through sin. The pitfall of powerful self-pity.

Acts 14:22
[Paul went to his churches] strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."
Luke 9:58

And Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

2 Timothy 2:3

Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 4:16-17

At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them. But the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, in order that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the lion’s mouth.

23. Get busy with some task.

24. Pray at all times in the Spirit for God's deliverance.

Matthew 6:13

And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Luke 22:40

And when He arrived at the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation."

Psalm 119:18

Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Thy law.

25. Be encouraged; God is patient.

Exodus 34:6-7

Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations."

Nehemiah 9:17

And they refused to listen, And did not remember Thy wondrous deeds which Thou hadst performed among them; So they became stubborn and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But Thou art a God of forgiveness, Gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness; And Thou didst not forsake them.
The Christian is engaged in a three-front war. The Bible, replete with martial language, bears this out. The great evil trinity against which we fight is the world, the flesh, and the Devil. In our day we have made friends with the world, and we have reduced our flesh down to a few psychological crossed wires. We have lost sight of these two battlefields precisely because we have lost sight of the third. In other words, we miss that we are at war with the world and our flesh because the Devil has defeated us in battle — we have forgotten that he exists.

C.S. Lewis, in the preface to his great work The Screwtape Letters, posits this nugget of wisdom: “There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors, and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight.” As wise as Lewis and this particular quote may be, I do have a quibble. No doubt the Devil is able to accomplish a great deal of mischief among those who see him as some sort of evil god, those with a morbid interest in him and his minions. That said, I would suggest that he is able to cause far greater damage among those who give him no thought at all. That is to say, both the materialist and the magician are bad, but the materialist is worse.

We have much the same problem within the Christian subculture, and for much the same reasons. On one side of the spectrum are the extreme wing of the charismatic movement. These folks claim to see a demon behind every bush. They don’t catch colds; they are under attack by the sniffle demon. They don’t have wandering eyes, but are at war with the lust demon. Often those in this camp are looking for demons behind every bush, because they can prove quite useful for excusing our sin — as Flip Wilson used to say, “The Devil made me do it.”

This is not the danger we face in Reformed circles. We are on the other side of the spectrum. Unlike the materialist, we do indeed believe in the demonic realm. The Bible, after all, talks about such things. But we tend to believe that demons exited the human stage at
the same time that miracles ceased. Demons exist, we are willing to confess, but they have been sitting on the celestial sidelines since the apostolic age. What drives this, I’m afraid, is less a careful exegetical study of the matter, and more an embracing of the modernist worldview. We look down our noses at our brothers who pay attention to the spiritual realm not because we find such to be unbiblical, but because we find it unsophisticated. We think Martin Luther’s habit of shouting at the Devil, of throwing his ink well at him, is a sign that Martin was on the psychological brink, when perhaps we ought instead to conclude that he exhibited here the same wisdom that led him to declare, “Here I stand!” It may be that Luther mined the truth that our God is a mighty fortress from the same source where he discerned that this world is with devils filled, namely, the Bible.

That we rarely give the Devil a thought, let alone his due, ought to confirm for us this important spiritual reality — that the Devil is sitting on our shoulder, whispering folly into our ears. He is active not only in the dark corners of Africa, but in the dark corners of our hearts and minds. If we would seek first the kingdom of God, we will have to come to grips with the reality that he is trying to stop us.

His forces, we ought also to remember, are not only arrayed in the political and cultural battlefields. He does not have his hand in the Democratic National Committee only, nor does he work his magic only in Hollywood. He is also about the business of growing in us his diabolical fruit. He is at work when we are filled with envy, malice, fear, selfishness. He is waging war when he encourages us to spend our energies not pursuing the kingdom, but pursuing personal peace and affluence. He is practicing his dark magic when he encourages us to defend not the honor of Christ, but our own reputation and dignity. He is at work in the details of our lives, how we speak to our children, how we listen to our spouse. And sadly, he is winning great victories.

The war between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman is not the exact same thing as the culture war. They intersect, but they are not one. Instead, the war between the seed and the serpent is the same thing as our war with the world, the flesh, and the Devil. May God give us the grace to win great victories in the little battles we fight each day. May He grant us the eyes to see the epoch-changing battles in our very ordinary lives.
I’m convinced it’s better for your church to have an evangelistic culture than just a series of evangelistic programs.

In a church with a program-driven approach to evangelism, sharing the gospel can become something mostly for certain people at certain times, like when the evangelism team goes out visiting.

But in a church with an evangelistic culture, each member is encouraged to play a role within the larger church’s effort to reach the people around them with the message of salvation in Jesus. It becomes a part of every believer’s life.

If you are looking to create an evangelistic culture in your local church, here are three ingredients that may help.

1. The Gospel: the Fuel for an Evangelistic Culture

The gospel message is the fuel that feeds an evangelistic culture in a church. We all naturally share the things that excite our hearts. If the Philadelphia Eagles ever won the Super Bowl (I know…), you wouldn’t have much luck shutting me up about it. In the same way, if we want to create cultures in our churches where it’s natural for members to talk to about the gospel message with non-Christians, then we need to help our members fall deeply in love with the gospel.

That means they must understand the gospel message. It also means that the beauty of the gospel message must be put on display week in and week out in our churches. When Christians truly grasp the depth of their sin, the wonderful holiness of God, the perfection of Christ and the depth of his suffering for them, the power of his resurrection and the gift of eternal life for all who repent and believe, our affections for Christ will grow.

The gospel message also frees Christians from motivations that might lead them to dislike evangelism. The gospel says that we don’t have to evangelize in order to earn God’s love. Our position in God’s family isn’t dependent on how often or how well we share the gospel. Instead we can be certain of God’s love, which frees us from the overwhelming concern for
the opinions of people around us that
makes us afraid to speak up about Jesus.

2. Prayer: the Power of an Evangelistic Culture

Second, a church that is sharing the gospel must be committed to prayer. Evangelism seems a hopeless task. We are calling spiritually dead people to embrace life. How are we going to equip and encourage people for that work? It seems utterly futile.

That’s why an evangelistic culture must begin with a culture of prayer. In prayer, Christians go to the Lord with a confession of their insufficiency for the task of evangelism and his sufficient strength. God alone can make the seeds that we sow spring up to eternal life in our hearers, and so we must begin with prayer.

In our church, this particularly happens on Sunday evenings. We gather together as a congregation to pray that the Lord would spread his gospel through us. People share gospel conversations that they’ve had during the previous week, or opportunities that they hope to have in the coming week.

This prayer time serves a few purposes.

First, it commits these things to the Lord, who normally has us ask before we receive in these matters (James 4:2).

Second, it involves the whole church in the work of sharing the gospel. It’s not a burden or a project that we undertake alone, but we have brothers and sisters to pray and encourage us.

Third, this sharing makes it clear that evangelism is the work of “normal” Christians. The people asking for prayer aren’t usually pastors or elders or gifted evangelists. They are just believers who have embraced their calling to share the good news with the people around them.

Finally, this prayer time gives people a good place to begin reaching out to their neighbors and co-workers. If people are nervous or uncertain about sharing the good news, we encourage them to begin with prayer. They can pray that the Lord would give them opportunities, and that he would bring people who need the gospel to their attention. That’s a much less intimidating first step than rushing out with a tract in hand.

3. Training: the Blueprint for an Evangelistic Culture.

A third ingredient is training, the blueprint for an evangelistic culture. Remember that the goal is for our churches to have evangelistic cultures
rather than merely evangelistic programs. But that doesn't mean that there is no place for church leaders to organize and equip people to share the gospel. In fact, a love for the gospel and prayer may not be enough to motivate Christians to a lifestyle of evangelism.

While evangelism will come naturally to some people in your congregation, there will be many people who love the gospel and pray faithfully but still need to be equipped to share the gospel. Here are a few ways church leaders can equip the congregation:

- **Recommend good books on the topic.** J.I. Packer’s *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* and Mack Stiles’ *Speaking of Jesus* are two of my favorites. Read these books with the people you are discipling, give them away to people who will read them, or make them available through your church library.

- **Bring people with you when you have a chance to share the gospel.** When I am invited to give an evangelistic talk, I bring a younger person from the church with me. It’s a good opportunity to model for them how to share the good news.

- **Address unbelievers in your sermons.** Your people will grow from listening to you engage people who don’t know Jesus with the claims of the gospel. Take time to thoughtfully consider the questions or objections that an unbeliever might have to your sermon’s message, and then speak to those issues.

- **Run evangelistic meetings where people can bring friends and get help sharing the gospel.** If your church can host an evangelistic coffee house meeting or a program like Christianity Explored, you will give opportunities for your people to invite their friends and observe how they can share the gospel as well.

There is no program that can create an evangelistic culture in your church. Instead, it will require church leaders to teach, model, and pray until members of the church realize that sharing the gospel is their privilege and responsibility. A church with such a culture will be far more fruitful and effective than a church with even the most effective programs and strategies.
Membership Weekender

Fri, 11 October - 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Sat, 12 October 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Joining a church allows you to serve the body and benefit from the accountability and oversight of the church.

Come and find out more about what we believe, who leads us as a congregation, and why you should commit to the church.

Dinner, breakfast, and childcare provided.

Missions Conference

with John Piper, and Mark dever

“To belong to Jesus is to embrace the nations with Him” John Piper

Fri, 15 November - starting at 5:00 p.m.
Sat, 16 November - starting at 9:00 a.m.
Venue: Dubai Evangelical Church Center
Cost: (pay at the door): 50 per person or 80 per couple- students free

Seats are limited so please register now at www.uccdubai.com/missions

October Calendar

October 10, 2013
7pm Thursday Bible Study.

October 11, 2013
9:30-10:20am Friday Foundations.
10:30am UCCD church gathering.
4-7 pm Membership Weekender

October 12, 2013
9:30 am - 12 pm Membership Weekender

October 17, 2013
7pm Thursday Bible Study.

October 18, 2013
9:30-10:20 am Friday Foundations.
10:30 am UCCD church gathering.

October 24, 2013
7pm Thursday Bible Study.

October 25, 2013
9:30-10:20 am Friday Foundations.
10:30 am UCCD church gathering. Communion Service

October 31, 2013
7pm Thursday Bible Study.

November 1, 2013
9:30-10:20am Friday Foundations.
10:30am UCCD church gathering.
6:00pm First Friday Prayer and Praise