

The Schemes and Tactics of our Enemy

Welcome to Harvest Community Church

Series: Battle Ready

Text: Ephesians 6:10-11, 2 Corinthians 2:11

Part of warfare is knowing the **tactics** of the enemy. Tactics are the plans, schemes, devices, and strategies of an army. Tactics involve maneuvers and positioning.

The reason many people struggle, and face defeat is because of ignorance. Ignorance is a **lack** of knowledge; foolishness is knowing something to be true and refusing to acknowledge it.

Psalm 14:1 A simpleton is one who knows what the enemy is up to and does not protect himself. **Proverbs 22:3** Ignorance is not bliss it leads to death.

The Bible tells us to put on or to be **clothed** with the full armor of God. The word clothed is the same word for endued when the disciples are told by Jesus to wait in Jerusalem until they are clothed with the power of the Holy Spirit. It is our being clothed in the power of God that gives us a **strategic** advantage over the enemy. We are told to put on the Armor of God so that we are **able** to stand. Without being clothed in the power of God we are not adequately prepared or equipped to stand against the enemy. To stand is a **position** of confidence and readiness. We are not fearful, cowering from and trying to avoid a confrontation. We are confidently ready to fight. The word stand is a military term that means to maintain a critical and strategic position on the battlefield.

With the armor, we are able to stand **against** the enemy. This is a forward position in the battle that brings us face to face with the enemy while we stand tall and confident. With the Armor of God and with God on our side we are more than a match for the enemy. Instead of us shuttering at what the devil can do for us, the armor of God puts us in the position to make the devil tremble at the thought of dealing with us.

What we need is to have the strength to stand against all of the **wiles** of the devil.

Ephesians 6:11 (AMP)

There are three key words we need to know and understand when discussing spiritual warfare – Wiles (schemes), Devices (strategies), Deception (deceit)

- The word ‘wiles’ comes from a Greek word which describes **methods**. Entire classes are taught in war colleges about warfare methodologies. Methods tell us how the devil operates and how he attacks the mind. Methods are the tricks, cunning and craftiness with which the enemy works.
- The word ‘devices’ comes from a Greek word that describes a deceived mind or a mind filled with **confusion**. It also depicts the plots and wicked schemes of Satan to victimize the mind. One way to describe these devices is **mind** games. When the Bible tells us that we are not ignorant of the devil’s devices we could also translate the verse – “*We are not ignorant of the mind games that Satan tries to pull on us.*”

All of us deal with the mental assaults of our enemy. These are not harmless war game trials they are mind games meant to destroy and tear down. This is why we are to cast down **imagination** and take every thought **captive** to the obedience of Christ. If we do not, those thoughts will wear us down and break us down. The devil delights in filling our emotions and senses with illusions that captivate our mind and eventually destroy us. Whoever and whatever controls the mind, controls a person's health, and emotions. Satan seeks to penetrate our **intellect** so that he can make an inroad to our deepest parts. As he does, the process of mental and spiritual captivity is well under way. The only way to break the power of the enemy over our thoughts is by the power of God and through the continual **renewal** of our mind.

Colossians 3:2-10, Romans 12:1-2, Philippians 4:6-9

- One of Satan's primary tools is **deception**. Deception occurs when a person believes the lies that the enemy is telling us. Remember that Satan's natural language is a lie, it is his native tongue. The moment that we begin to believe a lie and to accept it as truth is the moment that those wicked thoughts and mind games begin to produce **reality** in our life. As long as we resist a lie it has no power over us. When he tells you that you are a failure you are not one until you begin to believe it. We must choose, we will either have **faith** to believe what God says about us or we will have the faith to believe what Satan says.

We must continually renew our minds and be **washed** by the water of the word because our minds are under constant assault from the enemy. The enemy wants to wear us down with worry, overthinking and over stimulation so that our perception of things becomes twisted and convoluted to the point we cannot figure out what truth really is.

People like to say that **perception** is reality – this is not true. Satan uses false perception and incorrect believing empowered by a lie to create. This is why people get ulcers when there is really nothing to be worried about. Satan is not God; he does not have the power to create because he does not have the ability to bring something from nothing. We however were created in the image of God. Time and again we have proven that we can make something out of nothing when we believe lies. (This has ruined many marriages and churches) We also know that if we have the faith of a mustard seed, we can make mountains move. Remember, faith is the **substance** of things. Hope is expectation. Hope is positive expectation and **dread** is negative expectation. Both take faith. Hope chooses truth and dread believes a lie. Job even said the thing I feared the most has come upon me. **Job 3:25**

Deception is a key component of Satan's strategies. Deception is not only a full lie, it is also **half** truths and incomplete understanding. Throughout the Word of God, we are warned about the deception of our enemy

2 Corinthians 11:14, James 1:16, Galatians 6:7, 1 Corinthians 15:33, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 2 Timothy 3:12-13

If you study warfare the elite groups have specific weapons and advanced techniques. Basic soldiers have training and procedures. Even if you are elite, the tools you use stay consistent and so does your basic approach. The civilian equivalent of Army Special Forces is called **SWAT**. (Special Weapons and Tactics)

Satan does not have a new bag of tricks up his sleeve he uses the same weapons and tactics against everyone. As believers we are not **unaware** of his devices.

Satan's SWAT

- False **philosophies** **Colossians 2:8, Acts 17:18-21**
- False **religions** **2 Corinthians 11:4**
- False **ministries** **2 Corinthians 11:13-15, 2 Timothy 4:3-4, 1 John 2:18**
- False **doctrine** **Matthew 15:8-9, Mark 7:7-9, Colossians 2:22-23, 1 Timothy 4:1-3**
- Promoting **divisions** and schisms within the body of Christ
Romans 16:17-18, 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 1 Corinthians 3:3-7, Jude 1:17-19, 1 Corinthians 12:23-27
Notice how the word of God addresses all types of division.

Satan's Schemes for attacking and harassing God's people: Ephesians 6:16, Psalm 5:12

- Plants **doubt** in our mind, to doubt God and His Word **Genesis 3:1-2**
- Induces **fear** and worry **2 Timothy 1:7**
- Entices us through **temptations** **James 1:13-15, 1 Corinthians 10:13**
- By directing the affairs of **governments** **Daniel 10:13, Luke 4:5-6**
Satan is involved in the politics of all nations to influence them. Remember, Satan desires to set up a literal, visible kingdom on earth.
- By persecuting the **saints** **Revelation 2:10, 2 Timothy 3:12**
- Through hindering and preventing our service of **ministry** **1 Thessalonians 2:18**
- By **distracting** us from what's important and what deserves our focus – this is **diversion** **Revelations 2:4, Matthew 23:23**
- By lulling us into a false sense of security that induces **apathy** and indifference **Revelation 3:16**
- Using **psychological** warfare which produces discouragement, depression, insecurity, and general confusion (known as the fog of war) **James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:6-8**

One of Satan's most used tactics is **intimidation** **1 Peter 5:8-9** Goliath is a great example of how this works. He was arrogant, proud, loud, boastful, large, and aggressive. He taunted, challenged, and belittled. He was so imposing that no one was willing to challenge him. Every single day Goliath came out and threatened them. Intimidation is a **mental** bombardment that is relentless so that the harassment cripples you internally. Satan, like Goliath, wants to emotionally and mentally immobilize through fear and dismay. The devil is a slanderer and an **accuser**. He seeks to incapacitate, disable, stun, disarm and unnerve us. If Satan can cause you to **think** irrationally you may freeze up, undermine your courage, or cause you to make poor decisions and choices.

Goliath made one statement that is true. **1 Samuel 17:9** If we resist the devil, he will **flee**.

If we conquer the lying emotions, accusations, and deceptions of the devil we will be able to keep the enemy a **subordinate** for the rest of our life. If we do not learn to take our thoughts captive, Satan will **dominate** our thought processes for the rest of our life. We need to learn like David to **speak** for ourselves, rather than listen to the enemy and our own doubts.

1 Samuel 17:45

We also learn from David and Goliath how often Satan **deploys** his weapons. For forty days Goliath came out morning and evening like clockwork. Our enemy is **predictable** and relentless.

When David came upon the Israelites, they were defeated and demoralized. David was filled with **boldness**, courage and confidence that came from the Holy Spirit that was realized from past victories with lions and bears. David was so young that he was unskilled in conventional warfare. It is important that we are not trying to defeat the enemy through the arm of our flesh but in the power of God. Saul tried to give David his own armor. It wasn't comfortable and it did not fit correctly. In the **natural** David was not equipped for this battle, but in the spirit realm, David was dressed in the power of God. **1 Samuel 17:45-47**

What set David apart is that he resisted the enemy. Goliath was used to his taunts working but David not only resisted he **advanced**. He didn't stand at a distance and try to cherry-pick, he ran at the enemy, knocked him out and **finished** the job by cutting off his head.

To defeat the devil, we must resist him, but we need to understand who he is. We know that the word devil means accuser or slanderer. The Greek **'diablos'** comes from two words that carry the idea of penetration and to throw. It has the meaning of hitting something over and over again until it is so worn down that it can be completely penetrated. So "devil" is not a name. Satan is literally a devil – one who strikes **repeatedly** - again and again until he finally breaks down one's mental resistance. When the resistance is broken through, he strikes with the fiery darts with a fury to completely take a person's mind and emotions captive.

This is why we are to be clothed in the armor of God or literally clothed with the Holy Spirit.

Psalm 3:3