

Announcer

Welcome to transformed by the word, a podcast about discovering how to live your life with gratifying purpose. God created you for a reason and the Bible contains the keys to unlock your transformed life. Now, here's your host, Debora Barr

Debora 0:24

Thanks for joining me for Episode 13 of transformed by the word. Today, we are exploring the topic of spiritual warfare.

Spiritual Warfare is an obstacle that every Christian faces. When you accept Jesus Christ as Lord of your life, and begin living for him, you become a target for the enemy of your soul, who wants you back under his dominion and control

The Bible tells us that we must be self-controlled and alert, because the devil prowls around like a lion seeking someone to devour. We need to be aware of the ways that the enemy operates so that he cannot take advantage of us. We also need to understand the battle plans of the enemy. And we need to know the truth of God's word, because Jesus has already defeated the enemy of our soul.

The apostle Paul says in Second Corinthians chapter 10, that though we walk in the flesh, we do not war, according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God, for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity, to the obedience of Christ.

You notice the language of warfare here, pulling down strongholds. These are fortresses with high stone walls in the natural and in the spiritual realm. They are incorrect thinking patterns that are built on lies and deception. And they're very hard to tear down, because trying to destroy them is met with great resistance.

The next part of the scripture says, casting down or throwing down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. We combat this using the truth of God's Word.

The next part of the scripture says to bring every thought into captivity. Did you notice that? Again, it's a warfare concept, bringing our thoughts into prison or captivity, buying them up, take them to Jesus, compare them with the truth of God's Word. Do these thoughts on having line up with the Bible? Or do they not?

Romans 12:2 says that we are not to be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds, that we can prove what is that good, acceptable and perfect will of God. Spiritual battles must be fought with spiritual tools.

Now I've invited a special guest on the show today, her name is Seconda Hollinger. I met Seconda around 10 years ago at my church. We ended up taking Bible college classes together at Denver Seminary, and we've been serving together in ministry for the past several years. She's a US Navy veteran with 25 years of service, and she currently works in the field of emergency management, disaster preparedness and business continuity of operations. She's a native New Yorker, having grown up in Jamaica, Queens. Seconda serves alongside me in ministry at First Baptist Church of Glenarden Maryland, and she also serves in the youth ministry at our church. Seconda loves the Lord with all of her

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heart, and she desires to help other people experience Christ and form a relationship with God. That will never be broken.

Debora 4:47

Stay tuned. We'll be back in just a moment.

Seconda, thank you so much for coming on the show today to share with our listening audience. It is always such a pleasure and a blessing to be with you.

Seconda 5:38

Well, thank you for having me. It's always a blessing and an honor for you to just ask me to come on today.

Debora 5:44

Yeah, so today we're talking about spiritual warfare. And before we actually jump into our topic for today, I wanted to have the listening audience know a little bit more about you and your military background specifically.

Seconda 6:01

Okay, well, I am a retired senior chief Hospital Corpsman Navy, of course, the best service in the Navy, I did 25 years, served honorably, and I, two of the highlights of my career were actually responding to 911. I am a native New Yorker. And when we went up to respond there, it was really touching and telling. But it was a blessing as well to go there and help the responders out at Ground Zero. Also, in response to that, I was deployed to Iraq. And when I was deployed to Iraq, I was the lay leader for our ship, the USS comfort, wonderful ship, not like the regular Navy ships is a hospital ship that was white, with three red crosses on it. So it meant a lot to me to see that there was a cost for the Father, the Son of the Holy Ghost.

So I knew I was covered when our ship went out to support the rest of the forces. It was a blessing. It was a time that was like indescribable. Truly, God was in the midst. From the beginning to the end, I just asked him, Hey, Lord, when we go, are we going to come back? And he said, yes, you will come back. And you will tell others of the great things I've done. And during that deployment, he just blessed in so many different ways that we had to add extra services. Because the crowd just grew as far as services, we were able to do Easter sunrise service on the flight deck, we were able to do baptisms, and not get mobile, one of the other bases overseas.

God showed up in so many different ways, even in our service to the prisoners of war. You know, I it was really hard to take care of the medically while I had prisoners of war in the aft part of the ship. And then I had my fellow soldiers up front. I'm in the forward part of the ship, knowing that they caused the injuries that my soldiers or sailors had, or Marines up front. So it was really a time where I really had to seek God and say, What would you have me to do? And we also have a floor of it. Some victims were like a village that we call them a village of just innocent bystanders that were harmed. There was one lady in particular who kept calling me Sister, but not your sister. And they were like, she's talking to you, Chief, she's talking to you. And I'm like, no, they're like, yes. And I bonded with her. And God just showed me that Yes, she is my daughter. And her husband is my son. And before they left the ship, they

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lost five children. But before they left, the man said, You know, I know truly that you are, you know, my sister in Christ. And it was just such a blessing to just watch him move throughout a war, to still show His grace and mercy. So again, those are two highlights of my military career for me, towards the end of it and it was just such a blessing.

Debora 9:29

Wow, that's amazing. Now when you went into the Navy, and I know this too, because I was in the army, but we were equipped and trained for warfare. That's the purpose of the the military. So how does what you learned in the military translate into the spiritual realm?

Seconda 9:51

For me, I translated into being prepared. We go into the military, they teach us and they train us and we have a different mindset. To be ready to react, use the weapons that we have, we have a strategy that's in place, and then we execute. And it's the same thing with spiritual warfare, we have to know and study our enemy, in order to know how we can defeat them. And once we do that, we have to set up a strategy on how to take them down, you also have to know what your weapons are, the Word of God is the weapon. So that we can be weapons of mass destruction to the enemy.

So again, we had to practice we had to train in that train, it became automatic to us how to respond by going in the field, I'm a medic, I don't have time to think about what it has to do to treat or stop this bleeding. Or to treat this injury, or open this person's airway. I got to know what to do, and do it quickly. You know, time is not necessarily on my side. And the same thing in the spiritual realm, we have to move and God says move. Well, you got to know how to move, you got to know what to move with. And if you don't know that you don't train, it won't become automatic to you so tough. Everything's in timing as well. So we got to be able to move quickly. And he says, move we got to move. You can't be thinking about well, I think I need this, I think I need that scripture. So the more that we practice, why don't we read, you know about God or read the Word of God, and it becomes a part of us, we are able to respond immediately, just like in the miltar.

Debora 11:23

Yeah, that's really good. So I want to read the Scripture in Ephesians, that specifically talks about spiritual warfare. And that scripture is in Ephesians, chapter six, verses 10, through 17. And I'm going to read the New Living Translation. Here we go. It says a final word, be strong in the Lord, and in his mighty power, put on all of God's armor, so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh and blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor, so that you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle, you will still be standing firm, stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth, and the body armor of God's righteousness, for shoes, put on the peace that comes from the good news. So that you will be fully prepared, in addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith, to stop the fiery arrows of the devil, put on salvation as your helmet and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God

To make this spiritual warfare, more real, more relevant to today's world. Can you share with us any life examples that you can think of, of spiritual warfare that you personally have experienced? And how you dealt with that?

Seconda 13:17

I've had to deal with betrayal before. And, you know, of course, God tells us that his worst is we do have to forgive. And it's easier said than done sometimes. So for me, I had to realize that I wasn't dealing with the person I had to forgive the person. And I had to realize that I couldn't just look at the person I had to look at the spirit behind the person. And then it made it a whole lot easier for me to forgive for me to love unconditionally, despite the things that will go on around me. Sometimes, you know, may have been chaotic or whatever. And when you take a moment to pause and go look what's really going on what's really happening. And you get into His presence and you can go to the spiritual realm and say, Okay, this is what I'm fighting against. It's not the person but it's the enemy what the spirit behind the person then you can bring out your you know, your sword and a shield to quench the fire duster may be coming your way to try and take you down.

And then you can also use the word to cut down the enemy, and help you with that firm footing from putting your armor on shod your feet. So you can stand firm, and then making sure that your heart is guarded with that breastplate of righteousness so that we're living up rightly before him. You know, oftentimes, our automatic response would be to do something in the flesh. And it doesn't work. It just makes it worse. Because guys, like do you trust me? I have the whole world in my hand. I've given you the power to defeat the enemy. I've already defeated him for you.

So when we do stuff in the flesh, it makes us work and it sets us back. I learned that well the hard way. But I thank God for showing me and reminded me stop. Think about it. Who's behind this? Is this in line with me? Was it the enemy. And when we're able to stop and pause and do that, and not look at the person, or even the circumstance, and look at the spirit behind it, it makes it a lot easier to fight. It helps us to stay like you said, We shot in our feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and helps us to stay in God's presence in his peace. And then we can walk and we can be victorious. Even though we may seem like we're being punked, or, you know, the person's getting over your life. You got to know, God sees it, he hears it, he knows about it.

And sometimes I look at it as it's a test for me, am I going to respond the correct way? Am I going to respond to my flesh? Or am I gonna respond the way God would have me to respond in this built around, so I don't wear myself out, become discouraged, feel like God's forgotten about me. And he's like you fighting the wrong way.

So here, again, going back to the military, you got a strategy, you need to follow and execute that. When you don't, oftentimes, you're going to lose the battle, you got to get back up, brush off and start all over again. So I try to think about that having to start all over again. So I tried to do it the way God said, No, no, it doesn't always work. Sometimes I may react and replace the wrong way. And then I just think God, for me, at least having the knowledge to know, it's not the person. Look at the spirit behind it. Look at Look how the spirit is using this person to take jabs at you. And I'm like, Okay, okay, so then I can give them a sucker punch back with the word, I can give them a sucker punch back with worship. That takes my mind totally off of what I was focusing on that didn't need to focus on and put my focus back on God.

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Debora 17:21

You said so much, really powerful, they're, oftentimes when we get hurt by someone, we in our flesh just want to retaliate. But you are speaking about recognizing that there's a spiritual realm that we are interacting with, that the other person is being influenced by the enemy of our souls. And one of the major things in learning how to fight in the military is to understand the enemy, we always study the enemy. And how does this even work in sports? You know, when you're dealing with a sports team, how can a team be most effective?

Seconda 18:09

They've got to study their opponent. So when you study that tape, and you study the opponent, regardless of what sport it is, and you realize where their deficiency of weaknesses are, you're going to play to those. And that's how you can defeat them. So if you know that a football team has a running game, and they went off a running, you want to stop the running game, if you know that they're great at passing, and that's how they went in their game. Do you want to stop the passing game? So it's just like with the enemy, we know that he is deceitful. He accuses the brethren. Right? And he tempts us. So we have to fight against, we have to set up strategies that will fight those three major things. When you study your enemy, you can always take them down. But if you have no idea of what weapons Yes, how are you going to feed them?

Debora 18:58

Yeah, you know, looking in the Bible, I mean, we see the enemy, the devil, tempting Adam and Eve, right in the very beginning, in the book of Genesis right up front. That's how sin entered the world. And we see how the enemy defeated Eve. It was slight deception. What did he say to her? I mean, how did he How did he trick her?

Seconda 19:21

He told her you show you can eat that piece of fruit you can eat from that tree, you're not gonna die. Do you think God will really tell you that? He's just joking with you know, he told it up for a reason. And you see how he came to Eve? even come to Adam. He came to Eve and just deceived her into believing that and then of course, I don't believe he will. Surely he wouldn't tell us God wouldn't kill us because we eat this fruit. And Adam says, no, God told me that. Oh no, he was deceived as well.

Debora 20:02

Right? And then right after God confronts them, what does Adam start doing? He starts accusing he, well, you are he's actually accusing God. He's like, well, you gave this woman to me.

Seconda 20:14

You gave her to me. She's broken. She didn't do the right thing. So it's not my fault that I followed her. No, what did I tell you to do? You know, he didn't he didn't do what he was told to do. He was disobedient.

Debora 20:31

So we get the battle plans are the enemy right out of the Bible, all through the word, we see how the enemy has deceived people, how he has manipulated them, how he has accused them. And all of this is important for us to know as Christians in order for us to be able to fight these spiritual battles. So can you walk, walk through with us just the various pieces of armor and explain those out of the book of Ephesians?

Seconda 21:00

Okay, what I usually do is I try to pray this prayer every day. And I shod my feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace. So I'll make sure that my feet are covered, the soles are covered, so you can stand firm.

And then I've got myself with the girdle of truth. The Word of God is true. We know the truth, we can do the right things, when we're deceived by the enemy, we won't know the truth. So I wrap myself with that girdle of truth, I put the breastplate of righteousness on. So then I'm upright before God, and to cover my heart. So that my heart is guarded. And my main organs are guarded. You know, we think of boxing. Usually those body blows that take somebody out. So we want to make sure we have the breastplate of righteousness on the cover our core.

Then we had the shield of faith in the sword of spirit, which is the word that shield that quenches the fiery darts of the enemy, and you can always move that up and down all around, right to protect you, because those darts are coming, he's gonna shoot it your way.

And then you have the shield of faith and the sword of spirit, which is the word that sword cuts deeper with two edges, I mean it, you got to know how to use that weapon.

Okay, and then you put the helmet of salvation on to cover our minds, which is the battlefield. Because if we can get in our head and make us think certain things and deceive us by our thoughts, then our actions will follow. So that is how salvation protects not only our mind, but our ears, so that we can not hear the enemy, but make sure we hear just God as well, and helps us to keep focused on Christ.

So I usually try to pray that prayer every day. And I don't just cover myself, I cover my family as well. And so when you can, I feel as though when you can put it into a prayer and see it really quickly, you can always be dressed, because we know that we target like when we get finished this podcast today, I'm quite sure that enemy's going to be mad, but I'm already dressed. And then I made redress. Just to make sure and I'll be mindful that he may come at me, because he doesn't want people to be free.

See when we can use these weapons is God has taught us that this freedom and that is liberty in that we don't walk around fearful of the enemy. The only person we should fear is God himself. And he hasn't given us a spirit of fear of the enemy. So we have to know, again, knowing the word, right, that's sword, they can cut the enemy and defeat the enemy in any way. So putting this arm on daily, daily is what we should do. Even if things are going wonderful, still put it on, because he'll try and just suddenly sneak up on you and give you a jab here or there. Take a window, he may not knock you out. But those lighting glows after a while will take you down. So you have to be mindful of it. So again, that's part of our strategy is to put armor on daily, daily.

Debora 24:13

And I think if you like he said, Make that a habit every morning to put on that spiritual armor. And just think about it as you're putting on your clothes for the day. It will help you remain mindful that there is an enemy of our soul that wants to draw us back especially people that have turned their lives over to Christ. The enemy wants to draw you back into his dominion and his control. But if we are mindful to put on that armor each and every morning, then we're aware and we've got our guard up just as if we were going on a battlefield to know that.

Number one Jesus has already defeated the enemy and so we're already victorious. But if we remind ourselves and we put on our armor, then we will not not be swayed and tempted by the enemy. Well, thank you so much for sharing with us today would, I would really like for you to pray for our listeners today, people that may be in the midst of a spiritual battle right now and not really understanding why it seems like bad things are happening over and over and over. So would you pray to encourage them and help them to understand that this spiritual battle is what it is and that we are victorious in Christ?

Seconda 25:38

Sure.

Dear Heavenly Father, we come to you this morning. Oh, God, just thanking you for your grace and your mercy, your love, your peace. We thank You for Your Word of God that teaches us so far that we have weapons, we have an armor to protect us God from the hands of the enemy. Well, you told us not to fear him at all. And we can walk on serpents, we can walk on the enemy, that he's already defeated God. So we thank you for just stressing today. That there is an armor that we can put on God that we can shut our feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace, oh God, that we can gird our loins with the girdle of truth.

Oh, Father, we thank you for that breastplate of righteousness that guards our hearts. Oh God, and our core Father God and protects us. Oh God, we thank you for that shield of faith. Oh God, that that helps us to believe and know that with that shield of faith. We can quench the fiery darts of the enemy of God, and the sword of the Spirit, which is your word that tells us Oh God that we are more than conquerors through you Father God that no weapon formed against us will prosper God we thank you for that helmet of salvation. Oh God, that tells us Oh God that our minds are covered that we can take captive any thought that comes in Oh Father God, that is against you, oh God, that we can take a captive oh god and it can be cast away. Dear God, we thank you will God for giving us the power to tear down strongholds Father God, to cast away demons.

Father God, we thank you for the session today. I ask that you are blessed those that are listening father, to know that the enemy is going to come at them Father God, but that they are protected, because they are already victorious. Oh God, you already won the battle! Well, God, they just got to be able to stand firm term from temptation, oh God, because he will flee as we stand firm. We don't need to run from the enemy, oh God, but that will stand firm and your word or God will stand firm and you will God. We thank you for teaching us how to fight Father God, we know the weapons of the enemy, are accusations, deceptions and temptation. And we know that you have made us victorious over those weapons that he has. Thank you for this armor that continues to protect us and keep us Oh God, continue to bless those that are hearing this that are listening, that they know regardless of the chaos that may be going on around them, oh God, that you will protect them and keep them Oh God, as they stay focused on you. Not on the person God that they will act out in their flesh, but they will fight this

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battle in the spiritual realm. Oh God, that they know that they have the weapons to win. Because they have you residing inside of them. Oh God. And as you reside inside of them, oh God and they're trusting you in your word in your way and in your will. They'll be victorious. Thank you, Father, for just this time. Oh God, I thank you for all those that are listening, Father God that they will be doubly blessed Father God, that they will have an aha moment Oh God, and they will continue to put their armor on daily Oh God, so they can be victorious in you. And you will always get all the glory, the honor, and the praise in Jesus name. Amen.

Debora 28:55

Amen.

Don't go away. We'll be right back after this short break.

Debora 29:41

We just heard from Seconda Hollinger, some important truths about spiritual warfare and the tools that God has given us in Ephesians chapter six. She related to us how spiritual warfare relates to warfare in the natural, and how we need to put on the armor of God each and every day, in order to be victorious.

Now, if you've never surrendered your life to Jesus Christ, you don't have access to these weapons that we talked about today. You don't have the power of God working in your life. But you can surrender your heart and your life to Him today.

It is by faith, that we believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross for our sins. He did this so that we could have everlasting life.

Would you pray this prayer with me? If you've never surrendered your heart to the Lord? God,

I confess that I'm a sinner, and I need Jesus in my life. I repent of my sins, and I turn my life to you. I believe by faith that Jesus died on the cross for my sins, He was buried and rose from the dead. I accept this as truth. and invite Jesus to be Lord of my life, to reign and rule in my heart. Thank you, God, for forgiving me, and saving me. Amen.

Now, if you just prayed that prayer, and accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, we would love to hear from you.

Please visit my website at TBTW.com. And let me know about your decision for Christ so I can share that with our special guest. And we can encourage and support you with the next steps in your faith.

My prayer for you today is that you will put on the armor of God each and every day, so that you can stand firm against the wiles of the devil and be victorious in the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Stay tuned for our next episode of transformed by the word, where we will continue on the topic of spiritual warfare by focusing on praise as a weapon.

Announcer 32:31

Thank you for listening to transformed by the word with your host Debora Barr, be sure to subscribe to our podcast on iTunes or Google Play and connect with us at TBTWPodcast.com. Until next time, be blessed.

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