

BFF365 Hiding Behind Our Big Brother

Scott: Welcome to the "Building Faith Families" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today. Good afternoon, Steve. How are you today?

Steve: Today we're going to talk about spiritual warfare, and I think the title would be "Hiding Behind Our Big Brother." I don't know if people listening have had a big brother, but it's awful nice when you do have one when you happen to be in a confrontation with neighborhood kids or something at school. It's wonderful to get behind him and let him take care of things.

As Christians, we have a big brother Who's the biggest brother on the block, and we need to make sure that we're not getting out in front of Him. That's what we're going to talk about today.

Let's pray: Lord, help us now to have the right attitude and yet the right amount of boldness. We don't want to just be sitting there letting You do all the work. You told us that this is an honor that we share with You.

This honor have all the saints. We know that we are in a spiritual warfare, but at the same time, help us to be wise, so we're not picked off. Help us to be prudent, and help us to learn when to hide behind Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: Ephesians 6:10–13, "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. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places."

That's quite a picture that Paul paints. He says, "Take up the full armor of God so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm."

The words resist and stand firm come from the same Greek root. It's an active standing. It's not standing with your arms folded or twiddling your thumbs, but standing in an attitude and position of resistance.

The point of this podcast is we are in a battle. We're in a spiritual war. Our wrestling is not against things that we can see, touch, feel, or know their names but rulers, powers, world forces, and spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. This is something that we need to be aware of.

I don't think most of us have ever experienced seeing what's really happening when we're praying. If we could, we probably would pray a lot more. By faith, we take it that what Paul is saying is what we're involved in a life-and-death struggle. A spiritual battle.

I'm going to introduce some interesting scriptures. I say interesting because that word covers a lot, but it's not the kind of thing that you probably have heard preached on before.

Jude 9, and the context is Jude is talking about people in their church that are not in a good place. They rail and make incorrect judgments. In the ninth verse, "When the archangel Michael, contending with the devil..." this is part of this battle going on in heavenly places, "...was disputing about the body of Moses..."

Can you imagine or visualize an angel, perhaps an archangel, contending with the devil over the body of Moses? I have no commentary, except I take my hands up and I went, "Wow." The passage continues, "even Michael did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you.'"

God calls us to be warriors. He calls us to bind the strong man, to loose, to pray, to fight the good fight. There's a bunch of scriptures that we could talk about and I think most people are listening are cognizant of those passages.

We also have to be careful that we don't, you might say, step out in front of our big brother. We don't want to begin rebuking the devil, or start naming and calling him names. I've heard people do this in prayer, and it makes me tremble. Some people get excited about being in the spiritual battle, and they start addressing the devil personally. They start calling the devil by name.

I don't think this is the attitude we need to have. It is not safe. This is what Jude is teaching us, even Michael, and if anybody could have done that, it would have been Michael the Archangel.

We read about Michael and Gabriel in the end of Daniel, which are fascinating descriptions of a battle in the heavenlies. Daniel is praying on Earth, and in order for his prayer to get through, there's a battle in the heavenlies. Michael and Gabriel are helping each other to get God's answer to Daniel.

In this context, the powerful archangel Michael did not step out in front of his big brother, you might say, and rebuke the devil himself. He says, "The Lord rebuke you." How does this resonate? I want to ask you right now before I go into the rest of this.

Scott: That passage has caught me off guard before. I don't know exactly if I understand it properly or not. It struck me that he didn't go into name-calling and insulting one of God's creatures, even though he's turned evil. I don't know what exactly that means the way of that...I don't know if that's the interpretation or the translation or what.

I'm just curious because when Jesus is dealing with demons, sometimes he'll ask, "What's your name?" Then they responded, "Legion" or whatever. I've heard people talk about...Sometimes it's actually helpful to, if you're feeling attacked by a demon, to ask its name and then command it to be gone, that kind of stuff. I don't know, I'm a novice in this stuff.

Steve: I've never been led to ask somebody what the demon's name was. I'm sure that there are people out there that are way ahead of me in this field. I just want to make sure that I don't get into the name-calling business. I want to make sure that I'm not face-to-face with the devil because left to my own resources, he'll eat me up.

Steve: Let me read that passage that I referenced in Daniel 10, when Daniel had been praying and an angel appeared before him. I'll be reading in the 10th chapter, 10th verse.

"A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. He said to me, 'Oh Daniel, man, greatly loved. Understand the words that I speak to you and stand upright for now I have been sent to you.' When he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling.

"Then he said to me, 'Fear not Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words.

"The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me 21 days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia, and came to make you understand what is to happen to your people on the latter days, for the vision is for days yet to come."

There was a struggle in heaven. When Daniel prayed, he set things in motion in heaven, and now there are angels helping each other to get the answers through to him. This is an incredible picture of what is going on in the heavenly places.

My point is that, I would be careful about calling the devil names. I would simply say, "The Lord rebuke you." That make sense?

Steve: Let me read another interesting passage. Acts 19:13–17, "Some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus saying, 'I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches.'

"Seven sons of one Sceva, a Jewish chief priest were doing this. The evil spirit answered and said to them, 'I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?' The man in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them, and subdued all of them, and overpowered them so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

"This became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who lived in Ephesus, and fear fell upon all of them and the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified."

God used their efforts and God redeemed it. This account made its way into scripture which is amazing. Sadly, these guys were out of their league, weren't they? I doubt if they even knew Jesus Himself.

Scott: That's the point, they didn't know Jesus, that's why they got whooped. They were pretending like the guy who was trying to heal people in Jesus' name or whatever. If you don't actually know Jesus and have the Holy Spirit, you're in deep doo-doo if you try and take on a demon.

Steve: That last sentence, is exactly right, because we are not equal to the task in and of ourselves. These seven sons weren't. Even though they had the form, they didn't know God Himself. They hadn't been adopted into His family.

I take heed from this story and take seriously the exhortation to pray in Jesus' name, when I bind the strongman. And bind the strongman in the power of Jesus' blood of

Jesus. Not by Steve's name or in Steve's power, but everything I do is behind my big brother and in the name of my big brother. To me, that is the only safe place to be. We're going to see a lot more confrontations in the last days. Gloves are coming off and we need to be prepared. David in Psalm 18, "Jehovah is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer. My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge. My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold."

That was his attitude, "I'm going to take my place at God's side. I'm going to make Him my fortress. He's going to be my refuge and my shield."

If you have those thoughts swirling in your heart, then when you read Ephesians 6, this is not new stuff. Paul says in Ephesians 6:14, "Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one."

That shield of faith I know something about. I don't know much about the breastplate. I'm sure we've all heard sermons on this. This is a very popular topic at vacation Bible schools, Sunday schools.

The point is, we have been given spiritual weapons and spiritual armor. We need to avail ourselves of them and put them on and take them by faith. We don't go into battle unprepared, we don't get ahead of our big brother. We don't fight in our own name, but we put on the armor of God. We take up the shield of faith with which to extinguish all the flaming darts. This will be a topic for a future podcast.

We take up the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication.

My main thing I get from those last two verses is, you learn how to use the sword of the Spirit and you learn how to pray in the Spirit. We need the Spirit's help to know how to pray. Using the sword of the Spirit is a learned skill.

I don't think we just go into battle, with nice new shining armor, and begin to fight. We want Jesus beside us and us behind Him. We're at His side. He's our fortress, our deliverer, our shield. We don't jump into the battle and take on Goliath by ourselves, we have to learn how to wield the sword of the Spirit.

I have been in an environment for decades where people have experience in praying with the sword of the Spirit. Sometimes, God's Spirit will lead somebody to pray a certain way, using a certain passage of scripture. You can sense that they are right on the money.

It's beautiful when you hear something like that happen, because you know that every one of their strokes with that sword is hitting the mark. From today, we have three thoughts.

1. Hide behind Jesus, let Him do the rebuking.
2. Use His name and fight in His name.
3. Keep up the shield of faith to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one.

In other words, we're in a battle. We want to be sober, we want to be smart, but we also don't want to be feeble. We want to be bold. We want to do what God gives us to do because the weapons of our warfare are mighty and they do make a difference. Every one of our prayers of faith that we're praying is filling up a bowl of incense. Even if we don't see the answer right away, it's contributing to something that is going to bring about the final battle. Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: Got any more insights there, brother?

Scott: I don't remember if we covered this before or not. I always stumble over myself trying to find the exact verse. I think it's in 1 Peter 5:8–9 where he says, "Be alert and of sober mind, your enemy, the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings."

Part of that, the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same stuff. This is common. This is not extraordinary and reserved for the prayer warriors, the super-duper people. There's three or four of them that they call upon in church. This is common to all believers.

Steve: Yes. "This honor have all the saints". I love that verse in the Psalms because I really believe that God has made all of us believers, a kingdom, and priests.

That's what we're talking about here, and that's what priests do, they stand by the Lord, they fight the fight of faith, and they're led by His Spirit, so, amen. Good stuff. Father, thank You for this calling. You've called us to stand by You, fight Your battles. Thank You for Paul and his insights that he shared. Thank You for Daniel, who didn't know what was going on in the heavenlies, but he prevailed in prayer, and things happened that changed the course of history.

We want to do our part in the days that you've placed us. We're not counting on Daniel. We're not counting on Paul. We want to be right up to date with the Holy Spirit doing our part to see that the battle is put through in our days.

Give us that heavenly gumption and also give us the heavenly wisdom to keep up our shield of faith, to pray in your name, and to stand behind our big brother. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the Building Faith Families podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email Steve at spdemme@Gmail.com. If you have a question for me, you can reach me at scott@unsocializedmedia.com. Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.