

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

THEUNIS SWART

SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN THE LIFE OF THEUNIS SWART

In my life I can really testify of the devil that plan to kill, steel and destroy. This battle plan of the devil comes in seasons and times of your life when you are the closest to God and it is a continuous plan against your life as long as you love God.

I was called to be a servant of God when I was only 7 years old. My sister and I were walking from school one day when a guy hit me on the right cheek, and as the Bible said I went and turned my other cheek. Needless to say the guy took the opportunity to hit me on the other cheek as well. This significant incident was the calling of God on my life. I was a very cheerful little boy and attended church regularly with my parents. I really touched people around me as I always had a smile on my face and people said that my smile brought something special into their lives. I was part of the youth group at our church and went to a few Christian camps. God was walking with me every step and I was so full of the Spirit that I one night, I was 10 years old, prayed in front of the whole congregation. God was blessing me with good friends, family, great academic and sport results.

It was during this time that the devil was preparing his attack on my life. I did not know the devil and all his schemes as our church did not teach or preached much about him. The devil was more a myth than a danger and I was blind to his attack. The devil was preparing his attack on my body as per 1 Peter 5:8 and my mind as per 1 Corinthians 6:20 and 7:23. My grandfather then got very ill and was admitted to an old age home/hospital about 100 miles from our home. This was the situation the devil was creating, through the sickness of my grandfather to get to me.

I must also add that at that time I was filled with the fruits of the Spirit as in Galatians 5:22 and we all know to receive the gifts of the Spirit, 1 Corinthians 12: 8-10, we first need to have the fruits of the Spirit. Looking back now I realize that I was on the brink of making my next step from boy to man in the Spirit world, and the devil knew that. Every Sunday we would go after church and drive the hospital to visit my grandfather. We would then eat by my aunt's house

after the visit at the hospital, have a Sunday afternoon nap and then return home. My cousin was six years older than me and he started to molest me. The devil started his attack on my body, 1 Peter 5:8 and he was moving in for the kill. Fear got hold of me and thoughts of how am I going to handle the situation started to take over my thought life. My flesh was being taken over a little bit at a time as per Psalm 27:2, every time it happened, and my flesh was starting to get addicted to this molesting. My hormones were redirected from adolescence to adult and my mind could not process this change as this was not natural to the way God had made us. The battle was set in motion, Sunday mornings I was in church and Sunday afternoons I was molested. God and the devil had a battle over my life and I could feel and see that the devil was busy winning these battles small steps at a time. My knowledge of the devil and the condemnation of what happened to me were over weighing my chances to conquer this battle.

Deception and lies became part of shield to protect and hide the shame of my life. My mind was taken over bit by bit through friends showing me playboys, watching blue movies and having no respect for girls. I must say here that I did not have a sexual relationship with any girls up to my university days, but the way I looked at girls and the respect of them was very low. As per Psalm 27:3 the voices of other people also started to influence my way of thinking and how I feel about myself. I started to see myself as a sex symbol that would chase any girl with a dress and my thought life was dark.

I started to steal money from my parents to have a good time with my friends by impressing them. I had this second life out of the church where I wanted to be popular and be somebody else. I did not want to be that church guy anymore, but I wanted to be the most popular guy. I also started to rebel against the church and God and confession of my sins was a mere drug to my conscience. As soon it was worked out I will return to my old thought patterns. This entire struggle was inside of me and I did not tell anybody about it. The devils number one weapon is to conceal the truth as for us not to confess and repent as to come closer to God, James 4:7-8. Confession to God or to man was nonexistent in my life and I had to live a lie for the world as I was a Christian and Christians do not get involved with things like that.

The pain, hopelessness and the fear of my thoughts becoming known to others pushed me to start drinking and smoking after I left school. Now this was the best plan of the devil, because my mind was intoxicated so much that I did not even think about God. The times that I was sober I was thinking of the next drink and the next party, not about God. My time with God in church, at home and in prayer became less and less. The devil was pushing me to a point of no return. I got so drunk at times that I could not remember how I got home. I was also involved in two accidents and I do not know how many near accidents that I now realize how the devil tried to destroy my body and God through His grace kept me from any harm. In this age of aids God also kept me from aids and sex sicknesses. Through me the devil was also busy and trying to destroy the lives of others like friends with me in the car and girls I slept with. I was now a weapon in the hands of Satan and not in the hands of God.

I was busy to misuse the power to choose, that God gave us. I was making all the wrong choices at the wrong times. Then God decided to intervene into my life and he sent me my wife. At first the devil tried to use me to pull my wife into this ungodly life of mine, but she did not fall for the deception of the devil. Instead she started to pray and plead God for my life, she interceded for me nights on end. God then blessed me with a little girl but still I chose a double lifestyle. The devil used my working environment and alcohol to keep me from achieving my Godly purpose on earth. I was also dying inside and looking at pictures now of my life then, one could see the death in my eyes. They say your eyes are the window to your soul and my soul was busy to die. My hart became a heart of stone and tears and my smile busy to disappear. I was on my way to destroy my family and God had to intervene again and I changed jobs and we moved.

Again I was blessed with another little girl and this time God was determined to make a change in my life through my children. My Spiritual life at this stage was of nonexistence and I was playing church and Russian roulette with God. The devil had succeeded in killing my soul and steeling my spirit, he was just waiting to destroy my body and he tried. How many times I drove under the influence alone, with my family and friends and how many times God's grace was there for me. I was imprisoned in my own body under the curse of the devil and then one night after a sport gathering, under the influence again, my smallest daughter were crying in her

room about my life. It is there and then God spoke to me and I decided I wanted to choose life rather than death, God rather than the devil.

I did not know where to start, but God showed me to start at the alcohol. Getting my life back will have to start with a person with a purified mind, with no alcohol or cigarettes that influence the thought process. The moment I chose God He gave me the strength to destroy the kingdom of the devil in my life, I became a battle axe in the hands of God as per Jeremiah 51:20. I immediately started to touch people when they heard I was not drinking and smoking anymore. I thought I had won the battle against the devil, not knowing that the main battle has only started now. Being in the battle yourself is just a preparation for God to mold you into a battle axe for Him to use you in His hand to destroy the devil. I was now taken up in the army of God and needed to learn how to fight.

I first had to get connected to a church where I could find a family of God that could support me in times of attack, Hebrews 10:25. Although I was in a church I did not have a relationship with my fellow believers and this is where I started. I also started to repair my own prayer life with God and started to make time to speak with Him. I would still sometimes disregard the importance of prayer, but then God will create opportunities for me to see the need of Him and prayer. The most difficult of all was to take the step of confession, as the only sin to be forgiven is the confessed one. Here the devil kept the stronghold of my mind in deceiving me with the fear of humiliation and the loss of my wife and children, if they must find out about my past and my thought life. Winning the body back was the easiest, but winning the mind back was and is the greatest battle of all. You cannot physically close your eyes and ears, you need to overcome the devil for God to change the way you see and hear things.

I also had a problem to confess and repent. Confessing started to get easier but repentance was still a struggle. I will confess today, but be to the old ways again the next day. I was now a lukewarm Christian that wanted to satisfy the world as well as God. I was now worse off than when I was in total sin. I knew God was calling me for higher things in His Kingdom, but the bondage of the devil was stopping it. I then came to a point where I forgave my cousin, but the fruits of that sin were still overwhelming in my thoughts. I then got more involved in our church,

especially in the youth ministry, in a way to try and get the devil out of my thoughts and the things of God into my thoughts. This worked well for the times I was busy with the things of God, but as soon I got busy with the things of the world the devil was back. The stronghold was not broken and I needed to break the bondage and curse on my life. I had to close the door for the devil in my thought life and give him no place, Ephesians 4:12. I had to win the battle over shame through confession and forgiveness. Satan was still attacking me through temptations of the flesh and body, but his angle of attack changed from alcohol and sexual immortality to the stealing of money and lying.

I then realized that my personal time with the Lord was not enough and I had to start spending more time with Him. Playing the game of sin was starting to take its toll on the life of my family and me. I knew I had to resist the devil and God gave me more time to spend with Him. My job caused me to be on the road most of the time and I slept in lodges for two to three nights a week. This was the time I started to use to start and study the Word, pray more and ask our pastor more questions. The Spirit started to reveal all my sins, but the thought of less money for me because of honesty still had the upper hand. I also got more and more involved in church matters and God blessed the youth we were responsible. Looking back I cannot believe how unselfish and merciful the Lord was that He still blessed me with a huge youth group, irrespective of the sins I was struggling with in my life.

God then started to give me instructions in His Word and through a Christian Film, Faith like Potatoes, where I needed to go with my life. God was busy to equip me with the defensive weapons of Ephesians 6:10-18. My only problem was that I still took them off some times and myself an open target for the devil. God also showed me that I had to give up my job, sell all I had and follow Him, but my wife was not certain yet. At that time I thought that I had to sell everything to have money to go and study, and although that was part of the plan He wanted me to use the money to pay back what I owed to the government for taxes. Then God showed my wife and children that I had to go and study.

This was a huge step as we were called to the United States all the way from South Africa. People asked us: Why America? The answer God gave me, (1) to come and heal as a family,

away from hurt, circumstances and influences and (2) to be equipped for the work the Lord had called me to. I am talking about influences and circumstances as divorce, alcohol and immorality was at a high in our family around us and this devil used to take our focus off from what God has called me for. I always thought if God has called you the attacks on your life will decrease, but it actually only increased. In America I thought that the devil will calm down now as I was away from all distractions and influences and I can spend maximum time with Him – **WRONG AGAIN!!!!**

As I started to learn more about the devil and all his plans and how to attack him, instead of him attacking me, God started to break open all the wrongs in my life. The puzzle was very broken up and I still could not see where everything started and why it started. I then started to use all the weapons I learned, (1) fasting for forty days, (2) In the Word daily, (3) praying fervently and with expectancy, (3) submission to God and Pastor Parsley – this was another area God told me that I had to repent over as I did not submit to my pastor in South Africa and resisting the devil. I also had to learn what the difference between confessing and repentance is. My whole life consisted of confessing, saying sorry to smooth my conscience and using my Christian mask to pretend.

Three weeks ago God manifested Himself in our house through my 11-year-old daughter in a family crisis we had. I was ready to pack up and go back to South Africa just before it happened, but God came through a very unnatural way and showed me His glory and strength. In this situation my daughter stood up and prayed and called me to prayer, this showed me Gods glory and power through those that believe like children. In this God showed me why I came to WHBC and that I still need to learn and purify much more before I can take the responsibility of being the shepherd to His flock. The power in the name and blood of Jesus is so great that I want to be fully empowered by it, for me to be a remnant for God. My promises and instructions from God on my life in Isaiah 42:1+6-7, 44:28, 48:14-16, 62:10 is that for a remnant and that is why I want to have a relationship with God, not only an encounter. I want to be the battle axe, Jeremiah 51:20, in God's hands, but only after He has purified and equipped me to

have Him say as in Genesis 1:31, I am **VERY GOOD**. I want to live in the hand of God by His Word in my mouth and His Spirit in my heart and have a intimate relationship with Him.

Praise to God and glory to Him for His mercy in giving me the chance to share my life changing story with you. God's grace, mercy and patients is making me a warrior and a nurse for His Kingdom.