

Spiritual Warfare

QUICK REFERENCE COUNSELING KEYS Excerpt

The Importance of Knowing the Enemy . . .

No one was more respected as a military genius during WWII than the American General George S. Patton. Likewise, no one was more feared than his enemy, the brilliant German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, whose clever tactics earned him the nickname The Desert Fox. Rommel's success on the sun-scorched desert of North Africa was renowned, yet Patton lured him into a trap that resulted in defeat of the German troops. Patton out-foxed The Fox in order to bring about a major shift in the war that led to the ultimate allied victory over Germany. What prepared Patton to successfully defeat his cunning enemy? When asked, he reportedly said to Rommel, "I've read your book!"¹ Patton had studied the tactics of his enemy. In the same way, believers need to read The Book. As you study the Bible, you will become increasingly aware of the strategies used by your unseen enemy, Satan and his spiritual forces of evil.

*"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."
(Ephesians 6:12)*

Q: "I'm constantly defeated in my thought life. How can I gain victory?"

Realize first that Satan is called "*the father of lies*," and he delights in defeating you. Read through the Book of Philippians. Then take an inventory of every defeating thought and what you should be thinking instead. Write out your replacement thoughts. Then, as thoughts come, if they do not line up with Philippians 4:6–8, change your thinking! When you recognize a wrong thought, say, "In the power of Christ, I refuse that thought. The truth is . . . (state the truth)."

*"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."
(Philippians 4:8)*

Q: "Since God knows that our flesh is weak, why does He tempt us to sin?"

God is not the author of temptation. We sin when we fail to turn away from temptation immediately and instead follow the enticing desires of our own flesh.

*"Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire."
(James 1:13–14)*

Stand against Satan²

Knowing that Satan's power and knowledge are limited gives us the courage to stand!

Satan is not omnipotent. Satan is powerful, but he is not all-powerful. (1 John 4:4)

Satan is not omnipresent. Satan is a fallen angel, and angels cannot be in all places at once. (Job 1:7)

Satan is not omniscient. Satan is called "an angel of light." . . . He is cunning, crafty, and clever, but sin has so corrupted his wisdom that he still tries to defeat God. (Ezekiel 28:17)

Satan has been confined to boundaries. It is important to know that God allows Satan's activity in our lives only to strengthen and purify us. (Job 1:12)

Satan can't tolerate resistance. You resist his attacks by standing in your position in Christ. (James 4:7)

Satan hates the blood of Christ.³ As a Christian, since you are in Christ and Christ conquered Satan, you too are a conqueror. (Revelation 12:11)

*"Take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm."
(Ephesians 6:13)*

Key Verse to Memorize

*"Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."
(1 John 4:4)*

Key Passage to Read and Reread

Ephesians 6:10–18

Defeat the Flesh⁴

Admit you were born with a sin nature, a natural bent to sin. (Psalm 51:5)

Agree that Christ's death on the cross for you brought death to the sin nature in you. (Romans 6:6–7)

Appropriate the "resurrection power" of Christ within you to break the power of sin over you. (Romans 6:4)

Appreciate the truth that you have been given a new nature. (2 Peter 1:4)

Affirm that you are a new creation in Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Ask Christ, who lives within you, to give you victory over self-centered habits. (Philippians 4:13)

*"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."
(Galatians 5:24)*

God's Strategy for Warfare⁵

Depend on God's power for victory

Ephesians 6:10.

- Pray for God to overcome your fear and discouragement.
- Pray for God to give you His wisdom and discernment.

Know your enemy

Ephesians 6:11–12.

- Political and religious organizations are not your enemies.
- Satan, sin, and demonic spirits are your real enemies.

Be prepared for battle by wearing the battle gear

Ephesians 6:13–17.

- Have on the belt of truth to combat Satan's lies.
- Put on the breastplate of righteousness to overcome temptation.
- Wear the shoes of peace, knowing God is on your side.
- Carry the shield of faith to withstand doubt and unbelief.
- Put on the helmet of salvation to protect your mind.
- Use the sword of the Spirit. accurately.

Pray always

Ephesians 6:18.

- Make a commitment to pray about everything.

“I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”
(John 16:33)

Overcome the World through Faith⁶

Focus on Jesus as God the Son. (John 1:1–3, 14)

Acknowledge that Jesus has overcome the world. (John 16:33)

Identify with Jesus and know that His victory is your victory. (1 John 4:4)

Trust in the absolute truth of God’s Word. (2 Timothy 3:16)

Hold up God’s Word as your measuring rod against the world’s standards. (Psalm 119:11)

“Everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”
(1 John 5:4–5)

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1. Francis Ford Coppola and Edmund H. North, *Patton* (Frank McCarthy, producer; Franklin J. Schaffner, director. Beverly Hills, Calif.: 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment, 1997), videocassette.
2. Mark I. Bubeck, *The Adversary: The Christian Versus Demon Activity* (Chicago: Moody, 1975), 100–1; Theodore H. Epp, *How to Resist Satan* (Lincoln, NE: Back to the Bible, 1981), 11–12.
3. See J. Oswald Sanders, *Satan Is No Myth* (Chicago: Moody, 1975), 121.
4. See Bubeck, *The Adversary: The Christian Versus Demon Activity*, 36–43; Danny Daniels, “The Building Up and Tearing Down of Strongholds,” in *Spiritual Warfare*, ed. Ras Robinson (Fort Worth, TX: Fulness House, 1979), 20–31.
5. For this section, see Mark I. Bubeck, *Overcoming the Adversary* (Chicago: Moody, 1984), 73–129; David Jeremiah, *Spiritual Warfare*, Turning Point (San Diego, CA: Walk Thru the Bible Ministries, 1995); Sanders, *Satan Is No Myth*, 93–100.
6. Bubeck, *The Adversary: The Christian Versus Demon Activity*, 51–53.



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