

## WARFARE THUMBPRINTS

There is a battle going on. The battle is real and each one in the room is involved in the battle whether you realize it or not. Because of a lack of awareness of the battle, many Christians are losing. The victories do not have to go to the opposition, but they will until believers learn to fight biblically.

Two important things to know when in a battle:

Who are your enemies?

How do they primarily attack Christians?

For each enemy we will talk about, there is a distinct defense system at our disposal. Our ability to discern or identify what is happening in our life will determine what defense we take and whether or not there is victory. Sadly, most Christians do not understand what is happening. Therefore most Christians lose more battles than they win, and end up blaming God for their failures. The real truth of the matter is that the defense systems work as they have been designed to; they just need to be aimed at the right enemy to be effective.

### Who are our enemies?

**The World** I John 2:15-17 – “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.”

**The Flesh** Galatians 5:16-17 – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.”

**The Devil** James 4:7-10 – “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.”

### How do they primarily attack Christians?

**The World** The world is an organized system in opposition and rebellion against God. I John characterizes the world as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life. The lust of the flesh is our physical desires, whether it is food, sleep, sex, chocolate, adrenaline rushes, exercise in the extreme, physically taking the easy route/slothfulness. The list goes on. The lust of the

eyes has to do with the beautiful externals. That can be a pursuit of beauty, of thinness, of clothes, of a beautifully decorated home, of collecting beautiful things or any number of things. None of these are bad in and of themselves. God created beauty for our enjoyment. When it becomes a pursuit, something that starts to crowd out our focus and devotion to God, it has crossed the line. And last we have the boastful pride of life which is selfish ambition. Each one of these things pulls our attention off God and onto other things distracting us from our true purpose.

**The Flesh** The flesh is represented as the old nature or the old self in each individual, which is in opposition and rebellion against God. The flesh is always with us. There is always a tension. We always have a choice, to follow our flesh or to follow God. What are areas of the flesh that can be easily inflamed? There are partial lists in Galatians 5:19-21; Colossians 3:5-8; and Mark 7:21-23. Some of the things included here are: coveting, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, fear, bitterness and so on.

**The Devil** According to Jesus and the Bible, the devil is a real enemy who is in opposition and rebellion against God. His primary attack against Christians seems to be through debilitating accusations. These accusations are usually mental attacks in the mind.

These attacks may be intermingled: the world and the flesh, the flesh and the devil, etc.

### **What is a Christian's defense against the world, the flesh, and the devil?**

**The World** I John 2:17 indicates that we are to **evaluate** alluring temptations and say "no." The eternal things of God are not to be sacrificed for the temporary things of the world. The issue isn't whether things around us are tempting or not, but whether the temporary pleasure of the things around us are worth the eternal price tag that accompanies it.

**The Flesh** In dealing with the flesh there are several things to consider. First Romans 12:1-2 states that victory over our old nature or self is possible through consistently **renewing our mind**. How do we renew our mind? We renew our mind by replacing our old wrong way of thinking with new Christ-like thinking. We find Christ-like thinking in the Bible. Galatians 5:16 indicates that if we **walk controlled by the Spirit** we will not carry out the desires of the flesh. Lastly, II Timothy 2:22 tells us that in some situations involving the flesh, the believer should simply **run**. If certain types of movies or books or people tempt you to follow the flesh, then run.

**The Devil** Scriptures like James 4:7-8 and I Peter 5:8-9 indicate that a Christian is to firmly **resist** the attacks of the devil. Jesus' example in Matthew 4 shows that He used scripture against the devil in confronting him. The enemy's thumbprint is many and varied. The attack of the enemy will come in the form of accusation. Accusations are finger pointing in nature. If you are hearing "you always do this," or "you are such a bad friend," or "she thinks you are so inadequate," you may be dealing with the enemy. An important part of dealing with the devil is to submit to God. When we agree with God about a situation, or ask for His help we are submitting to God's headship.

### **Thumbprints/Clues of Enemy activity**

1. Lies and distortions of the truth
2. Drive vs. lead – Ps. 23  
This is an oppressive, pressing drive
3. Perspective distorted – water heater broken, WATER HEATER BROKEN
  - a. Problem seems huge, insurmountable, hopeless
4. Accusation – yes we sin but his accusations imply who we are (worthless) and what to do with us (damnable)  
Truth is war in Christ, His Beloved, Holy and Pure
5. Passivity vs. Surrender to God – which always results in action against sin, action for righteousness
6. Confused Complexity  
Satan confuses things and complicates thoughts in order to keep problems from being solved. God always seems to have clear simple steps.
7. Self-introspection vs. self examination  
Self-introspection can be used of Satan when it leads to despair. Self-examination results in conviction, admonition, confession, cleansing
8. Vague sense of something wrong, Foggy thought
9. Discouragement/despair  
This is a belief there is no hope. God seems to not be good, wise, sovereign or loving
10. Fear- being motivated out of fear to do things
11. Pride- temptation to increase ourselves.  
10. and 11 could be evidence of our flesh or the working of Satan. Take time to let the Holy Spirit search your heart; confess the actions of your flesh. If there is still a problem treat it as an attack of the enemy
12. Envy, strife and division - Purpose is to divide and conquer  
James 3:13-18 – "who among you is wise and understand? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. But the

wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.”

13. Lack of forgiveness/acceptance after repentance

Only God knows the heart of a man. It is His place to deal with the other person not ours. If someone asks forgiveness, we forgive and leave the rest to God. II Cor. 2:9-11

14. Bondage – Seems no grace, no power to resist, no choice – a slave

II Tim. 2:25-26 – “if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the **snare** of the devil who are **taken captive** by him to do his will.”

Bait is set for the trap- what is the bait you go for?

15. Extremes- not normal

Hatred, anger, lust

16. Voices

17. Thoughts – pressing/oppressive, repeated, nagging, horrid, shockingly evil

Test with Phil. 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.”

Thoughts vs. thinking

Jesus in the wilderness

Satan put wrong thinking in Jesus’ mind

Jesus sophron – Thought rightly

Resist do not give in, STAND, Wrestle- a real battle

Jesus kept resisting, He did not take the thoughts/line of thinking

Realize the thoughts did not come from you as the source

Tempts in weak areas- admit it to God that you are weak in this area,

No need to repent of the thought – only need to repent if yield to the thinking. Let God sort it all out. You do not have to try to figure it all out. If you realize some wrong thinking, confess to God you have been thinking this/your weakness. Ask Him to help you to think right thoughts. When you are in the Word, ask the Lord to show you how He sees you. Write it down, whatever it takes to keep those thoughts right up in front of you. The enemy will try to tell you it is not so and even come up with “evidence” but you just need to come back to what you know is true.

18. Hindrance

Hindrance warfare is not so much a temptation to sin but rather a blocking or resistance to forward movement.

**Pray** Rom. 1:10 “I make mention of you always in my prayers, making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come to you.” This verse is significant in that Paul was longing for many years to visit the church in Rome but was hindered from doing so. However, he still prayed that he may come to them. And his prayer was answered, only not in the way one would have expected.

After he was arrested in Jerusalem and had appealed to Caesar, he was escorted to Rome. Nevertheless he did get to see the saints there.

**Stand** against Satan

Satan has a goal in mind-his forward movement, while stopping our forward movement

Eph. 6:11,13-14 "Put on the full armor of God that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil." "therefore, take up the full armor of god, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness."