

CHAPTER FOUR

PRAYER AND WARFARE

SPIRITUAL PRAYER

All prayers must be spiritual. A prayer that is not spiritual is not a prayer and will not see a result. If all the prayers on earth today were spiritual prayers, believers would have many spiritual achievements. However, fleshly prayers are numerous! Self-will in one's prayer renders a prayer spiritually useless. Today many believers consider prayer a tool to accomplish their own purposes. If they had more knowledge, they would realize that prayer is just man speaking God's will to Him. The flesh must be crucified no matter where it is found. Even in prayer one must not allow the flesh to exist. God's work precludes any possibility of being mixed with human ideas. Even when the motive is good and the work is beneficial to men, God will not permit man to initiate anything that requires Him to follow the lead of man. Believers have only one right, to do what God tells them to do. They have no right to tell God what He ought to do. Other than following God's leading, believers can contribute nothing to God's work. God will not participate in any works that are initiated by self-will, no matter how much man prays for them. Self-will only makes prayers fleshly.

When a believer truly enters the spiritual realm, he realizes how empty he is, and that he has nothing of life to give to others and nothing in himself that can oppose the enemy. He spontaneously takes God as his source, and prayer then becomes indispensable. A real prayer is one that expresses the emptiness of the one praying and the riches of the One answering. If the flesh has never been dealt with by the cross to the extent that a man becomes a "vacuum," what use and purpose does his prayer have?

A spiritual prayer is nothing other than a prayer that is not from the flesh. It is not something that a believer thinks of, something that he desires, or something that he decides to do. Rather, it is something that he practices according to God's will. A spiritual prayer is a prayer in spirit. This means that a person first understands God's will in his intuition and then prays about it. "By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit" (Eph. 6:18). This is the command of the Scripture. If we are not praying in spirit, we are praying in the flesh. We should not open our mouth the minute we come to God. Instead, we should first ask God to show us what He wants us to know and show us how to pray. We have already tried repeatedly to pray for what we wanted. Why do we not now pray for what God wants? In prayer the flesh has no place. It is not what you want, but what God wants. Those who are not truly spiritual will not have truly spiritual prayers.

All spiritual prayers originate from God. God shows us what we should pray. He shows us a need and causes us to be intuitively burdened for that need. An intuitive burden is our call to prayer. But many times, due to negligence, we miss many of the small feelings in our intuition. We should never pray more than the burden in our intuition. Any prayer that is not initiated and inspired by the intuition is a prayer that originates from the believers themselves and is of the flesh.

If believers desire to see their prayers becoming effective in the spiritual realm and if they desire that their prayers would not be fleshly, they should confess their weakness, acknowledging that they do not know how to pray (Rom. 8:26), and ask the Holy Spirit to teach them to pray. They should then pray according to the instruction of the Holy Spirit. If God grants words for preaching, He will surely grant words for prayer. The

need for the latter is the same as that for the former. We must acknowledge our own weakness and powerlessness before we can utter His prayer through the operation of the Holy Spirit in our spirit. In the work it is vain to put one's trust in the flesh. In prayer it is equally useless to put one's trust in the flesh.

However, we must not only pray with the spirit, we must "pray also with the mind" (1 Cor. 14:15). When we pray, the spirit and the mind must cooperate. A believer receives the answer to his prayer in his spirit and understands what he has received in his mind. The spirit receives the burden to pray, and the mind prays out the prayer sentence by sentence. Only after this kind of cooperative work by the spirit and the mind can a believer's prayer be perfected. Many times prayers are only the exercise of the mind; they do not have the inspiration of the spirit. When this happens, the believers themselves become the origin of their prayer. Real prayer should originate from God's throne and should be felt in the believers' spirit, known in their mind, and prayed through the power of the Holy Spirit. Prayer and the human spirit cannot be separated from one another.

If a believer wants to pray in spirit, he must first learn to walk in spirit. A man can never walk during the day according to the flesh and pray in the spirit when it is time to pray. The way he prays cannot be very different from the way he lives. The spiritual condition of many people shows that they are not qualified to pray. The quality of a person's prayer is determined by the way he lives. How can a fleshly person pray a spiritual prayer? Even a spiritual person may not necessarily pray a spiritual prayer because if he is not watchful, he will fall into the flesh. However, if a spiritual person continually prays in spirit, his prayer will maintain his spirit and mind in a state of harmony with God. Prayer is an exercise of our spirit, and our spirit is strengthened through exercise. If we become negligent in prayer, our spirit will shrivel. Nothing can substitute for prayer. Even work cannot substitute for prayer. Many of us do not spend much time to pray because we are too busy with our work. Consequently, the demons are not cast out. Prayer allows us to first overcome the enemy within, before we deal with him outside of us. Whoever fights the enemy on their knees will find the enemy defeated when they rise up to meet him face to face. Through this kind of exercise, a spiritual man gradually becomes strong.

If believers pray all the time in the Holy Spirit, their spirit will be greatly developed, they will have very keen feelings in spiritual matters, and all of their spiritual drowsiness will be removed.

The present need of a spiritual believer is to detect the senses in his spirit. He should know how the enemy attacks, what God has revealed, and should express through his prayer the things that he has understood one by one. Believers should quickly realize any move in their spirit so that they can accomplish in prayer what God wants them to accomplish. Prayer is a kind of work. The experience of God's children proves that prayer accomplishes greater results than any other kind of work. Prayer is also a kind of warfare because it is the one weapon in our battle against the enemy (Eph. 6:18). Nevertheless, only the prayers that are prayed in the spirit are effective.

Prayers in the spirit are the most effective means of attacking the enemy and withstanding his wiles. Prayer can destroy and also build. It can destroy everything of sin and Satan and can build up everything of God. Therefore, prayer is the most crucial thing in our spiritual work and warfare. The success of spiritual work and victory in warfare both hinge on prayer. If a believer fails in prayer, he fails in everything.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Generally speaking, before a believer has experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit, he is like the servant of Elisha, who was very unclear about the realities in the spiritual realm (2 Kings 6:15-17). Although he may have received the teachings of the Bible and some instructions, he only understands them according to his mind and has no revelation in his spirit. The intuition in his spirit becomes quite keen only after he has experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In his spirit, a whole spiritual world will be opened up before him. When a believer passes through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, he comes in contact with God's supernatural power and touches a personal God.

At this point real spiritual warfare begins. First, the power of darkness will disguise itself as an angel of light and imitate the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Second, the intuition in the spirit will become truly aware of the existence of the spiritual realm and will know the reality of Satan and the evil spirits. The apostles did not receive the expounding of the Scripture by the Lord until after Golgotha. They saw the reality of the spiritual realm only after Pentecost. The baptism of the Spirit is the beginning of spiritual warfare.

After a believer has experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit and comes in contact with a personal God, after his spirit is released and freed, and he realizes the reality of matters in the spiritual realm, he will engage Satan in warfare if he has the knowledge. (We should remember that although a spiritual man has knowledge, his knowledge does not come all at once, but is acquired through many testings.) Only a spiritual man knows the reality of the spiritual enemy, and only he will fight with such an enemy (Eph. 6:12). This warfare is not with fleshly weapons (2 Cor. 10:3-4). Since the warfare is spiritual, the weapons must also be spiritual. Hence, this kind of warfare is a warfare between man's spirit and the enemy's spirit. This is the warfare of spirit with spirit.

If a believer has not reached this spiritual state, he will neither understand nor be able to engage in such a warfare in the spirit. He understands the way to "wrestle" with the enemy with his spirit only when the Holy Spirit strengthens the power of his spirit. Believers see the reality of Satan and his kingdom and then know how to withstand and attack him with their spirit only when they become spiritual.

There are many reasons for such warfare. The greatest reason is the enemy's attack and obstruction. Satan always applies his tactics to assault spiritual believers. Sometimes he assaults the emotion. At other times he assaults the body. There are also many obstacles that he places in the believers' work and environment. Another reason for spiritual warfare is to fight for God. Satan has countless works in this world and has designed countless schemes in the air. His works and schemes are all for the purpose of opposing God. When we are for God, we fight against Satan with our spiritual strength, destroy his schemes, and work with the words of our prayer. Although at times we do not know what he is scheming or doing, we fight against him anyway because he is always our enemy.

In addition to the above reasons, another reason for fighting with Satan is to be delivered from his deceptions and to deliver those who are deceived by him (see Section Eight, Chapter Three and Section Nine, Chapter Four). Although believers become keen in their spirit's intuition when they experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit, this is not sufficient to protect them from the wiles of the enemy. They can still be deceived. After one has spiritual feelings, he still needs spiritual knowledge. If he does not understand

the leading of the spirit and remains in a passive position, he will become a prisoner of the enemy. At this time, believers very easily fall into the error of ignoring the leading in their spirit and following irrational feelings or experiences, thinking that these are from God. After a believer has been baptized in the Holy Spirit, he enters into a supernatural realm. If he does not realize his own weakness and that he is no match for supernatural things, he will be deceived.

A believer's spirit can be affected by two sources: (1) the Holy Spirit and (2) evil spirits. If a believer thinks that his spirit can only be directed by the Holy Spirit and not be affected by evil spirits, he is very wrong. A believer should understand that besides the Spirit from God, there is also "the spirit of the world" (1 Cor. 2:12). This is the spiritual enemy mentioned in Ephesians 6:12. Unless a believer closes his spirit to reject them, evil spirits will take hold of his spirit through deceptions, disguises, and counterfeits.

When a believer is fully spiritual, he will be affected by the supernatural world. At this time, it is very important for him to know the difference between "spiritual" and "supernatural." Confusing these two things has led many believers into Satan's deceptions. Spiritual experiences are experiences that originate from the believers' spirit; supernatural experiences do not necessarily come from man's spirit. Sometimes they are felt in the senses of the body, and sometimes they are found in the realm of the soul. Believers should never take supernatural experiences as spiritual experiences. They should study their experiences and find out if these experiences come from the outward senses or the spirit within. Things that come from outside may be supernatural, but they are not spiritual.

Believers should never accept anything supernatural without first questioning it. Besides God, Satan can also perform supernatural things. Whatever feeling, appearance, or declaration there may be, a believer has to study the source. One must practice the teaching of 1 John 4:1. The counterfeiting efforts of Satan are often beyond the believers' expectation. If a believer is willing to humble himself and acknowledge the possibility of being deceived, he will save himself from many deceptions. Because of these deceptions, spiritual warfare becomes unavoidable. In spiritual warfare if believers do not exercise their spirit to advance in attack, the enemy will come to them and suppress their spiritual power. Spiritual warfare is a battle between the believers' spirit and the evil spirits of the enemy. If a believer is under deception, his warfare is a battle for freedom. If a believer is free already, his warfare is a battle for the deliverance of others, for guarding himself and others against the enemy's attacks, and for taking an aggressive stand to oppose all of Satan's plans and works.

This kind of warfare is a warfare of spirits; spiritual strength is required for such warfare. A believer must understand how he can wrestle with the enemy by his spirit. Without the spirit working for him, he does not know how the enemy attacks and how God wants him to fight. If he walks according to the spirit, he will learn to work by praying unceasingly in his spirit and opposing the enemy in this way. Every time a believer's spirit goes through a battle, it becomes stronger. If he understands the law of the spirit, he can see that he not only overcomes sin, but Satan as well.

The most crucial aspect of spiritual warfare is to be empowered with strength. We can see this from the portion of the apostle's teaching concerning spiritual warfare. He said, "Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength" (Eph. 6:10). Then he mentioned the spiritual warfare (vv. 11-18). But how can one be empowered? The apostle's answer is Ephesians 3:16: "To be strengthened with power through His Spirit

into the inner man." This is absolutely necessary. The inner man is the center of man, man's spirit. If the spirit becomes weak, everything becomes weak. Once the spirit becomes weak, there will be fear, and believers will not be able to withstand in the evil days. Believers need a strong spirit. The power of darkness is aimed at the human spirit. If believers do not understand the nature of the warfare, they will not be able to withstand in their spirit the principalities and powers.

Many believers feel elated in their spirit only when things are going smoothly. But when warfare comes, they are disturbed and become fearful, saddened, and depressed. They do not understand why they have failed. Believers must understand Satan's goal in the warfare before they can overcome. His aim is to take away the believers' position in ascension and to suppress their spirit in order that he can ascend. In warfare, position plays a key role. If a believer's spirit is depressed, his position in ascension is immediately lost. Therefore, believers must maintain a strong spirit and should not give any ground to the enemy.

Once believers realize that God has prepared the Holy Spirit to strengthen their spirit, they will realize the necessity of fighting with the enemy. Through assaulting prayers and wrestlings, their spirits are gradually strengthened. Just as those who wrestle with their bodies develop muscles through wrestling, the spiritual power of believers is increased when they fight the enemy. Evil spirits attack for the purpose of suppressing the believers' spirit and inflicting suffering to the soul. If believers realize the wiles of the enemy, do not draw back in anything, and withstand him, their emotions will be protected. Withstanding in spirit forces the enemy to take a defensive stand and neutralizes his attacks.

Withstanding is the most important work in spiritual warfare; the best means of defense is an attack. The withstanding that one experiences in the spiritual warfare is not accomplished just through the exercise of the will but through the exercise of spiritual power. Withstanding means to free oneself from the power of suppression. If one would "cut out a way" through the spirit, the enemy will be defeated. If one does not withstand the enemy, allowing him to attack, or if the enemy has already attacked without opposition, the believer's spirit will surely be suppressed and depressed. He will find it difficult to recover the transcendancy in his spirit even after a few days. A spirit that does not withstand is often a spirit that is suppressed.

Our withstanding must be based on the word of God. This is the sword of the Spirit. When believers receive the word of God, it will become spirit and life to them. Only then are they able to use it as their weapon of defense. A heavenly person knows how to effectively use God's word to destroy all the lies of the enemy. This kind of warfare is going on even now in the spiritual realm. Although physical eyes do not see this warfare, all those who strive to press forward in their spirit realize and confirm this type of warfare. Those who are deceived and bound by the enemy must be set free. Other than being bound by sin and self-righteousness, the most common bondage for believers relates to supernatural experiences. Believers accept these experiences heedlessly because they are marvelous and give them happy feelings. Little do they realize that these supernatural experiences only make believers proud and self-justifying. They afford no help in holiness and righteousness in life. Neither do they produce any lasting and genuine effects in their work. Once evil spirits succeed in their work, they will gain a place in the believers, and they will advance further and further until the believers walk according to the flesh.

Those who are bound themselves cannot release others. Only when the believers themselves are fully delivered from the authority of darkness experientially can they win the battle to deliver others. Today believers are more aware of the importance of the personal experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. But the danger lies right here. I am afraid that as the days go by, the number of people possessed by evil spirits will increase in proportion to the number who have experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The present need is to have a group of overcoming believers who know how to fight and deliver others from the deception of the enemy. If no one in the church of God knows the way to walk according to the spirit and the way to fight the enemy with their spirit, the church will be defeated! May God raise up men that He can use.

PRECAUTIONS IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE

In the life of a believer, each level has its own danger. The new life unceasingly wars against anything which is contrary to itself. While the saints live in the realm of the body, it wars against sins; while they live in the realm of the soul, it wars against the natural life; finally, while they live in the realm of the spirit, it wars against the principalities and powers. When a believer becomes spiritual, evil spirits launch an assault against his spirit. This is why it is called spiritual warfare, for it is a battle fought with spirit on both sides. However, unspiritual believers will not have, or will rarely have, such a danger. A believer should not think that once he reaches the spiritual realm, everything will be just fine and there will no longer be any need for war. We should realize that a Christian spends his whole life on the battlefield. It is impossible for him to lay down his arms until he appears before the Lord. While he is fleshly, he encounters danger and conflict in the realm of the flesh; while spiritual, he encounters spiritual danger and warfare. In the wilderness the Israelites only warred against the Amalekites. But after they entered Canaan, they started fighting against the seven tribes of the land. Before believers become spiritual, Satan and the evil spirits will not attack the believers' spirit; after believers become spiritual, all this will happen.

Because the enemy pays great attention to our spirit, it is necessary for spiritual believers to keep their own spirit in a proper state and constantly exercise their spirit. They should be very cautious about the sensations of their body. Any supernatural feeling and undue awareness of the natural affairs in the body need to be carefully distinguished. The believers' thoughts should be kept in perfect peace without any disturbance; their bodily senses also should be kept in complete calmness without being stirred up. They should reject anything that may cause their spirit to lose its peace, deny and oppose any falsehood with their will, and wholeheartedly pursue to walk only according to the spirit. Otherwise, they will lose ground in spiritual warfare as they walk according to the soul. Additionally, there is another matter which needs our full attention: the saints must guard their spirit from being passive in spiritual warfare.

We have mentioned that all the guidance we have comes from our spirit and that we must wait for the leading of the Spirit in our spirit. This is absolutely true, but we should be very careful lest we be led into error. While we are waiting in our spirit for the moving and guiding of the Holy Spirit, there is a danger of letting our spirit and person fall into a state of passivity. Nothing can give more opportunity for Satan to work than such a passive state. On one hand, we should not use our strength to do anything and should only obey the Holy Spirit; on the other hand, we should take heed not to let our spirit or any part of our being become mechanical and tumble into passiveness. Our spirit should livingly govern our whole person and actively cooperate with the Spirit.

Once the spirit is in a passive state, the Holy Spirit will no longer have a way to use it because the condition under which the Holy Spirit operates in man's life is totally different from that under which Satan operates. The Holy Spirit requires man to cooperate with Him entirely and livingly. He desires man to actively work with Him. He never denies the personality of the believers. In contrast, Satan requires man to fully stop in order that he may take over. He wants man to receive his work passively and become his mechanism. We must be watchful not to go to extremes by misunderstanding spiritual doctrines. We need not be afraid of going to the extreme in obeying the Lord or in rejecting the works of the flesh, which we must put away thoroughly. However, we should be very careful not to go to the kind of extreme that results from misunderstandings. We have stressed the point that whatever belongs to man and comes out of man is vanity and that we should seek only after God's own work. Nothing will have spiritual value unless it is done by the Holy Spirit through our spirit. Therefore, we should wait for God's revelation in our spirit. All of this is true. How good it would be if the believers acted according to this truth! But here lies the danger of an extreme that comes from misunderstanding. Due to misinterpretation, believers assume that they should not do anything --that their mind should be "blank," letting the Holy Spirit think for them; that their emotion should not be allowed to have any affection, letting the Holy Spirit put His own affections in their heart; and that their will should not make any decision, letting the Holy Spirit decide for them. They accept whatever happens to them, assuming that they should not actively use their spirit to cooperate with the Holy Spirit, but passively wait for the Holy Spirit's move. Once there is any moving within, they think it must have come from the Holy Spirit.

This is absolutely wrong. God wants to do away with the action of our flesh, but He does not intend to destroy us as a person. He never eliminates our personality. He does not want us to become a lifeless mechanism; He wants us to cooperate with Him. He does not want us to become void of thoughts, affections, and judgment. He desires that we think, feel, and decide in accordance with what He thinks, feels, and decides. The Holy Spirit will not replace our thoughts, feelings, and decisions; we still have to think, feel, and make decisions in accordance with God's own purpose. (We will thoroughly discuss this later.) If our mind, emotion, and will become utterly passive, requiring an outside power to take their place, then the spirit will inevitably fall into a passive condition. When a believer is unable to use his own spirit and needs a power from without to "move" his spirit, Satan will take full advantage of him.

There is a fundamental difference between the work of the Holy Spirit and the work of an evil spirit. The Holy Spirit motivates men to work by themselves, never denying their personality, but an evil spirit requires men to be entirely still, doing the work for them, so that their spirit becomes mechanical. Therefore, passivity of the spirit (i.e., a passive state involving the whole person) not only gives an evil spirit opportunity to work, but also makes the Holy Spirit unable to function properly because He lacks the cooperation of the believers. The result is the domination of the evil spirits. If believers are not spiritual, they will not have the danger of coming into contact with evil spirits. After they become spiritual, however, evil spirits will come to attack their spirit. Only spiritual believers, not fleshly ones, have the danger of passivity in the spirit and counterfeit experiences of the spirit, etc.

Because believers misinterpret the nullifying of the flesh, they put their spirit into a passive state. This allows an evil spirit to pretend to be the Holy Spirit. In their ignorance believers think that any moving must come from the Holy Spirit, and they receive it unwittingly, forgetting that not only the Holy Spirit but also evil spirits can

affect their spirit. Therefore, they give Satan the ground to attack them gradually in order to corrupt their morality, mental vigor, and health and make them suffer unspeakable pain.

This is what has happened to many believers who have experienced "the baptism in the Holy Spirit." It occurs because believers do not realize that once they have this kind of experience, they enter into a closer connection with the spiritual world (either God's or the devil's) and give the Holy Spirit or an evil spirit the possibility of influencing them. When they are about to experience this baptism, they consider any supernatural experience to be the baptism in the Holy Spirit. They are baptized in the spirit, but we must ask what kind of spirit they are baptized in, for a baptism in the Holy Spirit and in an evil spirit are both a "baptism in the spirit." Many believers want to experience the baptism in the Holy Spirit, but they do not know that the Holy Spirit needs the cooperation of their spirit, that their personality is not nullified, and that they still maintain their free will. Rather, they plunge into a passive state, giving up their own will and allowing a power from without to burn, twist, and cast them down. Thus, they are baptized in an evil spirit.

Some believers do have a genuine experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, yet they are subsequently deceived because they are unable to distinguish between the power of the spirit and the soul. Since they have had such a special experience, they think that they are under the full control of the Holy Spirit and should not make any decisions, thinking rather that they should remain in a passive attitude. Their spirit thus falls entirely into a passive state. Satan begins to give them extremely happy feelings with numerous visions, dreams, and other supernatural experiences. They do not realize that all these are due to their passive spirit. Instead, they consider them all to be from the Holy Spirit. Even though they have these experiences, they will still be able to tell the difference if they can distinguish their own feelings from the spirit and the supernatural from the spiritual. However, a mistake concerning the passivity of their spirit, compounded with a mistake in their lack of discernment, deeply entraps them in the enemy's deceit.

Once the believer's spirit is passive, his conscience spontaneously becomes passive as well. Once his conscience becomes passive, he thinks that he will be led directly by the Holy Spirit, either through a voice or through the Scriptures. He thinks the Holy Spirit will no longer lead him through his conscience or through the judgment of the intuition. Since he possesses the highest way of leading, he thinks that he only needs to listen to what the Holy Spirit is personally speaking to him or what He is speaking through the Scriptures. By not using his conscience and letting it slip into a passive state, he is defrauded in his daily living by the enemy. The result is nothing but obedience to the work of Satan. Since he no longer uses his own conscience, the Holy Spirit also, according to the principles of His work, will not employ his conscience on his behalf. Satan will take advantage of this situation to replace the leading of the believer's conscience and intuition with supernatural voices and other things.

As their conscience becomes passive and is led by evil spirits, some believers lower their moral standard. They no longer look at immoral matters as immoral. On the contrary, they think that they are living according to a higher principle. This hinders them from advancing in life and in their work. They stop using their intuition to sense the will of the Holy Spirit; neither do they use their conscience to distinguish right and wrong. They simply act as machines, following outward, superficial voices which they have mistaken for the voice of God. In this situation they ignore their reasoning, conscience,

and other people's advice. They become the most stubborn persons in the world and will not be convinced by anyone because they think they are following a higher way than that of the rest of the believers. They are very close to what the apostle said: "Who are branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron" (1 Tim. 4:2). They are void of any feeling of their conscience.

In such a life of spiritual warfare, we must keep our spirit in an active state --fully obedient to the Holy Spirit, not in a passive state. Otherwise, we will inevitably be deceived by Satan. If our spirit is not active and reaching out, even if it is not attacked by the enemy, it will be locked in, and Satan will blockade it and shut off all of its outlets. Our spirit will be unable to work, serve, or war, as though it were being suppressed. Our spirit must be active and reaching out. It must always resist Satan, or else it will be attacked from every side by evil spirits.

In spiritual warfare, one very important principle is that we must keep attacking Satan constantly. In order to guard ourselves from being attacked, we must attack. To attack the evil spirits is the only way to prevent them from attacking us. Once believers have entered into the spiritual realm, if they do not have a daily attitude of resisting the enemy in the spirit, assaulting Satan with prayers in the spirit, and asking God to destroy all the works of Satan done through the evil spirits, they will soon see their own spirit fall from the heavens and become weak and powerless. In a short time these believers will lose their feelings and not even know where their spirit is. This is because their spirit has fallen into a passive state and is no longer aggressively attacking. Believers unknowingly allow the enemy to attack, block, and surround their spirit. If the believers "release" their spirit daily and always resist the enemy, they will see their spirit becoming active and growing stronger day by day.

A believer must rid himself of all misunderstandings concerning the spiritual life. Before he reaches the spiritual realm, he often dreams of how happy he would be if he too could become a spiritual believer like some of his brothers. He assumes that the spiritual life is ecstatic. He imagines that the so-called spiritual life is a life of perfect happiness, one of rejoicing all day long. In reality it is just the opposite; the spiritual life does not provide any happiness to him; rather, it is a life of daily fighting. If you try to separate spiritual warfare from spiritual life, you will soon find out that that life is no longer spiritual. A spiritual life is one of suffering, charged with vigilance, labor, fatigue, sufferings, heartbreak, and conflict. This is a life absolutely for the kingdom of God, and one which disregards one's own happiness. When a believer is fleshly, he lives to himself and for his own "spiritual" happiness. He has no real spiritual use in God's hand. He can be used by God only after he has taken the attitude of being dead to sin and his own life.

A spiritual life in the eyes of God is one with spiritual usefulness because it is a life of attacking God's enemy for Him. We should stir up our zeal for Him and war against the enemy constantly, never allowing our spirit, which is so useful, to become passive.