

THE W.A.R.F.A.R.E. STRATEGY

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Seven Biblical Strategies for Spiritual Warfare

The Bible says spiritual warfare is real, but Christians can make two opposite mistakes: ignoring it or assuming every problem is caused by a demon.

Watch. Arm. Renew. Fight. Assess. Rebuke. Engage.

The W.A.R.F.A.R.E. Strategy brings together seven biblical practices without encouraging fear or superstition. Our confidence rests in Jesus Christ, not in ourselves.

1. W — WATCH: RECOGNIZE THAT SPIRITUAL WARFARE IS REAL.

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Pet. 5:8 KJV).

"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12 ESV).

We must not "be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs" (2 Cor. 2:11 ESV).

Watchfulness doesn't mean blaming every trial on Satan or demons. Like a watchman standing at his post (Hab. 2:1), we pay attention, pray, and consider whether spiritual opposition may be involved in a situation.

2. A — ARM: STAND FIRM WITH GOD'S ARMOR AND ACTIVELY RESIST WITH HIS WORD.

"Finally, 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" (Eph. 6:10–11 NASB1995).

The **armor of God** includes the **belt** of the truth of God's Word, the **breastplate** of righteousness, the **shoes** of readiness from the gospel of peace, the **shield** of faith, and the **helmet** of salvation (Eph. 6:10–17).

Our **weapons** are "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17 KJV) and persistent prayer (Eph. 6:18).

Active resistance begins with submission to God: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. **Resist** the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7 KJV).

Confess and repent of sin, refuse temptation, obey Scripture. "**Resist** him, firm in the faith" (1 Pet. 5:9 CSB).

Rely upon the Lord instead of your own strength (Eph. 6:10), remembering that "the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one" (2 Thess. 3:3 ESV).

3. R — RENEW: REPLACE LIES WITH THE TRUTH.

Jesus said of the devil, "When he tells a lie, he speaks from his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44 CSB).

Therefore, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the **renewal of your mind**, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom. 12:2 ESV).

The psalmist gives us a practical example: "I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you" (Ps. 119:11 ESV).

Read, meditate upon, memorize, and obey Scripture. Memorized verses are like arrows in a quiver, ready when temptation or deception comes. Jesus answered Satan in the wilderness with "It is written" (Matt. 4:1–11 KJV).

Guard what shapes your mind and home; reject influences that normalize sin or encourage occult practices (Deut. 18:10–12; Acts 19:18–19).

Test troubling thoughts against God's Word and "take every thought captive to obey Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5 CSB). Feelings are real, but they are not infallible.

4. F — FIGHT: FIGHT FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS IN PRAYER.

Fight in prayer for yourself. Jesus taught us to pray, "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matt. 6:13 KJV). He also told His disciples, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation" (Luke 22:40 ESV).

Ask God regularly to guard you against temptation, deception, and discouragement and to strengthen your faith.

Fight in prayer for others too, "praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints" (Eph. 6:18 ESV). Epaphras was "always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God" (Col. 4:12 KJV).

Pray routinely and earnestly for your family, church, pastors, missionaries, friends, nation, leaders, and others facing spiritual opposition.

Prayer isn't just an emergency response; it's part of our daily obedience.

5. A — ASSESS: TEST WHAT IS HAPPENING BY SCRIPTURE.

"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits** to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1 John. 4:1 NASB1995).

"But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of **discernment trained by constant practice** to distinguish good from evil" (Heb. 5:14 ESV).

If a situation seems spiritually troubling, pray for wisdom (James 1:5), examine the circumstances, seek wise counsel (Prov. 11:14), and measure what you observe against Scripture. The Bereans were "examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11 NASB1995).

Jesus warned about false prophets: "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matt. 7:16 KJV). False teaching, manipulation, division, or persistent resistance to God's Word may warrant further examination. But bad fruit doesn't automatically prove demonic activity, and subjective impressions are not divine revelation. Scripture remains our final standard (2 Tim. 3:16–17).

6. R — REBUKE: EXERCISE CHRIST'S AUTHORITY WHEN WARRANTED.

Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matt. 28:18 ESV). Therefore, believers have no independent authority over demonic forces.

Nevertheless, Jesus commissioned 72 disciples and told them, "Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy" (Luke 10:19 ESV). Paul later commanded a spirit of divination, "I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her" and "he came out that same hour." (Acts 16:18 KJV).

Some Christians understand the authority given to the 72 as limited to those disciples. That caution deserves consideration. Yet they were disciples, not apostles, and Scripture doesn't clearly say that rebuking demonic opposition in Christ's name later ceased. When there is reasonable cause to suspect genuine demonic influence, a Christian may consider directly rebuking it while relying entirely on Christ's authority.

Attempts to rebuke should be done soberly and cautiously. We are not called to become Christian ghostbusters or to search for demons behind every trial.

Saying Jesus' name is not a magical formula. Acts 19:13–16 warns against using His name apart from submission to Him, and Jude 9 warns against presumptuous speech.

Our regular calling is to submit to God, resist the devil, and stand firm in faith (James 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8–9).

7. E — ENGAGE: TAKE THE OFFENSIVE.

Christians are called to more than defending ourselves. We are also called to take the offensive against evil.

Jesus commands, "**Go** therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19–20 ESV).

We engage the enemy through gospel proclamation, discipleship, prayer, truth, sound doctrine, holiness, and obedience.

"For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds" (2 Cor. 10:3–4 ESV).

We must "destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God" (2 Cor. 10:5 ESV).

Jesus promised, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18 KJV).

Adrian Rogers said, "The church is not a showboat; it is a battleship."

CONCLUSION

Watch for spiritual opposition. Arm yourself with God's armor and weapons. Renew your mind by replacing lies with His Word. Fight for yourself and others in prayer. Assess and test everything by Scripture. Rebuke suspected demonic influence only when warranted and only in Christ's authority. Engage the enemy through the gospel, truth, and obedience.