

# Beating The Bully (Part 1)

Ephesians 6:12

**Main focus of this series:** This series is a formulation of key teachings and understandings from the book of Ephesians. In an effort to decipher each statement of Paul in Ephesians we believe we will learn how to successfully operate in the three positions of the believer: to sit (Ephesians 1-3), to walk (Ephesians 4-6:9) and over the next few weeks we will address the thought... stand (Ephesians 6:10-24) .

**The importance of this message today:** Few believer's ever realize their potential in Christ Jesus. There is an attempt on Satan's part to dilute the true reality of every believer's identity and power. God's desire is that all men find the next level of their spiritual potential so they might make a supernatural difference on this earth. Satan's sly deceitfulness is to cloud your understanding of this truth. But, if he cannot get you to believe you are less than you really are in Christ then he will tempt you to believe you are more than you were meant to be. There is a balance that must be developed so that we can not only reach our potential but reach the mission that God has set out in our hearts to do.

## Here's A Truth

I love following high school and college athletes into their future potential as a professional athlete or a professional of some sort in our society, knowing they did not waste their education on foolishness. The facts are, less than 5% of all athletes ever go to college to play their sport and less than 3% of college athlete's have the opportunity to participate in the pro's. During the college bowl games there was a commercial that depicted professionals who were former college standouts. They had become professionals, but not necessarily in the field of sports. I believe that when it comes to Christian's who move in the power power of God, that spiritual professional level, not a pastoral job, but a level where they are functioning in their spiritual potential in Christ, that there are only a few in percentage who walk in that potential. Many believers are not causing much havoc to the enemy. Many are watching the army walk along. Others are MIA, missing in action. **But God calls for courageous action, warfare faith, a conquering Spirit against the enemy! The church needs to become armed and DANGEROUS!**

*"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."*

Ephesians 6:12

There is a struggle in our world today. There is a struggle that can take place in the flesh and blood and there is a struggle in the spiritual realm. This important point I must make here:

**When you confuse your struggle, you confuse your future!**

As you read Ephesians, you will see why Paul wrote this particular community of believer's and why he interceded for them. He wanted them to reach their God given, supernatural, DNA potential as individuals in the body of Christ. To have a better understanding of this potential, a quick review of what Paul tells the believer's in Ephesus is necessary.

## Understanding Our Spiritual Potential

*"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the **Spirit of wisdom and revelation**, so that you may **know him better.**"*

**Ephesians 1:17**

**These two things help us know Him better.** Two things have to take place for that to happen:

1. **Spirit of Wisdom-** A pouring out of insight that comes from the Holy Spirit. It is not just knowledge...knowledge answers the question "what." But it is wisdom, and it answers the question "how." The Spirit of wisdom tells us what to do. If we are obedient, knowing what, "knowledge", will matter less and less. As a matter of fact, I believe that the desire for knowing what often slows down the process of God in our life. God will give you a Spirit of understanding, but how much faster could He move in our life if we were just willing to respond to His beckoning call? This is not a statement of staying ignorant, but too often we ask what first. We also get too caught up in the future with the question, "where." Stop! Just obey, learn in review...it's an incredible teacher. Wisdom has more to do with action than information.
2. **Revelation-** 602 *apokalupsis*- **1) laying bare, making naked; 2) a disclosure of truth, instruction.** It's simply supernatural knowledge or spiritual insight that comes from the Holy Spirit. It gives additional insight and awareness of the surrounding challenges weather they be in relationship with individuals or in spiritual dimensions. Without the help of "revelation" with others, then all you will be involved in is behavior modification, just correcting according to rules and standards. The church's ignorance of the stronghold's of Satan, his ruling spirits in the "high places" over our cities and regions must thrill the powers of darkness.

### **The End Result: To Know Him Better!**

**It takes a "Spirit of wisdom," not an intellectual confidence and a "revelation" of God to know Him better and in turn know ourselves better.** An intellectual study or academic pursuit in knowing God will not enhance your spiritual dynamics. But an intentional study that could be academically challenging to pursue the person of ***Spiritual insight leads us through the proper dynamics of becoming powerful in the spiritual dimension. It makes us dangerous.***

There are many thousands of churches to day who have good, God-fearing men who love God and love people and are obedient to His Word. But they are not making an impact on their city or making headway into their community because they have not learned to pull down the "high places" nor are they aware of them because there is a lack of a "spirit of wisdom" and "revelation" to recognize who God is in the first place that helps them identify the enemy of their cities and surrounding areas. **The more I know about who God is, the more I know of who isn't!**

### **Gain Better Perspective**

Paul wanted us to also understand how important this is by continuing his emphasis by saying,

***"I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe."***

Ephesians 1:18-19a

It's important that this Spiritual wisdom comes in and the revelation of God comes in us to help us know who God is. But it's also important that the "eyes of your heart" would be enlightened, 5461 *photizo- to give light, to shine, to enlighten, light up, illumine* to help us know who we are. Without this enlightenment you will remain clueless in one or more of these three areas. It is most important to know that having your eyes open in one area doesn't necessarily mean they are open in other areas. Remain clueless, with the eyes of your heart closed, not enlightened, you will not understand three things:

1. ***You will not understand what you were created for.*** ("***...know the hope to which he has called you...***") You can not live out your full potential in the spiritual dimension because you don't know what you are supposed to be doing. You will not have the hope in your spiritual DNA that you have purpose.
2. ***You will not understand what God has and wants to resource you with.*** ("***...the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints...***") Reading this scripture correctly, you are already resourced for what you were called for. Interestingly enough, too many "saints," (people who actually have already got the ear of God), are either oblivious of what God has place in them or they are trying to conger up resources that God has placed in them for actions and callings that He has not called them to. If you are unaware of how God has resourced you to do what you were created for you may have the want to, but never know you have the ability to.
3. ***You will not understand the difference between your strength and God's power.*** ("***...his incomparably great power for us who believe.***") Let me ask you a simple question, "Do you believe?" I'm not asking if you believe in miracles or the great power of God. Here the scripture says that His, (God's) power is incomparable. **There is no match up. If you cannot tell the difference between when you are doing things in your strength and His power, then you need the enlightening, a discernment through the eyes of your heart to take place so you can see the difference. If you do not understand or experience the high voltage of the power of God, I believe you will burn up or burn out trying to do the things God has birthed you with in hope, revealed you with in resources but hasn't empowered you with in power. When you try to do in your flesh what can only be done in the spirit, you will burn up or burn out. "Nothing" can really be done in outside the power and connection with God if you intend to do something for God over the long run.**

It is so difficult to watch a person in his or her potential and watch them waste it or never learn how to turn that potential into greater opportunities for their life. Let's review the process of potential that Paul describes that is available for us as believer's through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross and resurrection.

***"That power is like the working of his mighty strength which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that***

*can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.”*

Ephesians 1:19b-21

Paul tries to describe the power that God wants to activate in our life. It is an extraordinary power, power to raise Christ from the dead and power to crown Jesus with the position that He now resides, seated at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. So what does that mean? Well, Paul says that Christ's position at the right hand of the Father and in the heavenly realms is **Far above all**:

1. **Rule- archē** - the first place, principality, rule, magistracy given to demons and to the angels entrusted to them.
2. **Authority- exousia** - the leading and more powerful among created beings superior to man, spiritual potentates (A certain class and position of angels)
3. **Power- dynamis** – inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature
4. **Dominion-kyriotēs** - dominion, power, lordship.

### What's The Big Deal?

*“As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.”*

Ephesians 2:1-2

Satan, the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the “prince of the power of the air,” the number one ruler of death, stealing and destroying on this earth has power to force, control and take jurisdiction in the heavenlies over cities and in communities.

### Now What?

*“And God raised us up **with Christ** and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus...”*

Ephesians 2:6

God loves people. He loves the people of our city and surrounding area. But He has placed the responsibility of the breakthrough for our community upon our shoulders to do Spiritual Warfare for it.

*“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.”*

Matthew 5:14

Have you ever felt the heaviness of a community when you have walked down it's streets? How about an inner city? It is absence of God's presence. Have you realized that most inner cities today are choked with prostitutes, drug dealers, all kinds of perversion, gangs, homeless, the derelicts and hopeless all find themselves in the center of the cities? Have you ever notices that few churches survive down town in any city? It is because it is a strategic stronghold for Satan and his power must be broken so God's light can be shown in it.

**Ephesians 2:6 says that God, not us, not the pastor or some elected official, but God raised us up WITH Christ! And guess what? We are seated with Him in heavenly realms. God is great about making soldiers out of former slaves! See, it didn't take Him long to get Israel out of Egypt, but it took Him forty years to get**

## **Egypt out of them!**

God is wanting to do something through you today! Look why He raised us up in the heavenly realm.

***“...in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.”***

**Ephesians 2:7**

He wants to continue to show grace to mankind. He wants to show His kindness of Christ's love to all the earth. He wants to pour it into our lives that it overflows from our hearts. And then Paul reminds us...

***“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.”***

**Ephesians 2:8-9**

## **Two things have to happen for you to be placed in you heavenly position,**

1. **Grace-** That's what God does, that's all God can and will do...there is nothing else needed on His part.
2. **Faith-** That's what we do. That's all we can do. There is nothing that you can do by earning His grace to be activated in your life. You can never earn His grace by being good enough. Most of us know this but it is so easy to fall back into the lie of earning God's provision for our need of being accepted, forgiven and reconciliation in our life.

***“His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.”***

**Ephesians 3:10-12**

**Question: What is the wisdom of God for? To know Him better!**

**There are two things that happen because of our position in heaven,**

1. **God's intent is for us to unite as a body of believer's, the church, and proclaim or make known God's manifold wisdom, who God is TO the RULERS and AUTHORITIES in heavenly realms.**
2. **Approach God with FREEDOM and CONFIDENCE.**

## **Satan is a bully**

Example: I remember driving main street in my home town one warm evening in April or May. I know it was too warm to be wearing my letter jacket because I was sweating to death in it, but I was proud of it. I was standing in a parking lot talking to one of my friends and a girl when we heard someone calling out some names that I will not repeat. I looked and a scrawny little guy driving a corvette was throwing out some names that I will not repeat. We responded, “If you can back those words up, just pull on over here.” This little guy was obviously from the local college and he squealed his wheels getting over to us. As he gets out of the car, my friend and I laughed as he had to slide onto the ground as he got out of his corvette. There was no way he could take

on the girl. Then the guy in the passenger seat got out...I think his name was Goliath. He was huge, solid and mean. I was speechless. (I later found out that he got drafted and was going to play linebacker for the San Fransisco 49ers.) I actually thought, "I've got to get this jacket off or it's going to be torn to shreds." Forget about me, I didn't want to ruin my jacket. The climate changed, the air went out of the parking lot and I was speechless. When the little guy came up and asked, "What did you say to me?" We both competed for who would be last in our response, but eventually it came out, "The same to you!" See, both of us were committed Christian's and we knew it would be crossing the line to repeat the words back to him that he had said to us. Sweat was rolling down my back so much it probably left a puddle at my feet...or that's my story! Anyway, as Goliath approached closer sorrowful thoughts of wishing I had practiced throwing a sling crossed my mind. I was thinking how I might look tough by telling my friend, "I'll take the little guy." But I never had to. The girl who was standing there stepped forward and poked her finger in the chest of Goliath and said, "**Why don't you go and make trouble somewhere else. Get out of here and leave us alone.**" Surprisingly, the two said a couple of more statements, got in the car and drove off. My puddle had gotten bigger and I think I finally exhaled. She knew how to do warfare...thank God!

We too often fail to realize our role in this **Spiritual Warfare that we so often encounter in our life. We lose great victories and opportunities to change the course of events simply because we do not realize who God is and who we are through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. We do not have the Spirit of wisdom or revelation working in our life to help us know who God is and the enlightenment of God to open our hearts eyes to let us know who we are, our purpose, our resources and the power of God invested in us, the mighty role of the believer.** It is incredibly important to allow the truth of this message to penetrate your heart and your mind. There are great victories to be won for the glory of our King and in your life as well. It's found in the secret of taking your stand...today!

**Pastor Paul Yonggi Cho**, of Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, South Korea tells the story of when he first pioneered his church, nobody would come to it. It was an old torn up Marine tent and there was great demonic oppression over the village. But a breaking took place after months of prayer, a woman who had lain paralyzed for seven years was prayed for and a demon was cast out and she was completely healed. Immediately the community started opening up and finding God became easier and the blessings of God began pouring down. Today, Pastor Cho's church has at least 800,000 people in attendance every Sunday. Yoido is the largest church in the world.

Every night of the week at least 3,000 people are praying, fasting, and ministering to the Lord. On any given Friday evening, a many as fifteen thousand people unite together in prayer for God to move on them, their nation and the world.

**Satan's encounter with you is to keep you in bondage and to blind you to keep you unaware of the freedom that has been promised to you through the Word of God.** He wants to be a Goliath, a giant and minimize your potential in God's Kingdom.

**Pastor Cho knows that his church did not come about that freedom by accident. It came through fervent, violent, prevailing prayer and accurately understanding**

**their role in defeating the bully over their city and nation. They were able to articulate to Satan the words that saved my life a few years back, “Why don't you go and make trouble somewhere else. Get out of here and leave us alone.”**

See,

- **Christ's blood still cleanses;**
- **His power still resurrects;**
- **His Word still penetrates the darkness**
- **His Spirit still draws men to God.**
- **He is mighty, He is alive...He is Lord!**

**But God works through people, His Church.** He is looking for Spirit-filled people who will confidently proclaim what God's Word says about them and what it says about Him, our God! God has given us all we need to wage warfare and tear down the stronghold's around us. (II Corinthians 10:4-5) We are armed and should be dangerous!

Charles Spurgeon once wrote,

“He, (*Satan*) considers God's people. Viewing them as hindrances to his reign, he contrives methods by which he may remove them out of his way or turn them to his own account.” (Charles H. Spurgeon, *Satan A Defeated Foe*, Whitaker House, 1993, pp17)

**If Satan cannot destroy you he will attempt to rob your happiness by encouraging you to be obsessed with worry, fear and grief. Or, worse than that, Satan would have you pity yourself into false humility thinking it “spiritual” when it is all together repulsive and a life of unbelief! If he has no chance at making you miserable in eternity, he will do his share in the here and now. If he can't ruin you as a Christian he will attempt to spoil you as a person. He wants you to finish this race limping, not running at full speed. If he cannot destroy you he will disrupt and disturb you. If he cannot kill you he will wound and embitter you. Guard yourself! Satan is a bully!**

This attack on your life to keep you in bondage is not only for you, but for all those that you are around you and under your care. Satan's devouring you, (I Peter 5:8) is more of a containment rather than a digestion. There is a process from bondage to freedom and it is important to understand how we are to respond in this spiritual warfare and the tactics of Satan.

#### **Question:**

- How many people do you know who are in bondage in their lives today?
- How many Christians do you know who are in some sort of bondage today?
  - That's because Satan can still come into our lives and deceive us after we have accepted Christ and before His full work of Grace has done His complete work in us. Satan causes us to negotiate with the work of the Holy Spirit to either stay in bondage to some of the things that God have given us the victory for and we can be deceived with new bondages that we were unaware of coming into our life.

#### **Satan Is A Lier**

Satan is a liar and a good liar. You can see how good of a liar he is when you look at the first lie he ever told. He came to Eve in the perfect environment, who was created in the image and likeness of God and told her that if she would eat from the tree of knowledge that she would be like God. **She was already made in the image of God, she was made by God Himself, what better model could you make? But Satan tempted Eve with a garden makeover, he had her believe that she wasn't made in the image of God and needed improvements according to his specifications.** You could not look more like God than she did. Consequently, he hasn't stopped doing that. **Satan is still attempting to convince believers that God's grace, God's image bestowed on us through His sons sacrificial death on the cross is not enough.**

### Many Men Are Lier's Too

*"Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient."*

Ephesians 5:6

We can be taught by man who is taught by Satan. We can be taught empty words that lessen the idea of our warfare, that manipulates us into a passive relationship with God and Satan. It causes us to be attracted to and trust education and science to solve all our problems. It believes that man is evolving into perfection. It replaces God's Words and truth with acceptable standards of our world today. It promotes the satisfaction of our own pleasure and will rather than the will of our Father in heaven. On the other hand, many are taught that you can improve on the grace of God by buying into all kinds of spiritual accessories. Satan will attempt to get you to improve on what you already have.

- **How many is Satan lying to convince them that if they divorce their spouse that they will have joy?** God just wants you happy! You already have joy, but Satan wants you to think your joy is in the accessories. You will never have joy from departing from God's principles. That's how Satan is a liar and he will be come a bully in that area of your life. And that is why you need to beat the bully. Beware of someone who accompanies the bully too. He is a liar as well.

**Question: How many of you knew a bully when you were going to school?**

(Happy Days- FONZ)

### Satan Is The Bully

The challenge of having a bully around is the fear of when your FONZ is not. Let me tell you about our God, he will never leave you! He is always with you...even to the end of this earth! The bully is never, never, never going to catch me without Jesus because He lives in my heart. **But here is the problem with believer's, sometimes we don't turn to Jesus. We just run from the devil.**

Do not fear when the big howl of Satan causes you to run under the shelter of God's arms. It only tells us how much we must depend on His guidance and His strength. Isaiah prophesies of God:

*"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."*

Isaiah 41:10

- If Satan attempts to do much against you to cause fear, God will do more to build faith.
- If Satan takes away much to bring despair, God will give more to provide and cause praise.
  - Martin Luther used to say, "Let us sing psalms and spite the devil." God will give you the song and the satisfaction that Satan is not getting any satisfaction.
- If Satan tempts you to curse your life, God will fill you with the love of God that gives you life!

He will **strengthen us**. He will **help us**. He will **hold us up** with His **righteous right hand**. He is **worthy** to do this because He is **righteous**. He is **able** to do this because He is **Holy** and **powerful**. He is **willing** to do this because He is my **father**, and His **hand** is **extended to ME!**

### What Is Our Warfare?

*"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."*

Ephesians 6:12