

SPIRITUAL BATTLES



A GUIDE TO CONNECTION CONVERSATIONS AROUND SPIRITUAL WARFARE

We have a spiritual enemy- who uses the same tricks over and over and over again to hurt God's kids. There are no original stories. We can read throughout both Testaments' stories of everyday people who didn't understand the deception they were under. The combination of their own weakness (within), the world (around), and the Devil (nearby) creates havoc and derails God's plans for our lives.

WHAT DO KIDS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THIS ENEMY?

- He is against us and wants to hurt us.
- He whispers lies and attacks us, desiring God's kids to feel and experience misery.
- Satan is the prince of a hellish army and deploys them to torture, tempt, and oppress. He roams and hunts (Job 1:7; 1 Pet. 5:8) and sends his fallen angels to do his bidding. He isn't omnipresent—everywhere at the same time. Only God is omnipresent (Ps. 121:3; Prov. 15:3).
- God is stronger than he is. These are not equal rivals.
- God has given us tools (or weapons) to fight this enemy.
- One of those tools is confession. If we confess our sins, God will give us strength to fight him and we take the power and dark corners away where the enemy hides.
- Scripture is another tool. It is God's very words and saying them breaks spiritual strongholds. Have you ever noticed that in the Ephesians 6 passage referencing the armor of God there isn't a sheath? That's because I am never to put away this sword. Regular ingestion of biblical truth isn't a step that can be skipped. It does everything: strengthens, challenges, comforts, encourages, emboldens, and convicts.
- Worship is one way we can change the atmosphere. When we are feeling afraid, attacked, tempted, just singing God's praise is a powerful act. Sometimes I listen to music loudly in my car with the windows open and the wind on my face. Other times I put on instrumental worship and let the sound comfort me. Psalm 22 talks of the Lord inhabiting the praises of His people, giving us a certainty of His nearness. Worship doesn't have to involve musical notes. The Psalms teach that anything intended to honor God is considered praise, so we can praise Him while we work or play. Worship is as much about posture as it is about song. It reminds me of His truth and our position in Christ.

WHAT DO KIDS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THIS ENEMY? CONTINUED...

- Prayer keeps us connected to God. Even when we don't know what to pray, simply the name of Jesus brings forth His help and power. When we talk to God, He strengthens us and responds to our cries. This weapon isn't one size fits all. Sometimes I download my thoughts to God hurriedly, and I just need Him to hear me process. Other times I am crying out one word. It could be help, save, deliver, wow, thanks, please, now! Still other times I am silent in prayer but listening. This connection allows His power and peace to flow through us. It doesn't matter whether I whisper my prayers, write them, shout them, do them with others, say them in the morning—whenever and however I connect with God—talking to Him provides what I need to get through any new battle. When I engage in biblical practices, I see God deliver what I need: mercy, patience, self-control, love, peace, and joy. In the end, the result of that fruit in my life makes me grateful, instead of bitter, for the battles I face.
- So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come close to God, and God will come close to you. (James 4:7-8 NLT)
- Look, I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy. (Luke 10:19 NLT)

IDEAS FOR DISCUSSION WITH KIDS:

1. Ask them to draw what a spiritual battle looks like. That gives you insight into their understanding and a chance to insert truth.
2. Share with them what it feels like to you to be spiritually attacked. Ask them if they've ever felt that way?
3. Pick a verse that you can memorize with the child. Practice it together and come back later, asking them to share when they used it to feel God's presence.
4. Play a worship song quietly and then play it loudly. Does the meaning change? If all we can do is whisper our worship, it still has power.
5. Talk about all the ways we can pray- together with others, with our eyes open and closed, for a long time and a short time. Share some one-word prayers "Jesus!" or "Help." Or "Thanks." Ask them if it counts more when it's longer? Come up with a word or phrase they can pray when they don't know what else to say...

