

Understanding Spiritual Warfare from God's Perspective
Lesson 7: "Tactics the Enemy Uses Against the Church"

As we taught last week that satan was successful in getting Adam and Eve to disbelieve God's Word and believe his lies causing them to lose the eternal life and the blessing the Lord had for them casting all of humankind into sin.

So our response is to repent of our sin of trying to be our own gods so we can decide our own good and evil.

Although satan was defeated by Jesus, he does not go down without a fight.

- His focus now is to defeat God's plan for His chosen disciples on earth.
- His evil plan of attack: he desires to take as many people to the lake of fire with him as possible.
- He does everything possible to neutralize the Church of the living God.
- Deceiving, manipulating, binding God's people to fall into the same fate he chose.
- He is doing everything possible to render Christians powerless and impotent by enticing them to be disobedient to the Word of God.

God's will as revealed in His Word is:

Matt. 24:14: "This gospel of the Kingdom will be reached in all the world as a witness to all the nations – ethnos = people groups, and then the end will come."

- We must not allow distractions of politics, finances, family issues, personal challenges to hinder why we are left here and what our purpose and destiny are.

Matt. 28:18-20: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. GO therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

The Lord has established His church, His people to expand His Kingdom to all the earth.

- Since the establishment of His Body on earth, satan began to persecute the Church so he could gain more time on earth to hinder, destroy and frustrate God's will and plans of fulfilling Matt. 24.

Tactics the enemy uses against the Church:

1. **The Loveless Church** – Rev. 2:1-7 - The attack is for the Church is to lose its first love for the Lord, for other people to know Him.

“The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this: I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false; and you have perseverance and have endured for My name’s sake, and have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place – unless you repent. Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.”

- A people who have lost their first love for the Lord and people becomes a very well organized religious and social gathering place where the Spirit of the Lord has ceased to move.
- Rather than Gods presence, programs and religious performances in the name of God will entertain the church members without having the witness of the power of signs, wonders, and miracles and moving of the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus Himself warns His Church not to lose their first love and if they do to pray it back.
- We must not allow this to happen and when we see we are cold; stoke the fires of prayer and fasting and repentance until His presence returns.

2. **The Corrupt Church** – Rev. 2:18-29

- Satan desires to corrupt within the leadership of the church by releasing the spirit of Jezebel entrapping leaders into sexual immorality and other forms of abominable activities. Mishandling of finances, idol worship, false teachings.
- Even though a congregation has been influenced by this spirit, it may appear to be a well-functioning body until exposed as Rev. 2:19 describes:
“I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first.”
Vv. 20-22: “Nevertheless, I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat thing sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent

of her sexual immorality and she did not repent. Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.”

- The Jezebel spirit is not necessarily a female; but works to get involved and close to the leadership by serving and winning their favor in order to influence and eventually to corrupt the ministry.
- Shows a display of prophetic gifting’s, seems dedicated, committed and an invaluable asset to the church gradually winning favor with the intention of persuading the leaders and bringing them into spiritual and physical adultery.
- True repentance can bring God’s healing even to a corrupt church.

3. The Lukewarm Church – Rev. 3:14-22

- The enemy hates for God’s church to carry the fire of the Holy Spirit.
- His efforts are to convince us to be “seeker friendly” in the sense that we water down the Word taught/preached, don’t have a freedom and move of the Holy Spirit operating in the gifts of the Spirit for the deliverance of people.
- When we are lukewarm – we are no threat to the enemy.

Rev. 3:15-16: “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.”

- As cold or lukewarm is not useful for the work of the Kingdom of God on the earth.
- A lukewarm church is a people oriented church more concerned with following traditions and religious orders than what the Holy Spirit wants to do in and with His people.
- We are not called to be politically, socially correct and attempt to appease the different opinions of people; but called to give our lives for His purposes and the message of the cross of the Kingdom.
- Rev. 3:17-18 - Describes the Lukewarm Church:

“Because you say, **I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing – and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked** – I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich, and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.”

Jesus knows the condition of every church congregation and every individual believer who makes up those congregations.

- Jesus’ call is for His church/people/bride to REPENT:

Rev. 2:20: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him [the lukewarm church] and dine with him and he with Me.” This is not to sinners as we use this verse in evangelism; it is to The Church.

4. The Compromising Church – Rev. 2:12-17

- This congregation replaces the power and anointing and presence of God with programs and performing activities seeking to attract and entertain people and enjoy great numbers in attendance.
- They tend to use only selected scriptures that justify their compromising stands on social issues of abortion, homosexuality, LGBTQ agenda, and political parties.

Jesus spoke to this kind of compromise in Rev. 2:13: “I know your works, and where you dwell, where satan’s throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith... [in outward appearance], but He rebuked them for their involvement in compromising the teachings of scripture:

Rev. 2:14-15: But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.”

Doctrine of Balaam: Numbers 22-25, the king of the Moabites promised to reward the prophet Balaam if he would curse the Israelites – Num. 22:16-17.

God said to Balaam, Num. 22:12, “You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed.”

Knowing the will of God, Balaam disobeyed and followed Balak’s direction to curse Israel.

But God put His words in the mouth of Balaam and blessed Israel rather than cursed them.

Jude 11 - speaking of latter day false day prophets said: “Like Balaam, they deceive people for money.”

2 Peter 2:12: “the way of Balaam is like these false teachers who are like unthinking animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed. They scoff at things they do not understand, and like animals, they will be destroyed...they have wandered off the right road and followed the footsteps of Balaam son of Beor, who love to earn money by doing wrong. But Balaam was stopped from his mad course when his donkey rebuked him with a human voice.”

- The way of Balaam describes unrighteous pastors, prophets, ministers of the gospel who build their own empires on earth by gaining wealth by every possible means including teaching many false doctrines in the name of God.

What is the doctrine of the Nicolaitans?

Nicolaitans = “to be victorious over the people, or to conquer the people.”

- This was a religious sect in Ephesus and Pergamum whose members were rebuked for eating food sacrificed to idols and for sexual license.
- Possibly leadership of a church or ministry that is practicing false doctrine and is controlling people with an authoritarian leadership.
- They have forgotten the true meaning of Biblical leadership is serving God’s people and by being led by the Holy Spirit as good shepherds.
- Some have resorted to operating the church as a CEO, or Executive Pastor rather than as a shepherd.
- Rev. 2:15-16: “So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Therefore, repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.”

5. The Dead Church – Rev. 3:1-6

- Satan would love to have a church in name to be known as alive, but in practice be a spiritually dead church.
- How does an alive church become a dead church? 2 Tim. 3:1-5
 - “But know this, that in the last day’s perilous times will come; for men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal despisers of good, traitors, head-strong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; having a form of godliness but denying its power, and from such people turn away.”
- When the church is not preaching Jesus Christ and taking up the cross daily as His follower [the crucified life], and only teaching motivational messages without the demonstration of the power of God – it will become a dead church.
- Going through form and ritual without the Holy Spirit.
- Rev. 3:1-3: “I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. Remember therefore how you have received and heard; **hold fast and repent**. Therefore, if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.”
- It is an understatement to say the church of Jesus needs a revival – a third great awakening; a third Pentecost to awaken us to our purpose and destiny.

- We have created a people oriented, program based, religious church without experiencing the presence of God for many decades in America.
- The early church and its followers did not have the gimmicks churches use today [the dog and pony shows of attracting people for a prize].
- **God sent the Holy Spirit to empower us to win the lost to Christ and destroy the works of the devil by signs, wonders, and miracles.**

The real root of our problem is the need for the Holy Spirit to come in power and birth another true spirit of prayer and revival.

This COVID-19 is shaking the world, but will the church listen? Will people read the signs of the times and realize the Lord is talking to us to repent and turn back to HIM?

6. **The Persecuted Church** – Rev. 2:8-11

“I know your works, tribulation, and poverty and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of satan. Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

- When God’s church is alive and moving in the authority and power of the Spirit, then satan will do everything possible to cause the fire of God to die down or to raise severe persecution that will come from people, government, social and religious orders and even other believers.
- There are many believers today who are in severe persecution by governments who hate Christianity and the Lord Jesus Christ. There are many believers being arrested, tortured, killed, property taken from them, mocked and left with nothing.
- **Have you decided to follow:** Matt. 10:37-39: “He that loves his father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he that loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that does not take up his cross and follow Me daily, is not worthy of Me. The one who finds/saves their life shall lose it; and the one that loses their life for My sake shall find it.”

7. **The Faithful Church** – Rev. 3:7-13

- There has always been and will always be a remnant of people who will faithfully follow the Lord regardless of the price that must be paid.
Rev. 3:7-8, 10-12: “He who has the key of David, HE who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens”: I know your works. I have set before you an open

door, and no one can shut it, for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly. Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.”

Jesus assures His faithful church/people:

“I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it, because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial.”

It is the last days, the time to definitely be faithful and check our lives and be cleansed and kept pure until His return.

He is looking for the faithful bride to take her to be with Him in His glorious kingdom FOREVER.

We must be careful not to be conformed to the world and continually offer our bodies as living sacrifices to the Lord to represent Him in this world.

Rom. 12:1-2: “I beseech/strongly urge and plead with you, by the mercies of God, that **you** present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable/spiritual service. And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”