

Dr. Neil T. Anderson & Spiritual Warfare

A Summary and Evaluation of His Writings

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Dr. Jonathan Carl

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A Summary and Evaluation of His Writings

Dr. Jonathan Carl

I dedicate this work to my lovely wife, Brittney. You patiently and selflessly supported and encouraged me for a decade of seminary studies. You are a gift from God and a blessing: the best helpmate and friend ever! I could not have done any of this without your love and encouragement! I love da wifey!

Together we are blessed with some amazing daughters in Sophia, Lydia, Alia, and Mia! Our church family at South Fork has been incredible in their encouragement :) Thank you all for putting up with my many hours of studying & writing for this work!

Downloadable resources and helpful study videos freely available at:

www.TrustworthyWord.com & www.SpiritualWarfare.blog

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Ephesians 6:10–12 (ESV) “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. [11] Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. [12] For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

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Resources

Your only hope in your battles against the demonic is through a saving relationship with Jesus. Here are some free resources that you might find helpful for yourself or to help others.

In them you'll find God's words for you on how to be saved, or to examine the genuineness of your salvation. You'll find Bible study tips and many other helpful truths from God that you need today!

“How Can I Be Sure I’m Saved”

www.spiritualwarfare.blog/examine

“How Can I Be Saved”

www.spiritualwarfare.blog/saved

“Evidence for Jesus and the Bible”

www.spiritualwarfare.blog/evidence

“How to Study Your Bible”

www.trustworthyword.com/how-to-study-the-bible

“10 Bible Study Tips”

www.trustworthyword.com/bible-study-tips

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ANF* *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson. 1885-1887. 10 vols. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001. Accessed December 30, 2013. <http://www.ccel.org/>.
- CFM Community Freedom Ministries, FICM-USA's approach to discipleship counseling in and through the local church
- CRI Christian Research Institute, Charlotte, North Carolina, United States
- EMM Ekballistic Mode of Ministry, as used by David Powlison in *Power Encounters*
- FICM Freedom in Christ Ministries, Knoxville, Tennessee, United States
- FICMI Freedom in Christ Ministries International, The global ministry of FICM with its Executive Director based in Reading, England, United Kingdom
- NPNF*¹ *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Series 1. Edited by Philip Schaff. 1886-1889. 14 vols. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001. Accessed December 30, 2013. <http://www.ccel.org/>.
- NPNF*² *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Series 2. Edited by Philip Schaff. 1886-1889. 14 vols. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001. Accessed December 30, 2013. <http://www.ccel.org/>.

PREFACE

I am blessed that this book is not merely a topic of academic interest, but is also a practical application of essential scriptural teachings on issues for all mankind. I praise God for bringing me from death to life and for changing me from a follower of Satan to a child of God. I am grateful for salvation by grace through faith (Eph 2:1-10). In Christ, no matter the enemies against me, I am more than a conqueror and long for seeing and experiencing your presence one day face to face (Rom 8:18-39).

The course of my graduate and doctoral studies has stretched over a decade and the entirety of my marriage to date. I cannot thank my wife, Brittney, enough for her prayers, encouragement, and love throughout this journey. She is the epitome of a Proverbs 31 woman who is faithful in her roles as a godly woman, wife, mother, and pastor's wife. I pray that our girls, Sophia, Lydia, and Alia, imitate her as they grow up!

I want to thank Dr. Neil T. Anderson for his cooperation during the past few years of my doctoral research. He has been extremely helpful and timely in answering questions. I also want to thank Rich Miller, President of Freedom in Christ Ministries, for his aid and assistance during my research process.

I am extremely appreciative to my faculty advisor, Dr. Timothy Beougher, who has been a great mentor and model of godliness and wisdom. I am grateful for Dr. Adam Greenway and Dr. Bruce Ware for serving on my doctoral committee and using a discerning eye to evaluate my research and provide much needed guidance.

Jonathan Logan Carl
Hodgenville, Kentucky
May 2014

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Although there is “perpetual interest within the church regarding the things of spiritual warfare,” Christian spiritual warfare writings have been particularly numerous over the past few decades.¹ One ministry that particularly stands out in the magnitude and scope of its impact is Neil T. Anderson and his Freedom in Christ Ministries. Anderson’s writings are numerous in both quantity and coverage with a particular emphasis on Christian discipleship through lay led counseling. These works are often utilized by Christian believers, ministry leaders, and missionaries as a “how to” and “step by step” guide for situational encounters with spiritual warfare. Anderson’s ministry and writings have been given little academic treatment.² His writings and work are worthy of this book’s analysis to clarify criticisms and elucidate on the biblical, historical, and theological accuracy of his approach to spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship.

Neil T. Anderson

Anderson sees spiritual warfare primarily as a “spiritual battle that is going on for our minds.”³ Two of his books, *The Bondage Breaker* and *Victory Over the*

¹James K. Beilby and Paul Rhodes Eddy, “Introducing Spiritual Warfare: A Survey of Key Issues and Debates,” in *Understanding Spiritual Warfare: Four Views*, ed. James K. Beilby and Paul Rhodes Eddy (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 1-2. There has been a “heightened interest in this subject in evangelical circles in the last decade or so. . . . almost an explosion of interest in this subject in the last ten years.” “Statement on Spiritual Warfare: A Working Group Report” in *Deliver Us from Evil: An Uneasy Frontier in Christian Mission*, ed. A.Scott Moreau (Monrovia, CA: World Vision International, 2002), vii; 310.

²Chapter 4 will present the main academic treatments that have been made to date.

³Neil T. Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2000), 5.

Darkness, have each sold over 1.3 million copies.⁴ His seminars, staff, and counselors have reached over three million individuals in sixty countries through Freedom in Christ Ministries.⁵ In 2012, Anderson published his last planned book, *A Rough Road to Freedom: A Memoir*, finishing a writing career of authoring or coauthoring over sixty books.⁶ Christian leaders such as Bill and Vonette Bright, Josh McDowell, Kay Arthur, Chuck Swindoll, Jerry Rankin, and D. James Kennedy endorse Anderson's various writings.⁷ Noted theologian Wayne Grudem writes concerning Anderson's *Praying by the Power of the Spirit*, "Anderson brings together the teachings of the Bible and his own years of experience as pastor, counselor, and professor, and the result is a wise, down-to-earth, balanced, and biblically sound book that corrects many misunderstandings about prayer and the Christian life."⁸ Anderson's ministry, as a Christian ministry with significant influence, deserves careful attention, evaluation, and analysis.

Spiritual Warfare Defined

Over the past few decades, spiritual warfare reemerged as a topic of interest among Christians through numerous writings and conferences.⁹ One group who has

⁴Neil T. Anderson, *A Rough Road to Freedom: A Memoir* (Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, 2012), 269.

⁵"History of Freedom in Christ Ministries," accessed November 18, 2013, http://www.ficm.ca/history_of_fic.htm.

⁶"Neil T. Anderson," accessed January 4, 2014, <http://harvesthousepublishers.com/authors/neil-t-anderson>; Anderson, *Rough Road*, cover.

⁷Bob Passantino and Gretchen Passantino, "The Bondage Maker: Examining The Message and Method of Neil T. Anderson (Part 4) Spiritual Warfare and the Myth of Satanic Conspiracies and Ritual Abuse," *Christian Research Journal* 21(1998), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.equip.org/articles/the-bondage-maker-examining-the-message-and-method-of-neil-t-anderson-part-four-spiritual-warfare-and-the-myth-of-satanic-conspiracies-and-ritual-abuse>; Anderson, *Rough Road*, 1.

⁸Neil T. Anderson, *Liberating Prayer: Finding Freedom by Connecting with God* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2012), 5. This quote is Wayne Grudem's endorsement of Anderson's book.

⁹The "Deliver Us from Evil" consultation explains their motivations in meeting due to the "heightened interest in this subject in evangelical circles in the last decade or so. This was preceded by trends that built up this interest. . . . The net effect is divisiveness among evangelicals at a time when there is a greater need than ever for the church to develop an understanding of and use all the armour of God."

served to critically describe, define, and discuss many aspects of spiritual warfare is the Lausanne Movement. The Lausanne Movement began in 1969 in Berlin under the leadership of Billy Graham, providing over four decades of Great Commission conversations, influencing our understanding of evangelism and missions through their four global congresses and a multitude of other gatherings. The Lausanne Movement's regular international gatherings of biblical, historical, and theological scholars along with pastors, evangelists, missionaries, and other Christian ministry leaders offer guidance on and expert evaluation of spiritual warfare in the context of evangelism and discipleship since its founding. The Lausanne Covenant (1974) offers a helpful, albeit long, definition of spiritual warfare.¹⁰ Further responses to spiritual warfare occurred in Manila in 1989 and through "reflections on theology and the history of the church" in evaluating "contemporary issues" in the "Deliver Us from Evil" Lausanne theological consultation in Nairobi, Kenya from August 16-22, 2000.¹¹ This book utilized many of the expert biblical theologians, historians, church leaders, and practitioners from the Lausanne Movement to provide a much needed foundational understanding of spiritual warfare in

Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, vii-viii.

¹⁰Here is the full definition of SW in the Lausanne Covenant: "SPIRITUAL CONFLICT. We believe that we are engaged in constant spiritual warfare with the principalities and powers of evil, who are seeking to overthrow the Church and frustrate its task of world evangelization. We know our need to equip ourselves with God's armour and to fight this battle with the spiritual weapons of truth and prayer. For we detect the activity of our enemy, not only in false ideologies outside the Church, but also inside it in false gospels which twist Scripture and put people in the place of God. We need both watchfulness and discernment to safeguard the biblical gospel. We acknowledge that we ourselves are not immune to worldliness of thoughts and action, that is, to a surrender to secularism. For example, although careful studies of church growth, both numerical and spiritual, are right and valuable, we have sometimes neglected them. At other times, desirous to ensure a response to the gospel, we have compromised our message, manipulated our hearers through pressure techniques, and become unduly preoccupied with statistics or even dishonest in our use of them. All this is worldly. The Church must be in the world; the world must not be in the Church (Eph. 6:12; 2 Cor 4:3,4; Eph 6:11,13-18; 2 Cor 10:3-5; 1 John 2:18-26; 4:1-3; Gal 1:6-9; 2 Cor 2:17; 4:2; John 17:15)." John Stott, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 3: The Lausanne Covenant: An Exposition and Commentary," The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.lausanne.org/all-documents/lop-3.html>.

¹¹Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, ix-x.

the context of evangelism and discipleship. This foundational understanding was the basis for the analysis and critique of Anderson's approach to spiritual warfare.

While the Lausanne Covenant's definition of spiritual warfare is detailed and informative, a more concise definition is utilized in this book by looking at the Apostle Paul's description of spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6:10-20. This book's definition for spiritual warfare, based on Ephesians 6:12, is "the battle of the followers of Christ against the unseen spiritual forces of evil." This definition will serve to evaluate Anderson's writings in light of evangelism and discipleship.

Contemporary Significance

Modern approaches to spiritual warfare vary among cultural settings. In many animistic contexts, power encounter approaches are more prevalent with direct, confrontational encounters between spiritual leaders and demons through practices such as exorcism. Many western worldview Christians fall into categories of either looking down on spiritual warfare "with disdain," remaining unaware of spiritual warfare, questioning spiritual warfare practices, blindly accepting the spiritual warfare views of their leaders, and dismissing "new approaches as unbiblical and therefore unacceptable."¹² In more rationalistic settings one might find a greater ignorance of spiritual warfare while placing a greater emphasis on psychological or psychiatric solutions to observed symptoms and behaviors.

¹²The various attitudes towards spiritual warfare are summarized by the "Deliver Us from Evil" consultation committee: "In response to these issues churches have tended to fall into one of five categories. First are those that dismiss the idea of the spirit world with disdain. Second are those who are not just not aware of the world of the spirit to any degree and have not, therefore, developed any related disciplines. Next are those who are aware of the world of the spirit, pray, believe in the supernatural and have absorbed and gone along more or less with current changes of practice but have many questions and some discomfort and frustration about it all. Fourth are those who have accepted the views of their leaders or examined it for themselves and unquestioningly adopt the newest teachings and practices associated with spiritual warfare. Finally are those who always have had what they consider to be biblical views and prayer disciplines related to the spirit world and who dismiss the new approaches as unbiblical and therefore unacceptable." Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, viii.

Anderson's truth encounter approach recognizes the reality of spiritual warfare, while emphasizing personal responsibility in seeking God's changing power and truth. Although the attention given to spiritual warfare has varied in emphasis and direction across church history, there must always be an ongoing awareness and understanding of Satan's attacks and methods against the church and Christian believers.¹³ The diversity of understandings and approaches across history and cultures must be evaluated with a thoroughly biblical, historical, and theological foundation to determine what should be avoided, corrected, or embraced.¹⁴ Such an evaluation will be applied to Anderson's works and ministry in this book to determine the lasting value and use for the Christian community particularly in evangelism and discipleship.

Spiritual Warfare in Evangelism Defined

Evangelism is the sharing of "the good news of God's salvation from the power of evil, the establishment of his eternal kingdom and his final victory over everything which defies his purpose."¹⁵ Chuck Lawless further argues that "anything less than the telling of this good news is not evangelism."¹⁶ Evangelism is a task which Christ

¹³Exorcism practice seems "to diminish in the Middle Ages," but is still referenced among the Germanic tribes, Norwegians, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Martin Luther, the Catholic Church's 1614 *Rituale Romanum* (exorcism guidelines), and other sources. Tormod Engelsviken, "Historical Overview 3," in *Deliver Us from Evil* (Nairobi, Kenya: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 2000), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.lausanne.org/all-documents/historical-overview-3.html>.

¹⁴Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, 117. Scott Moreau categorizes evangelical approaches to spiritual warfare into seven types of encounters. Four of these approaches closely parallel the structure of Christ's command in Mark 12:30-31 to love the Lord our God with all of our heart (relational-encounter), soul (truth-encounter), mind (mind-encounter), and strength (power-encounter).

¹⁵Alan Nichols and Billy Graham, eds., *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World: The Story of the Second Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, Manila, 1989* (Charlotte, NC: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 1989), 112. This definition of evangelism is from the Manila Manifesto, an elaboration of the Lausanne Covenant; Evangelism is further described as "the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God." Stott, "Lausanne Occasional Paper 3."

¹⁶Charles Lawless, *Putting on the Armor* (Nashville: Lifeway, 2007), 95.

prioritizes for His followers and thus necessarily overflows into the Christian mission of local churches, parachurch organizations, and missions groups.

The Lausanne Movement helped connect spiritual warfare with evangelism through its 1993 Statement on Spiritual Warfare by proclaiming that “evangelization is to bring people from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God (Acts 26:18). This involves an inescapable element of spiritual warfare.”¹⁷ Any aspect of spiritual warfare that does not point to the gospel of Christ as the ultimate solution, fails to engage in evangelistic ministry. Paul tells us that the Gospel “is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Rom 1:16), a healthy corrective to those who see more power in their spiritual warfare activity than their evangelistic activity. Spiritual warfare also brings about many important questions about “when a person becomes a true follower of Christ” in conversion and “as a matter of Christian growth” in discipleship.¹⁸

Spiritual Warfare in Discipleship Defined

The Lausanne Covenant necessarily connects discipleship with evangelism since “in issuing the Gospel invitation we have no liberty to conceal the cost of discipleship.”¹⁹ Discipleship is “the idea of becoming a disciple rather than having been made a disciple” and “a way of life for all of life.”²⁰ Disciples learn from and follow

¹⁷Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, xvii.

¹⁸Paul G. Hiebert and Frances F. Hiebert, eds., *Case Studies in Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987), 25.

¹⁹“The objective of evangelism is conversion, and conversion implies a radical change of life style. It involves the convert in at least three new and conscientious relationships—to Christ, to the church, and to the world. For the results of evangelism include obedience to Christ (who is now acknowledged as Lord), incorporation into his church (for to belong to Christ is to belong to the people of Christ, Acts 2:40,47), and responsible service in the world (for conversion means nothing if it does not result in a change from self-centered living to sacrificial service, Mark 10:43-45).” John Stott, “Lausanne Occasional Paper 3.” It is interesting to note how Lausanne phrases discipleship as three relationships (Christ, church, world). Later in the book I discuss three relationship struggles in spiritual warfare (flesh, world, Satan).

²⁰Bill Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2006), 36.

Jesus while discovering that “it is the job of every believer to make disciples.”²¹ Discipleship is a process that “requires real teaching and real learning. It requires conversation, modeling, encouragement, debriefing, and practice, all of which happen in the context of relationship.”²² Dietrich Bonhoeffer boldly affirms that “Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ.”²³ John Calvin sees discipleship as a process of “imitating Christ” such that “we are drawn into union with him.”²⁴

Robert Coleman, best known for his work *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, one of the most published books in history on evangelism, asserts that discipleship includes the recognition “that we are in spiritual warfare. Anyone not willing to live under orders and endure hardships as a soldier of Christ will be no match for the enemy.”²⁵ The process of discipleship is serious, which Bonhoeffer connects to an understanding of “costly grace.”²⁶ Bonhoeffer further elaborates that one of the integral components of “costly grace” in discipleship is the process of repentance and confession. He asserts that “confession is discipleship” because “in confession the Christian begins to forsake his sins. Their dominion is broken. From now on the Christian wins victory after victory.”²⁷ Bonhoeffer’s understanding of the role of confession and repentance in discipleship

²¹Jim Putman, *Real Life Discipleship: Building Churches that Make Disciples* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2010), 20.

²²Ibid., 22.

²³Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Touchstone, 1995), 64.

²⁴John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 350-51.

²⁵Robert Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism and Discipleship* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 1998), 98.

²⁶Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, 45.

²⁷Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1954), 115.

parallels Anderson's *The Steps To Freedom In Christ* because "in confession the light of the Gospel breaks into the darkness and seclusion of the heart."²⁸

Anderson and Spiritual Warfare

In the North American context, many spiritual warfare approaches have focused on pragmatism, action, expedience, rituals, externalization, power, and heroisms.²⁹ Anderson places a greater emphasis on ongoing discipleship rather than evangelistic events. He and Dave Park lay out his definition of discipleship as "the intensely personal activity of two or more persons helping each other experience a growing relationship with God."³⁰ His "truth encounter" approach to discipleship avoids a focus on external behavior adjustment while prioritizing internal repair in Christians by equipping and encouraging them to "believe the truth and walking accordingly by faith."³¹

Anderson believes "that the ministries of counseling and discipling are the same in the Bible."³² This premise shapes much of Anderson's approach to discipleship. He seeks to form a methodology that will "meet people where they are and help them resolve their personal and spiritual conflicts so that they can be established alive and free in Christ."³³ Although many would consider counseling an arena reserved for highly trained counselors and professionals, Anderson believes that all believers are called in some capacity to be discipled as counselees (inquirers) and to become disciple-makers as

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹A. Scott Moreau, "A Survey of North American Spiritual Warfare Thinking," in *Deliver Us from Evil Consultation* (Nairobi: The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 2000), 120-23.

³⁰Neil T. Anderson and Dave Park, *Stomping Out the Darkness* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1993), 197.

³¹Ibid., 78.

³²Ibid., 13.

³³Neil T. Anderson, *Discipleship Counseling* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2003), 14.

counselors (encouragers). Anderson accentuates the individual responsibility of the believer in discipleship while maintaining that discipleship occurs best in community within the local church.³⁴

Thesis

What is spiritual warfare? What is Neil T. Anderson's understanding of spiritual warfare? Is Anderson's understanding consistent with a biblical, historical, and theological understanding of spiritual warfare? What is Anderson's approach to spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship, and is it correct? These foundational questions will guide the direction of this book.

In this book I argue that while Anderson's understanding of spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship is generally orthodox, his approach to spiritual warfare in evangelism is invalid and his approach to spiritual warfare in discipleship demonstrates significant points of theological and practical concern.³⁵ The spectrum of Anderson's approach to spiritual warfare is broad, which necessitates a claim-by-claim analysis and critique of his major positions in the realm of evangelism and discipleship. I explore Anderson's claims in order to determine which claims are validated and clearly evidenced by Scripture, church history, and theology. I also seek to discover which of his

³⁴Neil T. Anderson, Mike Quarles, and Julia Quarles, *Freedom from Addiction* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1996), 292; Neil T. Anderson and Robert Saucy, *God's Power at Work in You* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2001), 236-37, 247.

³⁵Specifically I will focus my argument on four overarching areas that demonstrate the general orthodoxy of Anderson's understanding of spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship: (1) Salvation: Understanding of Evangelism and the Gospel (2) Sanctification: Understanding of the Discipleship Process (3) Scripture and Prayer: Understanding of Communication with God (4) Spiritual Warfare: Understanding of the Truth Encounter Approach. Despite this overarching scriptural, historical, and theological orthodoxy, there are some specific applications and methods in Anderson's approach that are invalid: (1) Salvation: Lack of Evangelistic Appeal and Gospel Presentation (2) Sanctification: Lack of Clarity and Distinction in Evaluating One's Faith in Christ (2 Cor 13:5), Imbalanced Emphasis on Sin's Offense to God's Holiness, Understanding of Sin Nature, Limited Reproducibility (3) Scripture and Prayer: Improper and Imbalanced Use of Rebuking Language (4) Spiritual Warfare: Failing to Clearly Differentiate Demonic Possession in Non-Believers from Influence and Oppression Against Believers.

claims, specifically in his application and methodology, fairly deserve critique in their content and communication.

Analytical Approach

I evaluate Anderson's approach to spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship through the lenses of Scripture, church history, and theology. This analytical approach helps me ascertain the accuracy and lasting legacy of Anderson's spiritual warfare understanding.

My doctoral studies in Evangelism and Church Growth as well as in Christian Missions have prepared me for my analysis of Anderson's writings.³⁶ The scope of my analysis and critique necessitates that I rely on additional expertise and skill sets in the areas of biblical, historical, and theological analysis. Since Anderson's writings have sparse academic treatment, I utilize the Lausanne Movement as a base of academic reference in considering Anderson's claims. The academic papers and presentations within Lausanne on spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship are written by dozens of key leaders, international scholars, noted theologians, and expert witnesses who also reference numerous other biblical scholars.³⁷ The grid and scope of Lausanne

³⁶My doctoral coursework had included the academic reading of over 110 works and the writing of over 370 pages on the topics of: Evangelistic Ministry: Biblical and Theological Principles, Contemporary Church Growth and Discipleship, Spiritual Warfare in Evangelism and Missions, Methods and Influence of American Evangelists, Urban Evangelism, Church Planting, Spiritual Awakening, Philosophy, History of Christian Missions, Philosophy and Methodology of Missions, Theology of Christian Mission, Cultural Anthropology and Christian Witness, and Missionary Biographies. This academic preparation was invaluable in the significant task of research, analysis, and critique.

³⁷It is important to understand the breadth and depth of those who represent Lausanne. Some of the authors who write in Lausanne's *Deliver Us from Evil* are Tokunboh Adeyemo, Ricardo Barbosa de Sousa, David G. Burnett, Tormod Engelsviken, V. Ezekia Francis, Amsalu Tadesse Geleta, Neuza Itioka, Knud Jørgensen, Charles H. Kraft, Marguerite Kraft, Ole Skjerbæk Madsen, A. Scott Moreau, Bryant L. Myers, Jerry Mungadze, Oskar Skarsuane, John Christopher Thomas, Yusufu Turaki, and Hwa Yung. Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, xiii-xv; In addition, multiple scholars are categorized and referenced in the North American context such as John MacArthur, David Powlison, C. Peter Wagner, John Wimber, Clinton Arnold, Walter Wink, Sydney Page, Chuck Lowe, Paul Hiebert, Jim Logan, Neil Anderson, Timothy Warner, Gailyn Van Rheenen, and Mark Ritchie. Moreau, "A Survey," in *Deliver Us from Evil*, 117-26. Other biblical leaders and scholars from Lausanne are referenced through this book (see bibliography): J. D. Douglas, Billy Graham, Alan Nichols, C. René Padilla, Ishaya S. Audu, Edward Dayton, George

not only helps determine what elements of Anderson's writings were sustainable and unsustainable, but also aids in determining what elements are missing or imbalanced.

Biblical analysis. Scriptural accuracy is the primary concern of this book's critique of Anderson's work. I evaluate Anderson's writings to determine if they consistently present the whole scriptural message on spiritual warfare, or if they omit, overemphasize, or present any areas in an imbalanced manner. Furthermore, I examine his usage of particular biblical passages to understand if Anderson accurately communicates the biblical meaning. Anderson relies heavily on Scripture to guide his writing, but it is essential to determine if his conclusions are biblically correct (Acts 17:11).

Historical analysis. Historical consistency is another important test of Christian teaching and orthodoxy. Anderson makes claims that his teachings are in line with early church history.³⁸ When considering the guide of church history in determining orthodoxy of spiritual warfare approaches, early church leaders share a particularly helpful perspective. Church history does demonstrate that church leaders "took the realm of the demonic seriously and believed that Christians could be profoundly influenced by evil spirits."³⁹ Clinton Arnold asserts that a "thorough treatment of this topic from the

Duncan, Timothy Dzaio, John R.W. Stott, Oswald Hoffman, Richard C. Halverson, Harold B. Kuhn, Walter Kunne, Harold John Ockenga, Rene Pache, Chandu Ray, Johannes Schneider, and Christopher J. H. Wright.

³⁸"The early church included in its public declaration of faith, 'I renounce you, Satan, and all your works and ways.' The Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, and many other liturgical churches still require this renunciation as part of confirmation. For some reason it has disappeared from most evangelical churches. Consequently, we have mislaid a very important truth: We must not only choose the truth but recognize and renounce the counterfeit." Neil T. Anderson, "Today's Neil Anderson Devotional," in *Daily in Christ*, accessed June 29, 2013, <http://www.crosswalk.com/devotionals/dailyinchrist>.

³⁹Clinton E. Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 112.

vantage point of church history would be very helpful and illuminating.”⁴⁰ History shows a serious concern for the demonic affliction of believers.⁴¹

The historical focus of this book places greater emphasis on the early church era (AD 100-400) due to its frequent use by spiritual warfare advocates and its cultural and chronological proximity to the biblical writers. The focus of the research is on the main characters, councils, and confessions that reflect and represent the general theological considerations of spiritual warfare. I demonstrate through my analysis and critique where Anderson’s spiritual warfare claims are either consistent or inconsistent with Church history.

Theological analysis. Underlying Anderson’s scriptural and historical understanding of spiritual warfare is a theological foundation that must be tested. Anderson feels there is a spiritual warfare framework across Scripture, writing “one has to see Scripture from a spiritual warfare perspective” because it “is the backdrop of the whole Bible.”⁴² During his writing career, Anderson refers to “a godly theologian who I asked to hold me accountable” and helps him make “sure that everything I write or teach has a biblical basis.”⁴³ Despite such accountability, Anderson’s writings need a more thorough, public, theological analysis particularly in the areas of hamartiology (sin), soteriology (salvation, especially in connection with “union in Christ”), demonology, evangelism, sanctification, and phenomenology. This book’s theological analysis of Anderson’s spiritual warfare understanding describes both strengths and weaknesses,

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Neil T. Anderson, interview by author, Franklin, TN, October 3, 2011.

⁴³Neil T. Anderson, interview by author, October 1, 2011. Anderson reveals later that theologian is Robert Saucy, also referenced in Anderson, *Rough Road*, 241.

makes recommendations towards improvement of his message, and communicates applications of his overall ministry legacy.

Evangelism and Missions Implications

Although Anderson's works are not focused solely on evangelism or missions, they are widely read and utilized in many ministry settings with application that overlaps into both evangelism and missions. This book considers the evangelism implications of Anderson's works. There are aspects to Anderson's works that can be better communicated or adjusted with a greater consideration towards the implications for evangelism and missions. Anderson's approaches to evangelism and missions are considered, analyzed, and presented for their strengths and weakness along with specific recommendations for great utilization in future applications.

Discipleship Implications

Anderson sees his ministry and works as primarily focused on discipleship, regarding *Discipleship Counseling* as his most significant and lasting contribution to the Christian community even though it is not his most popularly sold work. The massive quantity and spectrum of his writings makes it difficult for the average Christian clergy or layman to coherently analyze and apply to towards the discipleship process. Anderson's approach to the discipleship process is considered and critiqued with specific recommendations towards continued utilization in discipleship ministries.

Thesis Summary

Anderson's writings and ongoing ministry legacy in Freedom in Christ Ministries are significant and lasting. His works have not been adequately treated in the academic realm and deserve greater attention. A broad but deep consideration of his approach to spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship is needed. In this book I argue that while Anderson's understanding of spiritual warfare in evangelism and

discipleship is generally orthodox, his approach to spiritual warfare in evangelism is invalid and his approach to spiritual warfare in discipleship demonstrates significant points of theological and practical concern.⁴⁴ This biblical, historical, and theological analysis and critique helps lay a foundation for future research and writing on Anderson as Christian scholars, pastors, evangelists, missionaries, and laymen continue to engage in “the battle of the followers of Christ against the unseen spiritual forces of evil.”⁴⁵

Methodology

The scope of Anderson’s writings, both published and unpublished, is vast. Research of Anderson’s approach to spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship is through the study of his published literature, unpublished literature, Freedom in Christ Ministries (FICM), and interviews.

Literature

The primary source material on Neil Anderson is immense in the existence of his over sixty published books as well as the availability of interviews and unpublished materials. I own most of Anderson’s writings and accessed much of the remainder through seminary libraries. For my research, I traveled to Knoxville and Franklin, Tennessee to visit with Anderson and Rich Miller (President, FICM) and they both were extremely helpful with an ongoing openness towards visits, phone conversations, and email dialogues. Secondary source materials specifically related to Anderson’s ministry

⁴⁴Anderson counters, “The focus of my ministry is not evangelism, but it always occupies my mind. I have not written anything on evangelism. My contribution is to explain the whole gospel (forgiveness, new life, and disarming of Satan), and help those who make decisions for Christ repent, and establish them alive and free in Christ so they can be good witnesses. The thrust of my writing is the next step after salvation, which is sorely lacking around the world. . . . I personally feel my biggest contribution isn’t spiritual warfare, it is discipleship counseling and pastoral care. I am not much of a critic of methodology, in fact I am not much of a critic of anything. The truth encounter helps encouragers get over the fear issue, is holistic, includes God in the process, and helps the inquirer assume their own responsibility.” Neil T. Anderson, interview by author, January 27, 2014.

⁴⁵This is the definition of spiritual warfare for use in this book.

and writings are less available. Despite the paucity of direct references, analysis, and critiques on Anderson, there are plenty of primary source materials that facilitate the analysis of the methods and views he maintains concerning spiritual warfare.

Freedom in Christ Ministries

Anderson's decision to depart from Talbot in 1992 allowed him more time for speaking engagements, writing, and the creation of Freedom in Christ Ministries. FICM seeks to resource and equip Christians "to experience spiritual freedom and spread that freedom to others."⁴⁶ FICM helps communicate this message of freedom by helping Christians to "understand who they are in Christ" and to "win the spiritual battles for their minds."⁴⁷ Anderson's FICM puts a priority on disciple making, believing that "people come to Christ by faith, but they would need to repent if they are going to become reproducing disciples."⁴⁸ FICM seeks to be above reproach through clear and transparent communication, openly sharing the ministry's financial audits online. FICM offers answers to some of its criticisms such as the believer's position and identity in Christ, the importance of forgiveness, and the authority of a believer in spiritual warfare.

FICM's current President, Rich Miller, allowed me to visit their headquarters and interview him in depth concerning the history, views, and future of FICM.⁴⁹ Miller extended an invitation for ongoing conversations and welcomed any critiques or research that might be helpful for FICM's increased faithfulness to the biblical message on spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship. Miller also granted me free access to their online "university" courses that are used to train up FICM coordinators. The

⁴⁶Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

⁴⁹Rich Miller, interview by author, Knoxville, TN, May 29, 2013.

continuation of Anderson's approach to spiritual warfare through FICM is essential to understanding the ongoing and future legacy of Anderson's teachings.

Unpublished Materials and Interviews

Although Anderson shares his friends' assertion that he does not have "one unpublished thought," he offered up any unpublished material help that he is able to share.⁵⁰ Anderson communicates his responses to his most commonly encountered objections through several belief statements posted online through FICM. Once a regular public speaker, Anderson ended most of his speaking engagements in 2013 but began a new daily blog.⁵¹ Anderson's unpublished writings were helpful additions that complement his published works.

Over the past two years I interviewed Anderson as well as FICM leadership. All of those whom I contacted agreed to participate in my research. Anderson was extremely helpful and encouraging, quickly responding to any questions in a timely and direct manner. He believes this research project to be helpful to him, FICM, and to the next generation of Christian disciple makers.

Limitations and Delimitations

Since my access to resource materials was virtually unlimited, the main limitation of this book was the spatial constraints of the book itself. In order to fit within these constraints, I delimited this work to Anderson's approach to spiritual warfare specifically in the realms of evangelism and discipleship. Although this was still a broad area of coverage, especially since the majority of Anderson's literature is arguably discipleship related, it created a necessary foundation of research to allow for future research in more specific avenues. I did not attempt to analyze Anderson's works from a

⁵⁰Neil T. Anderson, interview by author, March 28, 2013.

⁵¹"Freedom in Christ Ministry Blog," Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed March 30, 2013, <http://www.discipleshipcounsel.com/blog>.

psychological or counseling methodology approach, although future research in that area would be helpful.

This book was also delimited to analyzing Anderson in comparison with Scripture, history, and theology. Although it would be helpful to compare Anderson's writings in detail with other spiritual warfare writers and advocates, this book did not seek to attempt that approach. This book's analysis with Scripture, church history, and theology is a more lasting, foundational approach to Anderson's works. In order to provide additional expertise in evaluating Anderson, the Lausanne Movement was a key authority and reference for drawing on theologians and practitioners with skills and knowledge in the field of spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship.

In consideration of church history and the spatial limitations this book, I also delimited the book's historical analysis to a greater emphasis on early church history (AD 100-400), with particular attention on their approach to spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship. Other periods of church history were given less attention. The purpose of the early church focus was to clarify historical claims by Anderson in light of the actual approach of the early church to spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship.

Chapter Conclusion

In this book I argue that while Anderson's understanding of spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship is generally orthodox, his approach to spiritual warfare in evangelism is invalid and his approach to spiritual warfare in discipleship demonstrates significant points of theological and practical concern. This book shows the lasting value of Anderson's works but also establishes specific and needed corrections for future works on spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship.

CHAPTER 2

NEIL T. ANDERSON AND SPIRITUAL WARFARE

In order to analyze Anderson's understanding of spiritual warfare, one must first engage his life, ministry, and writings to specifically, yet summarily, see the various components of his views. His writings and responses to criticisms establish a context for engagement over issues of evangelism, Gospel understanding, discipleship, use of scripture and prayer, and the truth encounter approach to spiritual warfare. This chapter argues that Anderson's understanding of spiritual warfare is clearly communicated and discernible, allowing for scriptural, historical, and theological analysis in chapters four, five, and six.

Biography

A brief glance at Anderson's life and ministry story assists in better understanding the man behind the writings and ministry. Much of his biographical information is gleaned from his recently written memoirs, *Rough Road to Freedom: A Memoir*, as well as from personal interviews with Anderson. Although a biographical approach is not the purpose of this book, future research into his life would be fascinating and instructive.

Family

Anderson's ancestors were of Scandinavian descent, his grandfather having emigrated from Norway to the United States. Born in 1942, his upbringing was "poor by today's standards," primarily being raised in a farming community "where neighbors

looked after one another, and family was the bedrock of our culture.”¹ Although his parents and grandparents were not highly educated, he and his siblings (Paul, Shirley, Peg, and Alice) all had advanced educational opportunities ranging from nursing to graduate and doctoral studies. Anderson indicates that his personality from childhood was “fun-loving” and “adventurous” with lots of fond memories.² He lovingly communicates the profound influence of his mother explaining that, “the good you see in me is Jesus and if there is any other good in me it is my mother.”³ His father’s influence was less significant, observing how his father’s bitterness impacted his family and upbringing.⁴ In his introduction to *Victory Over the Darkness*, he expresses his thankfulness to his parents for his moral and physical upbringing:

None of this [ministry] would be possible, however, without my parents, Marvin and Bertha Anderson. Thank you for my physical heritage that made it easy to enter into my spiritual heritage. Thousands of life illustrations have poured out of my messages from those early years on the farm in Minnesota. Thank you for faithfully taking me to church, and for the moral atmosphere in which I was raised.⁵

Anderson also shares his appreciation for his community in which he had “great role models” and “so many other men around that I could, and did, look up to.”⁶

Spiritual Upbringing

Anderson’s own storyline of salvation and sanctification is instructive in seeing his own heart for evangelism and discipleship. Anderson grew up going to church under the leadership of his mother. He writes, “Dad was raised Lutheran, but Mom was

¹Neil T. Anderson, *A Rough Road to Freedom: A Memoir* (Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, 2012), 11-12.

²Ibid., 12.

³Ibid., 24.

⁴“To me, Dad was like a tough boss and life was OK if I obeyed him, which I did. I always had my mother to go to for advice and sympathy, but my sisters would receive no emotional support from their father.” Ibid., 25.

⁵Neil T. Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2000), 14.

⁶Anderson, *Rough Road*, 25.

the spiritual leader and we attended the Methodist church she was raised in.”⁷ From an early age, Anderson states that “I always thought of myself as a Christian. Only years later did I discover that I wasn’t. If the gospel was preached, I never got it.”⁸ Anderson’s own salvation story would not take place until years later once he was married.

Marriage

Anderson’s journey towards marriage first began when he enrolled in the University of Minnesota. He dropped out during his first semester, but in the process he explains that “I met Joanne Espe, a sophomore transfer student from a small Lutheran college. We dated for most of that semester, but when I left the university we parted ways with no commitments, and I joined the Navy.”⁹ After serving several years in the Navy as a sea and rescue swimmer, he was honorably discharged from Navy in 1964, enrolling in electrical engineering at Arizona State University and then working at a private high school as a wrestling coach and dorm master.¹⁰ During Anderson’s time in the Navy, Joanne married but was then widowed after only seven months when her husband died in a plane crash.¹¹ Less than a year after the death of Joanne’s husband, she and Anderson began communicating again, eventually marrying in 1966.¹²

⁷“To my knowledge he never forgave his own father. By the grace of God I did forgive my father, but I have often wondered why his bitterness didn’t have more of a negative impact on me than it did.” Anderson, *Rough Road*, 18.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., 29.

¹⁰Ibid., 31-35.

¹¹Ibid., 35.

¹²Ibid., 36.

Salvation Journey

Joanne “was raised a Lutheran” but had “converted to Catholicism for her first marriage.”¹³ Anderson, raised Methodist, had no desire to become a Catholic, so they “compromised and became Episcopalian.”¹⁴ In 1969, Anderson, Joanne, and Joanne’s father were invited by “a spiritually alive Episcopal priest” to attend a Campus Crusade for Christ “Lay Institute for Evangelism.”¹⁵ Anderson describes his conversion experience:

I was learning to share my faith and didn’t have any. The definitive question that penetrated my mind was, “If you took Jesus out of your religion, what difference would that make?” I thought, *Ya, what difference would that make? I believe in God?* In hindsight, that is astonishing. My whole ministry today is based on who we are in Christ. On Wednesday of that week they gave an invitation to receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, and I made a decision to trust only in the finished work of Christ for my salvation. I was born again. For the first time in my life I understood the gospel, and it was indeed “Good news.”¹⁶

Immediately following his salvation experience, Anderson was thrust into direct, door-to-door evangelism. His response? “I had never really struggled with fear, but this was intimidating.”¹⁷ Anderson explains his first Gospel-sharing experience:

In the next two hours I led three people to Christ. They didn’t make a decision for Christ due to my intellectual brilliance and professional skill. They heard a simple presentation of the Gospel and responded by faith, which was astonishing to me. The field was actually ‘white unto harvest.’ Experiencing that almost had a bigger impact on me than my own personal decision [to trust in Christ] on the previous Wednesday.¹⁸

Following Anderson’s conversion and first evangelism experience, he ended up joining a Baptist church due to a friend’s invitation. He began to see his engineering

¹³Anderson, *Rough Road*, 37.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid., 37-38.

¹⁷At the conclusion of Anderson’s evangelism training he was told, “Don’t tell anybody that you came to this conference unless you come back tomorrow and go door to door in this community and share your faith.” Ibid., 38.

¹⁸Ibid.

workplace as a mission field.¹⁹ Although he thought his bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering "was the end of my formal education," God eventually led Anderson to resign his engineering job at Honeywell and to enter into seminary at the Talbot School of Theology in La Mirada, California.²⁰ As Anderson entered into seminary, he simultaneously entered into a series of ministry opportunities that God would use to direct and shape his understanding of evangelism and discipleship.

Ministry

Anderson's journey in Christian ministry began during his transition from engineering into seminary. Ministry opportunities quickly arose within his church and seminary as he had opportunities to minister, pastor, teach, and eventually serve as a professor. During this time he recognized that his "early education was steeped in western rationalism and naturalism."²¹ He began to study the Scriptures to better explain the spiritual reality that he was encountering. His ministry years were full of blessings and joy, yet simultaneously full of difficult challenges. Anderson summarized his lifetime of ministry by stating, "I am just a child of God serving Him in His kingdom."²²

A Description of His Personal Journey

Anderson recounts that as a pastor he encountered many people who had "personal and spiritual conflicts" for whom he "didn't have adequate answers."²³ As he searched for "a biblical and holistic answer for people's problems," he was drawn into

¹⁹"I had already made up my mind that I was working for God at Honeywell, believing that should make me a loyal employee and a better engineer. It wasn't just a job for me, it was a mission field." Anderson, *Rough Road*, 43.

²⁰Ibid., 36, 47.

²¹Ibid., 12.

²²Ibid., 12-13.

²³Neil Anderson, interview by author, October 1, 2011.

what many refer to as “spiritual warfare.”²⁴ His initial concern in following the Lord’s lead into this ministry was not the fear of the demonic, but rather “the academic hassle” of criticism.²⁵ Anderson cautions that many who enter into the spiritual warfare realm of Christian ministry do so out of “the biggest trap . . . the lure of secret knowledge and additional powers.”²⁶

As he discovered the reality behind many Christians’ struggles, he realized that his message countered the traditional “sinner saved by grace” message of the American evangelical church. The biblical message he found, was that Christians “do have a spiritual problem,” and “by definition in the Bible, you are not a sinner saved by grace; you are a saint who sins.”²⁷ Anderson defines his ministry journey as characterized by both study and experience, stating, “It is a fool who says he hasn’t learned from his experiences.”²⁸ Anderson explains, “I didn’t want to base my teaching on my experience” so he “went to seminary to search for answers” and to begin his writing and academic careers.²⁹

²⁴Anderson, interview, October 1, 2011.

²⁵“I wasn’t afraid of the demonic, that has never been an issue for me.” Neil Anderson, interview by author, October 3, 2011, Franklin, TN, audio transcript.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid; Rich Miller, interview by author, May 29, 2013, Knoxville, TN, audio transcript. Miller adds that in one of Anderson’s first works, the expression was published that Christians are “saints who occasionally sin,” which generated a lot of objections. Anderson holds that the word “occasionally” was inserted by an editor, changing his original phrase (“saints who sin”); When asked, “Rich mentioned that in *Victory over the Darkness* the editor added ‘occasionally’ to your phrase of ‘saints who sin,’ generating ‘saints who occasionally sin.’ Is this true?” Anderson replied, “Sadly, it is true and I didn’t catch it. The devil has had a field day with that one. I wasn’t very prepared for the critics when I first started to write. I had no idea that there were people ready to pounce if they find a pit in the cherry pie. But I also assume the responsibility to make sure there are no pits, which is nearly impossible, but one still has to try.” Neil Anderson, interview by author, January 4, 2014.

²⁸Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

²⁹Ibid.

Church Ministry

Anderson's entrance into seminary also allowed new opportunities of service within his church. These opportunities became formative experiences which Anderson saw as preparations for his international ministry opportunities in later years. He recounts a story of holding personal bitterness towards his pastor, finally deciding to meet face to face, confessing and seeking forgiveness for his unloving heart towards his pastor.³⁰ Later he would experience a local lay ministry making decisions based upon fundraising, not scriptural convictions, personally concluding that "I would never let money, or the lack of it, be the basis for ministry decisions. I would never compromise my convictions for financial gain, and I never have."³¹

As Joanne and Neil grew in their faith, they experienced personal conviction towards abstinence from alcohol, explaining that with addictive substances "when conviction comes from God, the power to stop comes with it."³² Another foundational influence during his seminary years came from an evangelist's message on "How do you know the will of God?" and "How do you know whether something is right or wrong when the Bible is silent on it?" He explains that he still clearly remembers and applies the evangelist's answer that, "First, can you do what you are doing and glorify God? Second, can you do what you are doing and be a positive witness?"³³

Anderson relates a situation when God "showed me that effective prayer and thanksgiving were inseparable" and that "I began to understand that prayer is more about listening than talking, and to be still and know He is God."³⁴ Anderson saw his three

³⁰Anderson, *Rough Road*, 50.

³¹Ibid., 51.

³²Ibid., 54.

³³Ibid., 55.

³⁴Ibid., 60.

years at Lakewood First Baptist as “a crash course in Ministry 101.”³⁵ In these opportunities with youth and college ministry roles, Anderson experienced opposition that he retrospectively saw as God’s preparations for slander and false accusations at the national level.³⁶

Anderson then enjoyed the opportunity to pastor at Pacific View Baptist Church in Torrance, California, where he “started to realize that my gifts were more suited to preaching and teaching.”³⁷ During his pastorate, he experienced ongoing conflict, and concluded that “the enemy will sow seeds of disunity in every Christian ministry.”³⁸ In the midst of seeking to resolve church conflicts at Pacific View, Anderson “learned the hard way that you can’t be reconciled with another person if they don’t want to be (Romans 12:18).”³⁹

Anderson learned an important leadership lesson from his pastoral experience, explaining that “people cannot rise above their leadership.”⁴⁰ He continues, “If you are called to be a pastor, there is one criterion for success that is not negotiable. The bottom line is, you have to love people. If people know you love them, you can make a lot of mistakes.”⁴¹ In all of the difficulties in ministry, he summarizes that one should “never doubt in the darkness what God has clearly shown you in the light.”⁴²

As Joanne’s health began to suffer, Anderson found that she didn’t really enjoy serving as a pastor’s wife or being in the spotlight. One of his key motivations to

³⁵Anderson, *Rough Road*, 75.

³⁶Ibid., 64.

³⁷Ibid., 76.

³⁸Ibid., 68.

³⁹Ibid., 79.

⁴⁰Ibid., 89.

⁴¹Ibid., 84.

⁴²Ibid., 99.

obtaining a doctorate was to find an alternative avenue for ministry.⁴³ When Anderson transitioned from the pastorate to teaching, he states, “I was relieved when I sensed that God has released me from that pastorate. A lot was accomplished. . . . I left a better person, and that made it worth the trip.”⁴⁴

Talbot Theological Seminary

Anderson saw his initial ministry opportunities in the church as God’s method of preparing him, explaining that “I was born to teach, but God had to deepen the life of the teacher in order to expand the message.”⁴⁵ Anderson’s transition to Talbot Theological Seminary allowed him the opportunity to teach for ten years, culminating with his service as the Chairman of the School of Practical Theology.

In reflecting on his teaching of evangelism at Talbot, he concedes that he “would teach evangelism differently today, quite differently.” Explaining this change, Anderson says,

I taught classic evangelism, four spiritual laws, that kind of stuff. I would convince people that they are sinners and that they need the Lord and whatever else, I don’t think we need to do that, I think the Lord convicts of sin. I think they are looking for life and we need to offer that.⁴⁶

In describing his submission to authority, Anderson insists, “I don’t have a rebel bone in my body.”⁴⁷ He defends this by recounting a story of an undergraduate student that manifested a demonic spirit in his office at Talbot. When he arrived at Talbot, they had a policy against exorcism, so Anderson’s first reaction was to call the

⁴³Anderson, *Rough Road*, 93. Anderson would go on to earn a Master of Arts in Christian Education (1974, Talbot School of Theology), a Doctor of Education in Institutional Management (1982, Pepperdine University), a Master of Divinity in Practical Theology (1982, Talbot School of Theology), and a Doctor of Ministry in Pastoral Care (1990, Talbot School of Theology). Neil Anderson, “Resume,” accessed April 4, 2014, <http://www.discipleshipcounsel.com/resume/>.

⁴⁴Anderson, *Rough Road*, 95.

⁴⁵Ibid., 109.

⁴⁶Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

⁴⁷Ibid.

president of the seminary.⁴⁸ The president sent the dean of the students, saying, “You help him, we’ll pray.” Anderson remarked that following that spiritual warfare encounter, the school’s policy on exorcism changed.⁴⁹

Continuing in his time at Talbot, Anderson “proposed a Master of Theology elective on Spiritual Warfare. Our seminary had never had such an elective and there was some resistance to the idea.”⁵⁰ He explains that “at the time there was not a lot of evangelical literature available on spiritual warfare. Some evangelicals saw the subject as a Pentecostal or charismatic issue and best suited for missions.”⁵¹ Anderson’s increasing opportunities to study, teach, and then write about spiritual warfare would become his lasting ministry legacy.

Anderson particularly enjoyed his interactions, friendships, and mentoring relationships by Talbot’s faculty. He shares that, “I was blessed to have Dr. Robert Saucy as a friend. . . . Later he would serve on the board of Freedom in Christ Ministries for ten years.”⁵² Anderson summarizes this period of ministry as a period of deep enjoyment, lamenting in some ways how God called him to leave there. He still misses the regular interaction with his colleagues, but his change in ministry setting allowed him time to place a greater emphasis on his Freedom in Christ Ministry.⁵³

Spiritual Warfare Experiences

During his ministry in churches and seminary, Anderson began to encounter people requesting help as they seemingly wrestled with demonic forces. He describes his

⁴⁸“I knew that being submissive was necessary for our own spiritual protection.” Anderson, *Rough Road*, 111.

⁴⁹Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

⁵⁰Anderson, *Rough Road*, 109-10.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 111.

⁵²*Ibid.*

⁵³Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

“first experience with someone who clearly had a demonic problem” saying that “in my naiveté I assumed she must have been dabbling in the occult or involved in some gross immorality. Neither one was the case. So what do you do? I certainly didn’t know what to do. My seminary education had never touched on the subject.”⁵⁴ As he retrospectively considers her situation, he explains that “it would be years before I learned that what the young woman really needed to do was forgive her father.”⁵⁵

Although Anderson’s initial attempts in helping others with the demonic were through power encounters, he began to discover what he believed was a biblical approach to spiritual warfare, the truth encounter. When someone began to manifest a demonic spirit, he would say to the individual, “there is a spiritual battle for your mind, I’m going to pray, and when you’re able, just call upon the Lord Jesus to save you.”⁵⁶ He saw the need at times to intervene on behalf of the individual, but mostly sought to encourage the responsibility of the individual to pray through a process of repentance and belief.⁵⁷

Altogether, Anderson’s repeated experiences “raised a lot of questions” in his mind. He wondered if the experiences were “an anomaly, and how many others struggled with the enemy? If we wrestle not with flesh and blood, then the primary battle is spiritual. This has profound effects for how we understand mental health and how to be more effective in evangelism.”⁵⁸ He writes that he “started to understand that it was my job to catch the fish. It was God’s job to clean them.”⁵⁹ Anderson says that he began

⁵⁴Anderson, *Rough Road*, 73.

⁵⁵Ibid., 74.

⁵⁶Ibid., 74-75.

⁵⁷“Halfway through my message, a young man seated in the overflow area suddenly fell from his chair with what appeared to be a seizure. Two doctors were summoned from the congregation, but I sensed something else was going on. It was totally out of character for me, but I prayed out loud, ‘In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I command Satan to release [the young man].’ . . . found out later that the seizure stopped immediately.” Ibid., 91.

⁵⁸Ibid., 75.

⁵⁹Ibid., 84.

to “declare my dependency upon God and ask him to fill me with His Holy Spirit before I started any ministry.”⁶⁰ Although these spiritual warfare experiences left Anderson “with a lot of questions,” the answers he discovered “would shape my future ministry.”⁶¹

Freedom in Christ Ministries

Anderson’s decision to depart from Talbot allowed him more time for speaking engagements and writing for Freedom in Christ Ministries (FICM). FICM’s initial focus was on resourcing people through conference-style training. Today, FICM operates primarily through lay training, equipping resources, and a trained network of volunteer “encouragers” (lay counselors).

History. Freedom in Christ Ministries was established in 1989 by Anderson in La Habra, California as a means of communicating the message of freedom. In 1990, Anderson’s publishing of *Victory over the Darkness* and *The Bondage Breaker* provided the tools to expand their goal of equipping believers. *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* became the primary tool for disciple making, with most training focused on how to lead people to experience freedom. Anderson describes *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* as “nothing more than a comprehensive process of repentance. . . . The Steps to Freedom in Christ don’t set you free. It is Christ who sets you free through your response to Him in repentance and faith.”⁶² Over the years through its volunteers, resources, conferences, and ministry FICM has had incredible success in ministering to millions of people. In recent years, FICM has shifted its focus away from conferences and towards a reproducible model based on lay counselors. In 2002 FICM shifted its headquarters to its

⁶⁰Anderson, *Rough Road*, 84.

⁶¹Ibid., 93.

⁶²Neil T. Anderson, “The Origin, Theology and Rationale of The Steps to Freedom in Christ,” Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed March 5, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>.

current location in Knoxville, TN and in 2006 Rich Miller became the current President of FICM.

Purpose. FICM seeks to resource and equip Christians “to experience spiritual freedom and spread that freedom to others.”⁶³ FICM helps relate this message of freedom by helping Christians to “understand who they are in Christ” and to “win the spiritual battles for their minds.”⁶⁴ Anderson created FICM to put a priority on disciple making, believing that “people come to Christ by faith, but they would need to repent if they are going to become reproducing disciples.”⁶⁵

FICM-USA is FICM’s American headquarters, with a mission “to resource and equip Christians in America to experience spiritual freedom and spread that freedom to others.”⁶⁶ FICM-USA was founded on equipping people through its conferences and through over 100 books and media resources, but today has changed their focus to “equip people on a grass roots level with the message and ministry of freedom so that they can start Community Freedom Ministries right where they live.”⁶⁷

A Community Freedom Ministry (CFM) is FICM-USA’s “approach to discipleship counseling in and through the local church.”⁶⁸ The approach of a CFM is designed around “three Ts,” which “involves teaching the message of freedom (as written in Anderson’s books), taking people through The Steps to Freedom in Christ, and training others to use the ‘Steps.’”⁶⁹

⁶³Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed November 18, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

⁶⁶Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed November 18, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Rich Miller, interview by author, February 14, 2014.

⁶⁹Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed November 18, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>.

FICM seeks to be above reproach through clear and transparent communication. Its website openly shares the ministry's financial audits. FICM offers answers to some of its criticisms with position papers on topics such as Christian identity, the importance of forgiveness, and the authority of a believer in spiritual warfare.⁷⁰

Anderson points to "The Story of *Casa Sobre La Roca*" to highlight a work of FICM in a church in Bogota, Columbia. The message of Freedom in Christ not only played a role in the church's establishment, but also helped the founding congregation grow to over 10,000 members and 34 churches. All conversion decisions made at *Casa Sobre La Roca* church "were taught the message of Freedom in Christ and led through The Steps to Freedom in Christ."⁷¹

Vision. FICM-USA's vision is to train "10,000 endorsed volunteers, called Community Freedom Ministry Associates" over the next 20 years.⁷² CFM University is FICM-USA's methodology for training CFM Associates. In three years of availability, 148 individuals have already completed this training, including two online courses and a face-to-face practicum training. CFM University's coursework is seeking to expand into sessions on marriage, corporate bondage, and more complex counseling issues.⁷³ Despite Miller's desires for a heavy expansion of FICM's mission impact, it is heavily dependent on volunteers and has significant financial limitations.⁷⁴

One of FICM's greatest impacts has been its global expansion through Freedom in Christ Ministries International (FICMI) based in Reading, England. FICMI shares its mission as "to equip the Church worldwide, enabling it to establish its people,

⁷⁰Miller, interview, May 29, 2013.

⁷¹Anderson, interview, October 1, 2011.

⁷²Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed November 18, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>.

⁷³Miller, interview, May 29, 2013.

⁷⁴Ibid.

marriages, and ministries alive and free in Christ through genuine repentance and faith in God.”⁷⁵ FICMI exists in Ethiopia, Liberia, South Africa, Argentina, Canada, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, United States, Venezuela, India, Malaysia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Australia, New Zealand, Austria, France, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, and the United Kingdom.⁷⁶

One of the greatest successes of FICMI has been through its Executive Director, Steve Goss, and his association with the Alpha Course, a “series of interactive sessions that freely explore the basics of the Christian faith.”⁷⁷ This association has enabled FICMI to help disciple over 150,000 people in around 3,000 churches through *The Freedom In Christ Discipleship Course*.⁷⁸ FICM-USA and FICMI both hope to expand their disciple making opportunities through a newly published 6-week discipleship course called *The Grace Course*.⁷⁹ FICM hopes to continue to carry the message of Freedom in Christ to the ends of the earth in a financially reproducible and lay dependent model. Their hope is that the biblical truths presented in Anderson’s works continue to impact the lives of many for generations to come.⁸⁰

Understanding of Spiritual Warfare

Anderson states that his understanding of spiritual warfare “has not changed much in the last several years.”⁸¹ He reveals that more reading of the “church fathers has

⁷⁵Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed November 18, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷The Alpha Course, accessed November 19, 2013, <http://www.alpha.org>.

⁷⁸Neil T. Anderson and Steve Goss, *The Freedom in Christ Discipleship Course: Discipleship-Group Workbook: A 13 Week Course for Every Christian* (Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, 2004).

⁷⁹Steve Goss, Rich Miller, and Jude Graham, *The Grace Course* (Oxford: Monarch Books, 2012).

⁸⁰Miller, interview, May 29, 2013.

⁸¹Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

greatly reinforced my early convictions” about the reality of spiritual warfare.⁸² He recounts how he first “dealt with the spiritual battle from the classic power encounter and saw the battle as a separate reality.”⁸³ Quickly he “learned to deal with problems much more holistically” by “adopting the truth encounter as opposed to the power encounter.”⁸⁴ Anderson argues that it is important for everyone to have a biblical understanding of spiritual warfare. He states that misunderstanding and fear leads many to disengage from the very spiritual battles they are called to fight.⁸⁵

Power Encounters

Anderson believes that the necessity of power encounters stopped at Pentecost, but that the practice continues on today. He observes that “if you promote the power encounter, 95% of pastors won’t touch it. No counselors will touch it. They almost can’t. They’ll get sued, or thrown before the board, or lose their license.”⁸⁶ He recounts his own attempts at power encounters, saying,

I’ve done that, I’ve confronted the demonic, had the dialogues, everything else, and I just said “hey,” there is something really wrong with this. Something really, really wrong. There had to be some way to deal with this thing so that you don’t lose control. You almost leave the encounter like the exorcist, thinking that the devil has more power than you do which is an illusion, a lie. You have more people in America afraid of the devil than of God. It is totally distorted. It is all deception. It is like watching “follow the yellow brick road” and finding that the thing you were trembling of is a scrawny old man behind a megaphone.

Anderson learned from his own attempts at power encounters and explains that some of his problem was in a misunderstanding of the solution. He critiques power

⁸²Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵“Liberal churches will have nothing to do with it, and the intellectually arrogant will always perpetuate their perspective. Fear keeps a lot of people at a distance, which is a major strategy of the enemy.” Ibid.

⁸⁶Ibid.

encounter advocate C. Peter Wagner’s spiritual warfare approach and emphasis as being “not on what God has done” but on his own power and abilities. Anderson further explains that many power-encounter advocates do it often out of “a power trip” by “commanding demons. . . . That is the bogus part about it.”⁸⁷

Deliverance ministries. Anderson explains that “getting rid of something [a demon] is not the answer.”⁸⁸ Deliverance ministries ultimately fail because of “what is incomplete with them.” Even if the removal is a process of “getting rid of a lie” rather than a demon it is merely “helpful, but not complete.” Anderson asserts that he hates the term “deliverance” because “biblically, deliverance is salvation” not deliverance from a demon or a lie.⁸⁹

Territorial spirits. Anderson acknowledges that you “are treading on dangerous grounds theologically, in regard to the reactions you will get” concerning territorial spirits. Anderson does believe that “the devil is the god of this world” and “the ruler of this world” because “Jesus said it.” Anderson maintains that Satan’s temporal rule is “through a hierarchy of demons.” Anderson does believe that “there is a ‘Prince of Persia’” as described in Daniel 9 but ultimately questions the point of those who emphasize territorial spirits. He argues that demons “are all disarmed” and that “it is not for me to figure out the enemy.” Anderson describes a group of Christians “preparing to meet in old Ephesus in the amphitheater to pray out the Queen of Heaven” and calls it “totally bogus” and unbiblical. Anderson’s calling, like all believers is “to know the truth . . . to know Christ.”⁹⁰

⁸⁷Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

⁸⁸“It is the same problem we have with recovery ministries. I’m not drinking any more. Well great, now you are a dry drunk, great, you are more miserable than you were before.” Ibid.

⁸⁹“You’ve been delivered out of darkness.” Ibid.

⁹⁰Ibid.

Responding to manifestations. In order to prevent being drawn into a “power encounter,” Anderson stops demonic manifestations whenever they occur. He states that there is no formula to it, but that it partially “depends on what the manifestation is.”⁹¹ He recounts a recent incident in Romania where he “lost control of the session” because of the difficulty in using a translator. The counselee had his “eyes roll back, tongue flapping” and there was a feeling of a dark presence. He described how he then told the counselee “you can do that if you want to, but you can stop, you don’t have to do that” at which point the counselee chose to stop the behavior/manifestation.⁹²

Even a phrase that Anderson frequently encourages others to use, “I am a child of God, the evil one cannot touch me” has “nothing to do with power and authority.” He states, “It is not a formula. I’m telling you, the devil can see through your unbelief and fear. There is nowhere to hide it.” In order to stop a manifestation, a believer must respond in “confident faith.” He further explains, “Authority does not increase with volume. Just take your place in Christ.”⁹³

Power encounter summary. Anderson realizes that when demonic manifestations occur, people are going to immediately associate you with the Pentecostal and charismatic stories they have heard. Regardless of what occurs in the encounter, Anderson advises that you confidently stop the manifestation so that you can proceed into a truth encounter.⁹⁴

⁹¹Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³“Sat down next to a guy with a butcher knife to his own throat. First voice said, ‘this man is going to die tonight.’ What would you do? My amateur friends would try to cast a demon out of him, and that is what happened. Then you end up with a power struggle, and somebody is probably going to get hurt. I just sat down beside him and said, ‘No he is not going to die tonight. I know you can hear me now. All this is, is a thought in your head. You can put the knife down or you can hold it there. It is your choice.’ He put it down.” Ibid.

⁹⁴“You’ll hear amongst Pentecostals, ‘cough up the demon.’ They’ll get a bucket. I’ll say

Truth Encounters

Anderson describes his approach to spiritual warfare “as a truth encounter as opposed to a power encounter. Jesus came to undo the works of Satan and he disarmed him at the cross. In Christ, we have authority over the kingdom of darkness, which is a truth that every disciple should know.” Anderson emphasizes the truth encounter as a process of putting off the lies of Satan and putting on the truth of God.⁹⁵

Anderson encourages all Christians to utilize his *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* to seek God’s guidance through the focal areas of repentance and faith. He justifies this process through Paul’s statement towards believers, that “God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will (2 Tim 2:24-26).”⁹⁶

Anderson argues that too often people have a dualistic view that God and Satan are “two equal and opposite powers” which is a “bogus” view. Anderson reinforces the greatness, power, and authority of Christ and how Christians must “go out with the whole Gospel, that Jesus came to undo the works of Satan (1 John 3:8) and you have the authority in Christ to do God’s will, that the devil is disarmed.” This approach towards encountering God through prayer and his Word is a process of repentance of sin, a renouncing of lies, a belief in truth, and a faith in Christ is the “truth encounter” approach that “has almost been revolutionary.”⁹⁷

‘What’s that coming from?’ They’ll feel nauseous, and when they share that with them, they just get into it and think they are throwing up demons or something stupid like that. Everybody has heard those kinds of things and thinks that is what you are doing.” Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Ibid.

Spiritual Warfare and Theology

Anderson admits, “My western education has skewed my worldview, which left me with an inadequate understanding of the spiritual world.”⁹⁸ He affirms “an unwavering commitment to the authority of Scripture has kept me balanced.” He also references his relationship and dialogue with “a godly theologian who I asked to hold me accountable” and helps him make “sure that everything I write or teach has a biblical basis.”⁹⁹

Anderson believes that “one has to see Scripture from a spiritual warfare perspective” because it “is the backdrop of the whole Bible.” This conflict existed “from the beginning of history” as “a battle between good and evil, between the Spirit of Truth and the father of lies, between the true prophets and the false prophets, between the Christ and the anti-Christ and we are in that battle whether we believe it or not.” He argues that spiritual warfare “is not a Pentecostal, charismatic, evangelical issue” but rather it “is a biblical issue.”¹⁰⁰

Anderson’s theology of spiritual warfare is characterized by greater emphasis on the Epistles than on the Old Testament, Gospels, or Acts. He believes that after Pentecost, “how we engage the enemy has changed due to our position in Christ.” He argues that “the epistles record very little history, but provide us with the instruction we need to live victoriously. The book of Acts tells the story of that transition.”¹⁰¹

Authority. Anderson believes authority to be the first crucial issue to understanding the spiritual warfare since Pentecost. He points out that many missions programs and agencies like to highlight “go and make disciples” but fail to acknowledge

⁹⁸Neil Anderson, *Discipleship Counseling* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2003), 8.

⁹⁹Anderson, interview, October 1, 2011.

¹⁰⁰Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

Christ's previous sentence, "all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."¹⁰² A reading of the first and second chapters of Ephesians helps one see "the scope of the authority and power that we have in Christ."¹⁰³ Anderson comments on the content of his teaching:

How much of what I teach is based on my authority in Christ? Almost everything. I go out as a joint heir with Christ. I am carrying on the Lord's work. I am connected with God with His authority. It is His authority, it is not mine. As soon as I step outside of Christ, I am dead. I live in His power; that is how I live. I can't believe that we've forgotten that.¹⁰⁴

Authority as referenced by power encounter approach is often self-focused and prideful, but Anderson describes his authority as Christ-focused and confident.¹⁰⁵

New covenant and identity. The New Covenant "changes everything" says Anderson. "The law is now within me, it is not external. I have a new heart." Too often, Anderson laments, evangelicals teach that believers have a "heart that is deceitful and desperately sick" rather than "a new heart." In making this statement, Anderson begins to reveal his understanding of Christian identity and its relationship to sin nature. He argues, "Some theologians and bible teachers will confuse the old man, flesh, and old nature."¹⁰⁶

Anderson states that too often people "identify themselves by is something other than Christ" such as a denomination or a theological position. "That identity serves as a barrier that separates" us from our true identity in Christ. He asks, "What is the

¹⁰²Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

¹⁰³Ibid.

¹⁰⁴Ibid.

¹⁰⁵Ibid.

¹⁰⁶Ibid.

whole point of sanctification? To make you like Jesus.” We “are created in the likeness of the image of God.”¹⁰⁷

Anderson’s observation is that “from a theological perspective, the Bible is almost 50/50 on the indicative and the imperative.”¹⁰⁸ He believes the problem in many churches is that our teaching and message has become “98% imperative, ‘here is what you need to do’ and maybe 2% indicative.” The fact remains, he argues, that greater emphasis needs to be placed on what “is already done, you are already a Christian, you are already a child of God” and not simply “good messages on how to live.”¹⁰⁹

Repentance and sin nature. Connected with identity, Anderson believes that Christian churches need “to present a much more holistic approach that is based on repentance; there is where my heart lies. I want people free. To do that requires repentance. And we are not offering that to them.” He states that believers are often too passive in our discipleship processes, and that “no one is going to confront you on your spiritual life or thought life, what you do in solitude.” Anderson believes that “the most damning thing in our culture is the unbelievable sexual problems that people have had or are having.” He explains this by illustrating:

If you went into an average bible-believing church in America, and 16 are seated on one row. Two are struggling with sexual identity confusion, they are not gay, but they are struggling. Another four, and this is a very conservative estimate, have been sexually abused. Another four beyond that, are in sexual bondage to pornography, whatever else, so are the previous six by the way. That is true of every row in every church in America.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

¹⁰⁸Ibid.

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

Anderson emphasizes that repentance and faith are not simply essential in salvation, but are necessary for the process of sanctification. When speaking about sin dwelling in oneself, Anderson states that “having something dwelling in me does not describe my nature” and too often Christians use the terms “nature, flesh, and old man” interchangeably which “really adds to the confusion.” He further explains his views and defines his terminology on sin nature in an online paper “Do Christians Have a Sin Nature?”¹¹¹

Anderson also explains his belief in cognitive therapy, but that without a spiritual focus “you can temporarily change feelings, you can temporarily change behavior, you can change it up in here (pointing towards head), but you haven’t changed who they are.” He asserts that the true “power to change” lies alone in the “life of Christ.” People must be aware of areas in which they are “paying attention to deceiving spirits” and instead turn to the truth of Christ.¹¹²

Demonization and possession. Anderson is quick to point out that “possession is not a biblical term” and instead he uses the term “demonization, meaning that one is under the influence of one or more demons.”¹¹³ Many of his critics believe that Anderson teaches that Christians can be demon possessed, but Anderson simply says “no” and explains,

Despite what some of our critics charge, I (Neil) have never taught that believers can be “demon possessed.” The first cornerstone of our message is that believers are eternally secure in their identity as children of God. We teach that no believer is in such deep bondage that they cannot exercise their responsibility to “submit therefore to God. Resist the devil” (James 4:7). Our approach is to encourage believers to exercise their authority and responsibility as children of God to repent of sin, win the battle for their minds, present their bodies to God and resist the devil.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed November 18, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>.

¹¹²Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

¹¹³Anderson, email interview by author, December 3, 2011.

¹¹⁴Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed November 18, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>.

The reality is that that “Christians are Holy Spirit possessed, because we have been purchased by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.”¹¹⁵ Ultimately Anderson explains that the “relationship of believers to the demonic is not that simple.”¹¹⁶ He points out biblical references towards ongoing spiritual warfare, in phrases such as such as “deliver us from evil (Matt 6:13),” “keep them from the evil one (John 17:15),” “deliver us from the present evil age (Gal 1:4),” and “the whole world lies in the power of the evil one (1 John 5:19).”¹¹⁷ Anderson further points to the biblical references to the “sons of the evil one” in the parable of the wheat and the tares (Matt 13), Paul’s experience with a “messenger of Satan (2 Cor 12)”, and “the children of the devil (1 John 3:10)” as further evidence on ongoing attacks on believers.¹¹⁸

Spiritual Warfare and History

Anderson finds that spiritual warfare “interest and emphasis has come and gone in Church history.” Anderson states that “for 2,000 years, in an orthodox or catholic church, before you were admitted into the church there was a rite of exorcism.”¹¹⁹ He also supports the observation that the early church had an ongoing emphasis on offering and promoting “Life. Life. Life.” Anderson holds that “to this day, every hurting Christian has one thing in common: none of them knew who they were in Christ.”¹²⁰

In the last 25 years, “the secular movie and television industry has shifted dramatically toward the supernatural” as seen in the Harry Potter books and movies,

¹¹⁵Anderson, interview, December 3, 2011.

¹¹⁶Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed November 18, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>.

¹¹⁷Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed November 18, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>. Note later discussion on 1 John 5:19 in chaps. 4 and 5.

¹¹⁸Ibid. Note that these references are not towards believers.

¹¹⁹Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

¹²⁰Ibid.

psychic and ghost phenomena, and New Age beliefs. Western rationalism “dissolves you out of responsibility” contrary to how the church fathers “were definitive on repentance.”¹²¹

Anderson states that although Satan’s varying tactics do not change with time, it is important to understand that

Satan is a chameleon and a liar. His primary strategy is deception. Eve was deceived and believed a lie. His first strategy is to remain undetected. If that is exposed he will resort to a pretense of power to solicit fear. The primary strategy works in the American culture, but is less effective in third world countries, which are predisposed to believe in the spiritual world. His most consistent pattern is to tempt us to live independently of God, and then accuse us when we do. Essentially Satan and his demons are the same all over the world, and so are the problems. Sin is sin no matter what form it takes, so is depression, fear and anxiety.¹²²

Anderson asserts that “the western church must move more toward a biblical worldview, and away from intellectual arrogance.” He further points out that “until the enlightenment faith always preceded understanding. Western rationalism insists that understanding precedes faith, which strips the Bible of miracles and questions the resurrection, virgin birth, and many standards of orthodox faith.” Anderson states that although spiritual warfare emphases and interest varies over time, Satan’s methods do not change and the solution remains constantly found in faith through repentance and belief in Christ.¹²³

Spiritual Warfare and the Church

Anderson describes the greatest spiritual warfare challenge to North American churches occurring from the replacement of discipleship with counseling. He explains,

mega churches have set the trend and the pastors are CEOs. We have lost the art of pastoring and many don’t want to get that involved with people. Many don’t feel competent and simply refer their people to professionals. Jesus came to set captives free and bind up the broken hearted, which is what our ministry does. The average

¹²¹Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

¹²²Ibid.

¹²³Ibid.

pastor doesn't have a clue what the person in the pew is struggling with. There was a time when the majority of people went to their pastor or priest have they had a personal problem, but that is not true anymore.¹²⁴

Anderson explains that the missing issue in many discipleship models is repentance. He points to Jesus' and Paul's emphasis on repentance and states that the local church should offer more opportunities to repent. People do not need "to hear a good message on how to live" but need encouragement and exhortation to repent so that they can be freed of the "ton of baggage" that they are carrying around.

Spiritual Warfare and Evangelism

Anderson believes evangelism to be the responsibility of every believer.¹²⁵ Anderson points to the church fathers' understanding of salvation as "union with God," sealed with the Holy Spirit as a "guarantee for the future."¹²⁶ He references participating in and leading an Evangelism Explosion team, holding that "genius of the program was on-the-job training."¹²⁷ Anderson explains that he eventually gained new insight into the gospel that "changed my presentation" to more of an offer of life.¹²⁸

¹²⁴Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

¹²⁵"Learning to be a faithful witness without regard for our own personal well-being is a hurdle every Christian needs to get over." Anderson, *Rough Road*, 44.

¹²⁶"The Church Fathers referred to salvation as union with God, which is what it is. . . . They understood that salvation for the believer began in their past when they were born again, is presently being worked out, and will be completed in the future. In other words, we have been saved, we are being saved, and some day we shall be fully saved. . . . I personally believe that born-again Christians should be assured of their salvation according to Ephesians 1:13-15. . . . The presence of the Holy Spirit in my life is my guarantee for the future." Ibid., 115-16.

¹²⁷"As I drove to my first visit I went with the determination to find out if they were Christians and not to leave until I'd shared the gospel with them if they weren't. I would use these two Evangelism Explosion questions which were: 1. If you died tonight, do you know where you would spend eternity? 2. If God asked you on what basis you had a right to be there, how would you answer?" Ibid., 69-70.

¹²⁸John 11:25-26 gave Anderson the understanding that "if we die physically, we will continue to live spiritually. This new insight changed my presentation of the gospel. Before I would say something like this, 'Jesus is the Messiah who died for our sins. If we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead, we will be saved. Then we will go to heaven when we die.' That would give the impression that eternal life is something that we get when we die, but that is not true. . . . to save a dead person you have to perform two functions . . . cure the 'disease' that caused them to die, and . . . [celebrate] the new life we have in Christ because of His resurrection (Romans 6:23)." Ibid., 115.

Anderson believes that “our gospel presentations are insufficient” as they often focus on attempting to “convince people that they are sinners in need of forgiveness.” He asserts that if “we see salvation as addition that is heresy.”¹²⁹ He argues that what is taught in Scripture is “transformation. You are a new creation in Christ. You are not in the kingdom of darkness anymore. You are in the kingdom of light.” Instead he argues that people often “operate as if we are half in the kingdom of darkness and half in the kingdom of light.”¹³⁰

A spiritual warfare understanding in evangelism is definitely needed “as Satan has blinded the mind of the unbeliever.”¹³¹ As an example of evangelism with a spiritual warfare orientation, Anderson recounts the evangelism methodology of Dave Park, with whom he co-authored several youth-directed works. Park would precede his gospel invitations by telling unbelievers “if you don’t know, if you haven’t made a decision for Christ, you are having thoughts in your mind, condemning me, cursing me, warning you against me, telling you not to go any further.” Anderson believes that Park’s awareness and reference to the battles going on within unbeliever’s minds has made him more successful in evangelism. Anderson also references *The Alpha Course* as a helpful methodology of evangelism.¹³²

Anderson’s personal approach in evangelism is to offer freedom with the understanding that unbelievers “are dead people who need life.”¹³³ He states,

What Adam and Eve lost in the fall was life and that is what Jesus came to give us. People are looking for life, not heaven. If all we are offering is forgiveness from sin and heaven when we die, then so is Islam and they are more fanatical about it. If we could show people how they could overcome addictive behavior, depression, fear,

¹²⁹Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

¹³⁰Ibid.

¹³¹Ibid.

¹³²Ibid.

¹³³Ibid.

anxiety, anger, and a life of love, joy, peace, etc. we would win a lot more converts.¹³⁴

Anderson continues to explain that Christians engaging in evangelism and missions must be prepared because “every path towards God is challenged” and Satan’s “first strategy is to keep people from coming to Christ.”¹³⁵

Historically, Anderson claims that it is important to understand that getting free from demonic influences was the primary evangelistic appeal of the early church, and the ability to do so was a test of orthodoxy. The churches that can help inquirers and new believers resolve their personal and spiritual conflicts through genuine repentance and faith in God will see dynamic church growth. When that doesn’t happen the life style of the average Christian is essentially the same as the unbeliever.¹³⁶

Anderson advises missionaries to be aware that they will likely “be going into a culture that does not have their worldview.”¹³⁷ He points to the fact that “westerners have what Dr. Paul Hiebert calls the ‘Excluded Middle’” which is “a two tier mentality that consigns the spiritual world of God, angels and demons to a higher tier that does not impinge upon the natural world.” Anderson also believes that missionaries need to be “free in Christ themselves” for “if they are not secure in Christ before they go on the field, they will not be able to withstand the conflicts that are inevitable.”¹³⁸

Spiritual warfare does not stop with evangelism and missions, for when someone comes to Christ, Satan does not simply “pull in his fangs and curl up his tail.” Satan’s attacks continue past the point of regeneration “which is why believers need to put on the armor of God, learn how to stand in Christ and take every thought captive in obedience to Christ.”¹³⁹

¹³⁴Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

¹³⁵Ibid.

¹³⁶Ibid.

¹³⁷Ibid.

¹³⁸Ibid.

¹³⁹Ibid.

Spiritual Warfare and Discipleship

Anderson believes “that the ministries of counseling and discipling are the same in the Bible, although too often they have become separate and unrelated disciplines in the Christian community.”¹⁴⁰ Anderson terms his view of discipleship as “discipleship counseling” which is “an attempt to meet people where they are and help them resolve their personal and spiritual conflicts so that can be established alive and free in Christ.”¹⁴¹

Anderson defines faith as “what you believe” and repentance as “changing what you believe” but that faith “is dependent on its object” of belief or trust.¹⁴² He further explains that “we are saved and sanctified by faith” and that “repentance is impossible without Christ, for He is the one who grants repentance (2 Tim. 2:24,25).” Anderson believes that “we cannot require one to repent in order to be saved because they need the life of Christ in order to repent. However, repentance, which literally means a change of mind, is happening the moment one chooses to believe.”¹⁴³

Anderson further explains that “justification and regeneration takes place the moment a person is born again. Sanctification begins at our new birth, but isn’t completed until we are fully in the presence of Christ with a resurrected body.” He articulates that “positionally, every new believer is alive and free in Christ,” but many do not live that way, and if they want to fully experience that life and freedom “they need to repent.”¹⁴⁴

Anderson’s discipleship books and *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* are designed to help believers bear more fruit in their lives because “a fruitless Christian is an oxymoron.” This fruit grows out of believers taking personal responsibility in

¹⁴⁰Anderson, *Discipleship Counseling*, 13-14.

¹⁴¹Ibid., 14.

¹⁴²Anderson, interview, December 3, 2011.

¹⁴³Ibid.

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

understanding their identity in Christ, repenting of their sin, and praying personally to God.¹⁴⁵

Prayer. Anderson explains that the many prayers found in his steps are “not some canned response” but a powerful method of teaching and exhorting people to pray and petition God. “The power behind the prayers in the Steps” is found in changing the typical approach of a pastor or leader taking the lead and instead getting individual believers to pray. This change in getting the counselee to pray has “absolutely changed” Anderson’s ministry. Anderson wants the counselee to realize that the counselor is not the deliverer, but that “Christ is the deliverer.”¹⁴⁶ Counselees who merely read “words out loud without any heartfelt affirmation” will likely experience ineffective prayer. Anderson’s prayers are not “magical formulas with power that is released if they are properly spoken.”¹⁴⁷ The prayers listed in *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* are designed to direct the counselee to “important areas of truth found in the Scriptures” and “are only effective to the extent that they are sincerely offered to a powerful and loving God.”¹⁴⁸

Theophostic prayer. Anderson states that theophostic prayer “can be an effective process to get at embedded lies.” His major issue with inner healing ministries is that they are not holistic since it relies on “more on the belief of the encourager than on the faith of the inquirer.”¹⁴⁹ Anderson is most troubled by theophostic prayer’s “lack of repentance.” Anderson’s discipleship process is different because he finds that biblically,

¹⁴⁵Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

¹⁴⁶Ibid.

¹⁴⁷Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed November 18, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>.

¹⁴⁸Ibid.

¹⁴⁹Anderson, interview, December 5, 2011. “Another truth-oriented approach is that of Ed Smith. From this ‘theophostic’ perspective, healing is attained through discovering the lies we have been believing and then allowing Jesus to come and speak truth to us, thus healing the wounds left by the lies.” Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, 191.

in order to “have lasting results” believers “need to know who they are in Christ” and “genuinely repent and believe themselves.”¹⁵⁰ Anderson states that his discipleship counseling includes “inner healing, freedom from demonic influences, counseling and discipleship” which leads towards making reproducible disciples.¹⁵¹

Recovery ministries. Anderson hopes to influence change in the approaches of many recovery ministries. He is particularly against their common practice of “sitting in a circle and saying ‘I am co-dependent, I am an addict, I am an alcoholic . . . reinforcing the failure identity.’” Anderson maintains that such “failure identity” is “secular stuff” that has carried on into the church. Instead Anderson’s hope is that recovery ministries “stop identifying people by their failed identities” and to start doing “counseling and therapy” with the presence of God.¹⁵²

Conclusion

Anderson has influenced millions of people across the world through his ministry and writings. His insights into spiritual warfare are saturated with biblical references and theology that even his most ardent critics affirm. Anderson continues to try to refine and communicate his message with clarity, but there are still issues where continued dialogue and clarification would be helpful. The truth encounter approach is unique among many spiritual warfare approaches in that it maintains control over the demonic while placing responsibility onto the individual believer. Anderson’s *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* and associated works communicate a message rooted in a faith that is focused on the believer’s identification with Christ and a life characterized by a repentant and prayerful heart. Although he has authored or co-authored over sixty works,

¹⁵⁰Anderson, interview, December 5, 2011.

¹⁵¹Ibid.

¹⁵²Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

Anderson still sees room for future impact by communicating biblical guidance and tools for Christians encountering spiritual warfare.¹⁵³

Writings

Anderson's ministry is not primarily defined by his time at Talbot or FICM, but by the over sixty books that he has authored or coauthored.¹⁵⁴ Anderson is best known by *Victory over the Darkness* and *The Bondage Breaker* but has written various other works regarding addictions, marriage, relationships, church, counseling, families, and discipleship. The primary focus of this section will be on Anderson's most published and foundational works, *Victory over the Darkness* and *The Bondage Breaker*. A chapter by chapter summary will help the reader to understand Anderson's focus and approach to spiritual warfare. His other works, such as *Discipleship Counseling* and issue focused works will be given a much briefer reference. His most recent work, *Rough Road to Freedom: A Memoir* is given special attention especially in chapters 1 and 2. *The Daily Discipler*, Anderson's "practical course of systematic theology" will be utilized in analyzing his approach to evangelism and discipleship in greater detail in chapter 5.¹⁵⁵

***Victory over the Darkness* (2000)**

Anderson's first published book turned into a popular work with over 1.3 million copies in print.¹⁵⁶ His focus on Christian identity has been one of the defining focuses of his ministry. The influence and emphasis of this work makes it essential to understand in detail the claims and teachings that Anderson advocates in this work.

¹⁵³Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

¹⁵⁴Anderson, *Rough Road*, back cover.

¹⁵⁵Anderson, *The Daily Discipler*, back cover.

¹⁵⁶Anderson, *Rough Road*, 269.

Chapter 1: “Who Are You?” Anderson quickly argues towards an emphasis on love being personally practiced and corporately reproduced in the process of discipleship.¹⁵⁷ He expresses that “maturity is the product of time, pressure, trials, tribulations, the knowledge of God’s Word, an understanding of who you are in Christ, and the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life.”¹⁵⁸ Anderson believes that “the critical foundation of your belief system and your behavior patterns as a Christian” is rooted in “your understanding of who God is and who you are in relationship to Him.”¹⁵⁹ He continues by describing what it means to be a child of God in light of God’s plan of salvation.¹⁶⁰ He summarizes the chapter saying, “your sense of personal worth comes from knowing who you are as a child of God and your growth in character.”¹⁶¹

Chapter 2: “The Whole Gospel.” Anderson then describes his thesis that many Christians “are not living free and productive lives because they don’t understand who they are and why they are here.”¹⁶² He believes that the root of this problem is with an incomplete understanding of the gospel, producing “forgiven sinners instead of

¹⁵⁷“The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith—I Tim 1:5. . . . Discipleship counseling is the process where two or more people meet together in the presence of Christ, learn how the truth of God’s word can set them free and thus are able to conform to the image of God as they walk by faith in the power of the Holy Spirit. . . . Ultimately, every Christian is responsible for his/her own maturity and freedom in Christ.” Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness*, 16-18.

¹⁵⁸“We cannot receive instant maturity. It will take us the rest of our lives to renew our minds and conform to the image of God, but it doesn’t take as long to realize our identity and freedom in Christ.” Ibid., 19-21.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., 24.

¹⁶⁰“You are a whole person and possess a life of infinite meaning and purpose because of who you are—a child of God. . . . The only identity equation that works in God’s kingdom is you plus Christ equals wholeness and meaning. . . . Being created in the image of God is what gives us the capacity to fully think, feel, and choose. . . . It is God’s eternal plan to bring human creation back to Himself and restore the union He enjoyed with Adam at creation. That restored union with God we find ‘in Christ,’ is what defines who we are as children of God. . . . In Christ we are able to know God personally because we have received the mind of Christ in our inner selves at salvation.” Ibid., 26-31.

¹⁶¹Ibid., 37.

¹⁶²“Who they are is rooted in their identity and position in Christ.” Ibid., 43.

redeemed saints.”¹⁶³ As a corrective, Anderson communicates the importance of understanding that eternal life begins at the point of salvation, not at the point of physical death.¹⁶⁴ As one better understands who they are in Christ, they will be equipped to live life behaviorally as the saints that they already are ontologically.¹⁶⁵ He ultimately holds that the believer’s only hope rests in a full gospel understanding that “you are a child of God now, who is being conformed to the image of God.”¹⁶⁶

Chapter 3: “See Yourself for Who You Really Are.” Anderson understands sanctification in the past tense as “positional sanctification and refers to the position or the status the believer has in Christ” and in the present tense refers to “progressive or experiential sanctification.”¹⁶⁷ He explains that the “foundational truth from which you live” as a Christian is “that God is your loving Father and you are His accepted child.”¹⁶⁸ He acknowledges that believers can “interfere with the harmony of my relationship with God” when they fail to trust and obey.¹⁶⁹ Even when Christians “fail to take Him at His

¹⁶³“For some unknown reason, we have left the Resurrection out of the gospel presentation. Consequently, we end up with forgiven sinners instead of redeemed saints.” Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness*, 45.

¹⁶⁴“If we don’t have spiritual (eternal) life before we die physically, we can anticipate only hell. . . . What does it mean to be spiritually alive in Christ? The moment you were born again your soul came into union with God in the same way Adam was in union with God before the Fall. You became spiritually alive and your name was written in the Lamb’s book of life (Rev. 21:27).” Ibid.

¹⁶⁵“It is not what you do as a Christian that determines who you are; it is who you are that determines what you do (II Cor 5:17; Eph 2:120; I Pet 2:9-10; I John 3:1-2). . . . Next to a knowledge of God, a knowledge of who you are is by far the most important truth you can possess. . . . Clearly, the term ‘saint’ is used in Scripture to refer to the believer, and ‘sinner’ is used in reference to the unbeliever. . . . As believers, we are not trying to become saints; we are saints who are becoming like Christ. . . . Because you are a saint in Christ by God’s calling, you share in Christ’s inheritance.” Ibid., 47-51.

¹⁶⁶Ibid., 56.

¹⁶⁷“The process of sanctification begins at our new birth and ends in our glorification.” Ibid., 60-61.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., 63.

¹⁶⁹“Harmony with God is based on the same concerns as harmony with my earthly father: trust and obedience.” Ibid., 67.

Word or choose to walk by the flesh,” their “relationship with Him is not at stake, because we are related by the blood of Jesus Christ.”¹⁷⁰ He concludes that it is “equally important” that Christians perceive and treat one another rightly as children of God.¹⁷¹

Chapter 4: “Something Old, Something New.” In this chapter Anderson highlights what occurs in a believer at the point of salvation.¹⁷² He describes Christians as having an important choice to “walk (or live) according to the flesh (Gal 5:19-21) or they can walk (or live) according to the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23).”¹⁷³ He argues that the purpose of spiritual growth is “so you can *be* like Christ, not just *act* like Him.”¹⁷⁴ Anderson holds that “we are neither saved nor sanctified by how we behave but by how we believe” but that believers have responsibilities in crucifying their old nature (the flesh) and in “being a child of God and being free in Christ.”¹⁷⁵

Chapter 5: “Becoming the Spiritual Person God Wants You to Be.” In this chapter Anderson suggests that there are three types of people: the natural, the spiritual, and the fleshy.¹⁷⁶ He encourages believers to evaluate their lives to determine whether

¹⁷⁰Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness*, 67.

¹⁷¹Ibid., 68.

¹⁷²“We were born physically alive but spiritually dead. We had neither the presence of God in our lives nor the knowledge of His ways. Consequently, we all learned to live our lives independently of God. . . . Positionally, several things changed at salvation. First, God transferred us from the domain of darkness ‘to the kingdom of His beloved Son’ (Col 1:13) Second, sin’s dominion through the flesh has been broken. As a believer, you are no longer in the flesh, you are in Christ.” Ibid., 74-75.

¹⁷³“Christians are no longer in the flesh, but because the characteristics of the flesh remain in believers, they have a choice.” Ibid., 75.

¹⁷⁴“Spiritual growth in the Christian life requires a relationship with God who is the fountain of spiritual life, a relationship that brings a new seed or root of life.” Ibid., 77, 81.

¹⁷⁵“The flesh, our old nature, has to be crucified by the believer (Gal 5:24). . . . Being a child of God and being free in Christ is positional truth and the birthright of every believer.” Ibid., 84-86.

¹⁷⁶“The natural man has a soul; . . . however, his mind and subsequently his emotions and his will are directed by his flesh, which acts completely apart from the God who created him. . . . The spiritual man . . . has been remarkably transformed from the natural person he was before spiritual birth. At conversion, his spirit became united with God’s spirit . . . His mind has been renewed and transformed. . . .

they are walking in the flesh or the spirit.¹⁷⁷ He promotes the importance of an ongoing walk of “faith in the power of the Holy Spirit” in order to live a productive Christian life.¹⁷⁸ He remarks that Christian freedom lies “in the ability to choose to live responsibly within the context of the protective guidelines God has established for our lives.”¹⁷⁹

Chapter 6: “The Power of Believing the Truth.” In this chapter, Anderson brings forth the importance of Christians truthfully knowing the “object of your faith.”¹⁸⁰ He writes about the importance of correct belief, communicating that “everything we do is essentially a product of what we have chosen to believe.”¹⁸¹ He proposes that God’s unconditional and irrevocable love is the defining truth of the Christian life.¹⁸²

Chapter 7: “You Can’t Live Beyond What You Believe.” Anderson postulates that your beliefs are the foundation of how you live.¹⁸³ He specifically encourages readers to evaluate their lives for bitterness, anger, resentment, anxiety, or

The fleshly person is a Christian, spiritually alive in Christ, and declared righteous by God . . . though free to choose to walk after the spirit and produce fruit of the spirit, he continues to involve himself in sinful activity by willfully walking after the flesh.” Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness*, 93-97.

¹⁷⁷“How can you know if you are walking according to the flesh or according to the Spirit? Take a look at your life. “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident . . . (Gal 5:19-21).” Ibid., 105.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., 99.

¹⁷⁹“Christianity is a relationship, not a ritual or a religious code of ethics. . . . If the Spirit-filled walk is neither license nor legalism, what is it? It is liberty . . . you have the choice to walk according to the Spirit or to walk according to the flesh.” Ibid., 101-3.

¹⁸⁰“The only difference between Christian faith and non-Christian faith is the object of our faith. . . . How much faith you have is dependent upon how well you know the object of your faith.” Ibid., 109-10.

¹⁸¹“Believing something doesn’t make it true and not believing something doesn’t make it false.” Ibid., 113.

¹⁸²“The primary truth you need to know about God for your faith to remain strong is that His love and acceptance are unconditional. . . . No matter what you do or how you fail, God will still love you because the love of God is not dependent upon its object; it is dependent upon His character.” Ibid., 117-19.

¹⁸³“Walking by faith simply means that you function in daily life on the basis of what you believe.” Ibid., 124.

depression to quickly see the need for right goals based on right beliefs.¹⁸⁴ He offers that “a godly goal is any specific orientation that reflects God’s purpose for your life and is not dependent on people or circumstances beyond your ability or right to control.”¹⁸⁵ He concludes that times of difficulty can not only reveal wrong goals, desires, and beliefs but can become “the catalyst for achieving God’s goal for our lives, which is our sanctification—the process of conforming to His image.”¹⁸⁶

Chapter 8: “God’s Guidelines for the Walk of Faith.” Anderson considers how many people struggle with identity, fulfillment, and satisfaction issues in life, proposing that believers must understand their identity in Christ and grow in character in order to have a biblically lasting sense of worth.¹⁸⁷ He reminds readers that success and significance are derivatives of focusing and prioritizing God’s goal for our lives.¹⁸⁸ Anderson posits that fulfillment “is discovering our own uniqueness in Christ and using our gifts and talents to edify others and to glorify the Lord.”¹⁸⁹ He believes God’s plan for happiness comes through honest transparency, eternal focus, and contentment with

¹⁸⁴“When an experience leaves you feeling angry, anxious, or depressed, those emotional signposts are there to alert you that you may be cherishing a faulty goal based on a wrong belief. . . . People who cannot control those who frustrate their goals will probably respond by getting bitter, angry, or resentful.” Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness*, 126, 130.

¹⁸⁵“A godly desire is any specific result that depends on the cooperation of other people, the success of events or favorable circumstances you have no right or ability to control.” Ibid., 131-32.

¹⁸⁶“Trials and tribulations reveal wrong goals, but they can actually be the catalyst for achieving God’s goal for our lives, which is our sanctification—the process of conforming to His image. During these times of pressure, our emotions raise their warning flags, signaling blocked, uncertain, or impossible goals based on our desires instead of God’s goal of proven character.” Ibid., 135.

¹⁸⁷“Your sense of worth is based on your identity in Christ and your growth in character, both of which are equally accessible to every Christian.” Ibid., 141.

¹⁸⁸“Success is accepting God’s goal for our lives and by His grace becoming what He has called us to be. . . . If you want to increase your significance, focus your energies on significant activities: those what will remain for eternity.” Ibid., 142.

¹⁸⁹“The key to personal satisfaction is not found in broadening the scope of your activities but in deepening them through a commitment to quality.” Ibid., 143-45.

God's provision.¹⁹⁰ He concludes with an encouragement to experience the peace of God through "personal prayer and interaction with God's Word. . . . (Phil 4:6-7; Col 3:15-16)."¹⁹¹

Chapter 9: "Winning the Battle for Your Mind." Anderson advances his argument that our spiritual battle is for our mind, urging Christians to take their thoughts captive to God's truths.¹⁹² He cautions that "Satan's strategy is to introduce his thoughts and ideas into your mind and to deceive you into believing that they are yours" because the devil knows that "once a stronghold of thought and response is entrenched in your mind, your ability to choose and to act contrary to that pattern is very difficult."¹⁹³ Anderson desires that Christians understand that "dealing with Satan is not a power encounter; it is a truth encounter" and they must renew their mind "by filling it with God's Word."¹⁹⁴ He concludes with the prompting to "choose the truth and keep choosing it until it becomes the normal pattern of your life."¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁰"God's concept of happiness is summed up in the simple proverb: 'Happy is the man who wants what he has'. . . . Chief among the inhibitors of Christian fun is our fleshly tendency to keep up appearances. . . . Insecurity means depending upon temporal things that we have no right or ability to control." Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness*, 146-47.

¹⁹¹Ibid., 148.

¹⁹²"The more time and energy you invest in contemplating your own plans on how to live your life, the less likely you are to seek God's plan. . . . If you don't take captive the initial thought, you will probably lose the battle to temptation . . . we need to take the way of escape the moment our thoughts are contrary to the truth and righteousness. . . . If what we think does not reflect truth, then what we feel does not reflect reality." Ibid., 152-56.

¹⁹³Ibid., 159. Related verses are 1 Pet 1:13 "preparing your mind for action, being sober-minded," 2 Cor 4:4 "the god of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ," 2 Cor 10:4-5 "the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ."

¹⁹⁴"Satan has no authority or power over you except what you yield to him when you are deceived into believing his lies." Ibid., 161-62.

¹⁹⁵Ibid., 163.

Chapter 10: “You Must Be Real to Be Right.” Anderson confronts the notion that people are shaped by our environment or history, countering that “God determines who you are, and your interpretation of life’s events determines how well you will handle the pressures of life.”¹⁹⁶ He challenges the believer to rightly understand and to honestly express one’s feelings.¹⁹⁷ Likewise he encourages learning to rightly “respond to others when they honestly acknowledge their pain.”¹⁹⁸ Finally, he concludes the chapter with a reemphasis on renewing your mind with the inclusion of “managing your emotions by managing your thoughts and acknowledging your feelings honestly and lovingly in your relationships with others.”¹⁹⁹

Chapter 11: “Healing Emotional Wounds from Your Past.” Anderson asserts that “God doesn’t fix our past, but He does set us free from it.”²⁰⁰ He writes that “people are not in bondage to past traumas. They are in bondage to the lies they believed about themselves, God and how to live as a result of the trauma.”²⁰¹ He encourages healing through the analysis of past events based on a believer’s identity in Christ.²⁰² When relating to others, believers must remember to “base our relationships with others on the same criteria on which God bases His relationship with us: love, acceptance, and

¹⁹⁶“Life’s events don’t determine who you are.” Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness*, 171.

¹⁹⁷“Your emotions are to your soul what your physical feelings are to your body. . . . In God’s eyes, if you are not real, you are not right. If necessary, God may have to make you real to make you right with Him.” Ibid., 173, 178.

¹⁹⁸Ibid., 180.

¹⁹⁹Ibid., 182.

²⁰⁰Ibid., 184. Perhaps a better word in this statement would have been “erase” instead of “fix.”

²⁰¹Ibid., 188.

²⁰²“Perceiving those events from the perspective of your new identity in Christ is what starts the process of healing those damaged emotions.” Ibid., 189.

forgiveness.”²⁰³ He wraps up the chapter by defining and describing different aspects and applications of forgiveness.²⁰⁴

Chapter 12: “Dealing with Rejection in Your Relationships.” Many people in life have experienced rejection, so Anderson addresses this important area in order to assist people in dealing with past rejection and preparing for future rejection.²⁰⁵ He exhorts people to take responsibility for their own character and for reaching out to meet the needs of others.²⁰⁶ He cautions of Satan’s attacks in tempting us “to focus on our rights instead of our responsibilities” and warns against trying “to play the role of the Holy Spirit in someone else’s life.”²⁰⁷ Anderson then makes the case for disciplining and accountability as part of the process of discipleship.²⁰⁸ He concludes the chapter with the encouragement of allowing “other believers the privilege of meeting your legitimate needs.”²⁰⁹

²⁰³Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness*, 190.

²⁰⁴“Forgiveness means resolving to live with the consequences of another person’s sin. . . . Forgiveness is a crisis of the will, a conscious choice to let the other person off the hook and to free yourself from the past.” Ibid., 192-93.

²⁰⁵“The system has rejected them and therefore they find it easy to reject themselves. Any success or acceptance that comes their way will be questioned or doubted on the basis of what they already believe about themselves. . . . If you find yourself responding to rejection defensively, turn your attention to those things that will build you up and establish you in your faith.” Ibid., 202-6.

²⁰⁶“Before God, each of you is responsible for your own character . . . and meeting each other’s needs.” Ibid., 207.

²⁰⁷“When we attempt to play the role of the Holy Spirit in someone else’s life, we misdirect their battle with God onto ourselves; and we are unqualified for the task.” Ibid., 208-9.

²⁰⁸“Disciplining others is a part of our ministry; judging character is God’s responsibility. . . . We must hold people accountable for their sinful behavior, but we are never allowed to denigrate their character.” Ibid., 210.

²⁰⁹“By denying other believers the privilege of meeting your legitimate needs, you are acting independently of God and you are vulnerable to getting your needs met by the world, the flesh, and the devil.” Ibid., 212.

Chapter 13: “People Grow Better Together.” Anderson finishes *Victory over the Darkness* with his hope for promoting discipleship as the “process of building the life of Christ in one another.”²¹⁰ He connects evangelism to discipleship, writing “to disciple people, we have to first lead them to Christ so the Holy Spirit can bear witness with their spirits that they ‘are children of God’ (Rom 8:16).”²¹¹ He lists the goals of discipleship as being to help other believers “become firmly rooted in Christ,” “accept God’s goal of sanctification and grow in the likeness of Christ,” and to “function as believers in their homes, on their jobs, and in society.”²¹² He concludes his book by connecting Christian counseling with discipleship by describing its goal “to help people experience their freedom in Christ so they can move on to maturity and fruitfulness in their walk with Him.”²¹³

Summary. Anderson uses his first book to establish what he sees as the biblical identity in Christian belief. He begins with the gospel, journeys into the importance and applications of believing truth, and finishes with a focus on extending personal victory into corporate victory through the process of discipleship. Anderson addresses a lot of areas of common struggle while directing Christians to a right understanding of who they are in Christ.

The Bondage Breaker (2000)

Anderson uses his second but most popularly sold book, *The Bondage Breaker*, to build a deeper understanding to spiritual warfare. He places less emphasis on

²¹⁰Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness*, 217.

²¹¹Ibid., 221.

²¹²“The first goal of discipleship is to help those you disciple become firmly rooted in Christ. . . The second goal of discipleship is to accept God’s goal of sanctification and grow in the likeness of Christ. . . . The third goal of discipleship is to help others function as believers in their homes, on their jobs, and in society.” Ibid., 222-25.

²¹³Ibid., 226.

Christian identity as he did in *Victory Over the Darkness*, instead choosing to focus on a right understanding of the enemy and his tactics. Out of this foundation Anderson encourages action in repentance and belief in order to help the believer realize freedom from the powers of darkness through faith.

Chapter 1: “You Don’t Have to Live in the Shadows.” In this chapter, Anderson explains God’s plans for growth in the lives of Christians, first helping them to understand what life was like before receiving Christ as their Lord and how Satan seeks to attack them now.²¹⁴ He believes it foundational for Christians to understand who they are before working on what to do.²¹⁵

Anderson then confronts some of the common misconceptions about spiritual warfare, first asserting that demonic activity still continues today.²¹⁶ He then counters the notion that the modern understanding of mental illness serves as a replacement of the historical notion of demonic activity.²¹⁷ He further argues against a two-pronged approach of separating the psychological and spiritual.²¹⁸ He proclaims that Christians can be affected by demons and that sometimes the impact is not as extreme as one might

²¹⁴“The father of lies can block your effectiveness as a Christian if he can deceive you into believing that you are nothing but a product of your past—subject to sin, prone to failure, and controlled by your habits.” Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 11.

²¹⁵“Being alive and free in Christ is part of positional sanctification, which is the basis for progressive sanctification. In other words, we are not trying to *become* children of God, we *are* children of God who are becoming like Christ.” Ibid., 12.

²¹⁶“*Misconception: Demons were active when Christ was on earth, but their activity has subsided.* . . . The kingdom of darkness is still present, and the devil still ‘prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour (I Peter 5:8).’ [emphasis original]” Ibid., 19-20.

²¹⁷“*Misconception: What the early church called demonic activity we now understand to be mental illness.* . . . To be effective Christian counselors, we have to learn to distinguish between organic or psychological mental illness and a spiritual battle for the mind.” Ibid., 20-21.

²¹⁸“*Misconception: Some problems are psychological and some are spiritual.* . . . as long as believers accept ‘a two-tier worldview with God confined to the supernatural and the natural world operating for all practical purposes according to autonomous scientific laws, Christianity will continue to be a secularizing force in the world.’” Ibid., 21-22.

think.²¹⁹ Anderson concludes the chapter by explaining that freedom is not found through power encounters, but through a personal encounter with Christ and His truth.²²⁰

Chapter 2: “Finding Your Way in the World.” In this chapter Anderson explains the reality of Satan and his demons, arguing that the spiritual realm must not be ignored.²²¹ He communicates that Satan’s motive is to turn people’s attention away from following God and towards a self-rule and self-interest.²²² Someone’s peace and freedom in life is discovered, Anderson emphasizes, once they deny “the role of being God in our lives.”²²³ Anderson describes the effects of salvation being forgiveness, deliverance, and justification, with victory over self occurring “when we have learned to love God and others.”²²⁴

²¹⁹“*Misconception: Christians cannot be affected by demons . . . If Satan can’t touch the church, why are we instructed to put on the armor of God, to resist the devil, to stand firm, and to be alert? If we aren’t susceptible to being wounded or trapped by Satan, why does Paul describe our relationship to the powers of darkness as a wrestling match? . . . Misconception: Demonic influence is only evident in extreme or violent behavior and gross sin . . . It is not the few raving demoniacs who are causing the church to be ineffective, but Satan’s subtle deception and intrusion into the lives of ‘normal’ believers.*” Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 22-23.

²²⁰“*Misconception: Freedom from spiritual bondage is the result of a power encounter with demonic forces.* Freedom from spiritual conflicts and bondage is not a power encounter; it’s a truth encounter. . . . Power for the believer comes in knowing and choosing the truth. . . . Jesus’ death and resurrection triumphed over and disarmed the rulers and authorities of the kingdom of darkness (Col 2:15). . . . Since you are alive in Christ and seated with Him in the heavenlies, you no longer need an outside agent to effect authority for you. You now reside ‘in Christ,’ who has all authority.” *Ibid.*, 23-27.

²²¹“Most attempts at integrating theology and psychology include only God and humanity (fallen and redeemed) and exclude the activity of Satan and demons. . . . When Paul talks about the spiritual battle in the heavenlies . . . he is referring to the spiritual realm, the kingdom of darkness that is all around us and governed by the ruler of this world.” *Ibid.*, 30-31.

²²²“Satan’s primary aim is to promote self-interest as the chief end of man. Satan is called the prince of this world because self-interest rules this world. . . . The diabolical idea that people are their own gods is the heartbeat of this fallen world and the primary link in the chain of spiritual bondage to the kingdom of darkness.” *Ibid.*, 36-37.

²²³“Until we deny ourselves that which was never meant to be ours—the role of being God in our lives—we will never be at peace with ourselves or with God, and we will never be free.” *Ibid.*, 39.

²²⁴“We are forgiven because He died in our place; we are delivered because we died with Him. We are both justified and positionally sanctified as a result of the cross. . . . We have won a degree of victory over self when we have learned to love God and others.” *Ibid.*, 40-41.

Chapter 3: “You Have Every Right to Be Free.” Anderson expounds on the concept of freedom, holding that Christians must be rooted in their identity as saints and children of God.²²⁵ He reinforces this identity by explaining that eternal life in Christ starts at salvation and that being a saint “doesn’t mean that you are sinless (I Jn 1:8). But since your old self has been crucified and buried with Christ, you no longer *have* to sin (I Jn 2:1).”²²⁶ He explains that Christians have a “responsibility to not let sin reign in your mortal body.”²²⁷

Chapter 4: “You Can Win the Battle for Your Mind.” Anderson believes the spiritual battleground occurs primarily in our mind as “Satan’s perpetual aim is to infiltrate your thoughts with his thoughts and to promote his lie in the face of God’s truth. He knows that if he can control your thoughts, he can control your life.”²²⁸ He articulates that Satan attacks our thoughts so that “these deceptive thoughts come first person singular in such a way that we think they’re our own thoughts.”²²⁹ He reminds his readers that the immaterial nature of demons makes them naturally unseen and

²²⁵“Your attitudes, actions, responses, and reactions to life’s circumstances are greatly affected by what you believe about yourself . . . if you see yourself as a dearly loved and accepted child of God, you will have a better chance of living like one.” Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 46.

²²⁶“Eternal life is not something you get when you physically die; it is something you get the moment you are born again! . . . Being a saint or a child of God doesn’t mean that you are sinless (I Jn 1:8). But since your old self has been crucified and buried with Christ, you no longer *have* to sin (I Jn 2:1). You sin when you choose to believe a lie or act independently of God.” *Ibid.*, 48-49.

²²⁷“Sin is a sovereign master that demands service from its subjects. You are dead to sin, but you still have the capacity to serve it by putting your body at sin’s disposal. It’s up to you to choose whether you’re going to let your body be used for sin or for righteousness. . . . Because of Christ’s victory over sin, you are free to choose not to sin. It is your responsibility not to let sin reign in your mortal body.” *Ibid.*, 52.

²²⁸“Fortresses (or strongholds in the King James Version) are fleshly thought patterns that were programmed into your mind when you learned to live your life independently of God. . . . We can be transformed because we have the mind of Christ within us and because the Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth.” Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 61.

²²⁹“The spiritual battle for our minds does not operate according to the laws of nature, which we can comprehend. There are no physical barriers that can confine or restrict the movements of Satan.” *Ibid.*, 63, 69.

unheard.²³⁰ Anderson reminds Christians that their beliefs will drive their behaviors, so they must be sure to renew their minds with God's truths.²³¹

Chapter 5: “Confronting the Rebel Prince.” The spiritual battle that is ongoing can be intimidating and overwhelming, and Christians must recognize that they “cannot accomplish anything apart from Christ.”²³² Anderson distinguishes authority as “the right to rule” and power as the “ability to rule,” holding that “believers have both the authority to do God’s will because of their position in Christ, and the power to do God’s will as long as they walk by the Spirit.”²³³ He explains that Satan is “a disarmed and defeated foe” but that “if he can deceive you into believing that he has more power and authority than you do, you will live as if he does.”²³⁴ Victorious and free Christian living

²³⁰“Satan and his demons are spiritual beings; they do not have material substance, so we cannot see them or any spiritual being with our natural eyes, nor hear them with our ears.” Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 66.

²³¹“You don’t do anything without first thinking it. All behavior is the product of what we choose to think or believe . . . Trying to change behavior, without changing what we believe and therefore think, will never produce any lasting results. . . . Flesh patterns don’t just leave. They are slowly replaced or overcome as we renew our minds.” Ibid., 69-72.

²³²“We have no spiritual power or authority apart from our identity and position in Christ. *Who we are* must always take precedence over *what we do*: and we cannot accomplish anything apart from Christ.” Ibid., 77.

²³³“In the flesh you don’t have the ability to resist Satan and his demons, but *in Christ you do*. Jesus Christ has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt 28:18); He’s at the top of the chain of command. He has given His authority and power to His servants to be exercised in His name (Lk 10:17); we’re under His authority, but we share it for the purpose of doing His will.” Ibid., 77-79.

²³⁴“Why, then, does the kingdom of darkness exert such negative influence in the world and in the lives of Christians? . . . Satan is not an equal power with God; he is a disarmed and defeated foe (Col 2:15). But if he can deceive you into believing that he has more power and authority than you do, you will live as if he does. You have been given authority over the kingdom of darkness, but if you don’t believe it and exercise it, it’s as if you didn’t have it. . . . Fear of anything (other than the fear of God) is mutually exclusive to faith in God. When Satan tries to incite fear, we are to maintain our position in Christ and exhibit the fruit of the Spirit, which includes self-control (Gal 5:23). . . . As long as we fail to perceive our position in Christ and our authority over the kingdom of darkness and authority to do His will, we will fail to carry out our delegated responsibility. . . . Behind the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ lies the mightiest work of power recorded in the Word of God. And the same power that raised Christ from the dead and defeated Satan is the power available to us as believers.” Ibid., 80-82.

occurs when someone realizes their authority in Christ over the kingdom of darkness and confidently places their trust in His accomplished work.²³⁵

Chapter 6: “Jesus Has You Covered.” Anderson highlights the process of putting on the full armor of God, emphasizing the “belt of truth is our defense against Satan’s primary weapon which is deception.”²³⁶ He connects the confession of sin as clearing “the way for the fruitful expression of righteousness in your daily life.”²³⁷ He continues with the armor analogy from Ephesians 6:10-20 by speaking of being a peacemaker, rooting faith in knowledge of God, and being confident of your eternal victory in salvation.²³⁸ He then advises Christians of the necessity of exercising “your authority in Christ by speaking out loud, since the evil one does not have the power to completely know your thoughts.”²³⁹ He concludes the chapter by accentuating the importance of prayer as “the activity of joining God in His ministry.”²⁴⁰

²³⁵“You are a spiritually alive child of God *right now*. You are seated in the heavenlies with Christ *right now*. . . . You have the power and authority over the kingdom of darkness and to do His will *right now*. . . . If you don’t believe you have Christ’s authority over the kingdom of darkness, you’re not likely to exercise it. . . . In exercising our authority, humility is placing confidence in Christ, the source of our authority, instead of in ourselves. . . . It is the mark of a Spirit-filled Christian to be strong and courageous . . . Spirit-inspired boldness is behind every successful advance in the church. . . . When we boldly and humbly exercise the authority that Christ has conferred upon us over the spiritual realm, we experience the freedom we all have in Christ.” Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 84-88. Some related verses are found in Ephesians 2:6-7, 1 John 4:4, and James 4:7.

²³⁶“When we put on the armor of God, we are putting on the armor of light, which is the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 13:12). When we put on Christ, we take ourselves out of the realm of the flesh, where we are vulnerable to attack.” Ibid., 95-96.

²³⁷Ibid., 98.

²³⁸“The shoes of peace become protection against the divisive schemes of the devil when you act as a peacemaker among believers (Rom 14:19). . . . The object of our faith is God and His Word. The more you know about God and His Word, the more faith you will have. . . . the helmet of salvation guarantees your eternal victory.” Ibid., 98-99.

²³⁹“Should you come under a direct attack from Satan you will need to exercise your authority in Christ by speaking out loud, since the evil one does not have the power to completely know your thoughts. . . . The moment you call upon the name of the Lord, you will be free to resist the devil.” Ibid., 101-2.

²⁴⁰“Prayer is a primary weapon in combating spiritual blindness . . . we need to pray, as Paul did in Ephesians 1:18-19 that the eyes of believers may be enlightened to understand the spiritual power,

Chapter 7: “Manipulating Spirits.” After speaking of Christ’s covering protection of believers, Anderson switches to a more detailed treatment of Satan’s role.²⁴¹ He encourages believers with the reminder that “we belong to God, and Satan can’t touch who we are in Christ.”²⁴² He describes the reality of Satan and his demons and how their efforts are focused on getting “you to listen to the thoughts he plants in your mind” so that he can influence you and stop your progress in your “walk toward Christ.”²⁴³ The Christian’s path towards victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil is by choosing “the truth in the face of every lie.”²⁴⁴

Chapter 8: “The Lure of Knowledge and Power.” Anderson argues in this chapter that the root attraction to the occult is “almost always on the basis of acquitting knowledge and power.”²⁴⁵ He believes that “every cult or occult practice that Moses warned the Israelites to avoid in Canaan . . . is in place and operating in our culture today.”²⁴⁶ These practitioners of the dark side access real power and knowledge that interferes “with the work of God, deceiving many by the counterfeit forces they

authority, and protection which is our inheritance in Christ.” Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 103-4.

²⁴¹“Satan ruled from the fall of Adam until the cross. The death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ secured forever the final authority for Jesus (Matt 28:18). That authority was extended to all believers in the Great Commission so that we may continue His work of destroying the works of the devil (I Jn 3:8). . . . We need protection from this evil tyrant. Christ has not only provided protection, but in Christ we have authority over the kingdom of darkness. We also have the indwelling Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of truth (Jn 14:17), and He will guide us into all truth (Jn 16:13).” Ibid., 112-13.

²⁴²Ibid., 114.

²⁴³“It is clear from the context of Ephesians 6:12 that the rulers, powers, and forces which oppose us are spiritual entities in the heavenlies, that is, the spiritual world. . . . He has absolutely no power or authority to keep you from steadily progressing in your walk toward Christ But if he can get you to listen to the thoughts he plants in your mind, he can influence you. And if you allow him to influence you long enough through temptation, accusation, and deception, he can stop your progress.” Ibid., 115, 120.

²⁴⁴“We overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil by choosing the truth . . . with every arrow of temptation, accusation, or deception they shoot at us, we simply raise the shield of faith, deflect the attack, and walk on. We choose truth in the face of every lie.” Ibid., 121.

²⁴⁵Ibid., 124.

²⁴⁶Ibid., 127.

employ.”²⁴⁷ He warns that although Christians “are secure in Christ and indwelt by His Spirit” they are still “vulnerable to being lured away from the knowledge and power of God by our enemy, who exaggerates our sense of independence and importance apart from God.”²⁴⁸

Chapter 9: “Tempted to Do It Your Way.” Anderson explains that one of the primary temptation avenues is towards self-reliance and self-satisfaction.²⁴⁹ Satan lures and entices particularly through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.²⁵⁰ Anderson explains the birthing of sin as “every temptation is first a thought introduced to your mind by your own carnality or the tempter himself. If you ruminate on that thought and consider it an option, you will eventually act on it, and that’s sin.”²⁵¹ The escape from temptation that God provides is to “learn to respond to tempting thoughts by stopping them at the door of your mind, evaluating them on the

²⁴⁷Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 133.

²⁴⁸“We are secure in Christ and indwelt by His Spirit through faith in the work of Christ on the cross.” Ibid., 131-34.

²⁴⁹“When we were born again we became spiritually alive, but our self-centered flesh patterns and mental strongholds remained opposed to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, we are still tempted to look to the world, the flesh, and the devil to meet our basic needs and carnal desires instead of looking to Christ, who promises to meet all our needs according to His riches in glory (Phil 4:19). . . . The power of temptation is directly related to the strength of the mental strongholds and the carnal desires which were developed when we learned to live independently of God.” Ibid., 136.

²⁵⁰“His [Satan’s] tactic is to entice us to push something good beyond the boundary of the will of God until it becomes sin. . . . Temptation is greatest when hunger, fatigue, and loneliness are acute . . . If you give in to the temptation to meet your own physical needs or carnal desires independent of God, you are yielding to the lust of the flesh. . . . The lust of the eyes subtly draws us away from the Word of God and eats away at our confidence in God. We see what the world has to offer and desire it above our relationship with God. . . . By appealing to the pride of life, Satan intends to steer us away from the worship of God and destroy our obedience to God.” Ibid., 137-44. Corresponding verse is 1 John 2:16.

²⁵¹Ibid., 148.

basis of God’s Word, and dismissing those which fail the test.”²⁵² He concludes the chapter by teaching that genuine repentance “means a change of mind and way of life.”²⁵³

Chapter 10: “Accused by the Father of Lies.” Anderson warns of the danger of “listening to and believing” Satan’s accusative lies.²⁵⁴ Believers in Christ must be reminded that Satan’s accusations cannot “stick because Jesus Christ has justified us and lives to intercede for us (Rom 8:33-4).”²⁵⁵ Jesus’ work “has removed our filthy garments of unrighteousness and clothed us with His righteousness.”²⁵⁶ Anderson remarks that “when your feelings of remorse pound you into the ground and drive you from God, you are being accused by Satan” and should resist.²⁵⁷ The opposite of remorse is conviction from the Spirit that produces a sorrow that “draws you to confront Christ and confess your wrong” in repentance.²⁵⁸

Chapter 11: “The Danger of Deception.” Anderson points to the dangers of deceiving ourselves in denying our sin or failing to obey God’s Word.²⁵⁹ He reinforces truths to counter deception such as “never take credit for what God has provided” and to

²⁵²Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 149.

²⁵³“Submitting to God involves more than confession. It requires genuine repentance which means a change of mind and way of life.” Ibid., 150.

²⁵⁴“Satan can do absolutely nothing to alter our position in Christ and our worth to God. But he can render us virtually inoperative if he can deceive us into listening to and believing his insidious lies accusing us of being of little value to God or other people.” Ibid., 151.

²⁵⁵“Satan is not your judge; he is merely your accuser. Yet if you listen to him and believe him, you will begin to live out these accusations as if they were a sentence you must serve.” Ibid., 153-54.

²⁵⁶“Notice that the change of wardrobe is something that God does, not we ourselves-- he must change us in response to our submission to Him in faith.” Ibid., 154-55.

²⁵⁷Ibid., 158.

²⁵⁸Ibid.

²⁵⁹“We deceive ourselves when we hear the Word but don’t do it (James 1:22; I Pet 1:13) We deceive ourselves when we say we have no sin (I Jn 1:8). . . . When we become aware of a discrepancy between our identity in Christ and our behavior, we must confess it and deal with it.” Ibid., 167-68.

“not lean on our own understanding.”²⁶⁰ He continues to illustrate areas of self-deception such as a hypocritical self-perception of righteousness and lack of personal responsibility for our actions and associations.²⁶¹ Anderson concludes the chapter with exhortations of how to avoid and identify Satan’s deceptive teachings and teachers.²⁶²

Chapter 12: “The Danger of Losing Control.” Anderson then shifts from the danger of deception to the danger of “yielding control of your life in any way” that allows Satan to “impede your growth and destroy your witness for Christ.”²⁶³ Anger, bitterness, and unforgiveness are areas of “open invitation to demonic control (II Cor 2:10-11).”²⁶⁴ Anderson also references First Peter 5:6-9 as a warning to avoid pride and anxiety, two areas which may yield control and “make ourselves easy prey for Satan.”²⁶⁵ He again encourages “choosing truth, living a righteous life, and donning the armor of God” as essential individual responsibilities of the believer.²⁶⁶

²⁶⁰“The life you live, the talents you possess, and the gifts you have received are not personal accomplishments; they are expressions of God’s grace. Never take credit for what God has provided. . . . It is important for us not to lean on our own understanding, but to employ the mind of Christ and acknowledge Him in all our ways (Prov 3:5-6; I Cor 2:16).” Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 169.

²⁶¹“We deceive ourselves when we think we are religious but do not bridle our tongue (James 1:26). . . . We deceive ourselves when we think the unrighteous will inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor 6:9-10). . . . We deceive ourselves when we think we can continually associate with bad company and not be corrupted (I Cor 15:33).” Ibid., 170-71.

²⁶²“We are to love God, obey His Word, and test all signs, wonders, and dreams. . . . Two ways to identify false prophets and false teachers who operate within the church: they will eventually reveal their immorality. . . and despise authority and are daring, self-willed. They have an independent spirit. . . . You cannot expose Satan’s deception by human reasoning; you can only do it by God’s Spirit and divine revelation. Jesus said, ‘If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free’ (Jn 8:31-2).” Ibid., 175-76, 181.

²⁶³“Satan knows he can never own you. . . . Since we live in a world whose god is Satan, the possibility of being tempted, deceived, and accused is continuously present. If you allow his schemes to influence you, you can lose control to the degree that you have been deceived.” Ibid., 185, 187.

²⁶⁴Ibid., 190.

²⁶⁵Ibid., 191.

²⁶⁶“If we fail to cover ourselves with the armor God has provided, we are vulnerable in those exposed areas.” Ibid., 193.

Chapter 13: “Steps to Freedom in Christ.” This chapter is not only included in *The Bondage Breaker* but also as a separate workbook as *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* and verbatim in many of Anderson’s other books.²⁶⁷ It is an essential and foundational component of Anderson’s teaching. These steps are focused on seven areas: counterfeit versus real, deception versus truth, bitterness versus forgiveness, rebellion versus submission, pride versus humility, bondage versus freedom, and curses versus blessing.²⁶⁸ He encourages the reader to understand that these Steps do not affect your “eternal destiny” but do impact your “daily victory.”²⁶⁹ Each Step includes an emphasis on renouncing (verbally rejecting) Satan and praying aloud because “Satan is under no obligation to obey your thoughts.”²⁷⁰ He summarizes the steps as “just a comprehensive process of submitting to God and resisting the devil (James 4:7).”²⁷¹ He believes that many believers can “process them [*The Steps to Freedom in Christ*] on your own because Jesus is the Wonderful Counselor” but that some may need to request the help of a pastor, counselor, or a trained lay person.²⁷² He concludes the chapter with guidance on how to “maintain your freedom,” pray situation-specific prayers, understand your identity in Christ, and how to seek out forgiveness.²⁷³ Anderson uses other books such as *Restored* to expand and illustrate the Steps and provide “inquirers an opportunity to reinforce the

²⁶⁷Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 199; Neil T. Anderson, *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* (Ventura, CA: Gospel Light, 2004). *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* can also be found within the following titles: *Purity under Pressure*, *The Christ Centered Marriage*, *Winning the Battle Within*, *Freedom from Addiction*, *Getting Anger under Control*, *Spiritual Protection for Your Children*, *Freedom from Fear*, *Rivers of Revival*, *Living Free in Christ*, *Christ Centered Therapy*, *The Freedom in Christ Discipleship Course*, *The Grace Course* as well as in expanded and abridged forms in other works.

²⁶⁸Ibid., 199-252.

²⁶⁹Ibid., 199.

²⁷⁰Ibid.

²⁷¹Ibid., 200.

²⁷²Ibid., 199-200.

²⁷³Ibid., 242-52.

decisions they have made.”²⁷⁴ He explains that *Discipleship Counseling* serves as a tool for instructing encouragers how to guide someone “through the process and help them to maintain their objectivity.”²⁷⁵ Anderson always encourages those who have completed *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* to use a 21-day devotional, *Walking in Freedom*, as a tool for maintaining their freedom.²⁷⁶

Chapter 14: “Helping Others Find Freedom in Christ.” Anderson’s hope in ministry is for the message of his works to expand beyond the self-application of the truth encounter into Christians intentional investing themselves into the lives of others.²⁷⁷ He emphasizes how he derives his “methodology for dealing with the kingdom of darkness primarily from the Epistles rather than the Gospels and the book of Acts” because “our approach to evangelism changed after Pentecost and so has our approach to resolving spiritual conflicts.”²⁷⁸ He argues that the absence of “instructions in the Epistles to cast out demons” places “responsibility for living free in Christ” on the individual believer.²⁷⁹ He reinforces the truth encounter as the primary way of dealing with the demonic with the “primary requisites for helping others find freedom are godly character and the ability to teach.”²⁸⁰ Anderson focuses on the importance of identifying

²⁷⁴Anderson, *Winning the Battle Within* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2008), 212.

²⁷⁵Ibid.

²⁷⁶“Every third day they repeat one of the steps. This helps reinforce what they have done.” Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 269.

²⁷⁷“Helping others find their freedom in Christ does not require the exercise of a special gift; it requires the loving application of truth.” Ibid., 253.

²⁷⁸Ibid., 255-56.

²⁷⁹“Because there are no instructions in the Epistles to cast out demons does not mean that Christians cannot have spiritual problems. It means that the responsibility for living free in Christ has shifted from the specially endowed agent of authority to the individual believer. . . . Freedom for believers is based on what Christ has already done and on how they individually respond to Him in repentance and faith.” Ibid., 256.

²⁸⁰“Dealing with the demonic should be seen as a truth encounter rather than a power encounter. . . . Satan’s scare tactics are intended to provoke a response of fear. When fear is controlling a

false beliefs and replacing them with God’s truths.²⁸¹ He holds that his books and *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* are only tools and do not set a person free, that “what sets you free is your response to Christ in repentance and faith.”²⁸² Anderson concludes with encouragement and specific instructions on how to go about seeking forgiveness and restoration.²⁸³

Summary. Understanding Anderson’s *The Bondage Breaker* is essential to critiquing and analyzing his understanding of spiritual warfare. It is his best-selling work and the claims he makes within its pages are repeated and foundational to his other writings and ministry. Later in the book, the claims that emerge from this work will be evaluated to better consider his practices for discipleship and evangelism as well as his spiritual warfare claims and approach.

Discipleship Counseling (2003)

Anderson wrote *Discipleship Counseling: The Complete Guide to Helping Others Walk in Freedom and Grow in Christ* in 2003 and sees it as his most lasting and significant writing. His thesis is that the primary battleground between Satan’s lies and

believer, the Spirit of God is not, and Satan has the upper hand. Fear of the enemy and faith in God are mutually exclusive. . . . The truth encounter requires . . . that you be compassionate, nonjudgmental, and understanding.” Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 258-60.

²⁸¹“People are not in bondage because of past traumas—they are in bondage to the lies they believed as a result of past traumas. . . . You are not trying to resolve anything by hearing personal and family histories. The purpose is to understand what happened to them and what may have caused them to have certain beliefs. . . . People in conflict also very commonly have false beliefs about themselves. Most don’t know who they are in Christ, nor do they understand what it means to be a child of God. Consequently, they question their salvation. . . . People in conflict often have a distorted concept of the two kingdoms. They think they are caught between two equal but opposite powers: ‘bad old Satan’ on one side, ‘good old God’ on the other, and ‘poor me’ caught in the middle. The truth is, God is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient. Satan is a defeated foe—and we are in Christ, seated with Him in the heavenlies.” Ibid., 259-64.

²⁸²Ibid., 267.

²⁸³“If we can’t help a person forgive from the heart, we can’t help that person be free from the past. . . . Forgiving of others is primarily an issue between them and their heavenly Father. Reconciliation with the people they have forgiven may or may not follow.” Ibid., 268.

God's truth is in our minds, so discipleship is the process of biblically understanding and applying our identity in Christ.²⁸⁴ He writes that "the ministries of counseling and discipling are the same in the Bible, although too often they have become separate and unrelated disciplines in the Christian community."²⁸⁵ It is a work that is especially helpful for biblical counselors and pastors encountering spiritual warfare issues, but is also a great introduction and foundation for all ministers and Christians who have yet to be exposed to spiritual warfare encounters.

Discipleship Counseling begins with a Christian perspective on mental health before presenting the process of discipleship counseling. The roles of encourager (counselor) and inquirer (counselee) are described while emphasizing God's ultimate role as the Wonderful Counselor (Isa 9:6). Anderson believes that "having the right message and method is not enough. You have to have the right people who are dependent on God."²⁸⁶ He describes discipleship counseling as "an attempt to meet people where they are and help them resolve their personal and spiritual conflicts so that can be established alive and free in Christ."²⁸⁷

Anderson continues by explaining both the theological basis for discipleship counseling as well as the practical aspects, highlighting the use of *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*. He communicates some of his foundational principles as with an emphasis on Scripture as "the only reliable source for faith and practice (see 2 Timothy 3:16-17)."²⁸⁸ He focuses on the "finished work of Christ" as well as the "present ministry of the Holy Spirit."²⁸⁹ He believes faith to be the essence not only of salvation but of sanctification

²⁸⁴Anderson, *Discipleship Counseling*, 13-14, 25.

²⁸⁵Ibid., 13-14.

²⁸⁶Ibid., 12.

²⁸⁷Ibid., 14.

²⁸⁸Ibid., 16.

²⁸⁹"I believe that the message and method of discipleship counseling must be based on the

and that the Christian community is the best forum for spiritual growth.²⁹⁰ Like most of Anderson's other works, it is scripturally saturated: it is difficult to open the book and find a section without a direct biblical reference.

Anderson counters what he believes to be a typical over-reliance on psychology and psychiatry and emphasizes the biblical process of discipleship. He writes that "this battle between the father of lies and the Spirit of truth is fought primarily in the minds of all humanity."²⁹¹ He holds to the importance of understanding that "there is no time when our minds, emotions, wills, personalities and relationships are not contributing factors. Likewise, our present condition always has some spiritual basis."²⁹² Despite the seemingly complex reality of ministering to the whole person, he presents a simple solution. He argues that "there are a million ways into sin, but the way out is always the same. . . . Repentance and faith in God has always been the answer, so that means we have to take personal responsibility for our own attitudes and actions."²⁹³

Anderson clearly communicates that his *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* is a useful tool, full of insights to both counselors and pastors. He explains the process of discipleship as sanctification:

We are positionally sanctified by faith the moment we are born again because of what Christ has already done for us. We are progressively sanctified by faith when we are transformed by the renewing of our minds, which requires repentance and faith.²⁹⁴

finished work of Christ (see Colossians 1:27-2:10). . . . I rely totally on the present ministry of the Holy Spirit (John 16:7-15)." Anderson, *Discipleship Counseling*, 16.

²⁹⁰"We are limited by the faith of the counselees. We are not only saved by faith, we are sanctified by faith (see Galatians 3:1-5). . . . We all need the support of the Christian community and we all need to renew our faith and walk with God (see Hebrews 10:17-25)." Ibid.

²⁹¹Ibid., 25.

²⁹²Ibid., 58.

²⁹³Ibid., 61-62.

²⁹⁴Ibid., 338.

To those who are intimidated by, skeptical of, or just uninformed about the demonic, Anderson reassures them that “whether the demonic part is 0 percent, 5 percent, 10 percent or 50 percent does not make any difference.” He believes that “the critical part is submitting to God. Resisting the devil is simple if there are no unresolved issues between us and our heavenly Father.”²⁹⁵ Anderson explains that discipleship counseling can lead people towards freedom in Christ, but in order to remain free, people need to know

(1) who they are in Christ; (2) the authority and protection of the believer; (3) the nature of the battle that is going on for their minds; and (4) how to walk by faith by the power of the Holy Spirit according to what God said is true.²⁹⁶

Discipleship Counseling is an excellent survey of Anderson’s understanding of discipleship and spiritual warfare. It might be a little overwhelming or over-informative for the average pastor or layman. For someone who has not experienced overt spiritual warfare, or is cessationist in their understanding of the demonic, they may disregard Anderson’s approach and bemoan his heavy use of experience.

Issue Focused Works

The quantity and scope of Anderson’s works are vast with over sixty authored or coauthored books in print, totaling over five million books sold.²⁹⁷ It is helpful to see these works categorized and presented by their approach, audience, and focus. Many of these works are referenced at later points in the book, but for now it is helpful to simply see their existence and focus as a group.

²⁹⁵Anderson, *Discipleship Counseling*, 148.

²⁹⁶Ibid., 167.

²⁹⁷Anderson, *Rough Road*, back cover; Neil T. Anderson, *The Core of Christianity* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2011), back cover.

Doctrinal and academic focus. Anderson's *Rough Road to Freedom* is a memoir, but is also a concise summary of many of Anderson's teachings.²⁹⁸ *The Core of Christianity* focuses on summarizing major obstacles and steps in understanding the doctrine of union with Christ.²⁹⁹ *The Beginner's Guide to Spiritual Warfare*, co-written with Timothy Warner, serves as a brief overview of the topic of spiritual warfare as a synopsis of Anderson's spiritual warfare understanding.³⁰⁰ *God's Power at Work in You* is a summary of Christian identity and sanctification, while *The Daily Discipler* serves as Anderson's systematic theology.³⁰¹ In a more academic and medical stream, Anderson pens *The Biblical Guide to Alternative Medicine* and *Christ Centered Therapy: The Practical Implications of Theology and Psychology*.³⁰² These doctrinal and more academic works provide helpful overviews and greater depth to pinpoint and understand Anderson's concept of spiritual warfare.

Extensions of *The Bondage Breaker* and *Victory Over Darkness*. *Breaking Through to Spiritual Maturity* is a compilation of portions of *The Bondage Breaker* and *Victory over the Darkness*.³⁰³ Some examples of small groups workbooks are also found in *The Bondage Breaker: The Next Step*, *Beta: The Next Step in Your Journey with Christ*, *The Bondage Breaker: Study Guide*, and *The Freedom in Christ Discipleship*

²⁹⁸Anderson, *Rough Road*, back cover.

²⁹⁹Anderson, *The Core of Christianity*, back cover.

³⁰⁰Neil T. Anderson and Timothy M. Warner, *The Beginner's Guide to Spiritual Warfare* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2000).

³⁰¹Neil T. Anderson and Robert L. Saucy, *God's Power at Work in You* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001); Anderson, *The Daily Discipler*.

³⁰²Neil T. Anderson and Michael Jacobson, *The Biblical Guide to Alternative Medicine* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2003); Neil T. Anderson, Terry Zuehlke, and Julianne Zuehlke, *Christ Centered Therapy: The Practical Implication of Theology and Psychology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000).

³⁰³Neil T. Anderson, *Breaking Through to Spiritual Maturity* (Eugene, OR: Regal Books, 2000).

*Course: Discipleship-Group Workbook: A 13 Week Course for Every Christian.*³⁰⁴ *Liberating Prayer: Finding Freedom by Connecting with God* serves as instructive guidance towards growing beyond the prescribed prayer examples in *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* towards a more regular conversation with God.³⁰⁵ Final extensions of Anderson's first works exist in *Living Free in Christ* and *Restored: Experience Life with Jesus* as a more detailed overview of Christian identity and walking through *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*.³⁰⁶

Issue-based extensions of *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*. The numerical majority of Anderson's writings are issue based. Some address multiple issues in a broader format such as *Released from Bondage, Set Free: Overcoming Emotional, Sexual, Mental, and Spiritual Captivity, Walking in the Light, Walking through the Darkness, Finding God's Will in Spiritually Deceptive Times*, and *Walking in Freedom*.³⁰⁷ Anderson also has many works that are specifically targeted towards a cluster of issues such as *Overcoming Doubt, A Way of Escape: Freedom from Sexual Strongholds, Winning the Battle Within, Breaking the Strongholds of Legalism, Finding Hope Again: Overcoming Depression, Overcoming Depression, Know Light, No Fear:*

³⁰⁴Neil T. Anderson, *Beta: The Next Step in Your Journey with Christ* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2007); Neil T. Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker: The Next Step* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2010); Neil T. Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker: Study Guide* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2006); Neil T. Anderson and Steve Goss, *The Freedom in Christ Discipleship Course: Discipleship-Group Workbook: A 13 Week Course for Every Christian* (Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, 2004).

³⁰⁵Neil T. Anderson, *Liberating Prayer: Finding Freedom by Connecting with God* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2012).

³⁰⁶Neil T. Anderson, *Living Free In Christ* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1993); Neil T. Anderson, *Restored: Experience Life with Jesus* (Franklin, TN: E3 Resources, 2007).

³⁰⁷Neil T. Anderson, *Released from Bondage* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1992); Neil T. Anderson, *Set Free: Overcoming Emotional, Sexual, Mental and Spiritual Captivity* (Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, 1998); Neil T. Anderson, *Walking in the Light* (San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life Publishers, 1991); Neil T. Anderson, *Walking through the Darkness: Discerning Gods Guidance in the New Age* (San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life, 1991); Neil T. Anderson, *Finding God's Will in Spiritually Deceptive Times* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2003); Neil T. Anderson, *Walking in Freedom* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2008).

*Understanding Your Faith and God's Will for Your Life, Freedom from Fear, and Getting Anger under Control.*³⁰⁸ Anderson also wrote several works specific to issues of addiction: *Overcoming Addictive Behavior, Freedom from Addiction, and Released from Bondage.*³⁰⁹

Corporate and discipleship focus. Anderson wrote several books targeted towards relationships in marriage, in discipleship, and through their church. For marriage, he penned *The Christ Centered Marriage* and *Experiencing Christ Together: Finding Freedom and Fulfillment in Marriage.*³¹⁰ Anderson focused on the specifics of personal disciple making relationships through *The Path to Reconciliation: Connecting People to God and to Each Other, Helping Others Find Freedom in Christ, and Rivers of Revival.*³¹¹ He continued his emphasis on the importance of the local church by writing *Extreme Church Makeover* which was previously published as *Setting Your Church Free* in 1994.³¹²

³⁰⁸Neil T. Anderson, *Overcoming Doubt* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2004); Neil T. Anderson, *A Way of Escape: Freedom from Sexual Strongholds* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1998); Anderson, *Winning the Battle Within*; Neil T. Anderson, Rich Miller, and Paul Travis, *Breaking the Strongholds of Legalism* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2003); Neil T. Anderson and Hal Baumchen, *Finding Hope Again: Overcoming Depression* (Ventura, CA: Gospel Light, 1999); Neil T. Anderson and Joanne Anderson, *Overcoming Depression* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2004); Neil T. Anderson and Rich Miller, *Know Light, No Fear: Understanding Your Faith and God's Will for Your Life* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1996); Neil T. Anderson and Rich Miller, *Freedom from Fear* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1999); Neil T. Anderson, *Getting Anger under Control* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1999).

³⁰⁹Neil T. Anderson and Mike Quarles, *Overcoming Addictive Behavior* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2003); Neil T. Anderson, Mike Quarles, and Julia Quarles, *Freedom from Addiction* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1996); Neil T. Anderson, Judith King, and Fernando Garzon, *Released From Bondage*. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002).

³¹⁰Anderson, *The Christ Centered Marriage*; Neil T. Anderson and Charles Mylander, *Experiencing Christ Together: Finding Freedom and Fulfillment in Marriage* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2006). Previously published as *The Christ Centered Marriage: Discovering and Enjoying Your Freedom In Christ Together*, 1996.

³¹¹Neil T. Anderson, *The Path to Reconciliation: Connecting People to God and to Each Other* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2008). Portions previously published with Charles Mylander as *Blessed Are the Peacemakers*, 2002; Neil T. Anderson, *Helping Others Find Freedom in Christ* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1995); Neil T. Anderson and Elmer Towns, *Rivers of Revival* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1997).

³¹²Neil T. Anderson, *Extreme Church Makeover* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2006).

Children and teenager focus. Anderson's heart for discipleship extends into the realm of helping parents make disciples of their children. Considering younger children, he wrote *What God Says about Me: Helping Kids Discover That They Are Accepted Safe and Important in Jesus Christ*, *Spiritual Protection for Your Children*, and *The Seduction of Our Children*.³¹³ Almost as numerous as his issue-focused books are his easy to read teenage-focused works: *Awesome God*, *The Bondage Breaker: Youth Edition*, *Sold Out for God*, *Stomping Out the Darkness* (Youth version of *Victory Over the Darkness*), *Ultimate Love*, *Busting Free*, *Extreme Faith*, *Higher Ground*, *Overcoming Negative Self Image*, *Purity under Pressure*, and *Real Life*.³¹⁴

Devotional focus. Out of a love of Scripture and a desire to emphasize a daily devotional walk with Christ, Anderson wrote several books with a devotional focus. Emphasizing the importance of the Word, Anderson integrated his teachings into a sort of study Bible in the *Freedom in Christ Bible*.³¹⁵ He emphasized Christian identity through *Who I Am in Christ* and overcoming addictions through *One Day at a Time*.³¹⁶ Finally,

³¹³Neil T. Anderson, *What God Says about Me: Helping Kids Discover That They Are Accepted Safe and Important in Jesus Christ* (Ventura, CA: Gospel Light, 1998); Neil T. Anderson, Sue Vanderhook, and Peter Vanderhook, *Spiritual Protection for Your Children: Helping Your Children and Family Find their Identity, Freedom and Security in Christ* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1999); Neil T. Anderson and Steve Russo, *The Seduction of Our Children* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1991).

³¹⁴Neil T. Anderson and Rich Miller, *Awesome God: Getting to Know Him* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1996); Neil T. Anderson and Dave Park, *The Bondage Breaker: Youth Edition* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2006); Neil T. Anderson, Robert L. Saucy, and Dave Park, *Sold Out for God: Becoming More Like Jesus* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2001). Previously published as *Radical Image!*; Neil T. Anderson and Dave Park, *Stomping Out the Darkness* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1993); Neil T. Anderson, *Ultimate Love: The Real Thing* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1995); Neil T. Anderson and Dave Park, *Busting Free: Helping Youth Discover Their True Identity in Christ* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2010); Neil T. Anderson and Dave Park, *Extreme Faith* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1996); Neil T. Anderson, Dave Park, and Robert L. Saucy, *Higher Ground: Taking Faith to the Edge!* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1999); Neil T. Anderson and Dave Park, *Overcoming Negative Self Image* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2003); Neil T. Anderson, *Purity under Pressure* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1995); Neil T. Anderson and Dave Park, *Real Life: You Want It-Go for It!* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2000).

³¹⁵Neil T. Anderson, *Freedom in Christ Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002).

³¹⁶Neil T. Anderson, *Who I Am in Christ: A Devotional* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2001). Previously Published as *Living Free in Christ*, 1993; Neil T. Anderson, Mike Quarles, and Julia Quarles,

Anderson wrote an overarching daily devotion with his wife called *Daily in Christ* whose impact is now multiplied as a daily email devotional through Crosswalk.³¹⁷

Summary of Writings

The quantity and spectrum of Anderson's writings is profound, impacting millions of people across the world. His published writings encapsulate and communicate his understanding of spiritual warfare. While all of his writings are informative and helpful, there is much overlapping material between his works. For the purposes of this book, more focused attention is given to *Rough Road to Freedom: A Memoir*, *The Bondage Breaker*, *Victory Over Darkness*, *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*, *Discipleship Counseling*, and *The Daily Discipler*. These writings help consolidate his theology, practice of ministry, and are the foundation of his other works.

Self-Evaluation

Anderson's self-perception and self-evaluation are helpful for establishing a base of understanding of his ministry and legacy. He responds below to specific questions concerning his ministry impact, reflection on his writings, assessment of future needs, literature and authors who impacted him, and spiritual warfare readings he would recommend.

Impact

Anderson does not see himself as having "a spiritual warfare ministry." He believes that his "lasting contribution to the church, is not going to be 'deliverance stuff,' it is to provide a means to deal with that stuff without losing control."³¹⁸ His writings not

One Day at a Time (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2000).

³¹⁷Neil T. Anderson and Joanne Anderson, *Daily in Christ* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2000). Also available online through <http://www.crosswalk.com/devotionals/dailyinchrist/>.

³¹⁸Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

only describe the biblical truths for Christian growth, but also provide suggested steps and methodologies for believers to apply in their own lives.

When asked about his most significant book, Anderson surprisingly does not respond with either of his million-plus printed publications. Instead, Anderson states that *Discipleship Counseling* is his “biggest contribution to the Church, because it has the potential to move the church away from secular counseling to genuine repentance and the ministry of reconciliation.”³¹⁹

Concerning his most published book, *The Bondage Breaker*, Anderson states that although he has no records to prove it, it is “probably the most popular book on spiritual warfare ever written, with over 1.3 million copies printed in over forty languages.” The Evangelical Christian Publishers Association shows that *The Bondage Breaker* and *Victory over the Darkness* are the two most-published spiritual warfare books in the last decade that received awards through their association.³²⁰

Geographically speaking, Anderson observes that his ministry and writings have been “much more well received overseas” because he does not “have to convince people in Latin America that there is a spiritual world.”³²¹

Reflection on His Writings

Anderson reflects on the re-writing of his books, *Victory Over the Darkness*, *The Bondage Breaker*, *Setting Your Church Free* (now *Extreme Church Makeover*, and *Setting Your Marriage Free* (now *Experiencing Christ Together*), saying that “the

³¹⁹Ibid.

³²⁰The Christian Book Expo, accessed December 9, 2011, <http://christianbookexpo.com/salesawards/gpd-past-winners.php>.

³²¹Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

message has changed very little, but I have learned to share it better so as not to be misunderstood.”³²²

In his acknowledgements on the second edition of *The Bondage Breaker*, Anderson thanks Robert Saucy, for helping “crystalize my thinking on sanctification” and for helping remain accountable for the “credibility of the message and the integrity of the ministry.” He further remarks of his thanks to theologians Bruce Ware, Millard Erickson, and Bruce Demarest for offering “important suggestions to refine the message of freedom in Christ.”³²³

When asked whether he would retract something from one of his books, Anderson shared that he already removed “a true story of seeing writing on a mirror and what seemed like a bite mark on my hand.” He states that “if the critics had read further they would have had their objections clarified, but it was my fault for not clarifying it better at the time.”³²⁴

Most of Anderson’s works are practically driven and not theologically focused. Anderson proclaims,

I am not a theologian and I have no desire to be one. I am a pastor who wants to see the flock properly shepherded. So I have devoted my life to equipping the church so they can establish their people alive and free in Christ through genuine repentance and faith in God. I have written a practical systematic theology that I believe is holistic entitled *The Daily Discipler*.³²⁵

Anderson’s writings have had great impact over the past twenty years. His writing concluded with the recent publication of *The Core of Christianity* in 2010, *The Bondage Breaker: The Next Step* in 2011, *Liberating Prayer: Finding Freedom by*

³²²Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011. This author contends in chaps. 4 through 6 that the message has changed more than this quote suggests.

³²³Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 4.

³²⁴Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

³²⁵Ibid.

Connecting with God in 2012, and his final work *Rough Road to Freedom: A Memoir* also in 2012.

Future Work on Repentance Needed

Anderson comments on his own ministry by saying “in many ways I am a pioneer on the subject in pastoral care.” He explains his desire to develop a counseling model that was balanced and holistic, while remaining non-confrontational (concerning demonic manifestations) since “virtually no counselors are going to deal with spiritual issues if there is going to be an ugly confrontation.”³²⁶ Anderson observes that the “most practiced form of religion in the world” is Animism and Spiritism. As conversion occurs, new believers must enter into the church with “some form of repentance” and renouncing of Satan and his ways. Without such repentance, Anderson holds that believers will have unfruitful lives characterized by bondage to sin. He sees this message of repentance biblically described as necessary in both salvation and sanctification.³²⁷

Although he finds that many of his writings have met these goals, he believes that there is still a need for laying out “a comprehensive means by which one can repent.” Anderson’s interest in a repentance model shows up in *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* but is something that he sees occurring in the early church. He longs for additional research and writings that look into how Christians can do repentance “today in a better way.”³²⁸

Influences and Recommendations

³²⁶Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

³²⁷Ibid.

³²⁸Ibid.

The Scriptures. Anderson unashamedly proclaims, “I love the Gospels.” All of Anderson’s writings are saturated with Scripture references that leave no room in doubting the significant and authoritative weight he places on the Bible.

Anderson states that there is a “huge learning curve” that occurs in Acts that is significant to understanding discipleship and a balanced perspective on spiritual warfare. He argues that “people who do not understand the book of Acts as a transition book will end up digging up hankies from Paul’s grave hoping people will be healed and stuff like that.” Much of his theology is based upon the fact that he does not believe “the world has changed much” since Pentecost. God’s Word reveals that our enemy is not merely our own flesh and the world, but our enemy is primarily Satan, “the one who runs the world: it is the puppet master.”³²⁹

Writings that have influenced Anderson. Apart from the Scripture, Anderson maintains that *The Training of the Twelve* by A. B. Bruce had the greatest impact on his life, stating, “it is all gospel.” He also emphasizes the importance of reading and understanding the church fathers, as “the same counterfeits” and “the same problems” occur within the church today. *The Authority of the Believer* by John A. MacMillan is an additional work that Anderson points to when describing books of significant influence on his life and ministry.³³⁰ Anderson also points *Praying by the Spirit* by R. A. Torrey as a book that guided and shaped his understanding and practice of prayer.³³¹

³²⁹Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

³³⁰Ibid.

³³¹Anderson, *Rough Road*, 58. Anderson communicates his understanding of prayer in *Liberating Prayer*.

Recommended Reading on Spiritual Warfare

Anderson believes a relatively unknown work, *Filipino Spirit World: A Challenge to the Church* by Rodney Henry, provides helpful insights into the spiritism, animism, and folk religion practiced around the world. This resource he states is particularly helpful for an American missionary with a Western mentality.³³² He describes how he has recently read *Spiritual Secrets of a Trappist Monk: The Truth of Who You Are and What God Calls You to Be* by Father M. Raymond and how he discovered it to summarize his “whole message” and as being “refreshing.”³³³

Anderson highlights three main authors in gaining a biblical understanding of spiritual warfare: Clinton Arnold, Scott Moreau, and Wayne Grudem. He comments that Grudem “is a very godly theologian who understands the spiritual world.”³³⁴ He particularly references Clinton E. Arnold’s *Power and Magic: The Concept of Power in Ephesians, Three Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare, The Colossian Syncretism: The Interface between Christianity and Folk Belief*, and *Powers of Darkness, Principalities, and Powers in Paul’s Letters*. He speaks highly of Arnold, saying that for anyone researching spiritual warfare, he is the “one author you should not overlook.”³³⁵

Ministry Challenges

Anderson encountered many challenges during his ministry that are helpful to consider for a better contextual understanding in evaluating his writings and ministry legacy. One of the results of these experiences was that he became more ecumenical in his identity, saying “I have gotten beyond denominations, and sense no obligation to

³³²Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

³³³Ibid.

³³⁴Ibid.

³³⁵Ibid.

defend any systematic theology.”³³⁶ Through his experiences he learned and grew, desiring to share cautions and encouragement with others called to Christian ministry.

Cautions

Anderson encountered what he considered direct spiritual attacks on himself and his family. He believes that Satan will attempt to “divide your mind” and to “divide your marriage and family.” Anderson describes a very dark period of his ministry when his “daughter was raped, and for fifteen months I was not sure whether my wife would live or die and we lost everything we owned. It took dogged determination to endure those times.”³³⁷ His awareness of the enemy’s attacks have allowed him and his family to “stay single minded and united” while becoming “much stronger individually” and remaining “united in the Lord.” Anderson’s challenges were not only personal in nature, but he also observed how Satan’s seeks to divide the body of Christ by turning believers onto one another.³³⁸

Personal Challenges

Anderson mentions to anyone who is considering entering into spiritual warfare ministry that they are “going to have the gookiest things happen.” He states, “every time you go out to start bearing fruit, there is going to be opposition.” Early in Anderson’s ministry, he discovered this phenomenon firsthand for four years (1990-1994) when he would wake up “terrorized at 3:00 a.m.” each night before he started a conference. Anderson also commonly experienced mental distractions when leading

³³⁶Anderson, *Rough Road*, 12-13; Neil T. Anderson, “The Origin, Theology and Rationale of The Steps to Freedom in Christ,” Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed March 5, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>.

³³⁷Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

³³⁸Ibid.

groups in *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* such as a recurring thought of someone in the audience having a gun pointed at him.³³⁹

Experiential Challenges

Anderson warns against the many authors who advocate power encounters in spiritual warfare. He points out the tendency of one to “go overboard, like the school of missions did at Fuller with Peter Wagner and Chuck Kraft.”³⁴⁰ He describes Kraft’s implementation of seven classes on spiritual warfare in Fuller’s missions program as “crazy” and “obsessive” with an unhealthy interest in trying to “figure out demons.” Anderson describes how Kraft “made some students manifest in class,” responding that such activity “is almost abusive” and is “glorifying Satan.” Anderson summarizes, “Chuck Kraft, in my estimation, went overboard with it. He makes me uneasy.”³⁴¹

Ministry Challenges

When asked, “What are some of the biggest challenges you’ve faced during your spiritual warfare ministry?” Anderson replies,

First, I don’t have a spiritual warfare ministry. I have a ministry of reconciliation that includes the reality of the spiritual world. The biggest challenge was fighting stereotypes as the question suggests. I had to get beyond my own western worldview of rationalism and naturalism, and gain a biblical worldview that includes the reality of the spiritual world. Many western evangelicals still think this is a charismatic or Pentecostal issue that belongs more in third world mission strategies. As I begun to understand the spiritual battle that all Christians are engaged in, I felt that such pursuits were academic suicide in the Evangelical Theological Society. The challenge was to make such pursuits academically credible. I saw a lot of success on the personal level, but gaining public acceptance was slow.³⁴²

³³⁹Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

³⁴⁰Ibid.

³⁴¹Ibid.

³⁴²Ibid.

Anderson's biggest challenges in spiritual warfare ministry were not just the "direct spiritual confrontation from the enemy," but "the opposition I got from so called 'Christian' brothers." He points to the fact that "the more fruit I bore the more I was slandered," leading to the ministry in the States suffering "for some time, but God used that to expand our international ministry, because I didn't have to convince Christians in Latin America, Africa, Asia and Indonesia that there was a spiritual world." Overall, Anderson remarks that he was not totally prepared for attacks from the "church and how ugly, frankly evil, some people can be . . . that kind of surprised me, that hurt."³⁴³

Prayer Support

Anderson holds that one of his biggest mistakes early in ministry was not having enough prayer support. He "was kind of alone, breaking new ground" and "may have underestimated the evil opposition." He now intentionally sends out his schedule and regular reports to his staff and ministry associates for focused prayer. Due to their nature of ministry, FICM cautions new staff and volunteers to be especially wary of Satan's attacks. Anderson explains that "the devil tries to divide your mind and he tries to divide your marriage . . . division is his thing, unity is God's thing."³⁴⁴ Out of their experiences, FICM requires "a certain number of hoops, ministry wise, for one to become a ministry associate." Anderson encourages those who consider entering into spiritual warfare ministry to actively solicit prayer support.³⁴⁵

Criticism

Although almost all influential authors, pastors, and ministry leaders encounter criticism, it is still essential to give attention to and consider evidenced critiques.

³⁴³Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

³⁴⁴Ibid.

³⁴⁵Ibid.

Anderson's writings and ministries have encountered varying levels of criticism, especially given his focus on spiritual warfare and counseling. The most scholarly and public critique has been from Hank Hanegraaff and Elliot Miller of the Christian Research Institute (CRI).³⁴⁶ Although chapter four presents criticisms of Anderson in greater detail and scope, to include David Powlison's *Power Encounter* critique, the following three brief criticisms from CRI assist in understanding the base of the concerns to be addressed later.

Understanding of Sin Nature

One of the main criticisms placed upon Anderson's theology is that "Christians no longer possess a sin nature."³⁴⁷ CRI admits, "Anderson does not deny the ongoing reality of sin in the life of the believer" but disagrees with his understanding of sin nature nonetheless.³⁴⁸ Miller states that "the flesh is sinful, not sin-trained" and that despite

³⁴⁶Elliot Miller, "Neil Anderson and Freedom in Christ Ministries: A General Critique," *Christian Research Journal* 21 (1998) accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.equip.org/articles/neil-anderson-and-freedom-in-christ-ministries-a-general-critique->; Elliot Miller, "The Bondage Maker: Examining The Message and Method of Neil T. Anderson, (Part 1) Sanctification and the Believer's Identity in Christ," *Christian Research Journal* 21 (1998) accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.equip.org/articles/the-bondage-maker-examining-the-message-and-method-of-neil-t-anderson-part-one->; Elliot Miller, "The Bondage Maker: Examining The Message and Method of Neil T. Anderson, (Part 2) Spiritual Warfare and the 'Truth Encounter,'" *Christian Research Journal* 21 (1998) accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.equip.org/articles/the-bondage-maker-examining-the-message-and-method-of-neil-t-anderson-part-two-spiritual-warfare-and-the-truth-encounter->; Elliot Miller, "The Bondage Maker: Examining The Message and Method of Neil T. Anderson, (Part 3) Spiritual Warfare and the Seven 'Steps to Freedom,'" *Christian Research Journal* 21 (1998) accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.equip.org/articles/the-bondage-maker-examining-the-message-and-method-of-neil-t-anderson-part-three-spiritual-warfare-and-the-seven-steps-to-freedom->; Bob Passantino and Gretchen Passantino, "The Bondage Maker: Examining the Message and Method of Neil T. Anderson (Part 4) Spiritual Warfare and the Myth of Satanic Conspiracies and Ritual Abuse," *Christian Research Journal* 21 (1998) accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.equip.org/articles/the-bondage-maker-examining-the-message-and-method-of-neil-t-anderson-part-four-spiritual-warfare-and-the-myth-of-satanic-conspiracies-and-ritual-abuse->; Elliot Miller, "Deliver Us from Deliverance Ministry," *Evangelical Theological Society Northwest* (Spring 2001) accessed March 30, 2013, <http://www.westernseminary.edu/papers/Faculty/Breshears/Miller.doc>.

³⁴⁷Elliot Miller, "Neil Anderson and Freedom in Christ Ministries: A General Critique," in *Christian Research Journal* 21(1998), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.equip.org/articles/neil-anderson-and-freedom-in-christ-ministries-a-general-critique->.

³⁴⁸Miller, "Bondage Maker (Part 1)."

Anderson’s “verbal assent to crucifying the flesh, he does not truly call for crucifying it but rather reforming it.”³⁴⁹ In a continued emphasis on Anderson’s understanding of sin, Miller points out

The apostle Paul says that the law of sin dwells “in [our] members” (Rom. 7:23) and further exhorts us not to let it reign in our mortal bodies (Rom. 6:12), suggesting that it is present there. If the principle of sin remains with us, and the term sin nature refers to this principle, then how can Neil Anderson maintain that Christians no longer have a sin nature? Anderson gets into theological trouble because of his inadequate understanding of what the term nature means. Nature here refers to one’s disposition, inclination, or bent—the principle or law that governs one’s behavior.³⁵⁰

Anderson and CRI’s differences on sin nature are important. However, it seems that CRI and Anderson use different definitions for terms and that CRI has not considered the full scope of Anderson’s writings.³⁵¹

Self-perception and Sanctification

Anderson is sometimes characterized as having a “simplistic understanding of the old and new natures” that goes light on the seriousness of one’s self-perception as a sinner.³⁵² Miller accuses him as looking for more of a “cognitive rather than a volitional (moral) solution” for sin with a focus on identity that “is basically a self-esteem emphasis.”³⁵³

CRI highlights that, for Anderson, “it is absolutely essential to confess and renounce past sins if one wants to be free of them.”³⁵⁴ Miller labels Anderson’s *The Steps to Freedom In Christ* as a “second work of grace,” “reminiscent of traditional

³⁴⁹Miller, “Bondage Maker (Part 1).”

³⁵⁰Ibid.

³⁵¹Chapter four explores CRI’s understanding of Anderson to a much greater depth.

³⁵²Miller, “Bondage Maker (Part 1).”

³⁵³Ibid.

³⁵⁴Miller, “Bondage Maker (Part 3).”

magic doctrine,” leading towards “superstition and fear,” ritualistic, and a “bondage maker.”³⁵⁵

Demonization and Overemphasis on Satan

Miller presents that Anderson believes that “Christians can be and often are demonized (indwelt and controlled by demons).”³⁵⁶ CRI is concerned with how Anderson uses the term “demonization” and “assumes that the subject of deliverance is often believers.”³⁵⁷ Miller further holds that FICM’s position is that there is “no essential difference between dealing with demons afflicting unbelievers and those attacking believers.”³⁵⁸ He continues, stating “Neil Anderson is committed to a paradigm that is vulnerable to unbiblical sensationalism, fear, superstition, and dependency.”³⁵⁹ CRI condemns the practice of sin identification, vocal renunciation, and “vocal confrontation.”³⁶⁰

CRI also railed against Anderson’s description of a demonic manifestation through *The Bondage Breaker* account of a demon “biting Anderson on the hand and scrawling a message on his bathroom mirror.”³⁶¹ Miller argues, “Anderson’s spiritual warfare teachings are his overstatement of the devil’s authority, including his assertion that Satan has dominion over the earth and its creatures.”³⁶² He further criticizes

³⁵⁵Miller, “Bondage Maker (Part 3).”

³⁵⁶Miller, “Neil Anderson.”

³⁵⁷Passantino, “Bondage Maker (Part 4).”

³⁵⁸Ibid.

³⁵⁹Ibid.

³⁶⁰Miller, “Neil Anderson”; Passantino, “The Bondage Maker (Part 4).”

³⁶¹Miller, “Neil Anderson.”

³⁶²Passantino, “The Bondage Maker (Part 4).”

Anderson's demonic explanations for when people hear voices.³⁶³ Passantino states that Anderson promotes "75 different episodes of overtly demonic phenomena" that "the FBI, social scientists doing primary research, and investigative journalists has produced abundant evidence that his view of satanic activity is not true."³⁶⁴ In such sweeping statements, CRI rationally discounts the possibility of any of Anderson's observed demonic manifestations being real.

Anderson's Response to Criticism

Anderson claims that those whom have "taken the time to actually read what I have written" have been positive and thankful for a biblical balance. Anderson dislikes denominationalism and the "attitudes that separate." Many aspects of spiritual warfare are often associated with charismatic and Pentecostal practices and bring much "ugly accusations." Concerning his most publicized critic, Hank Hanegraaff and CRI, Anderson states, "I would probably agree with him 90% theologically." Anderson's frustration with CRI's criticism is not merely from their differences, but in how CRI communicated in a "judgmental and arrogant" manner. Anderson is averse to much of the "intellectual trips" where theologians simply strive to "outsmart one another."³⁶⁵

Anderson's approach to criticism has been modeled after Billy Graham "who took a lot of heat early on in his ministry." Instead of replying to criticism, Anderson says,

I have chosen not to be defensive and I have gone only where I have been invited. I have never charged for counseling nor required money for my services. I have tried to take the high road in every encounter and not retaliated in kind. God is my defense. I believe He raised up this ministry, and if He wanted to let the ministry be destroyed by the critics, so be it. I was and am content with that.³⁶⁶

³⁶³Passantino, "The Bondage Maker (Part 4)."

³⁶⁴Ibid.

³⁶⁵Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

³⁶⁶Ibid.

Anderson's approach to criticism is helpful, yet such criticisms must be considered and not ignored.

In chapter 16 of Anderson's *Rough Road* he provides his account of CRI's criticisms and of his attempts to peaceably and privately discuss them.³⁶⁷ He describes how

a nationally syndicated radio ministry was publicly criticizing me. The host was telling people to burn *The Bondage Breaker*. They published a journal and printed four inflammatory articles about me. In the first article, entitled 'The Bondage Maker,' I was 'a New Age, Catholic Robert Schuller.' The slander continued for several years. When the negative criticism first started, I was surprised and thought it was just a misunderstanding. I had twice been a guest on this radio program, and I knew several of the staff. Some were former students of mine. So I sent them a number of my books and tapes hoping that would clarify the issue, but the negative criticism only increased.³⁶⁸

Anderson continues to narrate, explaining how CRI never attempted to make contact with him and would not meet privately with him or Robert Saucy. Anderson sought corrective feedback from twenty five churches familiar with his teachings and ended up soliciting the assistance of the National Religious Broadcasters. The National Religious Broadcasters attempted to arrange a meeting between Anderson and the radio host, but "expressed disappointment that the host would not meet with us."³⁶⁹

Anderson eventually solicited feedback on five of his books, *Victory Over Darkness*, *The Bondage Breaker*, *Helping Others Find Freedom in Christ*, *Finding Hope Again*, and *The Common Made Holy*, from noted theologians Bruce Ware, Millard Erickson, and Bruce Demarest.³⁷⁰ Again the radio host was invited to participate, but instead responded by saying,

We are accountable before men, and we would be very willing to have our criticism of your theology judged by the larger body of Christ, say, in a public, advertised

³⁶⁷Anderson, *Rough Road*, 236-47.

³⁶⁸Ibid., 238.

³⁶⁹Ibid., 240.

³⁷⁰Ibid., 241; Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 4.

debate (to which the leading evangelical magazines and scholarly journals would be invited) between you and Dr. Saucy on one hand and ourselves on the other. But our conscience is bound in the word of God, and we therefore will never submit to having truth determined by the vote of a panel of three theologians selected by the NRB who may or may not be as competent as we are to judge these matters.³⁷¹

Anderson laments that “to this day, they have not called, or written to me or my office, for the purpose of setting up a meeting to discuss my message or ministry.”³⁷² He continued with his meeting with the theologians, reflecting that “their feedback was valuable to me in finishing the second editions . . . I am grateful for their gracious concern for the body of Christ and the contribution they made.” Anderson concedes that “over the last thirty years of ministry, my theology has changed. The truth hasn’t changed, but my understanding of the truth has change and it will continue to change if I am growing.”³⁷³ He shares a portion of the panel’s final report:

In our judgment, Anderson stands well within the bound of Christian orthodoxy, and in no respect do we consider his teachings heretical. . . . We believe that the treatment of sanctification and growth in holiness presented in Dr. Anderson’s and Dr. Saucy’s recent book, *The Common Made Holy* (1997), represents a more biblically nuanced and balanced treatment on the subject versus earlier works, such as *Victory over the Darkness* (1990) and *The Bondage Breaker* (1990). Critics should recognize the development in Dr. Anderson’s thinking, which by his own admission, is currently taking place.³⁷⁴

Anderson’s responses reveal that although he is “still puzzled to this day why this attack from the radio program ever happened,” he has grown spiritually through the process of being so publicly criticized.³⁷⁵ Anderson continues to seek to clarify his positions on issues and answer theological questions on FICM’s website, through his blog, and in *The Daily Discipler*.

³⁷¹Anderson, *Rough Road*, 241.

³⁷²“In order to conduct quality research, one must remove all personal bias and go directly to the source. That certainly was not done. Christian ethics require the believer to talk first with the wayward individual before going public.” Ibid.

³⁷³Ibid., 243.

³⁷⁴Ibid.

³⁷⁵Ibid., 246.

Chapter Summary

An understanding of Anderson's life and ministry helps establish the context to his call to writing and speaking on the issue of spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship. This chapter has laid out Anderson's understanding of spiritual warfare through an outlined presentation of some of Anderson's most influential writings. His self-evaluation and responses to ministry challenges and criticisms is essential to this book's critique and analysis of his ministry legacy.

CHAPTER 3

BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL, AND THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP

Chapter Introduction

This chapter provides the framework for understanding spiritual warfare. First, the focus will begin with a look at the Scriptures for a basic understanding of spiritual warfare in the lives of believers pursuing their call in evangelism and discipleship. Second, attention will be given towards a survey of church history, with a greater emphasis on the early church (AD 100-400) in order to ascertain their approach to and understanding of spiritual warfare in the church. Third, we will consider the Lausanne Movement to see their theological understanding of spiritual warfare in the church's task of multiplication through evangelism and discipleship. Finally, we will briefly survey and evaluate modern understandings and applications of spiritual warfare.

The approach of these sections will each have a distinct flavor of resources. The first section that approaches a scriptural understanding of spiritual warfare utilizes many modern church-planting resources, where a balanced emphasis is placed on both evangelism and discipleship. The church history section deals mostly with ancient resources that seem to place greater emphasis on discipleship while still sharing some evangelistic references. The Lausanne section places a greater emphasis on evangelism and missions, but still values and presents the discipleship implications of spiritual warfare. The final section maintains a balance towards both discipleship and evangelism in evaluating modern understandings and approaches to spiritual warfare. This biblical,

historical, and theological foundation will greatly aid in understanding and evaluating the validity of Anderson's approach to spiritual warfare.

Towards a Biblical Understanding of Spiritual Warfare

Spiritual warfare is a reality in life, families, and ministry. This book's definition of spiritual warfare is based off Ephesians 6:12: "the battle of the followers of Christ against the unseen spiritual forces of evil." Many approaches to spiritual warfare primarily place their focus upon demonic manifestations when speaking of Satan's attacks. Scripture reveals a much broader and more comprehensive strategy of how the devil and his demons attack believers.

The Bible refers to believers having three main enemies: the flesh, the world, and the devil (Eph 2:1-3). When believers feel attacked in life or ministry, they often try to discern the source of their difficulty, oppression, or temptation. These investigations are often unfruitful as "Scripture reveals that it is difficult- if not impossible- to separate the temptations that arise from these three sources."¹ No matter what specific source the opposition arises from, Christians have individual responsibility for their sin while their spiritual success rests solely on Christ's power.²

Scripture clearly attributes some instances of spiritual conflict directly to Satan. By considering these examples, believers can be aware of the Evil One's schemes and strategies so that they "would not be outwitted by Satan" (2 Cor 2:11) while advancing the Gospel in their evangelistic and disciple making callings (Matt 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).

¹Neil Anderson and Robert Saucy, *God's Power at Work in You* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2001), 282-83.

²Ibid., 284.

Approach and Delimitations

This author's approach is to briefly look at scriptural instances of Satan's attacks. The categorization of the biblical texts helps to reveal the enemy's strategy against believers. An understanding of Satan's strategy allows Christians to be wise to the enemy's ways so that they can better walk with and serve Christ through evangelism and discipleship. Space does not allow for a comprehensive or in-depth treatment of this topic. Nevertheless, this section functions as a simplified, biblical overview of how the enemy attacks, demonstrating the biblical reality of spiritual warfare. If space allowed, these passages would be explored to greater depth and more Scriptures, such as those found in the appendix, would be considered and evaluated.

Spiritual Warfare in the Scriptures

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded (Jas 4:7-8)

You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. (1 John 4:4)

The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. (2 Thess 2:9-10)

Satan stands against Christian believers and will do anything to attempt to stop the advance of the kingdom of God. The Lausanne Movement's 1993 Statement on Spiritual Warfare states that evangelism "involves an inescapable element of spiritual warfare."³ Since "biblical church planting is evangelism that results in new churches," church planters can expect to encounter the devil's attacks as they evangelize the lost.⁴ Whether in church planting, cross-cultural evangelism (missions), or near-culture evangelism, evangelistic efforts can anticipate demonic resistance. The battle for souls is

³A. Scott Moreau, ed., *Deliver Us from Evil: An Uneasy Frontier in Christian Mission* (Monrovia, CA: World Vision International, 2002), xvii.

⁴Jervis David Payne, *Discovering Church Planting: An Introduction to the Whats, Whys, and Hows of Global Church Planting* (Colorado Springs, CO: Paternoster, 2009), 4.

very real and will continue to rage until Christ returns. Christians must understand and have “a healthy respect for the unseen world.”⁵

The devil and his demons are so powerful that man-centered efforts towards evangelism and discipleship will fail for “only spiritual weapons can prevail, especially the Word and the Spirit, with prayer.”⁶ Satan’s powerful attacks against believers and ministers are often in the areas of “discouragement, distractions, or disqualifications.”⁷ Despite the power of the opposition and deception, Christians must remain in the truth of God’s possession of them (1 John 4:4) and are called to submit to and draw near to God while resisting Satan through righteous lives and minds (Jas 4:7-8).

God’s Role Vs. Satan’s Role Vs. Our Role

As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. (Gen 50:20)

Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and a harmful spirit from the Lord tormented him. And Saul's servants said to him, “Behold now, a harmful spirit from God is tormenting you. Let our lord now command your servants who are before you to seek out a man who is skillful in playing the lyre, and when the harmful spirit from God is upon you, he will play it, and you will be well.” (1 Sam 16:14-16)

And whenever the harmful spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand. So Saul was refreshed and was well, and the harmful spirit departed from him. (1 Sam 16:23)

Again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, “Go, number Israel and Judah.” (2 Sam 24:1)

But David's heart struck him after he had numbered the people. And David said to the Lord, “I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O Lord, please take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have done very foolishly.” (2 Sam 24:10)

So the Lord sent a pestilence on Israel from the morning until the appointed time. And there died of the people from Dan to Beersheba 70,000 men.” (2 Sam 24:15)

⁵Tom Nebel and Gary Rohrmayer, *Church Planting Landmines: Mistakes to Avoid in Years 2 through 10* (St. Charles IL: ChurchSmart Resources, 2005), 102.

⁶Alan Nichols and Billy Graham, eds., *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World: The Story of the Second Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, Manila, 1989* (Charlotte, NC: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 1989), 116.

⁷Nebel and Rohrmayer, *Church Planting Landmines*, 103.

And Micaiah said, “Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing beside him on his right hand and on his left; and the Lord said, ‘Who will entice Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ And one said one thing, and another said another. Then a spirit came forward and stood before the Lord, saying, ‘I will entice him.’ And the Lord said to him, ‘By what means?’ And he said, ‘I will go out, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ And he said, ‘You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do so.’ Now therefore behold, the Lord has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; the Lord has declared disaster for you.” (1 Kgs 22:19-23)

Then Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number Israel. (2 Chr 21:1)

Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord. (Job 2:1)

Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.” (Jas 1:12-15)

Across the Scriptures there is a seemingly complicated interaction between the roles and responsibilities of God, His people, and His enemies. In some instances, God removes His presence and sends evil spirits (demons) as a punishment (1 Sam 16:14-23, 1 Kgs 22:19-23). In some situations God uses human evil towards His good plans (Gen 50:20). On numerous occasions across Scripture, God directly punishes His people through His own hand or through the use of His angelic beings. At other times God directs, allows, or permits Satanic and demonic attacks that are seemingly disconnected from serving as any sort of punishment (Job 1-2, Paul in 2 Cor 12:7-10). Still, in other instances there is a very real and simultaneous interaction between God’s hand, Satan’s hand, worldly temptations, and human sinfulness that result in both individual and corporate suffering (2 Sam 24:1-15, 2 Chr 21:1). In spiritual warfare situations, Christians often desire to discover a single source and solution for their problems, but are reminded from these passages that the interaction between sources is often different in each case, but the solution is always to actively “wage the good warfare” (1 Tim 1:18) of the Christian faith.

Wage the Good Warfare

This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith, among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme. (1 Tim 1:18-20)

The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. (Luke 8:12)

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (2 Cor 4:3-4)

And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. (2 Cor 11:14-15)

The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. (Matt 13:38-39)

Christians are not to remain passive in the battle between Satan’s followers and Christ’s followers. In understanding the role of the church, it is essential to know that it is “not primarily about techniques.” Disciple making Christians are “venturing into ‘occupied territory’ only to be greeted by forces, seen and unseen, conspiring to work against any work of God.”⁸ Satan desires to keep the lost blinded and deceived so that they do not experience God’s truth and light. Believers are called to engage in spiritual warfare so that the gospel light penetrates the darkness of the world.

There are no sideline strategies for believers, but all “must be prepared for spiritual warfare.”⁹ One of Satan’s avenues is through false teachers, as Paul points out in his publicly rebuking and discipline of Alexander, Hymenaeus, and Philetus. These false teachers not only make “shipwreck” of their own faith, but also “are upsetting” the faith of others (1 Tim 1:20; 2 Tim 2:17). God reminds his children that spiritual warfare

⁸Jim Griffith and Bill Easum, *Ten Most Common Mistakes Made by New Church Starts* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2008), 16.

⁹Ibid.

is both a necessity and a reality in this age, but by drawing near to God they may “wage the good warfare” against the kingdom of darkness.

Take Up the Full Armor of God

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. 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; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (Eph 6:10-17)

When believers begin to understand the reality of spiritual warfare and their call to engage the enemy they will more diligently prepare for combat. Ephesians 6:10-20 is one of the most commonly-referenced passages for understanding spiritual warfare. Clinton Arnold explains it with statements concerning the importance of understanding the reality of the demonic, the availability and necessity of God’s power, and the primacy of prayer and one’s identity in Christ.¹⁰ Christians must not ignore the “presence, influence, power, and hostility” of Satan’s realm, but should protect themselves, their families, and their churches from Satan’s ongoing attacks.¹¹

God’s full armor provides the only protection for a believer. When Christians draw near to God in “intimate fellowship,” they will be “able to stand against the

¹⁰(1)“There are powerful, invisible, spirit beings that attack believers with the intent of hurting them, causing them to lapse into sin, or making them ineffectual for God’s kingdom purposes.” (2) “The goal of depending on the power of God is to resist the varied attacks of the evil one and to advance the kingdom of God into the world.” (3) “God’s power is truly available to his people.” (4) “Prayer is the essence of spiritual warfare and the most important means by which believers are strengthened by God.” (5) “It is vital to understand our new identity in Christ as a deep level and to live out of that new identity as a means of overcoming the impact of various forms of demonic assault.” Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 470-75.

¹¹Joel Rainey, *Planting Churches in the Real World* (Smarna, DE: Missional Press, 2008), 124-25, 129.

schemes of the Evil One” and be “ready for any spiritual opposition.”¹² Taking “up the whole armor of God” practically works out through a daily walk with Christ by internalizing his truths and living dependently on his strength.

Pray Continually

. . . praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak. (Eph 6:18-20)

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thess 5:16-18)

Continual prayer is not simply “preparation for the battle; prayer is the battle.”¹³ Just as communication reveals the true health of a marriage relationship, “private prayer is the revealer of the true spiritual condition of the human heart.”¹⁴ If believers “neglect communication with their heavenly Father, they are risking disaster.”¹⁵ The more intimately Christ followers get to know their Father through “a disciplined prayer life,” the more access they will have to the Lord and his powerful work in their lives, families, and churches.¹⁶ In addition to personal prayer, the believer needs to pray specifically for both new and mature believers while soliciting prayer for themselves.¹⁷

Keep Them from the Evil One

Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, so that we

¹²Payne, *Discovering Church Planting*, 75-77.

¹³Nebel and Rohrmayer, *Church Planting Landmines*, 101.

¹⁴Darrin Patrick, *Church Planter: The Man, The Message, The Mission* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 63.

¹⁵Payne, *Discovering Church Planting*, 73.

¹⁶Nebel and Rohrmayer, *Church Planting Landmines*, 112.

¹⁷Payne, *Discovering Church Planting*, 74; Griffith and Easum, *Ten Most Common Mistakes Made by New Church Starts*, 17.

would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.(2 Cor 2:5-11)

When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. (1 Cor 5:4-5)

I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. (John 17:15)

A believer's initial response to the enemy's presence in this world might be to desire flee the battle in order to be with Christ in heaven. Although heaven is the ultimate destination for believers in Christ, their temporal call is to remain in this world while limiting Satan's access to their lives and ministries. Darrin Patrick warns of the real encounters with the Evil One, saying "if you don't think demons are real, try planting a church! You won't get very far in advancing God's kingdom without feeling resistance from the enemy."¹⁸

Despite Satan's attacks, Christians can be effective through a "dependence on the power of the Holy Spirit."¹⁹ Becoming aware of Satan's schemes helps a believer to more faithfully walk and humbly serve in the power of God with "wisdom," "boldness," and "perseverance."²⁰ Christians should not seek encounters with Satan, but when such encounters occur, believers can stand confidently in their identification with Christ.

Conquerors through Christ

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 8:37-39)

he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job 1:21)

¹⁸Patrick, *Church Planter*, 64.

¹⁹Ibid., 59.

²⁰Jervis David Payne, *The Barnabas Factors: Eight Essential Practices of Church Planting Team Members* (Smyrna, DE: Missional Press, 2008), 23.

“Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips. (Job 2:10)

The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!” And he said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” (Luke 10:17-20)

And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matt 16:18)

But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face, because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us. (1 Thess 2:17-18)

No matter how spiritual warfare manifests itself in the life of an individual or church family, believers “have great power to see their ministries thrive—if they depend on God.”²¹ No matter the way Satan attacks, a believer or church will mature if they prioritize a God-dependency.²² Although God has not removed the believer from the battlefield, He has equipped the Christian to advance, fight, and stand confidently with the understanding that nothing can separate them from their relationship with Him. In the midst of Satan’s attacks, the believer can trust, like Job (Job 1:21, 2:10), that God is still in control “of the frequency and intensity of the conflict you encounter.”²³

Worldly and Fleshly Attacks

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever. (1 John 2:15-17)

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? (Jas 4:1)

²¹Nebel and Rohrmayer, *Church Planting Landmines*, 107.

²²Ibid., 109.

²³Rainey, *Planting Churches in the Real World*, 122.

And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:30-31)

Although Satan does attack believers and churches directly, it often appears through attacks from the world and the flesh. In this section passages will be considered that explore some of the directions of conflict from the enemy. Just as God commands believers to love Him and love others, Satan seeks to turn our attention away towards a self-centered love. He does this by shifting our strength (action), soul (desires), heart (emotions), and mind (thoughts) away from God and others, both in private and in public.

Sin: Self-Centered Action or Inaction

Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil (Eph 4:26-27)

Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. (1 John 3:8-10)

So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light (Rom 13:13)

each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. (Jas 1:14-15)

We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him. (1 John 5:18)

Chuck Lawless argues that “spiritual warfare isn’t about naming demons; it’s about so living a righteous life that our very life threatens the Enemy.”²⁴ Sin is part of the “enemy’s strategy is to derail effective leaders” and churches.²⁵ Satan’s role as

²⁴Charles Lawless, *Disciplined Warriors: Growing Healthy Churches That Are Equipped for Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2002), 214.

²⁵Nebel and Rohrmayer, *Church Planting Landmines*, 107.

tempter does not negate believers' accountability for their decision to sin.²⁶ This responsibility is seen in biblical pastoral qualifications describing "a man who is free from any serious character blights, is respected by those who know him, and is widely known to live a godly life."²⁷ Although such biblical qualifications may seem unrealistically high, their design is to prepare the pastor for spiritual warfare and to model for all believers who to stand firm in this evil day (Eph 6:13). Prayer is often highlighted as the main weapon Christians have in their battle against the Evil One. Although God repeatedly emphasizes prayer in spiritual warfare, a believer's holy living through internalized truth makes such prayers Christ-empowered (Eph 4:25-32; 1 Thess 5:16-22). Following God's call to love Him and others with strength (Mark 12:30-31) manifests itself in righteous, God-produced obedience as a living faith (Rom 12:1; Jas 2:17).

Soul Temptations: Pride

So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Cor 12:7-10)

He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. (1 Tim 3:6-7)

God allowed Satan to attack Peter so that Peter realized that "he could not stand on his own."²⁸ In the midst of life successes, many Christians may swell with prideful belief, thinking that they are responsible for God's powerful work. Paul warned

²⁶Patrick, *Church Planter*, 147.

²⁷Ibid., 46.

²⁸John MacArthur, *Standing Strong: How to Resist the Enemy of Your Soul* (Colorado Springs, CO: Victor, 2006), 34.

of such a pride, cautioning not to rely on “rhetorical strategies and techniques, and certainly not on social or psychological factors” but to trust in the “power of God, which is present in the preaching of the gospel of the crucified and risen Jesus Christ.”²⁹ When Satan sees believers’ pride in their own perceived strengths, he attacks “because he already has us in our weaknesses.”³⁰ Pride reveals itself in not only one’s strengths, but also in their weaknesses. Failures may reveal that Christians have often quenched the Spirit’s work by their prideful independence of and disobedience towards God.³¹ Pride is ultimately a self-love of the soul, in place of God’s call to first love Him and to love others second.

Heart Temptations: Anxiety, Suffering, and Finances

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. (1 Pet 5:6-9)

But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. (1 Tim 6:9-10)

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you. (Heb 13:5)

God’s call is often to “places where results, humanly speaking, are meager.”³²

These places in life when minimal results are seen can also be times of hostility rather

²⁹Eckhard Schnabel, *Paul the Missionary: Realities, Strategies and Methods* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 371.

³⁰Rainey, *Planting Churches in the Real World*, 124.

³¹Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul’s or Ours* (London: Robert Scott, 1912), 126.

³²James Engel and William Dyrness, *Changing the Mind of Missions: Where Have We Gone Wrong?* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 88.

than sympathy or neutrality.³³ Satan uses circumstances to try to target believers through emotional responses such as “fear, depression, worry, criticism, competitiveness, and jealousy.”³⁴ These real or perceived circumstances can serve to isolate the Christian from their only source of hope, joy, strength, protection, and provision in Christ. Believers must diligently root themselves in God’s Word so that their identity in Christ remains on the forefront of their minds and hearts.

Mind Temptations

But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.” (Matt 16:23)

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Rom 12:2)

One of Satan’s best avenues of attack is to tempt believers to have their minds set on the things of man rather the things of God. Just as God “never bypasses our mind,” Satan’s strategy is to deceive believers into thinking and following their own inclinations and minds.³⁵ Christians must test their thoughts, strategies, plans, and ideas with God’s Word to ensure that their leadership is in line with God’s good, pleasing and perfect will. Such a renewal of a believer’s mind “begins with genuine repentance” that leads to being rooted in truth.³⁶

Private Temptations: Marriage and Family

For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

³³Eckhard Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission: Jesus and the Twelve* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 671.

³⁴Nebel and Rohrmayer, *Church Planting Landmines*, 106.

³⁵Neil Anderson, *Discipleship Counseling* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2003), 87.

³⁶Anderson and Saucy, *God’s Power at Work in You*, 136.

Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. (1 Cor 7:4-5)

One of Satan's desires is to privately destroy not only the believer, but also his marriage and family, in order to derail the believer's public witness. Sexual temptation is a primary method of attack that the devil uses, hence God's warnings to married couples that they must be sexually intimate regularly. Christians must ensure that they do not "focus well on their spiritual lives" to the neglect of their marriages and families.³⁷ Just as God designed pastors to lead churches, He also ordained husbands to "take the lead in emotional, social, and sexual connection with their wives."³⁸ The Christian must not be unaware of Satan's tactics; he must be prepared for his marriage and family to "experience mental, moral, and physical attacks from the Evil One."³⁹ If Satan can wound or kill Christians' marriages or families, he can effectively paralyze them from evangelistic ministry and disciple making through their church. Believers must prioritize their love of their families and wives so that they may stand firm together against the devil's schemes.

Public Temptations: Church Ministry

Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number Israel. (1 Chr 21:1)

After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, "Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me." . . . So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "What you are going to do, do quickly." (John 13:21-27)

"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers." Peter said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death." Jesus said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me." (Luke 22:31-34)

³⁷Patrick, *Church Planter*, 102.

³⁸Ibid., 46.

³⁹Payne, *Discovering Church Planting*, 77.

But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." (Acts 5:1-4)

Christians have unique pressures that can lead to temptations to publicly misrepresent oneself to one's church, denomination, or contributors.⁴⁰ The range of ethical dilemmas is numerous, but the underlying heart issue is one of self-worship rather than God-worship. Whether the heart issue results in the misrepresentation of numerical growth, giving, or of one's spiritual health, the desire to be approved by man rather than God is a dangerous lie. Believers must first test themselves to see whether they are in the faith and secondly to ensure that they are not just hearers, but doers of God's Word (2 Cor 13:5; Jas 1:22-27).⁴¹ Satan desires to see hypocrites in churches because he realizes that he can use the failures of a few to cause many to stumble.

Summary of a Biblical Understanding of Spiritual Warfare

All Christians must recognize that "the life of the disciple is the life of constant spiritual warfare."⁴² This understanding leads a believer to both acknowledge and anticipate real Satanic attacks upon their lives, families, and ministries.⁴³ Christians should accordingly prepare, pray, and walk uprightly such that the devil has no opportunity to gain a foothold for attack.⁴⁴ Through their ongoing walk with God, the

⁴⁰Patrick, *Church Planter*, 23.

⁴¹Ibid., 26.

⁴²Payne, *Discovering Church Planting*, 77.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Payne, *The Barnabas Factors*, 17.

believer will be best equipped to depend on God for His power and strength in advancing the Gospel through evangelism and discipleship.

Towards a Historical Understanding of Spiritual Warfare

Clinton Arnold explains the prevalence of spiritual warfare in early church history writing, acknowledging the “numerous accounts of demonization and exorcism as well as descriptions of the deceptive work of demons in pagan religions fill the writings of the church fathers.”⁴⁵ Some rationalist and cessationist Christian theologians surmise that spiritual warfare has diminished since the apostolic era, but the evidence is that there “is no hint of demonic activity dying out.”⁴⁶ Documentation of spiritual warfare continues “through the whole time period of the ancient church” as well as during the Middle Ages, the Reformation, and the early post-Reformation.⁴⁷

In evaluating spiritual warfare writings and practice, early church leaders share a helpful perspective in understanding and evaluating claims of territorial spirits, demonic possession, exorcism, demonic oppression, and other experiences and practices. Church history does demonstrate that church leaders “took the realm of the demonic seriously and believed that Christians could be profoundly influenced by evil spirits.”⁴⁸ Clinton Arnold asserts that a “thorough treatment of this topic from the vantage point of church

⁴⁵Clinton E. Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 25.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Oscar Skarsaune, “Possession and Exorcism in the Literature of the Ancient Church and the New Testament,” in *Deliver Us from Evil Consultation* (Nairobi: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization 2000), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.lausanne.org/all-documents/historical-overview-1.html>.

⁴⁸Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions*, 112.

history would be very helpful and illuminating.”⁴⁹ History shows a serious concern for the demonic possession of unbelievers and for the affliction of believers.⁵⁰

The focus of this section is to conduct a historical survey of the theological understanding of spiritual warfare. Attention will primarily be given to the early church era (AD 100-400). The focus of the research is on the main characters, councils, and confessions that reflect and represent the general theological considerations of spiritual warfare. This survey will establish whether Anderson’s spiritual warfare understandings and practices are rooted in early church history.⁵¹

Ante-Nicene Church Fathers

The church fathers before the First Council of Nicaea (AD 325) are numerous and diverse. Interestingly, they almost all show some concern in addressing spiritual warfare issues among Christians and the church. Their statements, observations, and practices are of great importance to establishing the historical validity of Anderson’s approach.

Clement of Rome

Clement of Rome, or Pope Clement I, is believed to have been a disciple of Peter and a co-worker with Paul (Phil 4:3; AD 57) and one of the first leaders of the church. In his letter to the church at Corinth, Clement references the war-like nature of

⁴⁹Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions*, 112.

⁵⁰“Numerous other accounts and excerpts could be given from Christian leaders throughout the post-Nicene age, the Byzantine Empire, and from luminaries such as Thomas Aquinas, John Calvin, Martin Luther, and the Puritans. . . . They all took the realm of the demonic seriously and believed that Christians could be profoundly influenced by evil spirits. Yet they were also thoroughly convinced that believers had authority in the Lord Jesus Christ to send these spirits packing. As Martin Luther said regarding the devil in his famous hymn, ‘one little word shall fell him.’ That word is Jesus.” Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions*, 112.

⁵¹In surveying the historical references to spiritual warfare, this historical research focused on discovering terms such as “Satan,” “devil,” “demons,” “exorcism,” “enemy,” and “evil.” The presence of such terms often revealed the location of writings that demonstrate the theology and practice of spiritual warfare during that period of history.

the call for Christians to “act the part of soldiers” in following the commandments of Christ.⁵² Clement seemed aware of spiritual warfare and called for Christians to actively engage in the battles they found themselves in.

Two letters that claim Clementine authorship, but are likely third or fourth century writings by another author, place particular emphasis on the role of exorcists within the church.⁵³ The writer interestingly dedicates a significant portion of a chapter to the practice of exorcism. This early, yet pseudopigraphal (false-named), reference gives significant weight to showing that the practice of exorcism did not die out with the apostles. The author exhorts his Christian brothers to take initiative in visiting those who are “harassed by evil spirits.”⁵⁴ He describes such activity as “suitable and right and comely” and places a primacy on intelligent and authoritative prayer.⁵⁵ The author encourages prayers rooted in “true faith,” cautioning against formulaic prayer.⁵⁶ The writer reminds believers that empowered prayer is characterized by being continuous,

⁵²Clement, *First Epistle of the Blessed Clement the Disciple of Peter* (ANF 1:5) accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.ii.ii.html>. Corresponding scriptures are found in Phil 2:25, 2 Tim 2:3, and Phlm 1:2.

⁵³M. B. Riddle, “Introductory Notice to Two Epistles Concerning Virginitly” (ANF 8:53) accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf08.v.ii.html>.

⁵⁴“This also, again, is suitable and right and comely for those who are brethren in Christ, that they should visit those who are harassed by evil spirits, and pray and pronounce adjurations over them, intelligently, *offering* such prayer as is acceptable before God; not with a multitude of fine words, well prepared and arranged, so that they may appear to men eloquent and of a good memory. *Such men* are ‘like a sounding pipe, or a tinkling cymbal;’ and they bring no help to those over whom they make their adjurations; but they speak with terrible words, and affright people, but do not act with true faith, according to the teaching of our Lord, who hath said: ‘This kind goeth not out but by fasting and prayer,’ offered unceasingly and with earnest mind. And let them holily ask and beg of God, with cheerfulness and all circumspection and purity, without hatred and without malice. . . . By your fastings and prayers and perpetual watching, together with your other good works, mortify the works of the flesh by the power of the Holy Spirit. He who acts thus ‘is a temple of the Holy Spirit of God.’ Let this man cast out demons, and God will help him. For it is good that a man help those that are sick. Our Lord hath said: ‘Cast out demons’ at the same thee *commanding* many other acts of healing; and, ‘Freely ye have received, freely give.’ For such persons as these a goodly recompense is *laid up* by God, because they serve their brethren with the gifts which have been given them by the Lord.” Clement, *First Epistle of the Blessed Clement the Disciple of Peter* (ANF 1:5).

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid.

focused, pleading, holy, humble, pure, and cheerful, and with noble intentions.⁵⁷ He emphasizes how an effective deliverer only exercises their powers through the help of God. Such empowered warriors put their own flesh to death and seek the “power of the Holy Spirit” through “fastings and prayers and perpetual watching, together with your other good works.”⁵⁸ He connects the practice of exorcism with healing. He also commends exorcism as a gift from the Lord and a practice that will be rewarded. These writings, although pseudo-Clementine, point to an early understanding of spiritual warfare that emphasizes God’s power being accessed primarily through prayer.

Mathetes

The Epistle of Mathetes to Diognetus (c. AD 130) is an early writing. The author or recipient of the letter is unknown, but Mathetes “was possibly a catechumen of St. Paul or of one of the apostle's associates” and “is, perhaps, the first of the apologists.”⁵⁹ There parts of the letter, such as chapter eight, “The Miserable State of Men Before the Coming of the World,” where the reader would expect a reference to Satan or his demons, but does not.⁶⁰ Mathetes refers to himself as “a disciple of the Apostles” who is sharing the “things delivered to me” to the Gentiles.⁶¹

In the concluding chapter of his epistle “The Importance of Knowledge to True Spiritual Life,” Mathetes references the serpent multiple times. His references surround the serpent’s attempts to deceive and place false knowledge into the lives of believers. He comments that Adam and Eve did not use true knowledge of the way to life “properly,

⁵⁷Clement, *First Epistle of the Blessed Clement the Disciple of Peter* (ANF 1:5).

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹A. Cleveland Coxe, “Introductory Note to the Epistle of Ignatius” (ANF 1:45), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.v.i.html>.

⁶⁰Mathetes, *The Epistles of Mathetes to Diognetus* (ANF 1:25), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.iii.ii.html>.

⁶¹Ibid.

they were, through the fraud of the serpent, stripped naked.”⁶² Mathetes’ descriptions paint a picture of Satan’s focus on deception rather than power and possession.⁶³

Polycarp

Polycarp (AD 69-155) was a disciple of John and other apostles, in contact with many eyewitnesses of Christ, and an early leader of the Christian church.⁶⁴ In his letter to the church at Philippi, Polycarp mentions little concerning spiritual warfare, but does point to the fact that “whosoever does not confess the testimony of the cross, is of the devil.”⁶⁵ He additionally affirms that “whosoever does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, is antichrist” and that “whosoever perverts the oracles of the Lord to his own lusts, and says that there is neither a resurrection nor a judgment, he is the first-born of Satan.”⁶⁶ Such powerful, bold statements do not reinforce any specific encounter approaches. Polycarp does reveal that there is significance in understanding that all humanity is allied with either Christ or the devil.

Ignatius

Ignatius was an early church father (AD 30-107) linked with the Apostle John, Eusebius, and Polycarp. It is “scarcely possible to exaggerate the importance of the testimony which the Ignatian letters offer to the dogmatic character of Apostolic

⁶²Mathetes, *The Epistles of Mathetes to Diognetus* (ANF 1:12).

⁶³“did not use this [knowledge] properly, they were, through the fraud of the Serpent, stripped naked. . . . or he who thinks he knows anything without true knowledge, and such as is witnessed to by life, knows nothing, but is deceived by the Serpent, as not loving life. . . . thou shalt always gather in those things which are desired by God, which the Serpent cannot reach, and to which deception does not approach.” Ibid.

⁶⁴A. Cleveland Coxe, “Introductory Note to the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians” (ANF 1:31), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.iv.i.html>.

⁶⁵Polycarp, *The Epistle of Polycarp to the Ephesians* (ANF 7:33), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.iv.ii.html>.

⁶⁶Ibid.

Christianity.”⁶⁷ His works include seven credible letters but early church history reveals eight additional writings that are likely later, spurious forgeries.⁶⁸ Out of these writings, two credible letters and three spurious letters contain spiritual warfare language.

The Epistle of Ignatius to the Trallians refers to Satan as the “wicked one” who envies in an invisible way. Ignatius refers to Satan as literally warring against him. Ignatius fights back through “meekness, by which the devil, the prince of this world, is brought to nought.”⁶⁹ He encourages the Trallians to put “put on your guard” and to “forsee the snares of the devil.”⁷⁰ Although Ignatius does not reveal a specific power or truth encounter approach, he clearly reveals his understanding that there are real attacks of Satan at both an individual (believer) and corporate (church) level. Ignatius also writes in his letter to the Philadelphians a warning concerning heretics “from whom ‘a defiling influence has gone forth into all the earth.’”⁷¹ He reinforces light, truth, and especially unity as they avoid “many wolves in sheep's clothing.”⁷² As Ignatius demonstrates, the Church Fathers often emphasized spiritual warfare when considering heresy.

Another important Ignatian writing is *The Martyrdom of Ignatius*. Although several aspects of the martyrdom account are verified historically, parts of it are of unknown veracity, as the writing was not referenced in the first six centuries of the

⁶⁷John Bonaventure O’Connor, “St. Ignatius of Antioch,” in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* 7 (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07644a.htm>.

⁶⁸A. Cleveland Coxe, “Introductory Note to the Epistle of Ignatius” (*ANF* 1:45), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.v.i.html>.

⁶⁹Ignatius, *The Epistle of Ignatius to the Trallians* (*ANF* 1:66), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.v.iv.html>.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ignatius, *The Epistle of Ignatius to the Philadelphians* (*ANF* 1:79), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.v.vi.html>.

⁷²Ibid.

church.⁷³ In this work, an eyewitness narrative of Ignatius' approach towards death is given. The crime Trajan assigned to Ignatius was of not worshipping idols. The author describes idol worship as the "worship [of] daemons."⁷⁴ This intimate connection of demons and idol worship was a spiritual warfare concept the early church continued to communicate.

Ignatius replies to the accusations that he is wicked, asserting that "all evil spirits have departed from the servants of God" and that he is "an enemy to these [spirits]" in destroying "all the devices of these [evil spirits]."⁷⁵ The clarity and certainty with which Ignatius describes demonic spirits shows that he believes the battle is real. He holds that believers should actively oppose Satan and his demons. Ignatius' reference to evil spirits departing from believers also suggests the practice of exorcism at the point of belief, implying from his own example that evil spirits are present in the lives of unbelievers.

The spurious writings communicate many more references to spiritual warfare, particularly to the power encounter approach. In *The Epistle of Ignatius to the Antiochians*, the writer references the office of exorcists.⁷⁶ Another fraudulent writing,

⁷³A. Cleveland Coxe, "Introductory Note to the Martyrdom of Ignatius" (*ANF* 1:127), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.v.xxiv.html>.

⁷⁴"Ignatius replied, 'No one ought to call Theophorus wicked; for, you call me wicked in respect to them, I quite agree with you; for inasmuch as I have Christ the King of heaven [within me], I.' Ignatius replied, 'No one ought to call Theophorus wicked; for all evil spirits have departed from the servants of God. But if, because I am an enemy to these [spirits], you call me wicked in respect to them, I quite agree with you; for inasmuch as I have Christ the King of heaven [within me], I destroy all the devices of these [evil spirits].' Ignatius answered, 'Thou art in error when thou callest the daemons of the nations gods. For there is but one God, who made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that are in them; and one Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, whose kingdom may I enjoy.' Trajan said, 'Do you mean Him who was crucified under Pontius Pilate?' Ignatius replied, 'I mean Him who crucified my sin, with him who was the inventor of it, and who has condemned [and cast down] all the deceit and malice of the devil under the feet of those who carry Him in their heart.'" Ignatius, *The Martyrdom of Ignatius* (*ANF* 1:129), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.v.xxv.html>.

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶"I salute the sub-deacons, the readers, the singers, the doorkeepers, the labourers, the exorcists, the confessors." Ignatius, *The Epistle of Ignatius to the Antiochians* (*ANF* 1:110), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.v.xv.html>.

from Mary of Cassobelæ to Ignatius, describes some “who were possessed of a wicked spirit as being false in their speech, and deceivers of the people” as well as referencing the “deceit of the demons.”⁷⁷ Interestingly the activity of both the demons and the possessed focuses on deception.

Another likely fraudulent writing, *The Epistle to the Philippians*, contains perhaps the most references to Satan in many of the ancient church writings with half of the chapter titles directly referencing Satan.⁷⁸ In this epistle, the author makes multiple references to the temptation encounter of Christ with Satan in the desert as well as scriptural references to the devil. Along with these references are a seeming inclusion and incorporation of terms and theology (bishop, presbyter, Lord’s Day, overemphasis on Mary, the Trinity) of the later church (3rd and 4th century and beyond).⁷⁹ Despite the biblical nature of many of the spiritual warfare references in the fraudulent writings, their inconsistencies lend little weight to an early date. These spurious writings, with additional emphasis on exorcism, possession, and spiritual warfare, cause concern that there was an attempt to over-emphasize and influence theology and practice where the early church did not.

Barnabas

The Epistle of Barnabas is a writing whose authorship is circumspect in many ways. The early church believed it written by Barnabas the Levite of Cyprus, an early believer of renown in the church.⁸⁰ Its dating is early, but its veiled authorship leaves

⁷⁷Ignatius, *The Epistle of Maria the Proselyte to Ignatius* (*ANF* 1:121), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.v.xviii.v.html>.

⁷⁸Ignatius, *The Epistle of Ignatius to the Philippians* (*ANF* 1:117), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.v.xvii.iv.html>.

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰A. Cleveland Coxe, “Introductory Note to the Epistle of Barnabas” (*ANF* 1:133), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.vi.i.html>.

some wondering as to its actual importance and significance. This letter does possess some early spiritual warfare references however, comparing the pre-salvific state of being a “habitation of demons” compared with how believers become a spiritual temple of God.⁸¹ Such a reference implies possession, but because authorship questions remain, the references are not greatly weighted.

Justin Martyr

Justin Martyr (AD 110-65), a Gentile born in Samaria, was a philosopher who came to Christ upon witnessing the “extraordinary fearlessness which the Christians displayed in the presence of death.”⁸² Justin’s writings constitute some of “the most important that have come down to us from the second century” and give “us an insight into the relations existing between heathens and Christians in those days.”⁸³ The attestation and trustworthiness of his writings give lend greater importance to his writings. In the arena of spiritual warfare, Justin Martyr provides the most significant insight into the Christian understanding of spiritual warfare in the early church.

Justin, *The First Apology*. In Justin’s apologies, he shares great insights into his understanding of Satan’s work on earth. He counters the accusations of atheists against Christians by identifying Greek gods as being demonic. He argues,

since of old these evil demons, effecting apparitions of themselves, both defiled women and corrupted boys, and showed such fearful sights to men, that those who did not use their reason in judging of the actions that were done, were struck with terror; and being carried away by fear, and not knowing that these were demons,

⁸¹“Before we believed in God, the habitation of our heart was corrupt and weak, as being indeed like a temple made with hands. For it was full of idolatry, and was a habitation of demons, through our doing such things as were opposed to [the will of] God.” Barnabas, *The Epistle of Barnabas* (ANF 1:147), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.vi.ii.xvi.html>.

⁸²A. Cleveland Coxe, “Introductory Note to the Writings of Justin Martyr” (ANF 1:159), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.viii.i.html>.

⁸³Ibid.

they called them gods, and gave to each the name which each of the demons chose for himself.⁸⁴

Not only does Justin explain the origin of these so-called gods, but denies their deity and again clarifies that they are “wicked and impious demons.”⁸⁵ Justin leaves no room to doubt that he believes that the gods of the Greeks and their associated manifestations are the product of real spirits: demons.

Justin also emphasized, like other early church fathers, how the demons seek to deceive. He also explains more clearly that they are accusers who seek to “divert you from reading and understanding” the writing and teaching of Christian leaders.⁸⁶ They work not only by attacking truth, but also through manifestations through “appearances in dreams” and “by magical impositions” to subdue hold mankind as “slaves and servants.”⁸⁷ Justin asserts that the believer is to “stand aloof from them (i.e. demons)” and “embrace chastity” while dedicating themselves to God and valuing Him above all other things.⁸⁸ Putting on righteousness is a key emphasis of Martyr’s approach to spiritual warfare.

Justin expounds on how “the demons still mislead men” through the example of the Samaritans Simon and Meander, “who did many mighty works by magic, and deceived many, and still keep them deceived.”⁸⁹ This view of spiritual warfare shows an integration of manifestation with deception through the examples of men. He reminds the reader that Simon appeared before the Roman people and senate during the reign of

⁸⁴Justin Martyr, *The First Apology of Justin* (ANF 1:163), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.viii.ii.html>.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Justin Martyr, *The First Apology of Justin* (ANF 1:167).

⁸⁷Ibid.

⁸⁸Ibid.

⁸⁹Justin Martyr, *The First Apology of Justin* (ANF 1:183).

Claudius Cæsar, leading to his deification and honor through a statue.⁹⁰ Justin asks for the destruction of Simon’s statue as well as a reminder not to “be entangled by that man’s doctrines” but rather to “learn the truth, and so be able to escape error.”⁹¹ Justin clearly emphasizes a truth encounter approach to spiritual warfare but also upholds the importance of destroying objects of false, demonic worship.

Lastly, for Justin’s first apology, he explains how some of the false religions, specifically in the temples of Greek gods, are but demonic imitations of biblical worship. He evidences this imitation in the practices of washings, libations, burnt offerings, sprinkling, and shoe removal, directly connecting this with a mockery of Moses’ encounter with God in the burning bush.⁹²

Justin, *The Second Apology.* *The Second Apology of Justin* continues to reveal how deeply Justin understands spiritual warfare. He describes “the evil demons” as hating Christians and endeavoring to keep unbelievers “subject to themselves.”⁹³ He specifically credits the demons as influencing human judges with the purpose of putting Christians to death. He further credits the “influence of the wicked demons” for the suffering and persecution of some “earnest men, such as Socrates,” while others such as “Sardanapalus, Epicurus, and the like, seem to be blessed in abundance and glory.”⁹⁴

Despite the activity of Satan and his demons, Justin upholds each man’s personal responsibility for his actions, asserting, “each man by free choice acts rightly or

⁹⁰See notes under Irenæus for a more detailed description of Simon.

⁹¹Justin Martyr, *The First Apology of Justin* (ANF 1:167).

⁹²Justin Martyr, *The First Apology of Justin* (ANF 1:183).

⁹³Justin Martyr, *The Second Apology of Justin for the Christians Addressed to the Roman Senate* (ANF 1:188), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.viii.iii.html>.

⁹⁴Justin Martyr, *The Second Apology of Justin* (ANF 1:191).

sins.”⁹⁵ Demonic influence towards sin occurs through a multitude of avenues, “partly by magical writings, and partly by fears and the punishments they occasioned, and partly by teaching them to offer sacrifices, and incense, and libations, of which things they stood in need after they were enslaved by lustful passions.”⁹⁶ Justin reminds us that Christ was incarnate partially “for the destruction of the demons.”⁹⁷

Interestingly, Justin points to the practice of exorcism. This is one of the earliest and most well attested references to the practice and office of exorcist. He describes “numberless demoniacs throughout the whole world, and in your city,” and how “many of our Christian men [are] exorcising them in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate.”⁹⁸ He points out how these Christians “have healed and do heal, rendering helpless and driving the possessing devils out of the men, though they could not be cured by all the other exorcists, and those who used incantations and drugs.”⁹⁹

Justin, *The Dialogue with Trypho*. A final important reference for understanding Justin’s understanding of spiritual warfare is found in *The Dialogue of Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, with Trypho, a Jew*.¹⁰⁰ This work is historically significant as “it is the first elaborate exposition of the reasons for regarding Christ as the Messiah of the Old Testament, and the first systematic attempt to exhibit the false position of the Jews in regard to Christianity.”¹⁰¹ As Justin explains the faith to Trypho,

⁹⁵Justin Martyr, *The Second Apology of Justin* (ANF 1:191).

⁹⁶Justin Martyr, *The Second Apology of Justin* (ANF 1:190).

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹Ibid.

¹⁰⁰Justin Martyr, *The Dialogue of Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, with Trypho, a Jew* (ANF 1:194), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.viii.iv.html>.

¹⁰¹A. Cleveland Coxe, “Introductory Note to the Writings of Justin Martyr” (ANF 1:159).

he uses the opportunity to explain the devil and his demons as well as the corresponding aspects of spiritual warfare.

Justin characterizes Satan principally as a liar, “as therefore the devil lied at the beginning, so did he also in the end.”¹⁰² Satan’s battle is clearly to “to deceive and lead astray the mind of man into disobeying the commandments of God, and gradually to darken the hearts of those who would endeavour to serve him, to the forgetting of the true God, but to the adoration of himself as God.”¹⁰³

Martyr describes the call for believers to “pray to be kept by Him from strange, i.e., from wicked and deceitful, spirits.”¹⁰⁴ He reemphasizes the specific needs for continual prayers of protection. He states that before conversion, believers served such demons, but now they have the power of Jesus’ name that “even the demons do fear; and at this day, when they are exorcised in the name of Jesus Christ, crucified under Pontius Pilate, governor of Judæa, they are overcome.”¹⁰⁵ In describing non-believers, Justin categorizes them alongside the demonic, as both refuse to obey the will of God and “do the works of the devil.”¹⁰⁶ In such categorization, he affirms that there is no middle ground or neutral territory in spiritual warfare.

As mentioned in his *Apologies*, Martyr asserts that false religious practices originate with the devil and are but imitations of God’s great work. He points biblically to the Magi in Egypt and the false prophets in Elijah’s days but then connects such false worship to Greek gods such as Bacchus son of Jupiter, Semele, Hercules, Jove of

¹⁰²Justin Martyr, *The Dialogue of Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, with Trypho, a Jew* (ANF 1:206).

¹⁰³Ibid.

¹⁰⁴Justin Martyr, *The Dialogue of Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, with Trypho, a Jew* (ANF 1:209).

¹⁰⁵Ibid.

¹⁰⁶Justin Martyr, *The Dialogue of Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, with Trypho, a Jew* (ANF 1:215).

Alcmene, and Æsculapius. Justin reminds the believer of his authority in Christ when they “exorcise all demons and evil spirits, have them subjected to us.”¹⁰⁷ He holds that this authority to overcome and subdue the evil spirits is effective over “every demon.”¹⁰⁸ Such authority is only definitively extended in the name of Christ, never in the names of “kings, or righteous men, or prophesy, or patriarchs” and only possibly if exorcised in the name of “the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”¹⁰⁹ He again reminds Trypho of how other Jewish and Gentile exorcists attempt exorcism with craft, but to no avail.

Justin Martyr exposes a comprehensive and thoroughly biblical understanding of spiritual warfare. He reveals that demonic possession and exorcism did not cease with the apostolic age but continued into the early church. He emphasizes the power of Christ’s name and the knowledge of truth while condemning human-crafted techniques in spiritual warfare. Although some of Justin’s other writings reveal some spiritual warfare themes, the *Apologies* and *The Dialogue with Trypho* presents an accurate understanding of his views and practices.¹¹⁰

Irenæus

Irenæus (AD 120-202) was a young leader in the church, a student under Polycarp, who quickly rose against the Gnostic heresies.¹¹¹ In his principle work, *Against*

¹⁰⁷Justin Martyr, *The Dialogue of Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, with Trypho, a Jew* (ANF 1:237).

¹⁰⁸Justin Martyr, *The Dialogue of Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, with Trypho, a Jew* (ANF 1:242).

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

¹¹⁰“But since the adversary does not cease to resist many, and uses many and divers arts to ensnare them, that he may seduce the faithful from their faith, and that he may prevent the faithless from believing, it seems to me necessary that we also, being armed with the invulnerable doctrines of the faith, do battle against him in behalf of the weak.” Justin Martyr, *Fragments of the Lost Work of Justin on the Resurrection*, (ANF 1:294), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.viii.viii.html>.

¹¹¹A. Cleveland Coxe, “Introductory Note to Irenæus Against Heresies” (ANF 1:309), accessed

Heresies, Irenæus connects the heresies to the work of the devil to include a similar reference as Justin Martyr did to Simon Menander.¹¹² He points to how Satan is “accustomed to lie against God, for the purpose of leading men astray.”¹¹³ Satan’s work from the beginning was to murder and lie, and “the truth is not in him.”¹¹⁴ The length and subject of Irenæus’ work might lead one to believe he might make more spiritual warfare references. Although Irenæus’ focus is principally on directly addressing the Gnostic heresies, he indicates an understanding of the underlying problem.

Hermas

The Pastor of Hermas (c. AD 160) was “one of the most popular books, if not the most popular book, in the Christian church during the second, third, and fourth centuries. It occupied a position analogous in some respects to that of Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* in modern times.”¹¹⁵ Its authorship is not certain, but its writing was early and its influence was immense. Origen considered it “divinely inspired,” while “Irenæus quotes it as Scripture,” and Eusebius mentions that many considered it an “admirable introduction to the Christian faith.”¹¹⁶

The second book of *The Pastor of Hermas* has three “commandments” with overtly spiritual warfare focused titles. The sixth Commandment is titled, “How to

December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.ix.i.html>.

¹¹²“Thus, then, the mystic priests belonging to this sect both lead profligate lives and practise magical arts, each one to the extent of his ability. They use exorcisms and incantations. Love-potions, too, and charms, as well as those beings who are called ‘Paredri’ (familiaris) and ‘Oniropompi’ (dream-senders), and whatever other curious arts can be had recourse to, are eagerly pressed into their service. They also have an image of Simon fashioned after the likeness of Jupiter, and another of Helena in the shape of Minerva; and these they worship. In fine, they have a name derived from Simon, the author of these most impious.” Irenæus, *Irenæus Against Heresies* (ANF 1:348), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.ix.ii.xxiv.html>.

¹¹³Irenæus, *Irenæus Against Heresies* (ANF 1:552).

¹¹⁴Ibid.

¹¹⁵A. Cleveland Coxe, “Introductory Note to The Pastor of Hermas” (ANF 2:3), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf02.ii.i.html>.

¹¹⁶Ibid.

Recognise the Two Spirits Attendant on Each Man, and How to Distinguish the Suggestions of the One from Those of the Other.” The seventh Commandment is titled, “On Fearing God, and Not Fearing the Devil.” The twelfth Commandment is titled “On the Twofold Desire. The Commandments of God Can Be Kept, and Believers Ought Not to Fear the Devil.”

In the sixth Commandment the writer describes believers as inhabited by two angels, the angel of righteousness and the angel of iniquity. He implores the reader to “understand them, and trust the angel of righteousness; but depart from the angel of iniquity, because his instruction is bad in every deed.”¹¹⁷ Although this commandment seems to imply that demons can possess believers, this commandment is best understood to describe the spiritual battle for our minds. The writer seeks to inspire the reader to awareness of and resistance to Satan’s temptations both in deceit and in behavior.

The writer uses the seventh Commandment to encourage the believer not to fear the devil, “for, fearing the Lord, you will have dominion over the devil, for there is no power in him.”¹¹⁸ He instructs the believer to fear the Lord in such a way that one not only avoids “that which is evil,” but does “that which is good.”¹¹⁹ A proper understanding of the power of the Lord is essential to a biblical understanding and application of the fear of the Lord.

The twelfth Commandment of Hermas again encourages the believer not to fear the devil because he cannot “hold sway over the servants of God, who with all their heart place their hopes in Him.”¹²⁰ He argues that the devil can wrestle against believers but true believers will resist the devil strongly and cannot be overthrown. He states that

¹¹⁷Hermas, *The Pastor of Hermas* (ANF 2:20), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf02.ii.iii.html>.

¹¹⁸Hermas, *The Pastor of Hermas* (ANF 2:25).

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰Hermas, *The Pastor of Hermas* (ANF 2:29).

Satan has no way of entering into (possessing) believers and instead goes into those whom are empty (non-believers).¹²¹ Instead of fearing the devil, the “angel of repentance” reminds believers that he was sent to be with those “who repent with all your heart, and to make you strong in faith.”¹²² In the midst of repentance, there is not only strengthening, but there is healing of “former sins” by Christ.¹²³ No matter the “threats of the devil,” the believer must “fear them not at all, for he is powerless as the sinews of a dead man.”¹²⁴ Apart from Justin Martyr, the writer of *The Pastor of Hermas* provides the most depth and understanding to seeing the spiritual warfare beliefs and practices of the early church.

Tatian

Tatian (AD 110-72) was an Assyrian believer and a student of Justin Martyr who eventually lived in Antioch.¹²⁵ In his *Address of Tatian to the Greeks*, he depicts demons in a frenzied attack against mankind, attacking through attempts to pervert their minds. He describes these demons as sometimes making themselves seen, exhibiting themselves in a way that leads men to fear or honor them. Demons, Tatian holds, “depart in terror” when “smitten by the word of God” which then leads to the sick being healed.¹²⁶ In another section, Tatian describes people entering into relationships with

¹²¹“So also the devil goes to all the servants of God to try them. As many, then, as are full in the faith, resist him strongly, and he withdraws from them, having no way by which he might enter them. He goes, then, to the empty, and finding a way of entrance, into them, he produces in them whatever he wishes, and they become his servants.” Ibid. This quote shows the early church understanding that only non-believers can be demonically possessed/inhabited.

¹²²Ibid.

¹²³Ibid.

¹²⁴Ibid.

¹²⁵A. Cleveland Coxe, “Introductory Note to Tatian the Assyrian” (*ANF* 2:61), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf02.iii.i.html>.

¹²⁶Tatian, *Address of Tatian to the Greeks* (*ANF* 2:65), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf02.iii.ii.html>.

visiting demons. Those struggling with sickness, love, hatred, and revenge seek demonic assistance under false promises and assurances.¹²⁷

Tertullian

Tertullian (c.AD 145-220) was an early and extensively published author in the church.¹²⁸ In his premier work, *Apology*, he affirms the existence of demons, saying that they are well known by both believers and philosophers. He mentions Socrates himself as self-attesting to a relationship with a demonic spirit from childhood.¹²⁹ He emphasizes their subtleness while unashamedly seeking the ruin and destruction of mankind through disease, calamity, and temptations. He states that “we are not cognizant of their actions save by its effects” due to their invisible and intangible nature.¹³⁰ He affirms that the only “authority and power we have over them is from our naming the name of Christ, and recalling to their memory the woes with which God threatens them at the hands of Christ.”¹³¹ It is with this fear of Christ’s judgment that demons do become “subject to the servants of God” and “at our touch and breathing . . . they leave at our command the bodies they have entered, unwilling, and distressed, and before your very eyes put to an open shame.”¹³² Historian, Henry Kelly, explains that “No one was more aware than Tertullian of the demonic influences that surrounded the people of his day.”¹³³ Tertullian, in his lengthy description on repentance and baptism, places great emphasis on the

¹²⁷Tatian, *Address of Tatian to the Greeks* (ANF 2:72).

¹²⁸Allan Menzies, “Introductory Note to Tertullian” (ANF 3:3), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf03.iv.ii.html>.

¹²⁹Tertullian, *The Apology*, (ANF 3:17), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf03.iv.iii.html>.

¹³⁰Ibid.

¹³¹Tertullian, *The Apology*, (ANF 3:36).

¹³²Ibid.

¹³³Henry A. Kelly, *The Devil at Baptism: Ritual, Theology, and Drama* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2004), 107.

confession of sins.¹³⁴ Kelly summarizes Tertullian’s understanding of how to fight the demonic, writing,

Tertullian did not indicate the existence of, or feel the need for, any special rite designed to set men free from the demonic influence when they became members of the Christian community—in addition, that is to the act of renunciation, and, of course, baptism itself.¹³⁵

Tertullian’s description of exorcism is consistent with an emphasis on the power of Christ’s name with minimal focus on human power techniques. The power lies in the truth of God contained in the name of Christ. The vast scope of Tertullian’s writings necessitates much greater attention than this section allows.

Minucius Felix

Minucius Felix was a contemporary of Tertullian who penned *Octavius* (c.AD 210) as a feigned dialogue between a pagan and a Christian.¹³⁶ In his writing, he describes the work of demons at several points, describing both their possession and mental attacks.¹³⁷ He also describes in detail how the demons are connected with idols, statues, mediums, oracles, and predictive signs.¹³⁸ He argues that demons “are both deceived, and they deceive.”¹³⁹ These false spirits “weigh men downwards from heaven,

¹³⁴“They who are about to enter baptism ought to pray with repeated prayers, fasts, and bendings of the knee, and vigils all the night through, and with the confession of all bygone sins, that they may express the meaning even of the baptism of John: ‘They were baptized,’ saith (the Scripture), ‘confessing their own sins.’ To us it is matter for thankfulness if we do now publicly confess our iniquities or our turpitudes: for we do at the same time both make satisfaction for our former sins, by mortification of our flesh and spirit, and lay beforehand the foundation of defences against the temptations which will closely follow. ‘Watch and pray,’ saith (the Lord), ‘lest ye fall into temptation.’” Tertullian, *On Baptism* (ANF 3:669), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf03.vi.iii.i.html>. Corresponding scriptures are found in Matthew 3:6 and Mark 1:5.

¹³⁵Kelly, *The Devil at Baptism*, 107.

¹³⁶A. Cleveland Coxe, “Introductory Note to Minucius Felix” (ANF 4:169), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf04.iv.ii.html>.

¹³⁷Minucius Felix, *Octavius* (ANF 4:173), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf04.iv.ii.html>.

¹³⁸Minucius Felix, *Octavius* (ANF 4:190).

¹³⁹*Ibid.*

and call them away from the true God to material things.”¹⁴⁰ Felix vividly describes demonic possession, exorcism, and dialogue as well, explaining how they have communicated themselves as the gods of the Greeks and seek to keep unbelievers away from Christians.¹⁴¹ Overall, Felix describes a plethora of power-encounter type approaches to spiritual warfare while reinforcing that their goal is to deceive and distract humanity away from the truth of God.

Origen

Origen (AD 185–254) was an early leader of the church at Alexandria, helping to develop many of the foundational doctrines of the early church. Although some of his hypotheses would later be exposed as incorrect and heretical, his writings and teachings are of immense value to understanding the theology of the early church.¹⁴² In his *Origen de Principiis*, he describes the devil and his demons and how “the Church has laid down

¹⁴⁰Ibid.

¹⁴¹“They disturb the life, render all men unquiet; creeping also secretly into human bodies, with subtlety, as being spirits, they feign diseases, alarm the minds, wrench about the limbs; that they may constrain men to worship them, being gorged with the fumes of altars or the sacrifices of cattle, that, by remitting what they had bound, they may seem to have cured it. These raging maniacs also, whom you see rush about in public, are moreover themselves prophets without a temple; thus they rage, thus they rave, thus they are whirled around. In them also there is a like instigation of the demon, but there is a dissimilar occasion for their madness. . . . A great many, even some of your own people, know all those things that the demons themselves confess concerning themselves, as often as they are driven by us from bodies by the torments of our words and by the fires of our prayers. Saturn himself, and Serapis, and Jupiter, and whatever demons you worship, overcome by pain, speak out what they are; and assuredly they do not lie to their own discredit, especially when any of you are standing by. Since they themselves are the witnesses that they are demons, believe them when they confess the truth of themselves; for when abjured by the only and true God, unwillingly the wretched beings shudder in their bodies, and either at once leap forth, or vanish by degrees, as the faith of the sufferer assists or the grace of the healer inspires. Thus they fly from Christians when near at hand, whom at a distance they harassed by your means in their assemblies. And thus, introduced into the minds of the ignorant, they secretly sow there a hatred of us by means of fear. . . . Thus they take possession of the minds and obstruct the hearts, that men may begin to hate us before they know us; lest, if known, they should either imitate us, or not be able to condemn us.” Ibid.

¹⁴²A. Cleveland Coxe, “Introductory Note to the Works of Origen” (*ANF* 4:223), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf04.vi.ii.i.html>.

that these beings exist” but “had not explained with sufficient clearness” what they are or how they exist.¹⁴³ Origen describes a renunciation of the devil in baptism,

We come to that moment when we made these promises, this declaration to the devil. Each of the faithful recalls when he came to the waters of baptism, when he received the first seal of the faith and approach the fount of salvation, the words that he pronounced then; he recalls his renunciation of the devil. He promised to resort to none of his pomps and his works and not to submit to any of his servitudes and his pleasures.¹⁴⁴

In *Contra Celsus*, Origen references the exorcisms that Christ performed and refers to how Christians of the day powerfully performed exorcisms through the “grace which is in the word of Christ,” rather than through the wisdom and learning of men.¹⁴⁵ He continues on, emphasizing the power of prayer in exorcism of both humans and animals.¹⁴⁶ Origen also directly connects false religions and their worship in idols, altars, and temples to direct demonic worship.¹⁴⁷

Cyprian

Cyprian (AD 200-258) was the “spiritual son and pupil of Tertullian” but also known as the “Ignatius of the West.”¹⁴⁸ In his *Treatises*, he begins by emphasizing the

¹⁴³Origen, *Origen de Principiis*” (ANF 4:239), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf04.vi.v.i.html>.

¹⁴⁴Origen, *Homilies on Numbers* 12.4 in Everett Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries* (Grand Rapids; Eerdmans, 2009), 445.

¹⁴⁵“Because for the most part it is unlettered persons who perform this work; thus making manifest the grace which is in the word of Christ, and the despicable weakness of demons, which, in order to be overcome and driven out of the bodies and souls of men, do not require the power and wisdom of those who are mighty in argument, and most learned in matters of faith.” Origen, *Contra Celsus* (ANF 4:395, 613), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf04.vi.ix.i.i.html>.

¹⁴⁶“For ourselves, so far are we from wishing to serve demons, that by the use of prayers and other means which we learn from Scripture, we drive them out of the souls of men, out of places where they have established themselves, and even sometimes from the bodies of animals; for even these creatures often suffer from injuries inflicted upon them by demons.” Origen, *Contra Celsus* (ANF 4:639). This is the only reference that suggests demonic establishment over a place.

¹⁴⁷“Hence we are determined to avoid the worship of demons even as we would avoid death; and we hold that the worship, which is supposed among the Greeks to be rendered to gods at the altars, and images, and temples, is in reality offered to demons.” Origen, *Contra Celsus* (ANF 4:640).

¹⁴⁸A. Cleveland Coxe, “Introductory Notice to Cyprian” (ANF 5:263), accessed December 30,

unity of the church. He argues that as Satan's schemes are thwarted, such as when Christians leave false religions, he attacks in new ways through infiltration and division. Cyprian specifically describes these enemy attacks as occurring through "flattering and deceiving" and by Satan equipping his own ministers to invade the Christian church.¹⁴⁹ Cyprian's awareness of the reality of spiritual warfare continues to reveal itself throughout his work in reference to the enemy and his ongoing, strategic attacks.

Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers

Although the focus of this section of the book is on the early church era, it is informative to see how the spiritual warfare understanding of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers. This perspective is helpful in determining the continuation or cessation of particular aspects of spiritual warfare.

Eusebius

Eusebius of Cæsarea (c.AD 260-340) was especially known for his historical accounts of the early church.¹⁵⁰ His writings offer early and extensive accounts of the office of exorcist when referencing the existence of "52 exorcists" during the time of a Roman bishop named Cornelius (c.AD 250).¹⁵¹

Novatian's exorcism and baptism. Eusebius references how a convert named Novatian, who would eventually become a presbyter, was delivered of Satan's possession by the exorcists.¹⁵² Eusebius describes Novatian's possession spatially, saying Satan

2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf05.iv.ii.html>.

¹⁴⁹Cyprian, *The Treatises of Cyprian* (ANF 5:421), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf05.iv.v.i.html>.

¹⁵⁰Arthur C. McGiffert "The Life and writings of Eusebius of Cæsarea" (NPNF² 1:3), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf201.iii.iii.i.ii.html>.

¹⁵¹Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:287), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf201.iii.xi.xliii.html>.

¹⁵²"but Satan, who entered and dwelt in him for a long time, became the occasion of his

“entered and dwelt in him for a long time” but does not relate how that possession manifested itself. He also describes how following his exorcism he became sick to the point of death. Novatian’s illness continued, but was relieved immediately following his baptism which is described as “irregular” due to it being conducted by affusion as a “clinical baptism.”¹⁵³

The office of exorcist. Eusebius also references exorcists being persecuted along with other leaders of the churches in “Asia Minor and Syria during the time of the emperor Diocletian (c.AD 284-305).”¹⁵⁴ An explanatory note accompanying this writing explains that “although we find exorcism very frequently referred to by the Fathers of the second century, there seems to have been no such office until the third century, the present being the earliest distinct reference to it.”¹⁵⁵ This nineteenth century historian continues his explanation by stating, “In the fourth century we find the office in all parts of the Church East and West. Their duty was to take charge of those supposed to be

believing. Being delivered by the exorcists, he fell into a severe sickness; and as he seemed about to die, he received baptism by affusion, on the bed where he lay; if indeed we can say that such a one did receive it.” Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:288).

¹⁵³“There is no reason to doubt that Novatian received clinical baptism, as here stated by Cornelius. This does not imply, as is commonly supposed, that he was of heathen parentage, for many Christians postponed baptism as long as possible, in order not to sacrifice baptismal grace by sins committed after baptism. We do not know whether his parents were heathen or Christians. Upon the objection to Novatian’s ordination, based upon his irregular baptism.” Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:737).

¹⁵⁴Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions*, 112. “What was to be seen after this exceeds all description. A vast multitude were imprisoned in every place; and the prisons everywhere, which had long before been prepared for murderers and robbers of graves, were filled with bishops, presbyters and deacons, readers and exorcists.” Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:328).

¹⁵⁵“Explanatory Note number 2125: ‘The Exorcists likewise constituted one of the inferior orders of the clergy; but although we find exorcism very frequently referred to by the Fathers of the second century, there seems to have been no such office until the third century, the present being the earliest distinct reference to it. In the fourth century we find the office in all parts of the Church East and West. Their duty was to take charge of those supposed to be possessed of an evil spirit; to pray with them, care for them, and exorcise the demon when possible.’ See Bingham, *ibid.* chap. 4.” Arthur C. McGiffert “The Life and writings of Eusebius of Cæsarea” (NPNF² 1:3), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf201.iii.iii.i.ii.html>.

possessed of an evil spirit; to pray with them, care for them, and exorcise the demon when possible.”¹⁵⁶

Matrydom of exorcists. Eusebius graphically describes this time of persecution, explaining,

What was to be seen after this exceeds all description. A vast multitude were imprisoned in every place; and the prisons everywhere, which had long before been prepared for murderers and robbers of graves, were filled with bishops, presbyters and deacons, readers and exorcists, so that room was no longer left in them for those condemned for crimes.¹⁵⁷

Eusebius’ description of these martyrs is specific, naming and describing who they were. One of the first martyrs was Procopius who was “a lector, interpreter, and exorcist in the church.”¹⁵⁸ Alphæus was another martyr who was “a reader and exorcist in the church of Cæsarea.”¹⁵⁹

One of the more graphic accounts is of Romanus, another exorcist who also served as a deacon in the parish of Cæsarea. Romanus’s execution in Antioch is described with great detail for his level of boldness and courage in facing death,

Being arrested for his boldness, he proved a most noble witness of the truth, if there ever was one. For when the judge informed him that he was to die by fire, he received the sentence with cheerful countenance and most ready mind, and was led away. When he was bound to the stake, and the wood piled up around him, as they were awaiting the arrival of the emperor before lighting the fire, he cried, “Where is the fire for me?” . . . Having said this, he was summoned again before the emperor, and subjected to the unusual torture of having his tongue cut out. But he endured this with fortitude and showed to all by his deeds that the Divine Power is present with those who endure any hardship whatever for the sake of religion, lightening their sufferings and strengthening their zeal. When he learned of this strange mode

¹⁵⁶Ibid.

¹⁵⁷Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:849).

¹⁵⁸“The first of the martyrs of Palestine was Procopius . . . We learn from the longer account that he was a lector, interpreter, and exorcist in the church, and that he was exceedingly ascetic in his manner of life.” Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:886).

¹⁵⁹Explanatory Note: “We learn from the Syriac version that Zacchæus was a deacon of the church of Gadara, and that Alphæus belonged to a noble family of the city of Eleutheropolis, and was a reader and exorcist in the church of Cæsarea.” Arthur C. McGiffert “Explanatory Note” in Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:888).

of punishment, the noble man was not terrified, but put out his tongue readily, and offered it with the greatest alacrity to those who cut it off.¹⁶⁰

The specific examples and detail descriptions offered by Eusebius gives a brief glimpse at the courage and examples of those who served Christ as exorcists in the early church.

Demonic sacrifices. Eusebius also helpfully provides examples of the ongoing demon worship during the time of the early church. He describes a human sacrifice at Cæsarea Philippi when a Christian named Astyrius boldly intervened for God to rebuke the demon in order to “bring the men’s delusion to an end.” Immediately following his request to God, his prayer was publicly answered as “the sacrifice floated on the surface of the fountain. And thus the miracle departed; and no wonder was ever afterward performed at the place.”¹⁶¹

Eusebius describes two young virgin girls who were seized by demon worshippers to be raped, but escaped and committed suicide rather than “surrender their souls to the slavery of demons.”¹⁶² He continues to describe “two other virgins in the same city of Antioch who served God in all things” but were captured and “the

¹⁶⁰“What occurred to Romanus on the same day at Antioch, is also worthy of record. For he was a native of Palestine, a deacon and exorcist in the parish of Cæsarea.” Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:889).

¹⁶¹“Among these is also the following wonder. At Cæsarea Philippi, which the Phoenicians call Paneas, springs are shown at the foot of the Mountain Panius, out of which the Jordan flows. They say that on a certain feast day, a victim was thrown in, and that through the power of the demon it marvelously disappeared and that which happened was a famous wonder to those who were present. Astyrius was once there when these things were done, and seeing the multitude astonished at the affair, he pitied their delusion; and looking up to heaven he supplicated the God over all through Christ, that he would rebuke the demon who deceived the people, and bring the men’s delusion to an end. And they say that when he had prayed thus, immediately the sacrifice floated on the surface of the fountain. And thus the miracle departed; and no wonder was ever afterward performed at the place.” Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:783).

¹⁶²“For, she said, that to surrender their souls to the slavery of demons was worse than all deaths and destruction; and she set before them the only deliverance from all these things,—escape to Christ. . . . cast themselves into a river which was flowing by. Thus they destroyed themselves.” Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:861-62). The explanatory note to this passage sheds light that this is a unique scenario in the early church where suicide is described in a positive light. In other places it is universally condemned.

worshippers of demons commanded to cast them into the sea. And this was done to them.”¹⁶³

Eusebius describes a Roman Emperor, Maxentius, who “resorted to magic. And in his divinations he cut open pregnant women, and again inspected the bowels of newborn infants. He slaughtered lions, and performed various execrable acts to invoke demons and avert war.”¹⁶⁴ Another Roman leader from the East, Caesar Maximinus, is described as honoring his chief of sorcerers and magicians “with the highest rank. Becoming exceedingly timid and superstitious, he valued greatly the error of idols and demons. Indeed, without soothsayers and oracles he did not venture to move even a finger, so to speak.”¹⁶⁵

Apphianus: Gospel proclamation in face of demonic worship. Under the same ruler, the population of Cæsarea was ordered to offer sacrifices, with each person’s name being called individually to ensure compliance in the year AD 306.¹⁶⁶ Eusebius points out how a fearless youth,

while no one was aware of his intentions, eluded both us who lived in the house with him and the whole band of soldiers that surrounded the governor, and rushed up to Urbanus as he was offering libations, and fearlessly seizing him by the right hand, straightway put a stop to his sacrificing, and skillfully and persuasively, with a

¹⁶³“Thus they destroyed themselves. But there were two other virgins in the same city of Antioch who served God in all things, and were true sisters, illustrious in family and distinguished in life, young and blooming, serious in mind, pious in deportment, and admirable for zeal. As if the earth could not bear such excellence, the worshippers of demons commanded to cast them into the sea. And this was done to them.” Ibid.

¹⁶⁴Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:871).

¹⁶⁵Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:872).

¹⁶⁶“For in the second attack upon us under Maximinus, in the third year of the persecution, edicts of the tyrant were issued for the first time, commanding that the rulers of the cities should diligently and speedily see to it that all the people offered sacrifices. Throughout the city of Cæsarea, by command of the governor, the heralds were summoning men, women, and children to the temples of the idols, and besides this, the chiliarchs were calling out each one by name from a roll, and an immense crowd of the wicked were rushing together from all quarters.” Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:895).

certain divine inspiration, exhorted him to abandon his delusion, because it was not well to forsake the one and only true God, and sacrifice to idols and demons.¹⁶⁷

This young man's name is revealed to be Apphianus.¹⁶⁸ His story continues that after proclaiming the gospel to Governor Urbanus, he was seized, tortuously beaten, and thrown into prison along with his friends.¹⁶⁹ Apphianus was again tortured and beaten for a night and day in an effort to get him to recant his faith.¹⁷⁰ Steadfast in his faith, he was then was burned alive but still refused to recant his profession of faith.¹⁷¹ Finally, his tormentors cast him into the ocean and the crowd witnessed a "marvelous sight" when,

But what happened immediately after this will scarcely be believed by those who did not see it. Although we realize this, yet we must record the event, of which to speak plainly, all the inhabitants of Cæsarea were witnesses. For truly there was no age but beheld this marvelous sight. For as soon as they had cast this truly sacred and thrice-blessed youth into the fathomless depths of the sea, an uncommon commotion and disturbance agitated the sea and all the shore about it, so that the land and the entire city were shaken by it. And at the same time with this wonderful and sudden perturbation, the sea threw out before the gates of the city the body of the divine martyr, as if unable to endure it.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁷Ibid.

¹⁶⁸"Such was the death of the wonderful Apphianus. It occurred on the second day of the month Xanthicus, which is the fourth day before the Nones of April, on the day of preparation." Ibid.

¹⁶⁹"Thereupon, he of whom we are speaking, and that instantly, as might have been expected after so bold a deed, was torn by the governor and those who were with him as if by wild beasts. And having endured manfully innumerable blows over his entire body, he was straightway cast into prison." Ibid.

¹⁷⁰"There he was stretched by the tormentor with both his feet in the stocks for a night and a day; and the next day he was brought before the judge. As they endeavored to force him to surrender, he exhibited all constancy under suffering and terrible tortures. His sides were torn, not once, or twice, but many times, to the bones and the very bowels; and he received so many blows on his face and neck that those who for a long time had been well acquainted with him could not recognize his swollen face." Ibid.

¹⁷¹"But as he would not yield under this treatment, the torturers, as commanded, covered his feet with linen cloths soaked in oil and set them on fire. No word can describe the agonies which the blessed one endured from this. For the fire consumed his flesh and penetrated to his bones, so that the humors of his body were melted and oozed out and dropped down like wax. But as he was not subdued by this, his adversaries being defeated and unable to comprehend his superhuman constancy, cast him again into prison. A third time he was brought before the judge; and having witnessed the same profession, being half dead, he was finally thrown into the depths of the sea." Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:896).

¹⁷²Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:896).

This martyrdom of a youth, in defiance of “idol and demon” worship in Cæsarea, attested to by one of the most well-known church historians, is important to recognize and remember. These martyrdoms attest to the reality of the demonic and the determination of believers to remain faithful to God, no matter the cost to themselves.

Demonic immorality and Constantine’s fidelity. Eusebius also specifically mentions Emperor Constantine’s destruction of a particular idol temple at Aphaca, whose demon was known by its name Venus, and whose focus was on “destroying men’s bodies with effeminacy.” Eusebius explains,

It was a school of wickedness for all the votaries of impurity, and such as destroyed their bodies with effeminacy. Here men undeserving of the name forgot the dignity of their sex, and propitiated the demon by their effeminate conduct; here too unlawful commerce of women and adulterous intercourse, with other horrible and infamous practices, were perpetrated in this temple as in a place beyond the scope and restraint of law.¹⁷³

Constantine is also described as ordering the destruction of a temple dedicated towards the healing demon Æsculapius at Ægae in Cilicia along with many other temples dedicated towards demons.¹⁷⁴ Eusebius helpfully highlights and praises Constantine’s obedience to and love towards God in describing his actions in contrast to his predecessors who worshiped and celebrated the demonic.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:1344).

¹⁷⁴Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:1345).

¹⁷⁵“At a time when four emperors shared the administration of the Roman Empire, Constantius alone, following a course of conduct different from that pursued by his colleagues, entered into the friendship of the Supreme God. For while they besieged and wasted the churches of God, leveling them to the ground, and obliterating the very foundations of the houses of prayer, he kept his hands pure from their abominable impiety, and never in any respect resembled them. They polluted their provinces by the indiscriminate slaughter of godly men and women; but he kept his soul free from the stain of this crime. They, involved in the mazes of impious idolatry, enthralled first themselves, and then all under their authority, in bondage to the errors of evil demons, while he at the same time originated the profoundest peace throughout his dominions, and secured to his subjects the privilege of celebrating without hindrance the worship of God.” Eusebius Pamphilus, *Ecclesiastical History* 4:43, CCEL 1165; “And he alone of all who have wielded the imperial power of Rome, being honored by the Supreme Sovereign with a reign of three decennial periods, now celebrates this festival, not, as his ancestors might have done, in honor of infernal demons, or the apparitions of seducing spirits, or of the fraud and deceitful arts of impious men; but as an act of thanksgiving to him by whom he has thus been honored, and in acknowledgment of the

Athanasius and Cyril

Athanasius of Alexandria (c. AD 298-373) was an early church father especially known for his role in the Arian controversy at the Council of Nicæa (AD 325).¹⁷⁶ He makes particular reference to the symbol of Christ's cross as a form of power against demons.¹⁷⁷ Cyril of Jerusalem (c. AD 313-386) also makes similar references to the power of the sign of the cross.¹⁷⁸ Cyril mentions "exorcised oil" as "a charm to drive away every trace of hostile influence" in a way that is similar to "the breathing of the saints and the invocation of the Name of God."¹⁷⁹

Ambrose

Ambrose (AD 340-397) was an archbishop of Milan, referred to by Augustine as "a faithful teacher of the Church, and even at the risk of his life a most strenuous defender of Catholic truth."¹⁸⁰ In a lengthy and detailed description of the church's practice of baptism, Ambrose makes mention of an interesting renunciation component to the process of baptism. Ambrose describes the new believer, immediately before baptism, facing west and renouncing "the devil and his works, the world with its luxury

blessings he has received at his hands. He does not, in imitation of ancient usage, defile his imperial mansions with blood and gore, nor propitiate the infernal deities with fire and smoke, and sacrificial offerings; but dedicates to the universal Sovereign a pleasant and acceptable sacrifice, even his own imperial soul, and a mind truly fitted for the service of God." Eusebius, *The Church History of Eusebius* (NPNF² 1:1487-88).

¹⁷⁶Archibald Robertson, "Life of St. Athanasius and Account of Arianism" (NPNF² 4:14), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf204.v.ii.i.html>.

¹⁷⁷Athanasius, *One the Incarnation of the Word* (NPNF² 4:36), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf204.vii.ii.html>.

¹⁷⁸Cyril, *The Catechetical Lectures of S. Cyril, Archbishop of Jerusalem* (NPNF² 7:82), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf207.ii.xvii.html>.

¹⁷⁹"For as the breathing of the saints, and the invocation of the Name of God, like fiercest flame, scorch and drive out evil spirits, so also this exorcised oil receives such virtue by the invocation of God and by prayer, as not only to burn and cleanse away the traces of sins, but also to chase away all the invisible powers of the evil one." Cyril, *The Catechetical Lectures of S. Cyril, Archbishop of Jerusalem* (NPNF² 7:147).

¹⁸⁰Philip Schaff, "Prolegomena to St. Ambrose" (NPNF² 10:12), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf210.iii.html>.

and pleasures.” After this renunciation towards the devil, “as it were to his face,” Ambrose describes the initiated Christian turning to face to the east and “to Christ, and beholds Him face to face” as he prepares to enter into baptism.¹⁸¹ This renunciation is similar in form to exorcism and renunciation rites communicated by Tertullian (c.AD 145-220), Hippolytus (AD 170-236), Origen (AD 185–254), Cyprian (AD 200-58), and Augustine (AD 354-430).¹⁸²

Augustine

Augustine (AD 354-430) was “the greatest and most influential of all the Christian Fathers.”¹⁸³ His impact on church theology was monumental. As the church matured and expanded, his writings reveal the ongoing consideration and practice of spiritual warfare. In his message, *On the Creed: a Sermon to the Catechumens*, he references the ongoing process of exorcism, stating that “even little children undergo exsufflation, exorcism; to drive away from them the power of the devil their enemy, which deceived man that it might possess mankind.”¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹“After this the Holy of holies was opened to you, you entered the sanctuary of regeneration; recall what you were asked, and remember what you answered. You renounced the devil and his works, the world with its luxury and pleasures. That utterance of yours is preserved not in the tombs of the dead, but in the book of the living. . . . You entered, then, that you might discern your adversary, whom you were to renounce as it were to his face, then you turned to the east; for he who renounces the devil turns to Christ, and beholds Him face to face.” Ambrose, *On the Mysteries* (NPNF² 10:315), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf210.iv.v.html>.

¹⁸²“And a deacon should carry the oil of exorcism and stand on the left hand of the presbyter, and another deacon shall take the oil of the thanksgiving and stand on the right hand of the presbyter. And when the presbyter has taken hold of each one of those who will be baptized, let him command him to renounce [*apostassesthai*], saying: ‘I renounce thee, Satan, and all thy service and all thy works.’ And when he has renounced all these, let him anoint him with the oil of exorcism, saying, ‘Let all spirits remove far from thee.’ And then let him give him to the bishop named, or [to] the presbyter who stands at the water for baptizing.” Hippolytus, *Apostolic Traditions* in Kelly, *The Devil at Baptism*, 89; “The idea of renunciation is, of course, present in all religious conversions and initiations. When a person turns from one form of life to embrace another, the old ways must necessarily be rejected, especially those practices most inimical to the new beliefs and style of life.” Kelly, *The Devil at Baptism*, 94-105.

¹⁸³Philip Schaff, “Preface to The Confessions and Letters of Saint Augustine” (NPNF¹ 1:5), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf101.ii.html>.

¹⁸⁴Augustine, *On the Creed: a Sermon to the Catechumens* (NPNF¹ 3:370), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf103.iv.vii.ii.html>.

In *The City of God*, Augustine describes demons as “false and deceitful mediators” who seek to turn Christians “aside and hinder our spiritual progress; they do not help us towards God, but rather prevent us from reaching Him.”¹⁸⁵ Augustine argues that spiritual warfare not only prevents salvation, but also prevents sanctification. These brief references represent a much wider collection of Augustine’s theological and practical consideration of spiritual warfare.

John Chrysostom

John Chrysostom (AD 347-404) is argued to be “the greatest pulpit orator and commentator of the Greek Church, and still deservedly enjoys the highest honor in the whole Christian world.”¹⁸⁶ In his *Treatise on the Christian Priesthood*, Chrysostom highlights the importance of understanding the spiritual warfare that rages around humanity. He describes a massive and comprehensive military battle in human terminology, only to relate that if one could see the “devil’s most gloomy battle array” they would realize it to be a “far greater and more formidable conflict.”¹⁸⁷ He argues that no man must be unaware of “the wounds given by the devil” lest “his danger becomes the greater for his insensibility.”¹⁸⁸

Chrysostom refers to demons as “unclean spirits” that “will not cease assaulting to the last breath” and as creatures that hold “many forms of craft and deceit.”¹⁸⁹ He holds that humans have two options in life, “either to fall and perish

¹⁸⁵Augustine, *The City of God* (NPNF¹ 2:176), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf102.iv.IX.18.html>.

¹⁸⁶Chrysostom, *Prolegomena* (NPNF¹ 9:6), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf109.iii.ii.html>.

¹⁸⁷Chrysostom, *Treatises Concerning the Christian Priesthood* (NPNF¹ 9:74), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf109.iv.viii.html>.

¹⁸⁸Ibid.

¹⁸⁹Chrysostom, *Treatises Concerning the Christian Priesthood* (NPNF¹ 9:74).

unarmed, or to stand equipped and ever watchful.”¹⁹⁰ Chrysostom continues to elaborate on the devil and his demons, explaining that he gives so much attention to this doctrine because it “is full of security for you. For he is an enemy and a foe, and it is a great security to know clearly, the tactics of your enemies.” He describes spiritual warfare as “not ordinary matters” but a complicated battlefield that pits the “faithful against unbelievers” but also “the faithful against the faithful.”¹⁹¹ The controversial nature of spiritual warfare is one which begs the depth of consideration that Chrysostom gives it. In series of sermons on demons, Chrysostom communicates,

alternately the note of warning and encouragement,—warning against that weakness, indolence, languor of moral purpose which occasions a fall,—encouragement to use to the full all the powers with which man is gifted, in reliance on God’s forbearance and love, and on His willingness to help those who do not despair of themselves.¹⁹²

The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers communicate a biblically balanced reminder and warning of the importance of understanding spiritual warfare. Their descriptions are in line with those of the early church era.

The Seven Ecumenical Councils

In addition to looking at the early church fathers for insight into their understanding of the theology and practice of spiritual warfare, one can also look to early church doctrine. This doctrine is often best seen through the first seven ecumenical councils: First Council of Nicaea (AD 325), First Council of Constantinople (AD 381), Council of Ephesus (AD 431), Council of Chalcedon (AD 451), Second Council of Constantinople (AD 553), Third Council of Constantinople (AD 680), and Second Council of Nicaea (AD 787).

¹⁹⁰Ibid.

¹⁹¹Chrysostom, *Three Homilies Concerning the Power of Demons* (NPNF¹ 9:178), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf109.x.ii.html>.

¹⁹²W. R. W. Stephens, “Introduction to The Three Homilies Concerning the Power of Demons” (NPNF¹ 9:177), accessed December 30, 2013.

The Canons of the Holy and Altogether August Apostles is a collection of early church law, most of which are prior to AD 300. In one of these early canons, a prohibition is given against clergymen with “devils.”¹⁹³ At the Synod of Laodicea (AD 363), there is a prohibition given against the clergy and priesthood practicing magic, enchantment, astrology, or math. Clergy are also prohibited from making “what are called amulets, which are chains for their own souls.”¹⁹⁴ *The Canons of the Two Hundred Holy and Blessed Fathers Who Met at Ephesus* (AD 431) describe and condemn a Messalian sect that believed “that everyone inherited from his ancestors a demon.”¹⁹⁵ The Canons of the Council of Orange (AD 529) addressed the controversy between Augustine and Pelagius in salvation. In its seventh canon, they assert that a false understanding of agency in salvation occurs when one “is led astray by a heretical spirit.”¹⁹⁶

At the fifth ecumenical council, The Second Council of Constantinople (AD 553), Origen is anathematized regarding some of his particular views regarding

¹⁹³“If anyone has a devil, let him not be made a clergyman, neither let him pray with the faithful; but if he be freed, let him be received into communion, and if he is worthy he may be ordained.” *The Canons of the Holy and Altogether August Apostles* (NPNF² 14:594), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.xvii.iv.html>.

¹⁹⁴“The Anathematizations of Emperor Justinian Against Origen . . . V. If anyone shall say that a psychic (ψυχικήν) condition has come from an angelic or archangelic state, and moreover that a demoniac and a human condition has come from a psychic condition, and that from a human state they may become again angels and demons, and that each order of heavenly virtues is either all from those below or from those above, or from those above and below: let him be anathema. . . VI. If anyone shall say that there is a twofold race of demons, of which the one includes the souls of men and the other the superior spirits who fell to this . . . VII. If anyone says or thinks that Christ the Lord in a future time will be crucified for demons as he was for men, let him be anathema. . . IX. If anyone says or thinks that the punishment of demons and of impious men is only temporary, and will one day have an end, and that a restoration (ἀποκατάστασις) will take place of demons and of impious men, let him be anathema.” *The Canons of the Synod Held in the City of Laodicea, in Phrygia Pacatiana, in which Many Blessed Fathers from Divers Provinces of Asia Were Gathered Together* (NPNF² 14:151), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.viii.vii.iii.xli.html>.

¹⁹⁵*Note on the Messalians or Massalians* (NPNF² 14:241), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.x.xvi.xvi.html>.

¹⁹⁶*Canons of the Council of Orange*, Bible Study Tools, accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/creeds-confessions/creeds/canons-of-the-council-of-orange.html>.

demons.¹⁹⁷ A continuation of the Sixth Ecumenical Council, The Canons of the Council in Trullo, met in approximately AD 691. One of their canons describes the punishment of those who feign demonic possessions and manifestations, stating that “they should be subjected to afflictions and hardships of the same kind as those to which they who are truly demoniacally possessed.”¹⁹⁸ A 12th century commentator on this canon, John Zonaras, says that even in his day people made the same claim to demonic possession.¹⁹⁹ An additional canon from Trullo states that those “who tell fortunes and fates, and genealogy . . . those who are called expellers of clouds, enchanter, amulet-givers, and soothsayers” should be thrown out of the church.²⁰⁰

The Epitome of the Definition of the Iconoclastic Conciliabulum held in Constantinople (AD 754) represented that the introduction of icon worship through the pictures of the Saints was “introduced by the devil” and was not to be followed.²⁰¹ In the seventh ecumenical council at the Second Council of Nicaea (AD 787), bishop Basil of Ancyra asks to be restored to fellowship while resisting future “fraud of the devil.”²⁰² He mentions the “grace” bestowed by the Apostles and Fathers “even down to us today” for “the healing of diseases and the curing of sicknesses and the casting out of devils.”²⁰³

¹⁹⁷*The Anathematism of the Emperor Justinian Against Origen (NPNF² 14:320)*, accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.xii.x.html>.

¹⁹⁸*The Canons of the Council in Trullo (NPNF² 14:392)*, accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.xiv.iii.lxi.html>.

¹⁹⁹John Zonaras, “Ancient Epitome of Canon LX in The Canons of the Council in Trullo” (*NPNF² 14:392*), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.xiv.iii.lxi.html>.

²⁰⁰*The Canons of the Council in Trullo (NPNF² 14:393)*.

²⁰¹*The Epitome of the Definition of the Iconoclastic Conciliabulum held in Constantinople (A.D. 754) (NPNF² 14:543)*, accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.xvi.x.html>.

²⁰²*The Seventh Ecumenical Council. The Second Council of Nice. Extracts from the Acts (NPNF² 14:533)*, accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.xvi.v.html>.

²⁰³*Ibid.*

The Protestant Reformation Forward

During the Protestant Reformation, occasional references to spiritual warfare are seen through some of the church's leaders, confessions, and catechisms. Martin Luther (AD 1517) suggests that evil "is the pure work of the devil" and acts through human devices such as "fire-brands, bullets, torches, spears, and swords," but only "where God permits" and emphasizes repentance as a crucial element in the life of believers.²⁰⁴ In *The Augsburg Confession* (AD 1530), Philip Melancthon writes that the "Cause of Sin" is the "will of the wicked, of the devil and ungodly men."²⁰⁵

In *The Geneva Confession* (AD 1536), John Calvin labels Catholic churches as "synagogues of the devil" since "the Gospel is not declared, heard, and received."²⁰⁶ John Calvin, in his *Institutes* (AD 1536), makes many references to spiritual warfare, to include descriptions of the great number of demons and Satan's destructive schemes.²⁰⁷ He elaborates that "Satan cannot possibly do anything against the will and consent of God" but also describes the powerful, ongoing work of the unclean spirits.²⁰⁸ Calvin also

²⁰⁴"Evil Angels" in Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 643, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/hodge/theology1.iv.xiii.iv.html>.

²⁰⁵Philip Melancthon, *The Confession of Faith: Which Was Submitted to His Imperial Majesty Charles V At the Diet of Augsburg in the Year 1530*, 19, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/creeds-confessions/confessions/the-augsburg-confession.html>.

²⁰⁶John Calvin, *The Geneva Confession*, 18, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/creeds-confessions/confessions/the-geneva-confession.html?p=2>.

²⁰⁷John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 140, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/institutes.iii.xv.html>.

²⁰⁸John Calvin states that "God thus turning the unclean spirits hither and thither at his pleasure, employs them in exercising believers by warring against them, assailing them with wiles, urging them with solicitations, pressing close upon them, disturbing, alarming, and occasionally wounding, but never conquering or oppressing them; whereas they hold the wicked in thralldom, exercise dominion over their minds and bodies, and employ them as bond-slaves in all kinds of iniquity. . . . I deny that believers can ever be oppressed or vanquished by him. They are often, indeed, thrown into alarm, but never so thoroughly as not to recover themselves. They fall by the violence of the blows, but they get up again; they are wounded, but not mortally. In fine, they labour on through the whole course of their lives, so as ultimately to gain the victory, though they meet with occasional defeats. . . . For as believers are recognised to be the sons of God by bearing his image, so the wicked are properly regarded as the children of Satan, from having degenerated into his image." John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 140. This quote advocates for a sort of self-recovery of believers.

cautions believers from erring in imagining that “they have no enemy and thereby be more remiss or less cautious in resisting.”²⁰⁹ *The Scots Confession* (AD 1560) explains how Satan has tried from the beginning to associate his followers with Christ’s church.²¹⁰

In *The Heidelberg Catechism* (AD 1563), one of the great comforts of the believer is in knowing that Christ has “delivered me from all the power of the devil.”²¹¹ In understanding sin, *The Heidelberg Catechism* explains that sin occurs through “the instigation of the devil (John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 11:3; Genesis 3:4) and his own wilful disobedience.”²¹² This catechism also teaches that believers are to petition God for help, for their “mortal enemies, the devil (1 Peter 5:8; Ephesians 6:12) the world, (John 15:19) and our own flesh, (Romans 7:23; Galatians 5:17) cease not to assault.”²¹³ Believers are called to preserve and be strengthened by the Holy Spirit, so that they “may not be overcome in this spiritual warfare (Matthew 26:41; Mark 13:33), but constantly and strenuously may resist our foes, till at last we obtain a complete victory (1 Thessalonians 3:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:23).”²¹⁴ *The Heidelberg Catechism* is one of the earliest uses of the terminology of “spiritual warfare.”

The Second Helvetic Confession (AD 1566) describes the devil and demons, while describing the process of repentance as a “sincere turning to God and all good, and earnest turning away from the devil and all evil.”²¹⁵ The writer also describes at baptism

²⁰⁹Ibid.

²¹⁰“Since Satan has labored from the beginning to adorn his pestilent synagogue with the title of the Kirk of God.” *The Scots Confession*, 18, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/creeds-confessions/confessions/the-scots-confession.html>.

²¹¹*The Heidelberg Catechism*, 1, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/creeds-confessions/catechisms/the-heidelberg-catechism.html>.

²¹²Ibid., 9.

²¹³Ibid., 127.

²¹⁴*The Heidelberg Catechism*, 127.

²¹⁵“Others fell of their own free will and were cast into destruction, becoming enemies of all good and of the faithful.” *The Second Helvetic Confession*, 7-14, accessed January 4, 2014,

how believers “are enlisted in the holy military service of Christ that all our life long we should fight against the world, Satan, and our own flesh.”²¹⁶ *The Second Helvetic Confession* argues that exorcism was added to baptism such as one of man’s devices and not in the example of Christ.²¹⁷ Finally, the *Second Helvetic Confession* provides helpful understanding to the apparition of spirits as “laughingstocks, crafts, and deceptions of the devil.”²¹⁸

Outside of the Protestant Reformation, the Catholic Church published the *Rituale Romanum* (AD 1614) to give specific instructions and clarity to the exorcism process.²¹⁹ *The Westminster Longer Catechism* (AD 1648) references demons, consultations and oaths with the devil, and sanctification as essential in understanding spiritual warfare.²²⁰ *The London Baptist Confession* (AD 1689) identifies one avenue of temptation being from the “power of Satan.”²²¹ *The Episcopal Catechism* (AD 1789) specifically requires the renunciation of Satan at baptism.²²²

<http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/creeds-confessions/confessions/the-second-helvetic-confession.html>.

²¹⁶Ibid., 20.

²¹⁷Ibid.

²¹⁸“APPARITION OF SPIRITS. Now what is related of the spirits or souls of the dead sometimes appearing to those who are alive, and begging certain duties of them whereby they may be set free, we count those apparitions among the laughingstocks, crafts, and deceptions of the devil, who, as he can transform himself into an angel of light, so he strives either to overthrow the true faith or to call it into doubt. In the Old Testament the Lord forbade the seeking of the truth from the dead, and any sort of commerce with spirits (Deut. 18:11). Indeed, as evangelical truth declares, the glutton, being in torment, is denied a return to his brethren, as the divine oracle declared in the words: ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if some one should rise from the dead’ (Luke 16:29 ff.)” Ibid., 26.

²¹⁹*Rituale Romanum*, accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.sadena.com/Books-Texts/Roman%20Rite%20of%20Exorcism.pdf>.

²²⁰*The Westminster Longer Catechism*, 19, 105, 195, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/creeds-confessions/catechisms/the-westminster-larger-catechism.html>.

²²¹*The London Baptist Confession*, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/creeds-confessions/confessions/the-london-baptist-confession.html>.

²²²“Question 94: What is required of us at Baptism? Answer 94: It is required that we renounce

Charles Hodge (AD 1797-1878) makes many references to Satan and his demons in his doctrine of angelic beings.²²³ Hodge explains that Christians are to be aware of demonic attacks and “called upon to resist them, not in their own strength, but in the strength of the Lord.”²²⁴ He gives attention to demonic possession in the Scriptures, explaining that possessions still may occur but that “we should abstain from asserting the fact of Satanic or demoniacal influence or possession in any case where the phenomena can be otherwise accounted for.”²²⁵

The Baltimore Complete Catechism (AD 1885) also describes Satan’s temptation and how in order “to overcome his temptations we need the help of God.”²²⁶ Charles Spurgeon explains in *A Puritan Confession* (AD 1855) that Christ has purchased freedom “from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the curse of the moral law .

Satan, repent of our sins, and accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior.” *The Episcopal Catechism*, 5, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/creeds-confessions/catechisms/the-episcopal-catechism.html>.

²²³“As to the power and agency of these evil spirits, they are represented as being exceedingly numerous, as everywhere efficient, as having access to our world, and as operating in nature and in the minds of men. The same limitations, of course, belong to their agency as belong to that of the holy angels. (1.) They are dependent on God, and can act only under his control and by his permission. (2.) Their operations must be according to the laws of nature, and, (3.) They cannot interfere with the freedom and responsibility of men.” Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 643.

²²⁴Ibid.

²²⁵“These demoniacal possessions were of two kinds. First, those in which the soul alone was the subject of the diabolic influence, as in the case of the ‘damsel possessed with a spirit of divination,’ mentioned in Acts xvi. 16. Secondly, those in which the bodies alone, or as was more frequently the case, both the body and mind were the subjects of this spiritual influence. By possession is meant the inhabitation of an evil spirit in such relation to the body and soul as to exert a controlling influence, producing violent agitations and great suffering, both mental and corporeal. . . . There is no special improbability in the doctrine of demoniacal possessions. Evil spirits do exist. They have access to the minds and bodies of men. Why should we refuse to believe, on the authority of Christ, that they were allowed to have special power over some men? . . . We are not to deny what are plainly recorded in the Scriptures as facts on this subject; we have no right to assert that Satan and his angels do not now in any cases produce similar effects; but we should abstain from asserting the fact of Satanic or demoniacal influence or possession in any case where the phenomena can be otherwise accounted for.” Ibid.

²²⁶*The Baltimore Complete Catechism*, 230-32, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/creeds-confessions/catechisms/the-baltimore-complete-catechism.html?p=5>.

. . . from this present evil world, bondage to Satan, and dominion of sin.”²²⁷ In many of his sermons, Spurgeon shows an ongoing awareness of spiritual warfare. One of his sermons, “Satan Considering the Saints,” he describes how Satan seeks to do Christians great injury, cause worry, prevent their usefulness, and incite error.²²⁸ In another sermon, “The Devil’s Last Throw,” Spurgeon shares his uncertainty about Satanic possession while admitting that “some men exhibit symptoms which are very like it.”²²⁹ He affirms Satanic attacks through blasphemous thoughts in his own mind and recounts the torment of individuals as they seek to come to Christ.²³⁰ Spurgeon asserts that when someone becomes a believer possession is no longer an issue, for if “Christ turns the devil out of him he shall enter into that man no more forever.”²³¹

²²⁷Charles Spurgeon, *A Puritan Confession*, 20, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/creeds-confessions/confessions/a-puritan-confession.html?p=2>.

²²⁸Charles Spurgeon, “Satan Considering the Saints,” A Sermon (No. 623) delivered April 9, 1865 at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington, England, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/0623.htm>.

²²⁹“The present existence of demons within the bodies of men I shall neither assert nor deny; but certainly, in our Savior’s day it was very common for devils to take possession of men and torment them greatly.” Charles Spurgeon, “The Devil’s Last Throw,” A Sermon (No. 1746) delivered June 10, 1883 at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington, England, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/1746.htm>.

²³⁰“I will tell you what happened to me. I was engaged in prayer alone in a quiet place one day when I had just found the Savior, and while I was in prayer a most horrible stream of blasphemies came into my mind, till I clapped my hand to my mouth for fear that I should utter any one of them. I was so brought up that I do not remember ever hearing a man swear while I was a child; yet at that moment I seemed to know all the swearing and blasphemy that ever was in hell itself; and I wondered at myself. I could not understand whence this foul stream proceeded. I wrote to my venerable grandfather who was for [*sic*] sixty years a minister of the gospel, and he said to me,—‘Do not trouble about it. These are no thoughts of yours; they are injected into your mind by Satan. The thoughts of man follow one another like the links of a chain, one link draws on another; but when a man is in prayer the next natural thought to prayer is not blasphemy; it is not, therefore, a natural secession of our own thoughts. An evil spirit casts those thoughts into the mind.’” Ibid.

²³¹Spurgeon, “The Devil’s Last Throw.”

Summary of the Historical Understanding of Spiritual Warfare

As the writings and experiences of the early church fathers show, spiritual warfare has consistently revealed itself in history in both evangelism and discipleship. In surveying the history of the church, it is clear that certain aspects of spiritual warfare seem to not be emphasized. There are no apparent references to territorial spirits or strategic level spiritual warfare. Rituals or formulaic prayers are seldom described or encouraged and amulets are clearly discouraged. Ancestral spirits are only referenced in relation to a condemned heretical cult. Dialoguing, naming, and human techniques are rarely discussed.

The armor of God analogy as a spiritual warfare metaphor and concept is consistently reinforced through the teachings and writings of the church fathers. Power in spiritual warfare is found through humility, prayer, the name of Christ, a truthful understanding of God, and the Word of God. Satan's attacks are seen on an individual level through deception, temptation, heresies, idol worship, false religions, sickness, and mental attacks. The devil also attacks the church corporately through heresy, division, and complacency.

Exorcism is mentioned and described in church history, leaving no room for doubt that “numerous accounts of demonization and exorcism as well as descriptions of the deceptive work of demons in pagan religions fill the writings of the church fathers.”²³² Despite the attention given to exorcism, believers are consistently referenced as not being possessed. When described, exorcism appears to happen at the point of conversion, when there is found “clear accounts of initiatory rituals directed against evil spirits.”²³³ Demonic manifestations and apparitions are referenced, but caution is given in regard to since deceptions can occur in spiritual warfare. Repentance, renunciation

²³²Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions*, 25.

²³³“They are described or alluded to in the writings of Tertullian in Carthage and in the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus in Rome.” Kelly, *The Devil at Baptism*, 81.

and “confession of all their previous sins” were also seen as an important connection with baptism either as an exorcistic or apotropaic practice.²³⁴

Early Christian references to the demonic can be found in the writings of Justin Martyr, Theophilus of Antioch, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Origen, Athanasius and many other early church fathers. Not only is spiritual warfare documented constantly “through the whole time period of the ancient church,” but spiritual warfare is also seen during the Middle Ages, the Reformation, and the early post-Reformation.²³⁵ Exorcism practices seem “to diminish in the Middle Ages,” but are still referenced among the Germanic tribes, Norwegians, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Martin Luther, the Catholic Church’s 1614 *Rituale Romanum* (exorcism guidelines), and other sources.²³⁶ The existence and activity of the devil and demons are widely evidenced and commonly believed across the history of the church until the post-Enlightenment era.

This survey of the historical writings, characters, and confessions of the Christian Church reinforces the importance of having an historical understanding of spiritual warfare. Power encounters through exorcism are mentioned throughout this

²³⁴“The devil was associated with the rule of the world both by Theodotus and by Christian and Jewish tradition, so that, if orthodox Christians began to renounce both the world and the world ruler Satan in imitation of the gnostic precedent, they could do so with no suggestion of heterodoxy. Even before the time of Theodotus, in fact, Justin Martyr said that Christians had renounced (*apotassethai*) the things that were in the world (*kosmos*); and as I noted earlier, he also spoke of their renunciation of idols, which he regarded, so to speak, as *machinae ex diabolo*. The so called *Second Letter of Clement to the Corinthians* also mentions a renunciation of the world, using the word, *aiōn*, meaning ‘age.’ Tertullian, Augustine, and Rufinus (the later as translator of Origen) use the corresponding Latin word *saeculum* (rather than *mundus*, the equivalent of *kosmos*) when speaking of renunciation of the world, which they linked to baptism” (Kelly, *The Devil at Baptism*, 96). Kelly goes on, “Tertullian, however, regarded it not as exorcistic but rather as apotropaic, that is, as directed against lapses into sin in the future. He advises candidates to devote themselves before baptism to much prayer, fasting, kneeling, and watching, and to confess all their previous sins, so that the past might be atoned for and defenses acquired for resisting future temptations.” (ibid., 106). Apotropaic practice is to prevent future attacks or to diminish their power.

²³⁵Oscar Skarsaune, “Possession and Exorcism in the Literature of the Ancient Church and the New Testament,” in *Deliver Us from Evil Consultation* (Nairobi: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization 2000), accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.lausanne.org/all-documents/historical-overview-1.html>.

²³⁶Tormod Engelsen, “Historical Overview 3,” in *Deliver Us from Evil Consultation* (Nairobi: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 2000), accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.lausanne.org/all-documents/historical-overview-3.html>.

church history. The greatest emphasis of early church writings is not on the power and responsibility of the priest or church leader, but on the power of Christ and the responsibility of the believer. Regardless of the frequency and consistency of spiritual warfare accounts in history, these experiences, teachings, and theologies must always be examined in light of Scripture.

The Lausanne Movement: Towards a Theological Understanding and Application of Spiritual Warfare

Over the last century, Christians have discussed how to fulfill Christ's commission to the church in global evangelism and discipleship. The Lausanne Movement has been a great facilitator of conversation concerning spiritual warfare between expert Christian theologians, scholars, pastors, missionaries, and leaders. Their speeches and writings have had great influence on the biblical and theological understanding of spiritual warfare through their four global congresses and a multitude of other gatherings. In evaluating how the Lausanne Movement has handled the issue of spiritual warfare, one can establish an internationally recognized biblical and theological foundation to use as a foundation for evaluating the writings and ministry of Anderson.

Spiritual warfare is seen to exist throughout the timeline of the Bible, whether in Satan's temptation of Adam and Eve, his torment of Job, his temptation of Christ, or his future work at the second coming of Christ. Demonic activity, confrontation, and exorcism are evidenced in Christ's and the disciples' ministries.²³⁷ The modern rationalism commonly seen among western Christians today has led to a system of belief that relegates demonic and Satanic activity to the apostolic era.²³⁸ Across the history of

²³⁷See Appendix for a selection of biblical passages.

²³⁸Hwa Yung writes, "At a deeper level, the early incorporation of the Platonic body-soul distinction into Christian theology has laid the foundation of a pervasive dualism within Western thought. . . . Given this background, we can easily understand Paul Hiebert's description of the modern Western mind as having a two-tier view of reality. . . . Within such a worldview there is simply no place in which to fit the miraculous dimension, answers to prayer, the ministrations of angels, the work of a personal devil and

the early church, one sees a far different understanding that recognizes, discusses, and confronts demonic forces.

Through the study of spiritual warfare commentary in the Lausanne Movement, one can gain a better picture of its consideration and application within the realm of 20th century world missions, evangelism, and discipleship. The expert Christian theologians, scholars, pastors, missionaries, and leaders of Lausanne provide a cross-cultural and cross-denominational conversation that explores the biblical texts, Christian theology, ministry practice, and church history of spiritual warfare. The history of the Lausanne Movement can be traced back to the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910 when representatives of various missionary societies gathered together in what is thought of as “one of the most significant conferences in the history of Christianity.”²³⁹ Billy Graham felt that Edinburgh ultimately failed to follow through with its hope for evangelistic increase, so the Lausanne movement became a place of meeting to “consider the opportunities and responsibilities of evangelizing the world.”²⁴⁰

In 1966, following several conferences subsequent to Edinburgh, Graham organized the World Conference on Evangelism in Berlin, Germany in order “make an urgent appeal to the world Church to return to the dynamic zeal for world evangelization.”²⁴¹ In reemphasizing evangelism, Berlin served as a corrective to those churches and denominations who had redefined missions as social action instead of bringing people to “new life in Christ.”²⁴² The 1966 Berlin Conference then prompted a

demonic powers, and related ideas. This naturalistic and dualistic worldview contrasts sharply with the supernaturalistic and more holistic worldviews that are found in many non-Western cultures.” Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, 6.

²³⁹Bill Wagner, “A Hopeful Report from Lausanne,” *Baptist Press*, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?id=33938>.

²⁴⁰“The World Congress on Evangelism, Berlin 1966,” Wheaton College, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/berlin66.htm>.

²⁴¹“The World Congress on Evangelism, Berlin 1966.”

²⁴²Wagner, “A Hopeful Report from Lausanne.”

1974 International Congress on World Evangelization in Lausanne, Switzerland. The subsequent conferences, meetings, and congresses were referred to as the “Lausanne Movement.” Manila, Philippines hosted a second international congress in 1989, while a third congress took place in 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa in honor of the 100th anniversary of Edinburgh. Throughout the movement’s history, it provided an opportunity for Christian leaders around the world to gather, discuss, and encourage one another in evangelizing the world for Christ. Although the history of the Lausanne Movement is relatively brief, it has made a valuable contribution and impact on the modern understanding of spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship.

World Congress on Evangelism Berlin, 1966

Although some church interaction had occurred through the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910 and similar follow up meetings, much of the initial discussion had been only among missionary societies. When churches did gather to dialogue, the evangelism focus was sidelined in favor of a focus on ecumenism and social action. Billy Graham saw the developing trends and expressed a desire to “unite all evangelicals in the common task of the total evangelization of the world.”²⁴³ Graham’s desire materialized in 1966 with the combined efforts of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and *Christianity Today* magazine to host the World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin. Berlin’s congress drew 1,200 delegates from over 100 countries, and inspired further conferences in “Singapore, Minneapolis, Bogotá, and Australia (1968-1971).”²⁴⁴

The foundational principles of the Berlin congress were clarified from the onset of the gathering. The purpose in gathering was to “to define and clarify Biblical evangelism for our day” contra the confusion created by other groups who were more

²⁴³“About the Lausanne Movement,” The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.lausanne.org/about.html>.

²⁴⁴“About the Lausanne Movement.”

centered on unity and social concerns.²⁴⁵ The congress' leaders sought to demonstrate the relevance and urgency of the Gospel to the modern world. There was a desire to "explore new forms of witness" so they could better reach out to others with the Gospel while simultaneously dealing with "problems of resistance."²⁴⁶ Finally, the leaders in Berlin sought to exhort the church to "renew its own life through an intensified proclamation" of Christ so that the world would see that God "saves men through His son."²⁴⁷ This focused evangelistic direction would continue in later conferences.

Spiritual Warfare Language at the Berlin Congress

The presence and absence of spiritual warfare language throughout the 1966 Berlin Congress is important to notice. One might expect that the initial global gathering on evangelism might have the most detailed and forceful spiritual warfare language within a specialty session or paper. The most clear spiritual warfare language in Berlin was found in Billy Graham's introductory remarks on "Why the Berlin Congress?"

Billy Graham's comments on spiritual warfare. In his opening speech at Berlin, Billy Graham stated that "the Church has an energetic passion for unity, but it has all but forgotten our Lord's commission to evangelize."²⁴⁸ He then used spiritual warfare language to describe the condition of the world, saying, "our world is on fire, and man without God cannot control the flames. The demons of hell have been let loose."²⁴⁹ Such

²⁴⁵"The World Congress on Evangelism, Berlin 1966."

²⁴⁶Ibid.

²⁴⁷Ibid.

²⁴⁸Billy Graham, "Why the Berlin Congress?" in *The World Congress on Evangelism* (Berlin: Wheaton College, 1966), accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/berlinaddress.htm>.

²⁴⁹Ibid.

language was meant not merely as a metaphor or hyperbole, for Graham sincerely believed that the world's situation was dire and the roots of its problems were spiritual.

Graham then listed significant points of concern with his fourth point being that “there is confusion concerning the strategy of the enemy of evangelism.”²⁵⁰ He submitted that many do not acknowledge that believers have an active enemy whenever they seek to do the Lord's work through evangelism. He pointed out how both Jesus and the apostles referred to Satan as real, calling him “the prince of this world,” “the god of this age,” and “the prince of the power of the air.” The names used concerning him also indicate aspects of his character and strategy as a “deceiver,” “liar,” “murderer,” “accuser,” “tempter,” “destroyer,” and many other such names.²⁵¹

The fact that Graham dedicates such a significant portion of his opening address to spiritual warfare must not be overlooked. Graham, as one of the initiators and founders of the Lausanne Movement, considered it essential to understand both the nature and the character of Satan and his demons in opposition to evangelism and missions.

As Graham continued in his comments, he pointed out the strategy of Satan in the example of Paul being “hindered” in getting to do missionary work among the Thessalonians (1 Thess 2:18). Graham stated, “the evangelist and the work of evangelism are opposed on every hand by tremendous spiritual forces.”²⁵² He continued by saying that “Satan's greatest strategy is deception. His most successful strategy has been to get modern theologians to deny his existence.”²⁵³ Graham used the parable of the tares to explain how Satan blinds the minds of “those whom we seek to evangelize.”²⁵⁴

²⁵⁰Ibid.

²⁵¹Graham, “Why the Berlin Congress?”

²⁵²Graham, “Why the Berlin Congress?”

²⁵³Ibid.

²⁵⁴Ibid.

He further explicated Satan's strategy as using "deception, force, evil and error to destroy the effectiveness of the Gospel."²⁵⁵ The warning that must be heeded is that "if we ignore the existence of Satan or our ignorance of his devices, then we fall into his clever trap."²⁵⁶ In addition to Satan's character and nature, Graham emphasized a reflection on Satanic strategy and methodology.

Graham is also clearly not in the cessation camp concerning the Spirit's work. He unashamedly asserted,

I do not believe that the day of miracles has passed. As long as the Holy Spirit abides and works on the earth, the Church's potential is the same as it was in apostolic days. The great Paraclete has not been withdrawn, and He still waits to work through those who are willing to meet His conditions of repentance, humility, and obedience.²⁵⁷

Although remarks here are more significant to the movement's interactions with later issues concerning the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements, they are still important insights into his perspective of the spiritual battle going on around and through us. Graham himself makes this connection by stating, "we are now living in a generation when nothing will break through the overwhelming power of Satan except the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit."²⁵⁸

In "Why the Berlin Congress?" Billy Graham made his point very clear; spiritual warfare cannot be ignored in any talk of evangelism and missions. His language was rich in demonstrating that he sincerely believed that Satan and his demons are actively engaging the workers of Christ in the harvest fields. Such a direct and passionate emphasis on spiritual warfare would not be so clearly seen again as a focus of Lausanne leadership until the 2000 Consultation on spiritual conflict in Nairobi.

²⁵⁵Ibid.

²⁵⁶Ibid.

²⁵⁷Ibid.

²⁵⁸Ibid.

John Stott's comments on spiritual warfare. Not only were Billy Graham's spiritual warfare contributions at Berlin significant, but John Stott's remarks held the second greatest content and force in considering the conflict nature of evangelism. Stott's comments and view on spiritual warfare were especially intriguing because he was the leader, presenter, commentator, and chief theologian involved in the 1974 Lausanne Covenant, which would become and remain the foundational doctrine of the Lausanne Movement. In addition, following the 1974 Lausanne I gathering, Stott would serve as the chairman of the Theology and Education Working Group. Apart from Graham, Stott was arguably one of the most important influences on the Lausanne Movement.

In Berlin Stott delivered the plenary addresses on the Great Commission. In his second address on the subject, Stott described how Satan tries to usurp Christ's power and authority in Satan's role as the "prince of this world."²⁵⁹ Stott also asserted that despite Christ's "supreme authority in those 'heavenly places . . . [the] evil principalities and powers' still operate and wage war (cf. Eph 6:12)."²⁶⁰ Despite the ongoing and active nature of Satan and his demons, Christians must not forget that "the authority of Jesus Christ extends over all creatures, whether human or superhuman, over the Church, over the nations, over the Devil and all his works."²⁶¹ Stott saw this authority as extending beyond the heavens into the earth so that one might "be able to 'turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God' (Acts 26:18)."²⁶² As the chief theologian of the Lausanne Movement (seen more clearly in 1974), it is critical to understand the emphasis Stott assigned to Christ's authority and its extension unto us in

²⁵⁹John R.W. Stott, "The Great Commission," in *The World Congress on Evangelism* (Berlin: Wheaton College, 1966), accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/berlinaddress.htm>.

²⁶⁰Ibid.

²⁶¹Stott, "The Great Commission."

²⁶²Ibid.

doing His work here on earth. Stott saw that spiritual warfare continues to rage, not merely in the heavens, but also across the face of the earth where believers seek to evangelize the lost.

Other comments on spiritual warfare. It is remarkable to note that despite the emphasis by both Billy Graham and John Stott on spiritual warfare, few other speakers gave mention to its relevance. Only two out of the other twenty speakers (those with available written transcripts) referenced the enemy and the spiritual battle faced in evangelism.²⁶³ One of those speakers was Ishaya Audu who, in his emphasis on the urgency and relevancy of evangelism, simply shared his testimony of how “Satan kept me away from true faith and salvation.”²⁶⁴

The other source of comments relevant to spiritual warfare was found in Johannes Schneider of Berlin University in his message on “The Authority for Evangelism.” In this talk Schneider described human rebellion by saying that when “man surrenders his ties to God, he does not become really free, but plunges all the more deeply rather into the grip of satanic-demonic powers.”²⁶⁵ He also described the self-determinism found in a pluralistic society as counter-independence, leading to people being “subservient rather to the spirit of this world, that spirit by who are ruled the Sons of disobedience (Eph. 2:2)”²⁶⁶ Although Audu’s and Schneider’s inclusion of spiritual

²⁶³“Archives from the World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin,” Wheaton College, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/docs/Berlin66/audio.htm>.

²⁶⁴Ishaya S. Audu, “The Urgency of Evangelism and Its Relevancy to the Modern World,” in *The World Congress on Evangelism* (Berlin: Wheaton College, 1966), accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/docs/Berlin66/audu.htm>.

²⁶⁵Johannes Schneider, “The Authority for Evangelism,” in *The World Congress on Evangelism* (Berlin: Wheaton College, 1966), accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/docs/Berlin66/schneider.htm>.

²⁶⁶Schneider, “The Authority for Evangelism.”

warfare language was helpful, the content pales in comparison with the emphasis given by Stott and Graham.

The absence of comments on spiritual warfare. The relative absence of spiritual warfare language at Berlin is important to note. Even more significant is where such discussion might be expected but was remarkably absent. One example of such an absence occurs when two Berlin congress speakers discussed obstacles to evangelism, both in the church and the world, without any mention of Satan and his demons as an obstacle or involved in creating obstacles in evangelism.²⁶⁷

It is also surprising to not hear spiritual warfare language when referencing evangelistic passages of Scripture, evangelistic methods, a theology of evangelism, or even in one's personal testimony. George Duncan, Rene Pache, Oswald Huffman, and Timothy Dzaio all write on the evangelistic work of the early church in light of the Holy Spirit and fail to acknowledge the spiritual enemy they have in Satan and his demons.²⁶⁸ Additional congress papers such as "The Basic Theology of Evangelism," "Methods of Personal Evangelism," and a testimony titled "What God Has Done" all explain evangelism without any mention of spiritual warfare.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁷Walter Kunneth, "Obstacles to Evangelism in the Church," in *The World Congress on Evangelism* (Berlin: Wheaton College, 1966), accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/docs/Berlin66/kunneth.htm>; Harold B. Kuhn, "The Obstacles to Evangelism in the World," in *The World Congress on Evangelism* (Berlin: Wheaton College, 1966), accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/docs/Berlin66/kuhn.htm>.

²⁶⁸George Duncan, "An Apostolic Assessment of the Ministry of Jesus Christ," in *The World Congress on Evangelism* (Berlin: Wheaton College, 1966), accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/docs/Berlin66/duncan.htm>; Rene Pache, "The Holy Spirit and Evangelism," in *The World Congress on Evangelism* (Berlin: Wheaton College, 1966), accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/docs/Berlin66/pache.htm>; Oswald Hoffman, "The Work of the Holy Spirit in Acts," in *The World Congress on Evangelism* (Berlin: Wheaton College, 1966), accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/docs/Berlin66/hoffman.htm>; Timothy Dzaio, "The Heavenly Vision," in *The World Congress on Evangelism* (Berlin: Wheaton College, 1966), accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/docs/Berlin66/Dzaio.htm>.

²⁶⁹Harold John Ockenga, "The Basic Theology of Evangelism," in *The World Congress on Evangelism* (Berlin: Wheaton College, 1966), accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/docs/Berlin66/ockenga.htm>; Richard C. Halverson, "Methods of Personal Evangelism," in

Summary of the Berlin Congress

Although the World Congress on Evangelism in 1966 is often overlooked in historical comparison with the First International Congress on World Evangelization in Lausanne (1974), it offers particular insight into how the founders and shapers of the Lausanne Movement (Billy Graham and John Stott in particular) viewed the importance of spiritual warfare in evangelism. In evaluating Berlin it should be noted that the vast majority of the speakers are Western and give little or no reference to spiritual warfare.

Lausanne I: First International Congress on World Evangelization, Lausanne, 1974

Although the Berlin World Congress on Evangelism in 1966 accomplished much in reinvigorating the church towards evangelization, many participants were dissatisfied. Among the dissatisfied was the 1966 organizer himself, Billy Graham. He remarked that “the world church has floundered” and out of that disappointment developed momentum towards another gathering of church leaders from across the globe.²⁷⁰ In 1974, over 2,700 delegates represented over 150 nations at the First International Congress on World Evangelization in Lausanne, Switzerland.²⁷¹

Even in the planning process for Lausanne, there was disagreement in the prioritization of issues:

Some members pressed for an exclusive focus on evangelization; others favoured a broader, holistic approach. The Committee agreed on a unified aim to “further the total biblical mission of the Church, recognizing that in this mission of sacrificial service, evangelism is primary, and that our particular concern must be the [then 2,700 million] unreached people of the world.”²⁷²

The World Congress on Evangelism (Berlin: Wheaton College, 1966), accessed January 4, 2014); <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/docs/Berlin66/halverson.htm>. Chandu Ray, “What God Has Done,” in *The World Congress on Evangelism* (Berlin: Wheaton College, 1966), accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/docs/Berlin66/ray.htm>.

²⁷⁰J. D. Douglas and Billy Graham, eds., *Let the Earth Hear His Voice: Official Reference Volume, Papers and Responses* (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1975), 26.

²⁷¹The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, “About the Lausanne Movement.”

²⁷²Ibid.

Despite this aim, there was dissension in the drafting of the Lausanne Covenant, a foundational doctrine that led some to draft an “alternative covenant which placed a greater emphasis on addressing social needs as a part of evangelism.”²⁷³ Facing these competing interests, Billy Graham led and opened the congress with focus and passion.

Graham’s speech “Why Lausanne?” served to articulate both the problems with the church of that day and the direction in which the Congress would head. In this speech, Graham described the church’s absence of evangelistic fervor as arising out of “1) the loss of the authority of the message of the Gospel 2) the preoccupation with social and political problems 3) the equal preoccupation with organizational unity.”²⁷⁴ The theme of the conference was “Let the Earth Hear His Voice” with a focus on “four functions: intercession, theology, strategy and communication.”²⁷⁵ This focus, along with the Lausanne Covenant, became the two lasting legacies that continue to guide the international church movement today by defining “the necessity, responsibilities, and goals of spreading the Gospel.”²⁷⁶

Significance of the Lausanne I Congress

Lausanne I, as the First International Congress on World Evangelization would come to be known, began a worldwide Gospel conversation that continues throughout the international evangelical community today. John Stott emphasized the impact of Lausanne I by writing, “what is exciting about Lausanne is that its fire continues to spark

²⁷³Douglas and Graham, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 26.

²⁷⁴Ibid.

²⁷⁵The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, “About the Lausanne Movement.”

²⁷⁶“Lausanne I: The International Congress on World Evangelization,” The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.lausanne.org/lausanne-1974/lausanne-1974.html>.

off other fires.”²⁷⁷ The committee’s first chairman, Leighton Ford, asserted that “the Lausanne spirit was a new and urgent commitment to world evangelization in all its aspects, a new attitude of co-operation in the task, and a new cultural sensitivity to the world to which we are called.”²⁷⁸ The impact of Lausanne I is impossible to quantify or even adequately describe as its influence is widespread and interwoven into the very fabric of present day evangelical evangelism and missions. In Graham’s opening address at Lausanne I, he passionately proclaimed that “in the providence of God I believe that this could be one of the most significant gatherings, not only in this century, but in the history of the Christian Church.”²⁷⁹ Time will tell if Lausanne I was truly significant in the vast history of the church, but regardless of its long-term impact, its impact on the 20th century church is clearly noted.

²⁷⁷The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, “About the Lausanne Movement.”

²⁷⁸Ibid.

²⁷⁹Douglas and Graham, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 16.

Spiritual Warfare Language, Lausanne I

Billy Graham's comments on spiritual warfare. In a similar manner to Berlin in 1966, Billy Graham includes many spiritual warfare references. In Graham's brief welcome to Lausanne I delegates he stated that "we have heard the voice of Satan himself, lying, flattering, oppressing, afflicting, influencing, destroying, sowing discord, spreading false doctrines, and gathering his forces for another massive assault against the kingdom of God."²⁸⁰ Graham left no room for doubt that his theology regarding Satan had not softened in the eight years between Berlin and Lausanne. Graham still saw Satan as an active enemy against the expansion of the kingdom of God. Graham furthers this thought with a description of living in a world where "thousands are turning to perversions, the occult, with its Satan worship, mind control, astrology, and various ploys of the devil to lure men to turn from the truth."²⁸¹ Satan's strategies and methods are clear, and Graham emphasized the necessity of understanding that "Satan is marshaling his forces for his fiercest attack in history."²⁸²

Through Graham's exhortations, the international leaders gathered together were reminded of his passionate belief that the Scriptures teach us to acknowledge that believers live in the middle of a battlefield where "Satan will do everything he can to discourage, divide and defeat us as we seek to carry out the Great Commission of our Lord."²⁸³ Nevertheless, believers cannot forget that their identity, power, and strength in Christ "who has already 'nullified' the power of death, hell, and Satan. The final victory is certain."²⁸⁴ In a manner similar to his opening messages, Graham closes Lausanne I

²⁸⁰Douglas and Graham, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 17.

²⁸¹*Ibid.*, 24.

²⁸²*Ibid.*

²⁸³*Ibid.*, 35.

²⁸⁴*Ibid.*

with a warning and encouragement that Christians cannot ignore the biblical guidance that “Evil will grow worse, but God will be mightily at work at the same time.”²⁸⁵

Graham’s consistency in spiritual warfare dialogue reflected his intent and guidance in leading the international church towards a greater consideration of spiritual warfare for the sake of a more bountiful Gospel harvest.

Lausanne Covenant’s comments on spiritual warfare. The Lausanne Covenant is the doctrinal statement of the Lausanne Movement. The Lausanne Movement realized that it needed to have a doctrinal foundation to build upon in order to distinguish itself from ecumenical, social-action focused gatherings. John Stott introduced the Covenant as something “which binds us to pray together, to plan together, to work together for the evangelization of the whole world.”²⁸⁶ The Covenant contained 15 affirmations, totaling a little over 2,800+ words. Out of these affirmations, the twelfth one was dedicated to “Spiritual Conflict” comprising over 200 words or over seven percent of the total covenant length. Although this dedicated quantity and portion initially appeared to place heavy emphasis on spiritual warfare, a closer look is needed:

12. SPIRITUAL CONFLICT. We believe that we are engaged in constant spiritual warfare with the principalities and powers of evil, who are seeking to overthrow the Church and frustrate its task of world evangelization. We know our need to equip ourselves with God's armour and to fight this battle with the spiritual weapons of truth and prayer. For we detect the activity of our enemy, not only in false ideologies outside the Church, but also inside it in false gospels which twist Scripture and put people in the place of God. We need both watchfulness and discernment to safeguard the biblical gospel. We acknowledge that we ourselves are not immune to worldliness of thoughts and action, that is, to a surrender to secularism. For example, although careful studies of church growth, both numerical and spiritual, are right and valuable, we have sometimes neglected them. At other times, desirous to ensure a response to the gospel, we have compromised our message, manipulated our hearers through pressure techniques, and become unduly preoccupied with statistics or even dishonest in our use of them. All this is worldly. The Church must be in the world; the world must not be in the Church. (Eph. 6:12;

²⁸⁵Ibid., 1467.

²⁸⁶Douglas and Graham, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 2.

II Cor. 4:3,4; Eph. 6:11,13-18; II Cor. 10:3-5; I John 2:18-26; 4:1-3; Gal. 1:6-9; II Cor. 2:17; 4:2; John 17:15).²⁸⁷

This affirmation specifically chose to use verbiage such as “spiritual warfare,” “principalities,” “powers of evil,” “battle,” “armour,” “spiritual weapons,” and “enemy” within the first three sentences. In the fifth sentence, there is a transition where a focus on worldliness began and continued through the end of the statement. Noticeably absent was any specific reference to Satan and his demons or their work, methods, and strategies. There were also no specific references to the occult, spiritism, world religions, demonic possession, demonic oppression, deliverance, exorcism, eschatology, pneumatology, angelology, or descriptions of Christ’s victory and power over Satan and his forces.

John Stott’s commentary on the Lausanne Covenant presents a more worldliness-centered view of spiritual warfare. In this exposition, he refers to the enemy’s chief weapons as “error, worldliness and persecution.”²⁸⁸ He stated that Satan’s strategy is to “introduce sin and error into the church” and to attack “the church from outside, seeking either by physical persecution or by restrictive legislation to hinder the church's work.”²⁸⁹ Stott’s commentary incorporated spiritual warfare references such as “deceiving spirits,” “Satan,” “the devil,” and “non-Christian systems and cults,” language that was not present in the covenant itself. This worldliness-centered view of spiritual warfare was distinctly Westernized.²⁹⁰

In *The New Face of Evangelicalism*, efforts were made to explain and apply the Lausanne Covenant to the world today. C. René Padilla explained the twelfth article

²⁸⁷C. René Padilla, ed., *The New Face of Evangelicalism: An International Symposium on the Lausanne Covenant* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976), 205.

²⁸⁸John Stott, “Lausanne Occasional Paper 3: The Lausanne Covenant: An Exposition and Commentary,” The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.lausanne.org/all-documents/lop-3.html>.

²⁸⁹“Lausanne Occasional Paper 3.”

²⁹⁰Ibid.

on spiritual conflict by using a reductionist approach and distinctly different language than would be expected on spiritual warfare. The evil world of the day was described with a focus on its “materialism, its obsession with individual success, its blinding selfishness.”²⁹¹

Although the Covenant was significant in giving attention to “spiritual conflict” within its exposition and application, many spiritual warfare subjects were bypassed. The flavor and tone was distinctly Western and rationalistic, with a focus more on the moral and intellectual realms than the spiritual. The Lausanne Covenant was also distinctly different in using less spiritual warfare language than was present in the tone and direction that Billy Graham used in opening and closing both the Lausanne I and Berlin Congresses.

Detmar Scheunemann’s comments on spiritual warfare. Detmar Scheunemann, a past principal of the Indonesian Bible Institute, is a name virtually unrecognized in comparison with names such as Billy Graham and John Stott. Despite his lack of recognition, Scheunemann offered some valuable insights that would come to be explored and expanded in the 2000 “Deliver Us from Evil” consultation in Nairobi. Scheunemann’s paper at Lausanne I was titled “Evangelization among Occultists and Spiritists,” but he clearly communicated that the principles he endorsed had more widespread implications. The first significant claim was seen in his proclamation that “wherever a missionary goes today, he is face to face with occult powers and practices.”²⁹² Scheunemann saw the issue of spiritual warfare transcending geographical, political, and cultural boundaries. He felt all missionaries must be prepared to encounter spiritual warfare. Scheunemann even pointed to the expanding urban population as an example, where “we face an encounter with intellectualism and secularist thinking on one

²⁹¹Padilla, *The New Face of Evangelicalism*, 221.

²⁹²Douglas and Graham, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 885.

side, and belief in fortune-telling, astrology, magical healing, and superstition on the other side—a strange paradox!”²⁹³

Scheunemann not only referenced spiritual warfare in the context of the occult and spiritism, but also observed spiritual warfare in its influence among all world religions. He asserted that “spiritism is the religion of our day, undergirding all other religion . . . a problem that can no longer be regarded as the property of Asia or Africa, but is truly international with its tentacles reaching to every corner of the globe.”²⁹⁴ Scheunemann’s confidence in Christ’s power through the Gospel was also seen in his approach to evangelizing those holding to other religious beliefs. He argued that a mere intellectual approach with orthodox Muslims “usually fails” while “a presentation of the Gospel in power and authority even in confrontation with the secret spiritism of Islam breaks the way into the heart.”²⁹⁵

Scheunemann interestingly veered away from many within the deliverance camp by cautioning that, “the prayer of faith does not depend on a formula . . . [or] a certain manner.”²⁹⁶ Not only did he caution against prescribed methods, but he also warned people to “never go looking for demons, but if one appears under your feet, tread on it!”²⁹⁷ He helpfully advocated that the church should not seek to make “demonology specialists” but rather to train and integrate a proper understanding of spiritual warfare under the discipline of evangelism.²⁹⁸ Although he cautioned against some of the

²⁹³Douglas and Graham, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 885.

²⁹⁴*Ibid.*, 895.

²⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 890.

²⁹⁶*Ibid.*, 888.

²⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 896.

²⁹⁸*Ibid.*

excesses of deliverance ministries, Scheunemann did see a need for deliverance ministry as being “an integrated part of endtime-evangelism.”²⁹⁹

Scheunemann did not want to be an alarmist, yet he believed spiritual warfare to be a serious concern since the “majority of the world’s population is engaged in some kind of spiritism, directly or indirectly.”³⁰⁰ He exhorted all Christians “to be personally prepared” by understanding that this warfare is real and that they must be equipped by the Holy Spirit and cleansed by the blood of Christ.³⁰¹ In Christ, our final victory against Satan is assured, “but in these days he must be defeated, not merely ignored.”³⁰²

Other comments on spiritual warfare. In Lausanne I the most spiritual warfare language was found in Graham, the Covenant, and in Scheunemann but there were a few other notable references made as well. In speaking on “Theological Education and Evangelization,” Bruce Nicholls reminded his listeners that “in the Cross, the power of Satan was broken and at the Final Day it will be destroyed.”³⁰³ Spiritual warfare language was also seen in a narrative story by John Mpaayei concerning cultural practices when he described a town witch doctor, curses, and referenced the evil one.³⁰⁴ Michael Green, in describing a proper understanding of sin in “Methods and Strategy in Evangelism of the Early Church,” mentioned that oppression in the lost is not merely from sin but from “bondage to the various demonic powers which hold men in control.”³⁰⁵ Green described Christ’s role as conqueror, bringing “deliverance to pagan

²⁹⁹Douglas and Graham, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 894.

³⁰⁰Ibid., 888.

³⁰¹Ibid., 896.

³⁰²Ibid., 897.

³⁰³Ibid., 638.

³⁰⁴Ibid., 1229-34.

³⁰⁵Ibid., 162.

men, obsessed as they were with the sense of the demonic.”³⁰⁶ Even though there were some spiritual warfare references outside of Graham, the Covenant, and Scheunemann, these comments were sparsely distributed and limited in scope.

The absence of comments on spiritual warfare. As in 1966 in Berlin, there were many speakers who gave no reference to spiritual warfare in studies and presentations where it might have been expected. Some examples of this absence were seen in Wilfried Bellamy’s report on and Ralph Winters’ prioritization of cross-cultural evangelism.³⁰⁷ Spiritual warfare language was also missing from John Stott’s “The Biblical Basis of Evangelism” and “Missions Strategy” by Ernest Oliver.³⁰⁸ Final examples of spiritual warfare absence were also found in the discussion of religious syncretism and cultural contextualization in Africa by Byang Kato and Harold Kuhn’s description of the modern Charismatic movement.³⁰⁹ The Lausanne I Congress had many more papers presented than can be evaluated here, but the above examples were specific instances in evangelism dialogue where the absence of spiritual warfare references was most noticeable.

Post conference comments on spiritual warfare. The momentum created by Lausanne I transitioned into a multitude of conferences, working groups, and occasional papers.³¹⁰ One of the most significant spiritual warfare developments in the time between Lausanne I (1974) and Lausanne II (Manila, 1989) was the “Lausanne Occasional Paper Number Two: the Willowbank Report on Gospel and Culture” in 1978. In this report, the

³⁰⁶Douglas and Graham, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 163.

³⁰⁷*Ibid.*, 524-25, 226-41.

³⁰⁸*Ibid.*, 65-78, 492-500.

³⁰⁹*Ibid.*, 1216-23, 1141-49.

³¹⁰The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, “About the Lausanne Movement.”

participants considered the impact of cultures in communicating the Gospel. The group was comprised of “33 theologians, anthropologists, linguists, missionaries and pastors” from all six continents.³¹¹

In one particular area of their report they considered the issue of power encounter in spiritual warfare. The Willowbank participants remarked that

a number of us, especially those from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, have spoken both of the reality of evil powers and of the necessity to demonstrate the supremacy of Jesus Christ. For conversion requires a power encounter. People give their allegiance to Christ when they see that his power is superior to magic and voodoo, the curses and blessings of witch doctors, and the malevolence of evil spirits, and that his salvation is a real liberation from the power of evil and death.³¹²

The participants further sought to counter the “mechanistic myth on which the typical western world-view rests” by acknowledging the reality of demonic activity and that it is “vital in evangelism in all cultures to teach the reality and hostility of demonic powers.”³¹³ At the same time, Willowbank workers desired for people to affirm Christ’s authority and power over all principalities and powers and to understand that “power in human hands is always dangerous.”³¹⁴ Ultimately, the committee concluded that this battle exists in every culture and that Christians everywhere needed to interact in prayer and putting on God’s spiritual armor, understanding that they have an active enemy.³¹⁵

Summary of Lausanne I and Spiritual Warfare

Lausanne I brought about much dialogue concerning spiritual warfare.

Although the depth and quantity of discussion was greater than that of Berlin in 1966,

³¹¹“The Willowbank Report: Report of a Consultation on Gospel and Culture,” (Willowbank, Somerset Bridge, Bermuda: The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 1978), 5.

³¹²The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, “The Willowbank Report,” 21.

³¹³Ibid.

³¹⁴Ibid.

³¹⁵Ibid., 30.

some of it was still distinctly colored by Western world-views. Regardless of any shortcomings and oversights, the spiritual warfare discussion advanced at the international level among evangelism, missionary, theologians, scholars, and church leaders.

Lausanne II: Second International Congress on World Evangelization, Manila, 1989

Background of the Lausanne II Congress

The Second International Congress on World Evangelization, or Lausanne II, took place in Manila, Philippines in 1989 “to focus the whole church of Jesus Christ in a fresh way on the task of taking the whole gospel to the whole world.”³¹⁶ Their attendance was significantly higher than Lausanne I, having 4,300 participants from 173 countries in attendance compared with 2,700 participants from 150 countries in 1974. Lausanne II’s focus was broad as it covered the fifteen years since Lausanne I and sought to prepare the gathered for the latter part of the century.³¹⁷ The theme at Manila was “Calling the Whole Church to Take the Whole Gospel to the Whole World” and was clearly seen in the scheduling of each day’s programming.³¹⁸

Significance of the Lausanne II Congress

Although any international gathering of evangelicals is important, Lausanne II’s legacy is much less significant than that of Berlin and Lausanne I. Lausanne II served to reinforce and expand upon the Lausanne Covenant by producing the “the

³¹⁶“Lausanne 2: International Congress on World Evangelization,” The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.lausanne.org/manila-1989/manila-1989.html>.

³¹⁷Ibid.

³¹⁸Edward Dayton, “Introduction: Lausanne 2,” The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.lausanne.org/manila-1989/introduction-manila-1989.html>.

Manila Manifesto, as a corporate expression of its participants.”³¹⁹ One reason for the decreased impact of Lausanne II was seen in the fact that “the philosophy behind the design of Lausanne II was different . . . the plenary presentations were designed to be as much motivational and inspirational as informational.”³²⁰ Many saw an inspirational focus as less important than an international, coordinated, strategic, theological engagement. Regardless of perceived weaknesses in Lausanne II, the relationships and partnerships that formed through Lausanne II would be seen as one of the strengths that continued beyond its week of gathering.

Spiritual Warfare at Lausanne II

The issue of spiritual warfare was not present in Lausanne II to the same degree as prior congresses. The Congressional “participants did wrestle with missiological issues” especially through “discussion groups” or “tracks,” one of which was particularly focused on spiritual warfare.³²¹ The most significant interaction on spiritual warfare occurred through the Manila Manifesto. Similar to the Lausanne Covenant, the Manila Manifesto has a statement on spiritual warfare that comprises around six percent of the total statement (compared to seven percent of Lausanne’s). This portion read that “We affirm that spiritual warfare demands spiritual weapons, and that we must both preach the word in the power of the Spirit, and pray constantly that we may enter into Christ's victory over the principalities and powers of evil.”³²² Despite its brevity, this statement was distinguished by its emphasis on the use of “warfare” instead

³¹⁹The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, “About the Lausanne Movement.”

³²⁰Dayton, “Introduction: Lausanne 2.”

³²¹“Manila: A 'Town Meeting' and a Manifesto,” The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.lausanne.org/manila-1989/town-meeting-a-manifesto.html>.

³²²Alan Nichols and Billy Graham, eds., *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World: The Story of the Second Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, Manila, 1989* (Charlotte, NC: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 1989), 111.

of “conflict” as well as its reference to the “power of the Spirit” and “Christ’s victory.” This progression in spiritual warfare language was more fully seen in the 2000 “Deliver Us from Evil” consultation.

The Manifesto’s commentary also reflected the expanding influence of spiritual warfare by claiming, “all evangelism involves spiritual warfare with the principalities and powers of evil, in which only spiritual weapons can prevail, especially the Word and the Spirit, with prayer.”³²³ Lausanne II also used the term “power encounter” to encompass every salvation event, which was described as a “miracle” when “the believer is set free from the bondage of Satan and sin, fear and futility, darkness and death.”³²⁴ This use of “power encounter” was an attempt to redefine the usual use of the phrase in reference to direct demonic confrontation. The Manifesto commentators further emphasized that they have no “liberty to place limits on the power of the living Creator today” about the miraculous, language which clearly mirrors Billy Graham’s previous comments in Berlin.³²⁵ Although the focus and intent of Manila did not lend itself to a significant expansion or change in spiritual warfare considerations, there were some helpful insights into the continuation of its inclusion in the international gospel conversation.

Summary of Lausanne II and Spiritual Warfare

The legacy of Lausanne II lies mostly in the relationships that were built and the individual stories of motivation and encouragement. Despite these positive aspects, some, like David Wells, reflected that the seeming emphasis on “impressions over content, experiences over worship, hand-holding over repentance, ‘sharing’ over biblical

³²³Nichols and Graham, *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World*, 116.

³²⁴Ibid.

³²⁵Ibid. Also, Graham, “Why the Berlin Congress?”

exposition” was less than productive and paralleled some of the ecumenical concerns Billy Graham sought to avoid at the advent of the Lausanne Movement.³²⁶ Regardless of these critiques, the doctrinal beliefs of the Lausanne Covenant were upheld and expanded in some helpful ways in terms of spiritual warfare considerations. This was most clearly seen in the defining of the gospel as “the good news of God's salvation from the power of evil, the establishment of his eternal kingdom and his final victory over everything which defies his purpose.”³²⁷

Deliver Us from Evil Consultation, Nairobi, 2000

Although the major congresses of 1966, 1974, 1989, and 2010 were the primary focus of the Lausanne Movement, there were also various issue and regional gatherings along with occasional papers that help address specific issues or concerns. When 1993 Intercessory Working Group met in London, “apprehensions over developments in spiritual warfare . . . reached such levels that a full day of the meeting was devoted to discussion.”³²⁸ This time period coincides with the publishing and rapid sales of Anderson’s *The Bondage Breaker* and *Victory Over the Darkness*. Out of this meeting the Lausanne Statement on Spiritual Warfare was formulated, stating that “we agreed that evangelization is to bring people from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God (Acts 26:18). This involves an inescapable element of Spiritual Warfare.”³²⁹ As contemporary events unfolded in the realm of spiritual warfare, the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization decided to “offer guidance” for the world

³²⁶Nichols and Graham, *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World*, 137-38.

³²⁷Ibid., 112.

³²⁸Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, vii.

³²⁹Tormod Engelsen and A. Scott Moreau, *Spiritual Conflict in Today's Mission: A Report from the Consultation on “Deliver Us from Evil”* (Nairobi: Marc, 2001), 83.

evangelical community.³³⁰ This “inescapable element” of spiritual warfare was planned to be addressed and explored in further depth at the Deliver Us from Evil consultation in Nairobi, Kenya in 2000.

Significance of the Consultation

The significance of this consultation was found in its timely response to a period in evangelicalism that was flooded with a variety of spiritual warfare “books, courses and seminars.” Due to this flood of materials, there naturally arose a “heightened interest” for answers. The evangelical community was primarily shown to have five major viewpoints on spiritual warfare: (1) “those who dismiss the idea of the spirit world with disdain,” (2) those who “are not aware of the world of the spirit to any degree,” (3) “those who are aware . . . but have many questions,” (4) “those who . . . unquestioningly adopt the newest teachings,” and (5) those who “dismiss new approaches as unbiblical and therefore unacceptable” due to a “lack of theological groundwork on the subject, there is also much confusion.”³³¹ All of these reasons added up to the fact that the evangelical community was looking for a faithful discussion on spiritual warfare that covered the spectrum of views. The Deliver Us from Evil consultation became that very forum where they could “encourage churches of all traditions to . . . stimulate forthright discussion, serious reflection and practical ministry on spiritual conflict to the glory of God.”³³²

Spiritual Warfare Comments at the Consultation

The depth and breadth of spiritual warfare dialogue that occurred in Nairobi was substantive enough for its own book, however space will only allow a brief summary

³³⁰Engelsviken and Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, vii.

³³¹Ibid., viii.

³³²Ibid., xix.

of their activities. The committee found representatives from a variety of settings and a “broad spectrum of theological views.”³³³ They set their objective on seeking “a biblical and comprehensive understanding of (1) who the enemy is; (2) how he is working; and (3) how we can fight him in order to be most effective in the evangelization of all peoples.”³³⁴

The consultation participants studied not only theology and history, but also personal reflections on experience and contemporary issues.³³⁵ Despite the “divisiveness among evangelicals” at this time, there was also great interest in seeing that western participants were acknowledging the reality of spiritual warfare “as a result of their cross-cultural experience.”³³⁶ The participants knew that there was a “need to combat the effects on the church of secularization and the experience-centred cultures of post-modernism in the West.”³³⁷

Although the Lausanne Covenant, Manila Manifesto, and Lausanne Statement on Spiritual Warfare clearly and concisely expressed the Lausanne Movement’s view on spiritual warfare, the Deliver Us from Evil consultation helped respond to important issues such as “prayer in spiritual warfare, possession, demonization, and territorial spirits.”³³⁸ It significantly helped explain “the effect of the demonic in the lives of Christians” as well as in the process of evangelism. One of the most valuable interactions was in discussing the “extent to which we can learn and verify things from the spiritual realm from experiences not immediately verifiable from Scripture.”³³⁹ The Deliver Us

³³³Engelsviken and Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, ix.

³³⁴Ibid., xvii.

³³⁵Ibid., x.

³³⁶Ibid., viii, xvii.

³³⁷Ibid., ix.

³³⁸Ibid., viii.

³³⁹Ibid., xxvi.

from Evil consultation was by far the most important contribution of the Lausanne Movement to the spiritual warfare conversation.

Summary of the Consultation and Spiritual Warfare

Despite the many successes of the Deliver Us from Evil consultation, much work can be done among the evangelical community through cooperative work in the Lausanne Movement. There is still an “urgent need for a hermeneutic” that better explains and assists with “our understanding and theology of spiritual conflict.”³⁴⁰ As initiated by Billy Graham’s passionate exhortation in Berlin in 1966, believers must continue to “develop an understanding of spiritual conflict and its practice within the Christian community, so that in time it becomes part of the everyday life of the church.”³⁴¹ The documents deriving from this consultation are the most helpful and descriptive of the Lausanne Movement’s biblical, theological, and historical understanding of spiritual warfare and application within the church in missions, evangelism, and discipleship. Anderson’s writings fall in line with their affirmations and do not violate their warnings, rebukes and cautions.

Lausanne III and Spiritual Warfare

Lausanne III occurred in 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa but treated spiritual warfare much less than any other congress. Due to spatial constraints of this book, and the lack of spiritual warfare treatment within Lausanne III, appendix 2 holds more details and description concerning Lausanne III. Cape Town’s legacy has great potential in having a long term evangelistic impact. Great accomplishments for the Gospel are often found when so many believers gather together from across the globe for God’s glory. This congress sought out more participants than ever through creative use of media

³⁴⁰Engelsviken and Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, xxviii.

³⁴¹Ibid.

technologies. Despite these successes, it seems as if much of the online conversations have neglected any consideration of spiritual warfare in spreading the Gospel. The Cape Town Commitment does continue the theological trend of the Lausanne Movement of giving attention to spiritual warfare, and makes helpful assertions as to important focuses that must be present in the work of missions, evangelism, and discipleship. It can be hoped that “the conference in Cape Town might have given new impulses to the task of global evangelization.”³⁴²

Summary of a Theological Understanding and Application of Spiritual Warfare through the Lausanne Movement

The Lausanne Movement has a brief, but rich history of evangelical cooperation and interaction for the purposes of proclaiming the Gospel message to the ends of the earth. Thirty-five years ago, John Stott mentioned, “one of Lausanne’s most important achievements was the discussion in candour and mutual respect of evangelical difference.”³⁴³ Even today that perspective is still expressed by Bill Wagner, one of the few men to have attended all four global congresses, saying “I am thrilled that evangelicals are showing a real spirit of working together as one for the cause of Christ in our world today.”³⁴⁴ No matter the level of controversy, Lausanne continues to seek to “expand evangelical thinking” as issues arrive.³⁴⁵

Although there is still room for improvement, the Lausanne Movement has faithfully sought to have “a new and better theological definition of the task of the church” in evangelism and missions.³⁴⁶ Their treatment of spiritual warfare has waxed

³⁴²Wagner, “A Hopeful Report from Lausanne.”

³⁴³Padilla, *The New Face of Evangelicalism*, 5.

³⁴⁴Wagner, “A Hopeful Report from Lausanne.”

³⁴⁵Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, xviii.

³⁴⁶Wagner, “A Hopeful Report from Lausanne.”

and waned at times, but they have established a foundation that serves as an excellent biblical, theological, and historical base. Due to their international, cross-denominational, cross-cultural pool of experts and scholars, many of their observations and emphases are a helpful foundation in the critique and analysis of Anderson's writings on spiritual warfare in the context of evangelism and discipleship.

Towards a Modern Understanding and Application of Spiritual Warfare

Two prevalent modern approaches to spiritual warfare are truth encounters or power encounters.³⁴⁷ Truth encounter approaches often emphasize the individual's personal responsibility for seeking truth to counter the lies of Satan. Power encounter approaches tend to characterize spiritual warfare as a battle that necessitates direct, confrontational encounters between spiritual leaders and demons through practices such as exorcism and territorial spirit identification and prayer.³⁴⁸ Although attention to spiritual warfare seems to go through periods of emphasis and disinterest, Scripture, church history, and modern treatments all recognize that there are ongoing attacks of the devil and his demons against the church and Christian believers.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁷James K. Beilby and Paul Rhodes Eddy, eds., *Understanding Spiritual Warfare: Four Views* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 38. Many spiritual warfare works offer differing groups of approaches to spiritual warfare. Beilby and Eddy utilize four categories of a "World Systems Model" (47-88), "Classical Model" (89-123), "Ground-Level Deliverance Model" (129-172), and "Strategic-Level Deliverance Model" (173-210). They describe Anderson's model as a "bridging effort between 'power encounter' versions of the deliverance model and the classic model" (38).

³⁴⁸"Central to this model is the conviction that demonic entities can take up residence in people's lives and that exorcism- or 'deliverance' ministry- in one form or another is frequently required for their liberation and healing. . . . centers on the ideas of territorial spirits, spiritual mapping, and identificational repentance. This approach to spiritual warfare- commonly known as strategic- or cosmic-level spiritual warfare—can be seen as emerging from, and thus sharing the basic convictions of, the deliverance model, while further developing it in significant ways. It also shares some intriguing elements with the world systems model." Ibid., 36-43.

³⁴⁹"Exorcism practice seems 'to diminish in the Middle Ages,' but is still referenced among the Germanic tribes, Norwegians, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Martin Luther, the Catholic Church's 1614 *Rituale Romanum* (exorcism guidelines), and other sources." Tormod Engelsviken, "Historical Overview 3," in *Deliver Us from Evil Consultation* (Nairobi: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 2000), accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.lausanne.org/all-documents/historical-overview-3.html>.

Many western Christians fall into categories of either looking down on spiritual warfare “with disdain,” remaining unaware of spiritual warfare, questioning spiritual practices, blindly accepting the spiritual warfare views of their leaders, or dismissing “new approaches as unbiblical and therefore unacceptable.”³⁵⁰ Scott Moreau categorizes evangelical approaches to spiritual warfare into seven types of encounters. This author takes those categories and consolidates them into the five approaches below.³⁵¹ Four of the author’s categories closely parallel the structure of Christ’s command in Mark 12:30-31 to love the Lord our God with all of our heart (relational encounter), soul (truth encounter), mind (mind encounter), and strength (power encounter).

An Avoidance Strategy

Believers who advocate for no encounters with demons are those by whom “demonic confrontation is viewed with suspicion.”³⁵² These typically Western believers have been so “influenced by a naturalistic worldview that only admits the reality of what can be seen or touched or heard, deny[ing] that demons exist today.”³⁵³ John MacArthur describes this group as one who fails “to understand that the Christian life is a fierce spiritual battle.”³⁵⁴ Walter Wink also describes this group’s materialistic worldview as deriving from a theology that does not allow for an understanding of angels, spirits,

³⁵⁰Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, viii.

³⁵¹Ibid., 117-19. Moreau’s categories are (1) Traditionalists (2) Experience-based Warriors (3) Evangelical Confronters (4) Theologians and Biblical Scholars (5) Spiritual Healers (6) Truth-Encounter Advocates and (7) Cross-Cultural Spiritual Conflict Analysts. Interestingly, Moreau groups himself in three of the categories: Theologians and Biblical Scholars, Truth-Encounter Advocates, and Cross-Cultural Spiritual Conflict Analysts.

³⁵²Ibid.

³⁵³Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 419.

³⁵⁴John MacArthur, *Standing Strong: How to Resist the Enemy of Your Soul* (Colorado Springs, CO: Victor, 2006), 9.

Satan, demons, or the active spirit realm at all.³⁵⁵ Wink also mentions that the best way to discover the weakness of a system “is to discover what it excludes from conversation.”³⁵⁶ Those who resist any discussion and consideration of spiritual warfare risk being caught off guard in the midst of an attack. Scripture and church history emphasize resisting and standing firm against Satan’s activity and influence in this world. John reminds believers to “test the spirits” that “have gone out into the world,” thus implying that those who are in Christ should never ignore the spiritual battle raging around them (1 John 4:1).

A Relational Strategy

Jeremiah warns us that “the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?” (Jer 17:9). In spiritual warfare there is a group of practitioners that is often referred to as spiritual healers who “explore the healing of deep hurts through a variety of therapeutic means (prayer, counseling, medical intervention).”³⁵⁷ This relational encounter category has no prescribed approach, but they generally seek to “explore the healing of deep hurts through a variety of therapeutic means.”³⁵⁸

Charles Kraft explains the difference of his deliverance ministry by their claims that “complete healing does not come unless both the emotional and spiritual components of a person’s problems are addressed.”³⁵⁹ Kraft advocates “dealing primarily with the emotional garbage but also with the spiritual ‘rats’ (demons).”³⁶⁰ In stating this,

³⁵⁵Walter Wink, *Unmasking the Powers: The Invisible Forces that Determine Human Existence* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1986), 1.

³⁵⁶Ibid.

³⁵⁷Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, 118.

³⁵⁸Ibid.

³⁵⁹Kraft, *Confronting Powerless Christianity*, 57.

³⁶⁰Ibid.

Kraft argues that demons are not the main problem, but the emotional garbage that attracts them. Accordingly, he cautions against a counseling-only or deliverance-only approach, instead arguing for the use of both relationships and power to confront Satan and his demons.³⁶¹

Relational encounter practitioners must be on their guard against reducing the problems of their counselees to a mere emotional, flesh focused problem. Jeremiah asserts and reminds that the Lord searches the heart and tests the mind (Jer 17:10). Believers must likewise help those who have been deceived into thinking and feeling Satan's lies.

A Mind Strategy

Theologians and bible scholars most commonly assume a mind encounter approach to spiritual warfare, but their writings “vary widely in perspective.”³⁶² These writings provide helpful perspectives with spiritual warfare but often avoid spiritual warfare phenomenology and experiences. Some authors do engage in and provide cross-cultural analysis where they are able to “examine issues of spiritual warfare in light of cultural frames.”³⁶³ Academic treatments of spiritual warfare are greatly needed in order to consider requests such as a perceived need for a hermeneutic that

a) Allows culture and experience to play a role in the formulation of our understanding and theology of spiritual conflict. The basis and test of such a theology is Scripture, as faithfully interpreted by the Spirit-guided hermeneutical community of the global church. b) Allows an examination of issues that arise in Christian experience not directly addressed in Scripture. c) Accepts the fact that the Holy Spirit has surprised the church by acting in ways not explicitly taught in Scripture (Acts 10 and 15) and may be doing so again.³⁶⁴

³⁶¹Kraft, *Confronting Powerless Christianity*, 57.

³⁶²Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, 118.

³⁶³Ibid., 119.

³⁶⁴Ibid., xxvii.

Paul Hiebert challenges those who engage spiritual warfare through their minds to humbly recognize that their “understandings of Scriptures are partial and biased.”³⁶⁵ Hiebert continues by emphasizing that scholars should never forget to “constantly test our theological interpretations against biblical teachings, [so that] they become increasingly rooted in the biblical message itself.”³⁶⁶ The Apostle Paul reminds believers that the conflicts in their lives are not merely a “war according to the flesh” and that the “weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh” (2 Cor 10:3,4). Paul also follows this with affirmation of the mind encounter approach as part of spiritual warfare when he pens that “we destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised up against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ” (2 Cor 10:5). Encountering spiritual warfare with the mind is an important aspect that can serve as a biblical corrective to those who uphold merely phenomenological and experienced-based approaches. Mind encounter practitioners can lay a vital theological foundation, but they also must be aware of the biases of their own worldview and experiences.

A Power Strategy

The power encounter approach is commonly regarded as the most controversial as they seek to “integrate experience in testing doctrinal formulations.”³⁶⁷ The emphasis power enthusiasts place on experience leads to a wide spectrum of praxis and belief. The category of power encounter is defined by the fact that its practitioners “recognize reality of demonic work in Christians and advocate a direct confrontational deliverance approach.”³⁶⁸

³⁶⁵Paul G. Hiebert and Frances F. Hiebert, eds., *Case Studies in Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987), 18.

³⁶⁶Ibid.

³⁶⁷Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, 118.

³⁶⁸Ibid.

Deliverance practices and methodologies range from the heretical, syncretistic, debatable, and mostly-biblical. In order to support power encounters, these believers point to Paul's writing to the church at Corinth where he says that "kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power" (1 Cor 4:20). Others justify their approach by referencing where Christ states, "whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do" (John 14:12).

Many power encounter leaders have isolated themselves from many others in the evangelical community in their passionate promotion of their experiences and perceived successes. C. Peter Wagner demonstrates such isolationist hyperbole through his emphasis on territorial spirits and proclaiming that ignorance of these spirits is maybe "the most widespread danger of all among the evangelical community."³⁶⁹ A scriptural warning concerning pride is a helpful reminder for power-encounter practitioners, that they should "not think of yourself more highly than you ought" (Rom 12:3), and that they should test their experiences in light of Scriptural commands and examples (Acts 17:11).

Methods. Much of the theological concern over the confrontational approach to spiritual warfare in evangelistic ministry derives from their faulty use of Scripture. Many in this category seem to "appeal to pragmatism" and demonstrate a "willingness to consider ideas and follow practices that are admittedly extra-biblical."³⁷⁰ Sometimes their knowledge is found by "by interviewing the demons in demonized persons," through a "natural capacity or spiritual gifting," by "supernatural insights," or in "special revelation."³⁷¹

³⁶⁹C. Peter Wagner and Fredrick Douglas Pennoyer, eds., *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), 88.

³⁷⁰Edward Rommen, ed., *Spiritual Power and Missions: Raising the Issues* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1995), 41; Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, ix.

³⁷¹Rommen, *Spiritual Power and Missions*, 26, 51; Wagner and Pennoyer, *Wrestling with Dark Angels*, 33; Rommen, *Spiritual Power and Missions*, 53-55.

At times, power advocates “assume that the beliefs about spirit realities held by practitioners of occult and animistic/folk religions correspond to reality.”³⁷² Spiritual warfare through power encounter often demonstrates faulty epistemological principles as their “truths are accredited, justified, and propagated by means of anecdotes culled from many sources.”³⁷³ These problems compound through retrospective attempts “to link the doctrines to Scripture . . . in support of their doctrines . . . alternate interpretations are rarely entertained. They seem to disregard clear passages which do not agree with their assertions.”³⁷⁴ This sort of epistemological and hermeneutical approach leads to significant theological problems regarding the authority and perspicuity of Scripture and further isolates them from much of the evangelical community.

Focus. Those concerned with power encounters often demonstrate “an excessive and unhealthy fascination with demons.”³⁷⁵ They are even criticized by their own members such as C. Peter Wagner who cautions against “overemphasizing power” by referencing Jesus’ caution not to rejoice because the spirits are subject to you (Luke 10:20).³⁷⁶ Due to their continual focus on Satan, demons, and spirits, the perception is that their focus is on the enemy more than on God. It is a helpful exhortation and corrective to “never go looking for demons, but if one appears under your feet, tread on it!”³⁷⁷ Power encounter emphasis on methodologies and strategies often lead them towards a man-centered approach to evangelism.

³⁷²Rommen, *Spiritual Power and Missions*, 31.

³⁷³*Ibid.*, 36.

³⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 55.

³⁷⁵MacArthur, *Standing Strong*, 10.

³⁷⁶Wagner and Pennoyer, *Wrestling with Dark Angels*, 87.

³⁷⁷Douglas and Graham, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 896.

Summary. Many within the power encounter camp communicate a prideful and isolationist understanding of spiritual warfare. These believers need to reevaluate their use of Scripture and not forget that God has breathed it out and that it is all profitable (2 Tim 3:16) while remembering that their own fallen nature is prone to Satan’s deceitfulness. Finally, power practitioners should ensure that their hope is set on Christ (1 Pet 1:13) and not themselves or the spirits. By drawing near to him (Jas 4:8) who is greater than the one in the world (1 John 4:4), Christians can have confidence and experience lasting power in Him.

A Truth Strategy

The approach of encountering demons through a focus on truth happens by “teaching people truth and its application rather than direct demonic confrontation.”³⁷⁸ There are several different perspectives within this category, but most do not seek out or actively engage the enemy during their encounters. These Christians may hear or witness a demonic manifestation, but their response is usually to ignore it or to rebuke it to silence so that their evangelistic work may continue. This form of engagement is modeled after Paul’s annoyance with and concise verbal exorcism of the divining slave girl in Philippi (Acts 16:16-18).

Truth practitioners do not doubt that they must wrestle “against dark spiritual forces,” because “the kingdom of darkness is still present, and the devil still ‘prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour’ (1 Pet 5:8).”³⁷⁹ This view may sound similar to power practitioners, but the difference is in that they do not see themselves as the agent of change. They view the agent of change as the Holy Spirit coming into the lives of unbelievers. This truth approach focuses on how sin entraps,

³⁷⁸Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, 119.

³⁷⁹Neil T. Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1990), 20.

ensnares, and enslaves people. Like Jesus' command in John 8:31-32, they prioritize the Bible as truth that leads to freedom found alone in Christ.

Methods. Truth encounter methodologies are focus on the authority believers have in Christ. Wayne Grudem points out that “authority over demonic spirits was not limited to Jesus himself, for he gave similar authority first to the twelve (Matt. 10:8; Mark 3:15), and then to seventy disciples. . . . authority over unclean spirits later extended beyond the seventy disciples to those in the early church who ministered in Jesus' name (Acts 8:7; 16:18; Jam. 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8-9).”³⁸⁰ This Christ-based authority is sufficient.

Truth proponents do not focus on discovering new techniques or special insights into the enemy as Jesus “simply drove the demons out on the basis of his own authority (Mark 1:21-27; 9:14-32).”³⁸¹ Believers must be proactive in spiritual growth so that they are prepared for the day of battle, understanding that “spiritual warfare is not about reacting to the Enemy—it is about putting on the armor of God.”³⁸² This approach sees spiritual warfare defined not only by preparation, but also by direct evangelism that takes “the gospel of light into the kingdom of darkness.”³⁸³ Scriptural principles drive the truth encounter approach to the Bible as an all-sufficient guide to Christ's authority and the Holy Spirit's power.

Focus. While power encounter specialists invest a great deal of time evaluating and understanding the enemy, truth encounter believers spend time looking at a God who is sovereign. They see that “the battle between God and Satan is not one of

³⁸⁰Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 418-19.

³⁸¹Hiebert, *Case Studies in Missions*, 5.

³⁸²Lawless, *Disciplined Warriors*, 18.

³⁸³*Ibid.*, 83.

power (Job 1:1-12, Judg 9:23-24),” for Satan is on a leash with God-prescribed limits to his actions and ability.³⁸⁴ While some “warfare strategies often focus more on our power” than on human weakness in light of God’s strength (2 Cor 12:9), truth encounter proponents uphold the “the necessity of spiritual disciplines as armor against Satan’s wiles.”³⁸⁵ Ongoing sin identifies us with Satan (1 John 3:8) while Christ’s mercy and grace identify us as righteous and holy in the sight of God (Titus 3:3-7). Accordingly the truth encounter focus in spiritual warfare is not for “demonology specialists, but men of God” who help bring souls from darkness into light (John 8:12), from death to life (Ps 56:13), and from wandering to truth (Jas 5:19,20).³⁸⁶

Summary. The truth encounter approach to spiritual warfare applies God’s truth to all aspects of life by putting off the lies of Satan and putting on the living Word of God in Christ. Truth encounter members do not actively seek to dialogue or have power encounters with the enemy, but they believe in his real activity and actively resist the devil by standing firm through the armor of God and prayer. Truth encounter advocates place special emphasis on wielding “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Eph 6:17) as Christ did against Satan (Matt 4:1-11). Whereas other approaches are focused on demonic forces or on the humans themselves, the truth encounter approach seeks to be theocentric in every aspect of the battle. Believers are exhorted to be bold and courageous as they engage the enemy in evangelism and discipleship through the blood of Christ.

³⁸⁴Hiebert, *Case Studies in Missions*, 5.

³⁸⁵Lawless, *Disciplined Warriors*, 16.

³⁸⁶Douglas and Graham, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 896.

A Summary of Strategies

We know from Scripture that Satan is “a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:44) so it should not surprise us that he would attempt to lead us to rebel against God in our heart, soul, mind, and strength contrary to Christ’s command in Mark 12:30. As Satan tries to deceive believers in these ways, they must put on Christ’s truths through Scripture and put off Satan’s lies. Scripture is the foundation and test in evaluating understandings, applications, and interactions between the mind encounter, relational encounter, power encounter, and truth encounter specialists in their approaches to spiritual warfare. Although the truth encounter approach, which Anderson advocates, seems to be the most biblically and theologically correct strategy, there are helpful contributions from the relational, mind, and power strategies. These categories have more overlap in belief and practice than they realize or care to admit, and would benefit through increased dialogue, clarification, and interaction with the other approaches.

Spiritual Warfare Tactics

In evaluating spiritual warfare methods in evangelism, one must evaluate tactics that concern the unbeliever who hears and the believer who shares the gospel message. This section will also consider discipleship and sanctification issues in spiritual warfare. There is only space for a cursory engagement with and critique of each method. The previous spiritual warfare approaches show much overlap between their methods. In chapter five any approaches and methods relevant to Anderson will be examined in greater depth based off of this initial foundation of understanding.

The Hearer as Unbeliever or Believer

The primary concern for all hearers is their spiritual condition. Their spiritual condition can be often confused or overlooked if a demon manifests itself or if the individual demonstrates oppression or possession behaviors. These events can cause

questions concerning personal claims of Christian-allegiance.³⁸⁷ Other complications arise in considering past occultist ties, unconfessed sin, or demonic allegiances that have not been renounced. Some theories advocate that past sins may allow Satan to have permission or special access to that individual. Discerning whether a hearer is a lost soul in need of evangelism or a saved soul in need of discipleship is

complicated by the ambiguity which surround the meaning of the word *Christian* in many contexts today. If one wishes to include within the category of believer so-called nominal Christians or those who may no longer consider themselves to be believers but are part of traditions which still regard them as Christian, owing to a previous profession of faith or baptism, then perhaps one can argue for the domination of such “Christians” by demons. However, such modern ways of defining the term *Christian* do not take seriously enough the lines of demarcation which the New Testament draws between believers and unbelievers.³⁸⁸

As seemingly difficult as it may be to determine the validity of one’s faith claims, the essential element to be shared is the gospel news through the Biblical texts as the “sword of the Spirit” (Eph 6:17). The hearer must be encouraged and exhorted to “examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!” (2 Cor 13:5). Scriptural truth clarifies that there are two types of people: “children of the devil” and “children of God,” and that one’s true allegiance and state can be evidenced by their life (1 John 3:10).

Believers and unbelievers both need to hear gospel truths, but only true believers will respond in genuine repentance, belief, and life-changing faith that works itself out in visible, progressive change. Billy Graham claims that “our world is on fire, and man without God cannot control the flames. The demons of hell have been let loose.”³⁸⁹ Many Christians have tried to devise methods to engage these demons. These

³⁸⁷Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, xxvi.

³⁸⁸Ibid., 54.

³⁸⁹Billy Graham, “Why the Berlin Congress?,” in *The World Congress on Evangelism* (Berlin: Wheaton College, 1966).

methods must be tested and evaluated in light of Scripture in order to understand if they are God’s methods and possible vehicles for His power. Only a believing hearer has hope in any spiritual warfare encounter.

Therapeutic Level Warfare

Spiritual healing, faith healing, or physical healing ministries are types of therapeutic level spiritual warfare. This approach is to alleviate physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual harm done by demons. This category of spiritual warfare does not engage in evangelistic ministry and avoids the topic of salvation.³⁹⁰ Their focus is on helping people to “have their lives in order” instead of recognizing that their real need lies in the fact that “they have not trusted in Christ as Savior and Lord. Their souls are ‘unoccupied’—that is, the Holy Spirit does not indwell them. Thus they are open to demonic invasion (Matt 12:43-45).”³⁹¹

Therapeutic advocates argue, “with rare exceptions, the New Testament references to suffering relate to demonic attacks, persecution . . . or divine judgment, not to human illness.”³⁹² Therapeutic-type warfare must avoid the delusion of trying to do reparative surgery on a dead soul. John states that believers must remain “faithful unto death” despite demonic suffering, being reminded of Christ’s gift of life (Rev 2:10) and not focused on temporary solutions.

When Paul asks God for deliverance three times from “a messenger of Satan” (2 Cor 12:7-10) sent to harass him and keep him humble, God responds that “my grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor 12:9). Paul’s response is not in persisting in seeking therapeutic relief from the demonic, but to “for the

³⁹⁰One will see some similarities in this approach to Anderson’s lack of evangelistic appeal.

³⁹¹MacArthur, *Standing Strong*, 28.

³⁹²C. Peter Wagner, *How to Have a Healing Ministry without Making Your Church Sick* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1988), 255.

sake of Christ” to be “content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities” (2 Cor 12:10) by remembering in self-weakness flows divine-strength. Without salvation, no amount of therapy will solve one’s spiritual needs. With salvation, there must be a point of release that trusts God’s provision or withholding of comfort and relief.

Occult Level Warfare

Occult warfare describes a variety of activities and people directly connected with active worshiping of Satan and his demons. Such a differentiation between Satan-worshippers and “regular” unbelievers is unhelpful and unbiblical. The spiritual condition of members of the occult is no different from the spiritual condition of kind, nominal Christians. Paul describes humanity as all having been “dead in the trespasses and sins . . . following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air” (Eph 2:1-2). Despite the common effects of Adam and Eve’s original sin upon all mankind (Rom 5:12-19), some warfare proponents endorse a view of engaging different levels or types of demons.

Charles Kraft goes so far as to describe at least eight different types of evil spirits: family, occult, ordinary, territorial/institutional/religion, vice, household/geographical/cultural items, and ancestral.³⁹³ Kraft and others thus deduce that since there are different types of demons, there must be different methods of warfare for each type. Although demonic forces may manifest themselves differently in occult and non-occult persons, biblical spiritual warfare methods remain unchanged. God’s Word shows that there is only one suit of armor, the armor of God, that must be put on daily and saturated with constant prayer (Eph 6:10-20). All non-believers are in a condition of spiritual deadness, following Satan as his children in an active state of rebellion against God, but are never beyond the saving grace and power of Christ.

³⁹³Kraft, *Confronting Powerless Christianity*, 59-60.

Ground Level Warfare

Ground level spiritual warfare is the category that most people think of when they hear the term spiritual warfare. Kraft defines this warfare as that which “takes place in human contexts, in contrast with warfare that takes place largely in the air.”³⁹⁴ Ground warfare draws the most attention through the attention of media and popular culture in the form of possession or demonization encounters.

Exorcism and deliverance. Demon possession of unbelievers is often the aspect of ground level warfare that is viewed as most spectacular. It is clear from Scripture that demon possession occurred in a variety of ways. Some people were delivered of these demons on their own faith, others on the faith of others (Mark 9:23-24), and sometimes without any expressed desire to be rid of the demon.³⁹⁵ While some restrict such occurrences to the Bible, Millard Erickson points out “there is no reason to believe that demon possessions are restricted to the past.”³⁹⁶

Exorcists are widely criticized. Dramatic demonstrations and exaggerations often lead towards pride-filled ministries and enriched bank accounts. Experiences and anecdotes typically direct exorcism methodology instead of Scripture. Some exorcists seek “demons for information to use in expelling them” or ask for special revelation from God in the form of “words of knowledge.”³⁹⁷ These exorcism methods are cause for concern for “Satan disguises himself as an angel of light” (2 Cor 11:14) in order to lead people away from the all-sufficient source of knowledge in the Bible.

Specific exorcism methods are important to consider. Although there may be a “tremendous need for a deliverance ministry,” that does not validate all methods as

³⁹⁴Kraft, *Confronting Powerless Christianity*, 200.

³⁹⁵Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985), 473-74.

³⁹⁶Ibid., 474.

³⁹⁷Ibid.

biblical.³⁹⁸ Scripture shows that both Jesus and his apostles “cast out demons without pronouncing an elaborate formula” and sometimes did it without even being physically present (Mark 7:24-30).³⁹⁹ MacArthur cautions that the epistles never prescribe or “instruct believers to cast out demons” and that whenever they did, “the demon-possessed people were unbelievers.”⁴⁰⁰ The dangers of attempting exorcism in one’s own methods and power are seen in failure (Mark 9:14-18) and in physical harm (Acts 19:11-20). Such a method-centered focus can also point people to the practitioner’s power and ability rather than to the power of God (1 Cor 2:1-5).

Those who exorcise must understand that “Satan, the great deceiver, may be encouraging interest in demon possession in hopes that Christians will become careless about other more subtle forms of influence by the powers of evil.”⁴⁰¹ The ultimate concern of an evangelist towards a hearer is not the presence of demons but rather the absence of Christ. Salvation, not exorcism, is the goal, understanding that if one accepts Christ, they become “the temple of the living God” with which Satan has no portion (2 Cor 6:14-16).

Ancestor spirits and ghosts. The worship of ancestor spirits and interest in paranormal phenomenon are different but have a common fear and unhealthy desire to ascertain the future. Those who suffer from these fears seek to alleviate it in a variety of ways through rituals, sacrifices, idols, superstitious practices, and the consultation of a variety of practitioners (witch doctors, mediums, sorcerers, necromancers, etc.).

Ancestor worship practitioners see ancestors as “important mediators between humans

³⁹⁸Douglas and Graham, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 894.

³⁹⁹Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 474.

⁴⁰⁰MacArthur, *Standing Strong*, 25-26.

⁴⁰¹Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 474.

and spirits” who defend and provide wisdom to their relatives.⁴⁰² Those who seek out ghosts often do so out of desires similar to occult practitioners: a “desire for knowledge,” “lust for power,” “need for comfort,” “protection,” or “spiritual satisfaction” to their unhealthy curiosities.⁴⁰³

Scripture wholly condemns the practice of consulting the dead (Deut 18:11), divination (Lev 19:26), sorcery (Deut 18:10), mediums (Lev 19:31), seeking ghosts (Ezek 13:20), witchcraft (Gal 5:20), astrology (Isa 47:13-14, Deut 4:19), spell casting (Deut 18:11), and interpreting omens (Deut 18:11). No spiritual being or encounter will ever satisfy a person’s desires. True, lasting satisfaction is only found through a saving relationship with Christ (Matt 5:6). Christ is the only true hope and power available to people who struggle with ancestor spirits or paranormal activity.

Binding and loosing. Spiritual warfare advocates often use the term “binding the strongman” with reference to Matthew 12:29. These spiritual warfare proponents assume that the “strong man refers to evil spirits” and that “it would seem reasonable that the principle could be applied to a nation or a city or a people group as well as a house.”⁴⁰⁴ Wayne Grudem counters this power encounter interpretation with a clarifying thought about this passage: “Jesus had entered the strong man’s ‘house’ (the world of unbelievers who are under the bondage of Satan), and he was plundering his house, that is, freeing people from Satanic bondage and bringing them into the joy of the kingdom of God.”⁴⁰⁵ The task in binding and loosing should not be directed at the demonic, but

⁴⁰²Hiebert, *Case Studies in Missions*, 24. In one example demonstrating the widespread influence of ancestor worship, over 90 percent of the Chinese in Taiwan “do not want to become Christians because they must give up ancestor practices.”

⁴⁰³Douglas and Graham, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, 895.

⁴⁰⁴Wagner and Pennoyer, *Wrestling with Dark Angels*, 78.

⁴⁰⁵Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 418.

rather efforts should be directed towards being used by God to set the prisoners of sin free through the blood of Christ (Zech 9:11).

Rebuking. When one senses a demonic presence, or experiences a demonic attack, many Christians utilize a process of rebuking. Rebuking usually involves the verbal confrontation of Satan and his demons. The practice derives from Scriptural instances where Christ rebukes both Satan (Matt 4:10, 16:23) and demons (Matt 17:18; Mark 1:25).⁴⁰⁶ It can also be argued that rebuke is found in Paul's condemnation and cursing of Elymas the magician (Acts 13:8-11) and his exorcism of the spirit in the soothsaying girl of Philippi (Acts 16:16-18). Zechariah 3:1-7 also describes God directly rebuking Satan by saying, "The Lord rebuke you, O Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?" An additional evidence of rebuking language is found in Jude 1:9 when the archangel Michael spoke to Satan saying, "The Lord rebuke you!"

Although there are some biblical examples for a verbal rebuke of the demonic, these examples demonstrate that it occurs in limited instances. Biblical rebukes are not formulaic, are brief, and are solely focused on the power and name of Christ. If a believer chooses to practice rebuking Satan and his demons, the rebuke should be specific to the situation, directly to the manifesting demon or Satan, and not done "with a spirit of arrogance," understanding that our power and authority rests in Christ, not ourselves.⁴⁰⁷ Caution is urged in utilizing a rebuke, for both false teachers are condemned for their ignorant, hasty, pride-filled rebukes towards the demonic (2 Pet 2:10-13; Jude 1:8-11). If a believer chooses to speak aloud in a situation of spiritual warfare, he should not

⁴⁰⁶John Franklin and Chuck Lawless, *Spiritual Warfare: Biblical Truth for Victory* (Nashville: LifeWay Press, 2001), 153-54.

⁴⁰⁷Franklin and Lawless, *Spiritual Warfare*, 153-54.

primarily address the enemy but rather focus his prayers and concerns towards God for His power and work in the saving and protection of souls.

Naming. Naming is a tactic believed to gain power or authority over demons by discovering their names. Advocates postulate that since Christ found the name of the demonized Gadarene to be ‘Legion’ (Mark 5:9,15), that one should likewise make the same practice with both individual and territorial spirits.⁴⁰⁸ “Legion” may be more descriptive of the plurality and multiplicity of the demons rather than a demon’s specific name. Even if that was one particular demon’s name, Christ’s awareness of its name gave him no additional power or ability to exorcise it, for He already possessed in His own nature and name, the sufficient power for exorcism as the Creator of all angelic beings (Isa 45:22-23; Rom 14:11). Identifying names of demons is not suggested, practiced, or recommended anywhere else in Scripture so it is unwise to make much of this method.

Repentance issues. Some warfare practitioners make special mention of the importance of believers confessing and repenting of every known sin in fear that they may have given Satan a special gateway into their lives. They utilize long lists of possible sins and prayers of repentance and renouncement of Satan’s lies.⁴⁰⁹ They point to Acts 19:18 where believers came out after coming to faith, “confessing and divulging their practices.”

Repentance is clearly important both in conversion and sanctification, but there are particular cautions that must be made to those who emphasize repentance and renouncement in spiritual warfare. Unbelievers should realize that repentance is necessary for salvation (Acts 2:38, 3:19, 20:21), but that once one is in Christ, “there is

⁴⁰⁸Wagner and Pennoyer, *Wrestling with Dark Angels*, 84.

⁴⁰⁹Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 199-252.

therefore now no condemnation” (Rom 8:1). Danger lies in repentance becoming a ritual or formula and not sincerely from the heart. There should not be an unhealthy fear of one’s own limited ability to remember past sins, as if salvation is dependent on verbal confession of each and every past sin.

Vulnerability. Many are concerned with perceived levels of vulnerability to demons. Some argue that vulnerability can occur through “contact with physical objects,” “the curses of others,” “genealogical transmission,” or due to “geographic location.”⁴¹⁰ This view states that one should not be “outwitted by Satan” since one can anticipate and be aware of his “designs” (2 Cor 2:11).⁴¹¹ In this passage Paul is not suggesting a cat and mouse game with Satan but rather, as seen in the context, is explaining that Satan seeks to destroy unity in the church through a lack of forgiveness (2 Cor 2:5-10).

Nevertheless, vulnerability to items and locations continues as an issue that arises in spiritual warfare. Many are convinced that “demons can and do attach themselves to objects, to houses, or other buildings, to animals and to people.”⁴¹² 1 Corinthians 10:18-20 is often referenced as support of this view in light of food being sacrificed to idols. In consideration of 1 Corinthians 8:1-13, however, it is seen that the conscience, not the food, is the issue as it might cause concern in leading others astray. These passages do caution against provoking God to jealousy through carelessness in casually taking part in activities dedicated to demons.

A final vulnerability reference is given in Acts 19:19 where new believers burned their magic books. This action was not for fear of demonic power but rather served as a public act of repentance (renunciation and confession) of their changed lives.

⁴¹⁰Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 14-18; Rommen, *Spiritual Power and Missions*, 19.

⁴¹¹Wagner and Pennoyer, *Wrestling with Dark Angels*, 76.

⁴¹²Ibid.

These scriptural examples are not about vulnerability to items or locations, but are about the changed heart Christ desires to see in believers.⁴¹³

Genealogical connections. Some claim that Satan has claims on people through multiple generations due to the sins of their ancestors. Kraft states that he uses “the power of Christ to break generational curses, vows, dedications and rights given to the enemy through sin by the person’s ancestors.”⁴¹⁴ Other advocates of generational sin point to passages such as Exodus 20:5, 34:7; Numbers 14:18; and Deuteronomy 5:9. This concept of demons passing through generations is one which “occasionally appears in animistic religions,” but that is not taught by Scripture.⁴¹⁵ Chuck Lawless and John Franklin point out that God is the actor in these passages, not Satan, and that the cross of Christ broke all curses so that the “old has passed away” and believers are free from the condemnation of their past (2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 8:1).⁴¹⁶

Strategic Level (Territorial Spirits)

Strategic level spiritual warfare is an approach that confronts demonic spirits that are geographically assigned and of a higher power and responsibility among Satan’s workers. The concept behind this methodology is that if you can identify and map these demons you will gain a knowledge that helps you to free a particular geographical area from demonic oppression. This battle is viewed as happening in the air, but one that still affects believers on the ground. Emphasis is on repentance from the corporate sin in a particular nation or culture.

⁴¹³It is important to note that the Holy Spirit’s power is described as flowing in faith through objects such as Jesus’ cloak (Luke 8:44), handkerchiefs/aprons (Acts 19:12), and even shadows (Acts 5:15).

⁴¹⁴Kraft, *Confronting Powerless Christianity*, 216.

⁴¹⁵Rommen, *Spiritual Power and Missions*, 67.

⁴¹⁶Franklin and Lawless, *Spiritual Warfare*, 155-58.

Strategic level warfare also upholds warfare prayer as a weapon that allows the gospel to go forth where it would not otherwise be able to take root. Some of these theories come from “tribal views of spiritual warfare” and although they are found in intertestamental Judaism, they are not supported within the New Testament.⁴¹⁷ Chuck Lowe comments on the Reformers’ views, that “for Calvin, no less than for Luther, Scripture provides all that is needed for spiritual warfare.”⁴¹⁸

Territorial spirits are the main focus of strategic level spiritual warfare. This concept comes from the references to the Princes of Persia and Greece in Daniel 10:13, 20, 21; 12:1-2. Strategic level spiritual warfare advocates contend that “Satan does indeed assign a demon or a corps of demons to every geo-political unit in the world and that they are among the principalities and powers against whom we wrestle.”⁴¹⁹ Strategic level warriors also believe that as they come to know and understand the identities and rankings of the geo-political gods they can better pray against them so that they can free “those who are perishing” from “having their minds blinded by the god of this age” (2 Cor 4:4).⁴²⁰ They consider their interaction with territorial spirits to be “major league warfare” in contrast to personal deliverance ministries and emphasize the need for expertise in this field, or “Satan will eat you for breakfast.”⁴²¹

Some of these strategic level spiritual warfare methods were known, but not practiced, during the middle ages.⁴²² Others point out that there is “little biblical warrant

⁴¹⁷Hiebert, *Case Studies in Missions*, 3; Chuck Lowe, *Territorial Spirits and World Evangelisation: A Biblical, Historical and Missiological Critique of Strategic-Level Spiritual Warfare* (Fearn, Scotland: Mentor/OMF, 1998), 84.

⁴¹⁸Lowe, *Territorial Spirits*, 97.

⁴¹⁹C. Peter Wagner, ed., *Territorial Spirits: Insights on Strategic-Level Spiritual Warfare from Nineteen Christian Leaders* (Chichester, England: Sovereign World, 1991), 52.

⁴²⁰Wagner and Pennoyer, *Wrestling with Dark Angels*, 75.

⁴²¹*Ibid.*, 86-87.

⁴²²Lowe, *Territorial Spirits*, 88.

for a number of the teachings and practices associated with some forms of spiritual conflict which focus on territorial spirits.”⁴²³ Wayne Grudem reinforces this point by stating,

in no instance does anyone in the New Testament (1) summon a “territorial spirit” upon entering an area to preach the gospel . . . or (2) demand information from demons about a local demonic hierarchy, (3) say that we should believe or teach information derived from demons, or (4) teach by word or example that certain “demonic strongholds” over a city have to be broken before the gospel can be proclaimed with effectiveness.⁴²⁴

Strategic level spiritual warfare is mere speculation derived and reinforced by anecdotal evidence. A believer’s effectiveness in gospel sharing is solely dependent on Christ’s power.

The Believer as Proclaimer

Believers must be concerned with spiritual warfare in their own lives in order to be used effectively in evangelistic ministry and disciple making. Christians are reminded in Scripture of their need to “stand firm” (Eph 6:13) and “resist” (Jas 4:7) the devil. Satan’s testing of Job teaches Job to have an “increased awareness of God’s greatness and his own sinfulness” and of the “the necessity of submitting to God’s sovereign purposes.”⁴²⁵ MacArthur points out Satan’s sifting of Peter being instructive for in Peter’s realization that “he could not stand on his own.”⁴²⁶ Christians’ purpose is to love and glorify God and to make His glory and love known to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8; Matt 28:19; Mark 12:30,31). Biblical methods in spiritual warfare are seen in putting on the full armor of God daily and petitioning the Lord in prayer (Eph 6:10-20) so that he might provide the workers for the harvest (Luke 10:2).

⁴²³Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, xxvi.

⁴²⁴Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 421.

⁴²⁵MacArthur, *Standing Strong*, 31.

⁴²⁶Ibid., 34.

Satan desires to disrupt and hinder the Christian witness. The devil opposed Paul as he sought to visit the church of Thessalonica. Both “the evangelist and the work of evangelism is opposed on every hand by tremendous spiritual forces.”⁴²⁷ The harassment of Christian witness is also seen in Paul’s description of his thorn in the flesh (2 Cor 12:7), a “messenger of Satan.” Whether this was an actual demon or some sort of physical or mental suffering is not significant. It is important to notice that in his suffering “Paul didn’t attempt to bind, rebuke, or cast out this satanic messenger. He simply prayed to the Lord for its removal. Certainly God was able to do as Paul prayed, but He chose not to.”⁴²⁸ Paul’s trust in God’s sovereignty is essential to understanding a biblical view of spiritual warfare.

Satan also wants to hinder Gospel work by giving practitioners “a false sense of victory in spiritual warfare.”⁴²⁹ Lucifer wants believers to follow a ritualistic model for spiritual warfare, rather than an approach that is defined by Scripture and truth. Believers must realize that “conducting spiritual warfare by formula doesn’t work” for they “are not waging war according to the flesh,” but have divine power (2 Cor 10:3-4).⁴³⁰

Summary of a Modern Understanding and Application of Spiritual Warfare

Evangelistic ministry intensifies spiritual warfare as “all evangelism involves spiritual warfare with the principalities and powers of evil.”⁴³¹ In disciple making, Satan and his demons attack in order to “oppose the spiritual progress of God’s people (Eph

⁴²⁷Graham, “Why the Berlin Congress?”

⁴²⁸MacArthur, *Standing Strong*, 33.

⁴²⁹Wagner and Pennoyer, *Wrestling with Dark Angels*, 86.

⁴³⁰Lawless, *Discipled Warriors*, 214.

⁴³¹Nichols and Graham, *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World*, 116.

6:12).⁴³² Although there are many strategies and tactics in this war, manmade designs will fail and “only spiritual weapons can prevail, especially the Word and the Spirit, with prayer.”⁴³³ Scripture is the test of all contemporary and popular developments in spiritual warfare. Christian believers must engage non-believers and believers with truth through the Spirit’s power “to proclaim and demonstrate the gospel” and to “prevail over the forces of darkness.”⁴³⁴

Chapter Summary

This chapter demonstrates the prevalence and importance of a spiritual warfare understanding in evangelism and discipleship. These four sections of scripture, early church history, the Lausanne movement, and a modern understanding reveal many truths and concerns about spiritual warfare. Scripture clearly speaks and communicates sufficiently how to respond to spiritual warfare phenomena today. Church history through the modern day reveals a theological understanding and application of orthodoxy. Modern understandings vary in their strategy and tactics, but can be discerned through a right understanding of Scriptural truth, church history, and theological consistency.

This biblical, historical, and theological foundation will greatly aid in understanding the more specific critiques of Anderson in chapter four and analysis of Anderson’s approach to spiritual warfare in chapter five. Initially, it seems that Anderson’s writings, as presented in chapter two, correspond with an orthodox understanding and application of spiritual warfare in light of scripture, early church history, and a modern theological understanding as seen in Lausanne and contemporary

⁴³²Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 472.

⁴³³Nichols and Graham, *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World*, 116.

⁴³⁴“Cape Town Commitment—a Declaration of Belief and a Call to Action,” in *Lausanne 3: The International Congress on World Evangelization* (Cape Town, South Africa: The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 2010), 6.

practitioners and theologians. In chapter 4, I will consider and engage two major critiques of Anderson's writings that will be further explored in a more comprehensive analysis in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF NEIL T. ANDERSON'S APPROACH TO SPIRITUAL WARFARE

A Classic Alternative? David Powlison's Critical Analysis of Power Encounters

Although Anderson seems to largely fall in line with Scripture, church history, and the Lausanne Movement's affirmations, practices, and warnings concerning spiritual warfare, he has encountered several specific critiques. The most comprehensive and academic critiques of Anderson are from David Powlison of the Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation (CCEF) and Elliot Miller of the Christian Research Institute (CRI). Powlison's critique is found in his book, *Power Encounters: Reclaiming Spiritual Warfare*, which critiques the spectrum of the power encounter movement while specifically engaging Anderson's truth encounter approach.¹

David Powlison serves as the Executive Director and as a counselor and teacher at the Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation, and also serves as the editor of *The Journal of Biblical Counseling*.² His academic training focused on the history of psychiatry while he has practiced biblical counseling for over thirty years. His published writings include *Speaking Truth in Love*, *Seeing with New Eyes*, and *The Biblical Counseling Movement: History and Context*.³

¹David Powlison, *Power Encounters: Reclaiming Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995).

²"David Powlison," The Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.ccef.org/authors/david-powlison>.

³Ibid.

Powlison explains that his writing of *Power Encounters* serves to clarify “the warfare we really need to wage engages and implicates our humanity, rather than bypassing it for a superspiritual, demonic realm.”⁴ His concerns with the power encounter movement are many, but he focuses on questioning Satan’s work and the practice of a Christian life from a biblical perspective.⁵ Powlison points out that “the vast majority of contemporary books on spiritual warfare give incorrect or inadequate answers to these two questions.”⁶ Instead of immediately going on the offensive, Powlison reveals four shared propositions “among today’s Bible-believing Christians on the topic of spiritual warfare”: (1) “we are involved in spiritual warfare” (2) “Jesus Christ is the triumphant Deliverer and King” (3) “the modern age deadens people to the reality of spiritual warfare” and (4) “errors and excesses occur in deliverance ministries.”⁷ These statements undergird the Lausanne Covenant’s previously described affirmations. In order to address a biblical understanding of spiritual warfare, Powlison then defines power encounters in detail.

Power Encounters (EMM) Defined

Powlison explains power encounters as ekballistic mode of ministries (EMM), where practitioners “seek to identify and cast demons out of believers.”⁸ This phrasing of EMM is what he uses as a synonymous reference to this book’s use of “power encounters.” EMM leaders “assert that Christians cannot be ‘possessed’ by the devil

⁴ Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 14.

⁵“I will seek to answer two crucial points of confrontation regarding spiritual warfare. The first question engages how we understand the Christian life. How does the evil one actually work? How does he exert—or attempt to exert his dominion? The second question engages our practice of the Christian life. How should we fight? What is the way God delivers us- and tells us to deliver ourselves and each other—from bondage to the devil? What is the mode of warfare?” Ibid., 18-19.

⁶Ibid., 19.

⁷Ibid., 19-24.

⁸Ibid., 27.

because they belong to God. But they would say that Christians may be ‘demonized’ to a greater or lesser extent when held in bondage to sin by indwelling spirits.”⁹ He summarizes a Christian’s approach in EMM as a “battle against invading demons, either to repel them at the gates or eject them after they have taken up residence.”¹⁰

The enemy’s work. Powlison argues that EMM is “based on the key assumption that demons of sin reside within the human heart. According to EMM advocates, people undergo a moral demonization.”¹¹ Powlison helpfully explains this concept with a computer analogy, where demons act like a virus and EMM acts like “viral protection software.”¹² Although Anderson is not directly referenced at this point, Powlison’s description is almost identical with Anderson’s description of how Satan attacks Christians.¹³ Powlison continues to explain that EMM argues for demonic access to Christians by gaining “ground” through sins, occultic practices, cultic objects, and ancestral sins in order to “solidify into a stronghold” that will eventually lead towards bondage.¹⁴

⁹Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 28.

¹⁰Ibid., 29.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²“We could use the metaphor of the human personality as a computer hard disk with demons acting as computer viruses. These viruses can overwrite and corrupt sectors of the hard disk, executing their own commands within those sectors. Such demons must be removed; EMM is viral protection software.” Ibid., 30.

¹³“It sounds simple, but if Christians want to grow (be transformed) they need to reprogram their computers (minds), but they’d better check for viruses. . . . The enemies of our sanctification are the world, the flesh, and the devil. Computer viruses are not accidental. They have been maliciously introduced to destroy the system, and that is precisely what Satan wants to do.” Neil Anderson, *Rough Road to Freedom: A Memoir* (Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, 2012), 152.

¹⁴A “ground” is gained “in several ways. One is through our own sins. . . . which they can then solidify into a stronghold. Or occult practice and cultic objects can draw demons. . . . Also the sins of ancestors . . . or the direct sins of others against us. . . . The drama of human life is seen as a ‘spiritual’ drama: infiltrators and invaders cluster around, looking for grounds to penetrate the defenses of human personality. Such is the diagnosis for which EMM is the treatment.” Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 30.

The practioner’s work. Powlison then describes how the “EMM practitioner will seek to identify demons by name through inviting them to manifest, through a direct revelation, or through a counselee’s free associations.”¹⁵ As the demon is confronted, directly or through a conversation with the person, “effort is often made to identify the ‘ground’ by which demons gained entry into the person’s life and the ‘right’ by which they maintain residence.”¹⁶ Once this discovery has been made, “the actual encounter with the demon then takes place: the minister takes authority over them, binds them, and commands them to leave in Jesus’ name.”¹⁷ Powlison mentions an Anderson-like approach, that “in less dramatic forms of EMM, the counselee is simply invited to believe and affirm biblical promises while praying certain prayers against the evil spirits.”¹⁸

EMM sanctification. In defining an initial EMM encounter, Powlison also outlines ongoing EMM sanctification. He writes, “after the ekbballistic encounter, basic discipleship follows as the way of ‘maintaining one’s deliverance.’”¹⁹ He explains that “the person may be taught techniques of auto-EMM- various prayers, formulas for taking authority over dark powers, biblical truths to repeat—in order to stay free of demonic influence.”²⁰ Powlison proclaims that “ekballistic sanctification seeks to break demonic strongholds inside Christians; ‘when the demon goes, the Christian grows.’”²¹ In explaining this process, Powlinson explicitly ties Anderson to EMM sanctification by

¹⁵Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 31.

¹⁶“Such conversation may occur with either the person or the demon.” Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid., 32.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., 29.

using a verbatim title from what Anderson considers his most significant and lasting work, *Discipleship Counseling*.²²

The EMM Movement. The history of “the EMM spiritual warfare has been developing since the late 1960s, with four prominent varieties”: (1) Charismatics (2) Dispensationalists (3) Third Wavers and a (4) Broadly evangelical group.²³ He references the charismatic group as people like Don Basham, Derek Prince, and Binny Hinn characterized by a “fascination with demons and bizarre power encounters.”²⁴ The dispensationalist, Powlison offers, like Merrill Unger and Fred Dickason have “a more restrained feel, operating more through private pastoral counseling and prayer than through extraordinary encounters with demons.”²⁵ Many Third Wavers are from Fuller Theological Seminary, including authors like John Wimber, Peter Wagner, Charles Kraft, John White, and Wayne Grudem. He summarizes the broadly evangelical group as including Neil Anderson, Timothy Warner, Tom White, and Ed Murphy, “weaving features of EMM thinking into a more traditional evangelical perspective.”²⁶

As Powlison describes some of the common features of the EMM movement, he admits that his “comments will not always apply to every author, teacher, or practitioner. It should also be said that the teachers mentioned may not endorse everything that happens within the movement they helped set in motion.”²⁷ Powlison’s critique helpfully affirms positive elements that he notices within the EMM movement.

²²“EMM sanctification can be done to others as part of discipleship-counseling. And Christians can do it to themselves after being taught methods of ongoing self-deliverance.” Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 29.

²³Ibid., 32-33.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid., 34.

He applauds the EMM movement for taking “the Bible seriously; whatever the remaining flaws may be the Lord’s hand can be discerned cutting back the brush of demon hysteria.”²⁸ Powlison lists some of the positive aspects of the “best of contemporary ‘spiritual warfare’ ministries” as:

(1) they recognize and challenge the spiritual barrenness- the practical atheism- of the secular modern age. . . . (2) they encourage conservative Christians to reenvision the world as a spiritual place so that the fight for Christ’s kingdom and glory might be more effective. . . . (3) they challenge the notion that people’s personal problems can be reduced to purely psychological, social, physiological, or circumstantial factors. . . . (4) many ‘spiritual warriors’ demonstrate admirable love and self-sacrifice . . . (5) they show that prayer matters . . . (6) they usually believe and practice classic-mode spiritual warfare much of the time.²⁹

Finally, Powlison notices a trend among EMM practitioners as they mature, they “tend to move toward a hybrid of EMM and the classic mode of spiritual warfare, sometimes with a dose of psychology/psychiatry stirred in.”³⁰

EMM Errors

Powlison’s main purpose in writing *Power Encounters* is to highlight the errors he sees in the EMM movement while highlighting what he believes to be correctives from the classic mode of spiritual warfare. Powlison agrees that “both the Bible and our experience show that believers can and do suffer misery, temptation, accusation, and bondage to habitual sins; the devil plays a part. But quite often EMM advocates go further and conclude that such afflictions are a sign of demonization, thereby necessitating EMM.”³¹

²⁸“As they mature, most EMM practitioners seek to arouse fewer fireworks, such as demon manifestations and talking to demons, instead engaging in more talk to responsible human beings.” Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 34.

²⁹Ibid., 37.

³⁰Ibid., 34.

³¹Ibid., 41.

Powlison is concerned that “the ‘name of Jesus’ too often is used as a charm in a world teeming with demons who act independently of God’s providential rule.”³² He charts a “drift in EMM thinking toward demonological explanations creates a world more precarious and spooky than the Bible’s world.”³³ He believes that EMM claims that “because Jesus and the apostles cast out demons, we should do likewise” too be simplistic.³⁴ He offers that the biblical message for people in occult cultures “is not simply that the Lord has greater power than the spirits, but that he uses the spirits to his purposes.”³⁵

He believes the root of much of EMM errors are “because most EMM advocates do not look closely enough at texts in context.”³⁶ Because of this oversight, he argues that “they tangle together sin and suffering, classic and ekballistic methods. The result is a confused, distorted, misleading practical theology that uses the wrong tools for the wrong tasks.”³⁷ He summarizes the two main errors:

The modern demon-deliverance ministries are predicated on two fundamental errors. First, they misread the biblical record and fail to distinguish between moral evil and situational evil. They cast out “demons” of moral evil, something neither taught nor illustrated anywhere in Scripture. Second, they fail to reckon with the general mode shift away from the command-control mode and toward the classic mode.³⁸

Powlison announces that “the vast majority of EMM practitioners are cases of misdiagnosis. What is called a demon usually is a manifestation of sinful fear, bitterness,

³²Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 59.

³³Ibid.

³⁴“Because EMM is not forbidden by Jesus or the rest of the New Testament, there is no reason not to use it.” Ibid., 64.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid., 74-75.

³⁷“Most EMM practitioners introduce elements of classic spiritual warfare that create an odd mixture of modes.” Ibid.

³⁸Ibid., 91.

craving, unbelief, and the like.”³⁹ He suspects much of the problems to be derived from the fact that “the place of stories in EMM is so decisive that it becomes difficult to argue against them.”⁴⁰

Powlison makes the case that much of EMM’s errors are from a wrong understanding of not just evil, but sin:

Most EMM advocates have a “Pelagian” view of sin: they believe sin consists of conscious willed actions where one could have chosen the alternative. . . . it is inadequate for the ‘bondage of the will,’ the deep compulsions, the habitual and instinctive darkness of the human soul—as described in Genesis 6:5, Psalm 19:12, Ecclesiastes 9:3, Ephesians 4:17-22, and James 3:14-4:12. The Augustinian view of sin, by contrast, takes seriously both willed sin and blind willfulness. The EMM view of demonized sin is an inadequate way of accounting for “dark things” on the human soul; it substitutes for Augustinian self-knowing. Although the Pelagian view is inadequate and misleading, it is not necessarily fatal to vital Christian life.⁴¹

Powlison believes that EMM’s misunderstanding of the “dark things” on the human souls necessitates their “demonization of sin” which then “generates a defective mode of pastoral care and counsel, a defective mode of spiritual warfare.”⁴² Those EMM practitioners thus redefine “spiritual problems” primarily “as an ‘indwelling spirit’ problem.”⁴³ In summary, Powlison does not seek to demonize the EMM movement or exaggerate their position, yet he also does not neglect to confront their errors or present biblical correctives.⁴⁴

³⁹Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 119.

⁴⁰Ibid., 121.

⁴¹Ibid., 122. This is an important distinction relevant to Anderson’s perception of sin nature.

⁴²Ibid., 76.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴“First, truth and error often coexist in sincere Christians. . . . Second, erroneous views may operate as metaphors for valuable truths that are not put in a more orthodox fashion. . . . Third, an examination of what EMM advocates react against typically shows an impoverished employment of classic-mode spiritual warfare. . . . Fourth . . . Christians who turn towards secular psychology tell the same stories.” Ibid., 121-22.

Classic Mode Defined

Powlison believes the biblical form of spiritual warfare to be what he calls the classic mode. He presents that “EMM warfare claims to deliver us from the grip of foes concealed within human nature. But classic warfare—the picture Paul paints—delivers us from the grip of foes revealed by human nature. Those who are new creations learn to live in the light, standing against the darkness.”⁴⁵ He argues that Scripture “never says a word about the cause of demonization” but that “Christians fight spiritual warfare by repentance, faith, and obedience.”⁴⁶

He alleges that “the classic mode of warfare—of evangelism, discipleship, and personal growth—has followed the pattern of Jesus facing Satan in the desert.”⁴⁷ He further evidences that the classic mode is seen in the historical example of the Puritans and in the biblical texts such as the Psalms and Proverbs, highlighting that “knowing that the devil is God’s devil brings us incalculable joy and confidence in battle with our adversary.”⁴⁸ He encapsulates “the leading elements of the classic mode of spiritual warfare are best captured by Ephesians 6:10-20: reliance on the power and protection of God, embracing the Word of God, specific obedience, fervent and focused prayer, and the aid of fellow believers.”⁴⁹

Powlison believes Satan is minimized across the Old Testament, expressing that “it neither endorses the testimony of the nations to the occult worldview nor accommodates itself to demonological explanations for human sin or most human

⁴⁵Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 114.

⁴⁶Ibid., 37, 41.

⁴⁷Ibid., 35. It is interesting to note that this example includes Jesus’ verbal rebuke/command towards Satan.

⁴⁸“Psalms and Proverbs are the supreme manual for spiritual warfare, for fighting both flesh-and-blood and spiritual enemies.” Ibid., 35, 59.

⁴⁹Ibid., 36.

suffering.”⁵⁰ He goes so far as to posit that the Old Testament, compared to its surrounding demon-filled cultures, “gives an altogether different view of the devil, evil spirits, God, and the nature of our warfare.”⁵¹ Powlison goes so far to hold that “the Old Testament unmasks the occult view as mythical, so that we might not be diverted from the real battle with evil and the evil one.”⁵² This real battle he believes is seen in how “the Old Testament maximizes human responsibility,” and while acknowledging the activity of the demonic, “shows that God is sovereign and the demons are constrained.”⁵³

Powlison also points out that from the very beginning of the Old Testament, in Genesis 3, one sees opposition towards any dualistic suggestions and never sees a demonization of sin.⁵⁴ In Job’s response to suffering, Powlison highlights how

Job actually never mentions Satan, the secondary cause of his afflictions. Nor does he focus on the tertiary causes: murderous raiders and thieves, painful sores covering his body, rejection by his wife and relatives. Instead Job wrestles with God, the primary cause, because God is sovereign. And finally Job repents of self-righteousness.⁵⁵

Powlison concludes his references to the Old Testament with a look at Zechariah 3, mentioning that “Satan is not even allowed to speak” but ignoring the rebuking language within it that is strikingly similar to Jude 1:9.⁵⁶

Ultimately, Powlison boldly argues that “Scripture, however, never says a word about the cause of demonization.”⁵⁷ Powlison instead believes that “the problem of sin is the ultimate cause of all our varied miseries” but that “the Bible never demonizes

⁵⁰Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 51.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid., 51, 60.

⁵⁴“Genesis 3 . . . opposes dualistic tendencies and does not demonize sin.” Ibid., 53.

⁵⁵Ibid., 57.

⁵⁶Ibid., 58.

⁵⁷Ibid., 51.

sins, turning people into puppets.”⁵⁸ He stresses that “spiritual warfare with the power of evil is a matter of consistently and repeatedly turning from darkness to light in the midst of assailing darkness.”⁵⁹

Powlison reminds his readers that Satan and his demons “exist within the sovereignty of God’s purposes to redeem and judge responsible human beings.”⁶⁰ He exemplifies God’s redemptive purposes again with an Old Testament reference that “when the prophets speak to idolaters and those involved in the occult, they preach repentance and faith, not EMM.”⁶¹ He emphasizes that “people need repentance, faith, truth, prayer, and fidelity.”⁶² He maintains that “what should properly be called spiritual warfare is always conducted in the classic mode.”⁶³ He believes a distinguishing understanding between situational and moral evil to be crucial to understanding a biblical methodology and approach to spiritual warfare, holding that “what Jesus did to fight spiritual warfare with moral evil is what we are to do: Trust in God’s word of truth and obey through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.”⁶⁴

Moral and Situational Evils: Defined and Explained

Powlison’s understanding of EMM versus classic mode methodology in ministry revolves around his understanding of a dichotomy between moral and situational evil. Powlison believes understanding the sort or source of evil to guide the solution or methodological approach to the situation. He believes this approach to be key in

⁵⁸Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 53, 57.

⁵⁹Ibid., 36.

⁶⁰Ibid., 58.

⁶¹Ibid., 60.

⁶²Ibid., 59.

⁶³Ibid., 98.

⁶⁴Ibid., 61.

understanding Jesus' ministry, by noticing that "he mounted a twin-pronged offensive against the powers of evil—against moral evil and situational evil. Jesus employed two modes of warfare to address two different facets of the evil works of the devil."⁶⁵

Powlison defines situational evil as "the element of consequences: it means suffering, hardship, unpleasant and harmful events, death. This is situational evil—the evil we experience."⁶⁶ He explains that an important "distinctive about situational evil is that both God and Satan use it, although of course with opposite intentions."⁶⁷ Powlison then articulates that "God consistently portrays inhabiting evil spirits as situational—not moral—evils that hurt and abuse people."⁶⁸ His conclusion is that "ekballistic work was done to alleviate suffering" and the "the result of an ekballistic deliverance is relief, peace, and the restoration of mental and physical capabilities. It does not lead directly to moral improvement except as the miracle prompts grateful faith in Jesus."⁶⁹

Powlison desires to prove that demonic connections, and EMM, "are sharply separated from anything related to the spiritual warfare with indwelling sin" reinforcing,

This point deserves pondering by all proponents of EMM. Not a single example in the Bible shows Jesus or the apostles using EMM to deal with moral evil. The indwelling unclean spirits, like other forms of suffering, perhaps created conditions of temptation to moral evil for the victims. But we have no evidence that demonization was either caused by sin and unbelief or that it had any bondage-creating influence to perpetuate sin or unbelief.⁷⁰

He accordingly sees that Jesus' encounters with the demonic were unique in their approach in what will be described as a command-control mode. Powlison remarks, "the older way to fight situational evil typically involved prayer for God's deliverance

⁶⁵Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 64-65.

⁶⁶Ibid., 65.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid., 66.

⁶⁹Ibid., 67.

⁷⁰Ibid., 69.

and efforts to ameliorate suffering and injustice. Then Jesus came and used power encounters to create instant relief.”⁷¹ Even though he seems try to disconnect situational evil from moral evil, he simultaneously recognizes biblical cases, “such as Leviticus 26:14-39, 1 Kings 8, and Lamentations” which “present cases where situational evil is just a disciplinary consequence of moral evil, intended to bring about repentance and seeking refuge in the Lord.”⁷²

When addressing demonic attacks towards a Christian, Powlison emphasizes that “Satan’s organizing passion is to draw us into moral evil, making us like him and ruling us. When the Bible says that the Son of God appeared to destroy the works of the devil, it means moral evil first and foremost.”⁷³ He continues to connect moral evil with sin by stating that “sins, such as unbelief, fear, anger, lust, and other addictions, point to Satan’s moral lordship, but never to demonization calling for EMM. People are victims of demonic sufferings, just as they are victims of lameness, blindness, or purely physiological seizures.”⁷⁴ Across his book, Powlison seems to suggest that he lives in a modern time period devoid of the presence of demonization and thus absent of any need for EMM. He seeks to separate any sort of supernatural miraculous event from the more common emphasis on teaching, saying,

Those who want to follow these ideas further will notice that the pattern we traced in Mark 7-8 is replicated throughout the gospels and Acts. Jesus juxtaposes miracles (aiming at situational evil and revealing his goodness) with teaching, reproof, preaching, and questioning (aiming at moral evil and challenging our badness).⁷⁵

⁷¹Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 72.

⁷²“Generally in the Old Testament people cried out to God for deliverance from afflictions, repenting when their sins were the proximate cause and pursuing justice and mercy.” *Ibid.*, 100.

⁷³*Ibid.*, 65.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 66.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 155.

Even though Powlison acknowledges Satanic interaction with both situational and moral evil, nevertheless he concludes different methods are required depending on the problems. He writes, “moral evil is no less Satanic than situational evil, but different problems obviously demand different sorts of solutions.”⁷⁶ He chastises EMM writers for suggesting that “we should then bind and cast out demons of moral slavery that threaten and inhabit us.”⁷⁷ He instead points to Peter’s rebuke of Simon the magician as an example of turning people’s hearts back towards God and ignoring any sort of demonic confrontation.⁷⁸

Satan’s Attacks through Moral Evil

After relegating all demonization and EMM with situational evil, Powlison makes the case that this “should not minimize our awareness of Satan’s intimate involvement with the moral evil of the human soul. Advocates of the classic mode of spiritual warfare throughout history have been aware of the devil’s hand in sin and unbelief.”⁷⁹ Powlison helpfully distinguishes between Satan’s different roles in the lives of lost versus saved souls, saying “Satan utterly rules his spiritual children, the seed of the serpent, children of their father the devil. But even when we who have been born anew to become the children of God can still hear the voice of our former overlord.”⁸⁰ This distinguishing between lost and saved is a component that is missing in many EMM

⁷⁶Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 61.

⁷⁷“James does not specifically link the devil with trials and sufferings, but instead links the devil directly with our sinfulness.” Ibid., 117.

⁷⁸“Your heart is not right before God. Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. (Acts 8:21-22).” Ibid., 100.

⁷⁹“We have seen that demonization and ekballistics are consistently linked with situational evil.” Ibid., 102.

⁸⁰Ibid. This is a key affirmation towards the concept and claim of Christians “hearing” Satanic and demonic “voices.”

approaches who seek to apply to EMM indiscriminately of whether they are a child of God or a child of Satan.

For believers, Powlison explains that “temptation is not purely external to us” and that “Satan has means of addressing the soul with lies, of working on the inside.”⁸¹ Powlison holds that Satan’s “power to influence and enslave the inner life is vividly portrayed—he snatches away truth, inserts lies, blinds minds, holds people in bondage.”⁸² He again articulates that “the classic mode of ministry in all its vigor, without a hint of EMM, is the solution.”⁸³

He does not deny the attraction to the concept of “demons of sin,” for he expresses that “the intimacy of Satan’s hand in evil is so immediate that it is no surprise that some people might appear to have demons of sin. People exhibit their bondage to sin and sin’s uncanny master.”⁸⁴ In these comments regarding Satan’s work, Powlison uses words such as “bondage” and “slavery” that affirm the similarity between the EMM and classic understandings of Satan’s significant efforts.⁸⁵ Despite this similar description, Powlison reaffirms the biblical “message of personal responsibility and classic-mode spiritual warfare. It is always our moral evil, our unbelief, pride, lusts, fears, and wickedness that need to be repented of.”⁸⁶

Powlison expresses that EMM often does not maintain a biblical balance between the attacks of Satan, the world, and the flesh. He explains, “Not only do the world, the flesh, and the devil appear in concert, but the Bible consistently presents them

⁸¹Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 103.

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Ibid., 104.

⁸⁵“Moral bondage to the devil is simultaneously a slavery to the enthralling power of sin. . . . Clearly Satan is active as a liar and moral overlord, plunging people into iniquity.” Ibid.

⁸⁶Ibid.

in a carefully crafted balance. Of the three, God primarily focuses on the flesh—the human heart and its vulnerability to evil.”⁸⁷ He explains God’s focus on the flesh as a corrective towards Satan’s work to establish “establishes his moral lordship mainly through lies.”⁸⁸ Powlison hypothesizes that since God’s warnings and Satan’s attacks are mostly targeted towards the flesh, the mode of response is profoundly different than EMM as well.

Command-Control Mode Switch Towards Classic Mode

In this section Powlison articulates Jesus’ spiritual warfare methodology as “command-control” and that it was particular to his day and age and not necessary or prescribed for modern usage.⁸⁹ He describes this observation, “Jesus performs a particular action in an unusually striking and authoritative way, a command-control mode: ‘I say it. It happens.’”⁹⁰ He believes that the Bible tells modern Christians, “by precept or example—to accomplish the same work but in a different way, the classic faith-obedience mode.”⁹¹

Powlison ascertains that “the normal mode of healing in both the Old and New Testaments is to pray, placing primary reliance on God, and then to employ medical means.”⁹² The question arises whether there is a less common, but biblically allowable way of spiritual warfare ministry apart from the classic mode? Powlison answers saying,

⁸⁷Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 110.

⁸⁸“The devil’s schemes seek to draw us into sin and lies, to harden and darken us, to induce us to live in the flesh.” Ibid., 112-13.

⁸⁹“Eleven examples of Jesus’ works that we are called to do in a fashion different than our master.” Ibid., 77.

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹Ibid.

⁹²Ibid., 89.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts portray Jesus and the apostles using the command-control mode to address sickness, the weather, paying taxes, speaking with personal authority, and so forth. The rest of the New Testament, following the main approach in the Old Testament, exemplifies and commands a different mode. Is there a similar mode switch for dealing with demons associated with ailments and afflictions?⁹³

He asks the same question, a different way again, writing “do any passages from Scripture give possible warrant for an ongoing ekbastic method for relieving demon-induced sufferings?”⁹⁴ He answers both of these questions similarly, explaining that “Scripture is ‘silent’ on the issue. . . . The silence thunders.”⁹⁵ Powlison again claims a switch back to the classic mode, explaining that ekbastic methods may have been described in the Gospels and Acts but are never prescribed for the present.⁹⁶ In naming his approach the “classic mode” he suggests a chronological return to the biblical method of the epistles, yet ignores the chronological overlap of Acts with “the rest of the New Testament.”⁹⁷

Powlison characterizes that the main purposes of Jesus’ exorcisms were to do good to those who were suffering, demonstrate His deity, and initiate “brisk debate between faith and unbelief.”⁹⁸ He declares that “Jesus says nothing about how to do power works. Nothing about demons of sin,” grouping the concept of “demons of sin” with those who practice any form of “power works.”⁹⁹ In such a broad statement, Powlison constricts Jesus’s modeling, commands, and delegation of ekbastic ministry

⁹³Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 90-91.

⁹⁴Ibid., 95.

⁹⁵Ibid., 90-91.

⁹⁶Ibid., 97.

⁹⁷“Ekbastic works appear in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts; demon deliverance does not appear in the rest of the New Testament. . . . Understanding how to resist the devil is the key to reclaiming spiritual warfare in our day.” Ibid., 107.

⁹⁸“Why did Jesus cast out demons? . . . Jesus did good to demonized people. . . . Jesus revealed that he is the one whom the evil spirits must obey.” Ibid., 93.

⁹⁹“Moral evil is not in view either in demonization or ekbastics.” Ibid., 94-95.

(Matt 10:1; Mark 9:28-29; Luke 10:17-20) as a past historical event that is not relevant to present day ministry. Powlison instead shifts away from Jesus' clear words on the subject towards his "teaching," arguing that Jesus' spiritual warfare focus is only towards a classic model:

When Jesus teaches, he teaches about the classic mode of the Christian life and spiritual warfare: repentance, faith, commitment to him, how to love, the use of the tongue, alertness, reconciliation, integrity, identifying false teachers, how to handle money, prayer, and so on.¹⁰⁰

Although Powlison is articulate and balanced in most of his claims, with the well-meaning attempt to address unbiblical excesses of the EMM movement, he implies that some of Jesus' commands, teachings, and examples are to be ignored as irrelevant for today. In doing so, Powlison shows his cessationist and dispensational leanings, that "sign gifts" and such supernatural encounters and experiences are restricted to the apostolic period.

Anderson Engaged

Powlison's entire work is designed to engage Anderson and any other author that he had grouped into the EMM movement. Although Powlison has previously acknowledged the differences between some of the EMM points of view, he consistently presents Anderson as an EMM proponent and thus a target of his assertions.¹⁰¹ Powlison makes several specific references and relevant comments directed at Anderson:

Anderson is probably the most popular author now. His approach is distinctive for its pronounced general self-help emphasis, but he has wisely distanced himself from the flamboyant "power encounters," and has instead emphasized truth and faith as aspects of self-deliverance from demon inhabitants.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 94.

¹⁰¹"Scripture explicitly teaches us many things about spiritual warfare, but demons of sin, ancestral spirits, stages of demonization, binding unclean spirits, and maintaining one's deliverance do not derive from the proof texts that supposedly support these ideas." Ibid., 132.

¹⁰²Ibid., 33.

Affirmations. Powlison again affirms Anderson in explaining that “he takes a long and constructive step away from EMM when he teaches that a ‘truth encounter’ should replace a ‘power encounter.’”¹⁰³ He believes Anderson does well in avoiding conversations with the demonic and instead focusing on talking “to people, inviting them to faith in core evangelical doctrines of God’s grace and our new identity in Christ.”¹⁰⁴ Powlison further describes how,

Neil Anderson’s EMM ministry includes many good elements: digging out false beliefs, applying truth, calling for prayer, repentance, progressive sanctification, and commitment to the word of God. He can wake people up to the reality of spiritual warfare. I appreciate Anderson’s pilgrimage away from “power encounters” toward “truth encounters.” I also appreciate his biblical and practical criticism of those who do power encounters.¹⁰⁵

While Powlison helpfully affirms some of Anderson’s differences from many EMM practitioners, Powlison fails to recognize and affirm many of his similarities with the classic method. This may partially be due to Powlison’s unfamiliarity with the breadth of Anderson’s writings. A look at Powlison’s bibliography demonstrates many Scripture references but does not demonstrate any detailed references to the authors he is critiquing.¹⁰⁶ Anderson himself is familiar with Powlison’s work, referencing Powlison’s understanding of how “Satan can put thoughts into a person’s mind.”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 76.

¹⁰⁴EMM ministries differ widely regarding how much they talk to demons. Neil Anderson, for example, has moved completely away from naming and conversing with demons.” *Ibid.*, 76, 125.

¹⁰⁵“But God will use what is true to help people. Where prayer is sincerely offered, truth is presented in love, and there is a call to repentance, our Lord will be pleased to show his mercy.” *Ibid.*, 132.

¹⁰⁶Powlison only makes three footnote references to Anderson: one grouped reference to a topic, one group reference to a book, and one group reference to a particular chapter of Anderson’s book. Anderson is not quoted verbatim even when he is referenced by name multiple times. Such lack of evidence is concerning for a work of such importance and begs the question as to the level of first hand familiarity of Powlison with Anderson’s writings. It is also important to note that the original publishing date of Powlison’s work is 1995 so he did not have access to Anderson’s revised editions and newer works which better represent his self-attested growth and maturing in theological understanding. Apart from “The Classic Model” in *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, there are no recent articles, works, or addresses of Powlison towards Anderson and his writings.

¹⁰⁷“David Powlison, who states that demons cannot invade believers, acknowledges that Satan can put thoughts into a person’s mind: “‘Voices’ in the mind are not uncommon: blasphemous mockeries,

The tension between classic and EMM. Powlison explains that “Neil Anderson’s system illustrates the tension” of mixing of classic and EMM methods. Powlison does still “question his conceptualization of moral demonization and regret its prominence in his writings” and finds “the formulaic nature” of *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* as “problematic.”¹⁰⁸

Powlison believes that even though Anderson does not converse with demons, “he still conceptualizes the underlying problem as resident demons of sin.”¹⁰⁹ These claims are not evidenced or supported, nor is there a distinguishing between Powlison’s own views of internalized and enslaving attacks by Satan and his concept of “residential” or “inhabiting” demons. He continues arguing,

What Anderson does in effect is teach people to drive out their own sin demons by using the modes of classic spiritual warfare. His system is therefore a hybrid. He misdefines the problem—retaining an EMM model of sin as indwelling demons—but supplies the right solution.¹¹⁰

Powlison is correct in recognizing similarities between the classic position and Anderson’s, but could do better to evidence such claims towards Anderson that imply a belief in the “possession” of Christians by “indwelling demons.” He critiques the manner in which “Neil Anderson asks people to notice when they experience an inner opposition to what he is saying.”¹¹¹ It would be helpful for Powlison, who has already expressed his belief that “the children of God can still hear the voice of our former overlord,” to explain

spurts of temptation to wallow in vile fantasy or behavior, persuasive lines of unbelief. Classic spiritual warfare interprets these as coming from the evil one.” Anderson, *God’s Power at Work in You*, 281. Powlison shares that his quote is referenced from Thomas Brooks, stating “This is the greatest strength of Thomas Brooks’ classic, originally published in 1652, *Precious Remedies Against Satan’s Devices* (Great Britain: Banner of Truth Trust, 1984).” Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 135, 159.

¹⁰⁸“But God will use what is true to help people. Where prayer is sincerely offered, truth is presented in love, and there is a call to repentance, our Lord will be pleased to show his mercy.” Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 132.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 76.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹¹Ibid., 125.

his own understanding of how Satan speaks and how Christians are to respond and be counseled concerning the voices they hear.¹¹²

Understanding of repentance. Powlison believes that Anderson holds to a “truncated definition of repentance that many EMM practitioners hold.”¹¹³ He describes an EMM counseling process as beginning,

By working through a detailed list of occult and cultic activities along with other sins. The counselee checks off the ones that apply and prays prescribed prayers of repentance. He or she renounces these sinful things, claiming certain promises and protections. Such renunciations—whether mechanical or earnest—may occasionally create a significant breaking point with a particular sin, but generally do not work for the ongoing battle with sin. The classic mode seems to have failed, when actually it has been used superficially.¹¹⁴

Although Powlison does not evidence this claim, his description is very accurate of the *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* model. He does not demonstrate any biblical evidence of compiling a list of sins and using it to assist a believer in identifying, repenting, and turning from sin while simultaneously seeking to put on truth and righteousness. His summary dismissal seems more anecdotal than biblical, making unsupported assumptions concerning the sincerity and depth of the approach.

Ancestral spirits. Powlison briefly references Anderson’s concern with demonic influence through connections with one’s ancestors. Powlison writes that the EMM’s “proof text for transgenerational demons is Exodus 20:5, part of the Ten Commandments. . . . interpreted as a warrant for demons passed down the family line, although this idea appears nowhere in the Bible.”¹¹⁵ Powlison dismisses this as the “notion of generational transference of demonic agents is quite simply a piece of occult

¹¹²Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 102.

¹¹³Ibid., 123.

¹¹⁴Ibid.

¹¹⁵Ibid., 126-27.

theology that has infiltrated the EMM worldview.”¹¹⁶ Powlison may be correct on this issue, but it would be helpful if he could give more attention towards sharing a biblical counseling approach towards those affected by the consequences of the sins of their ancestors. Anderson does utilize the proof text that Powlison references, in the manner which Powlison describes, arguing for the passing on of sins and curses and not merely a transmission of the consequences or inclinations towards particular sins.¹¹⁷

Levels of demonization. Powlison explains and counters the EMM model presents a spectrum of demonization levels, from foothold or ground, to stronghold, to demonization or possession.¹¹⁸ Powlison affirms that the “Bible speaks volumes about how our moral enslavement to the devil occurs” but asserts that the Scripture is “silent on the question of how those demonizations in the gospels arose.”¹¹⁹ Powlison believes the best answer as to the source of demonization is from John 9:3, “so that the work of God might be displayed in his life.”¹²⁰ Further clarification by Powlison on when he is speaking of a non-believer’s demonization/possession and a believer’s “moral enslavement” would clarify his correctives towards EMM proponents. He explains that occult cultures and others should not be warned about worse levels of demonization, but should rather be encouraged to see God’s controlling use of the spirits and to comparatively understand the significant eternal suffering of non-believers in hell.¹²¹

¹¹⁶Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 126-27.

¹¹⁷Anderson, *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*, 20.

¹¹⁸“Are there stages of demonization? . . . the typical view says that oppression (Acts 10:38) leads to a foothold or ground (Ephesians 4:27) leads to a stronghold (2 Corinthians 10:4) leads to a full demonization or even possession (gospels). Moral slavery is the end result of a multi-stage process.” Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 127.

¹¹⁹Ibid., 129.

¹²⁰“The safest answer, given the totality of what Scripture does reveal, is Jesus’ response to his disciples regarding the man born blind: ‘Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life’ (John 9:3).” Ibid.

¹²¹“The Bible’s message to people in occult cultures is not simply that the Lord has greater

Anderson does speak to levels of demonization, but he seems to usually be talking about levels of moral enslavement more than he is speaking towards multiple demonic inhabitations.¹²²

Binding, rebuking, and self-deliverance. Powlison condemns the process of binding and rebuking demons, citing their often misinterpreted passages.¹²³ Powlison does not give enough attention to this corrective, not does he fully explore the problems and differences concerning rebuking language. Anderson does at times mention binding and rebuking, but its primacy and focus has been reduced in his more recent writings. More attention will be given towards Anderson's practice of binding and rebuking in chapter five.

Powlison also confronts the practice of self-deliverance.¹²⁴ Much of this sounds similar to Anderson's *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*, but Powlison never makes that direct connection to Anderson. Anderson does emphasize in his *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* and other works the importance of having prayer partners, or "encouragers," to work through the repentance process and encourages involvement in small groups and church families.¹²⁵

power than the spirits, but that he uses the spirits to his purposes." Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 61; "Suggests that threats of worse sufferings and seven demons, a threat of hell. . . . See how Jesus treats the lame men in Mark 2:5 and John 5:14. Without repentance, faith, and obedience the temporarily healed will face far worse sufferings—a threat of hell. Without repentance, faith, and obedience the exorcised will face seven worse demons—also a threat of hell." Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 74.

¹²²Anderson, *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*, 6-7.

¹²³"Should we bind demons? . . . Typically the deliverance minister 'binds' the spirits through various commands and prayers. The chief proof text for this practice is Matthew 12:29 . . . this is often supplemented by Matthew 16:19 and 18:18 . . . the passage does not teach—and nowhere does Jesus illustrate—a pastoral method of 'binding spirits.'" Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 130.

¹²⁴"Do we need continued self-deliverance? Another prominent feature of ekballistic counseling is self-deliverance. People are taught to 'maintain their deliverance' against the danger of reinvasion. The proof text most often given is Matthew 12:43-45. . . . Many of these techniques involve elements of classic-mode discipleship—truth, Bible study, prayer, repentance, worship—along with EMM warfare techniques. All these are overlaid on the EMM worldview." Ibid., 131.

¹²⁵"The best way to go through the Steps is to process them with a trained encourager." Anderson, *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*, 4; "Get involved in a small-group ministry where you can be a

Anecdotalism and pragmatic justification. Powlison rightly confronts the high level of occurrences of anecdotal story-telling and pragmatic justification found within the EMM movement. In his article “The Classic Model” in *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, he helpfully explains his own hesitancy to “write anecdotally,” but explains that without telling stories, “the conversation can sound like bookish theory.”¹²⁶ He argues that “in addition to the consistency and clarity of biblical witness, telling a couple of stories is worthwhile.”¹²⁷ Powlison’s concern for anecdotalism and pragmatism is the frequency and weighting the authors place upon them. He points to Anderson as an example of the “If it’s wrong, why did it work for me?” mentality. Powlison holds that “EMM works constructively to the degree that the person does not buy the distinctive EMM theology but acts in repentant faith.”¹²⁸

Demonic phenomena. Powlison helpfully connects his own experiences by relating that “I have seen, heard, and read the things that EMM advocates speak of.”¹²⁹ His concern is that EMM practitioners often “misinterpret, misdiagnose, and sometimes even produce those experiences.”¹³⁰ While he does not totally discount the possibility of demonic manifestations in EMM, he argues that “perhaps the practitioners are—naively—actually contributing to the production of bizarre evil.”¹³¹ He insinuates that a

real person, and be part of a church where God’s truth is taught with kindness and grace.” Anderson, *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*, 21.

¹²⁶Beilby and Eddy, *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, 106-7.

¹²⁷Ibid., 107.

¹²⁸Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 132.

¹²⁹Ibid., 136.

¹³⁰Ibid.

¹³¹“What about phenomena of demonic manifestation? . . . I see three possible explanations for the ‘manifestations of the demonic’ produced in EMM contexts. . . . (1) produced by highly charged expectations . . . (2) perhaps Satan himself cooperates with error to produce the special effects generated by EMM teaching and practice. . . . (3) EMM could actually involve demonic activity. . . . Something of uncanny evil seems to happen in some EMM encounters. Perhaps the practitioners are—naively—actually

more biblical approach might actually reduce the demonic phenomena, much as Anderson asserts through his truth encounter model.¹³²

Methodological Approaches Addressed

After confronting EMM methodologies, Powlison lays out his own approach to demonic afflictions with prayer, medical treatment, and pastoral care.¹³³ He cautions against an imbalanced ignorance or an imbalanced interest in the demonic, arguing that “from the standpoint of what human helpers should do, there is no significant difference between demonization and sickness, either in sickness or cure.”¹³⁴ Powlison reasserts his caution against naming demons, instead announcing that effective and biblical spiritual warfare involves “robust biblical counseling—the ministry of prayer and the word in love.”¹³⁵ He concludes, “The classical biblical worldview replaces a warrior’s confused zeal with a warrior who is becoming wise.”¹³⁶ He reminds Christians of the

contributing to the production of bizarre evil. . . . When instead we address people as people, recognizing that they are in spiritual warfare, we will remain on biblical ground.” Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 136.

¹³²Ibid., 136. Neil T. Anderson, interview by author, Franklin, TN, October 3, 2011.

¹³³“What about the remaining cases where people may suffer demon-produced afflictions? . . . the clearest answer lies in . . . James . . . Using the close analogy between sickness, the weather, and demonic suffering, the proper treatment in such cases is roughly what James 5:14-18 sets forth. Three components stand out: first, fervent, believing prayer with the sufferer for God’s healing mercy; second, an exploration of possible medical causes and treatments, applied as appropriate in the Lord’s name; and third, probing pastoral care to turn these adverse circumstances into an opportunity for ongoing repentance and growth in grace.” Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 120.

¹³⁴“Some cultures and individuals live in a world of superstitious fears, tending to over interpret sickness and other hardships as demonic. Other cultures and individuals are skeptical about unclean spirits, and tend not to notice demonic activity.” Ibid.

¹³⁵“Should we name demons? The EMM approach . . . gives names to supposed demonic agencies. . . . Accordingly EMM practitioners find demons named Anger, Hate, Self-Pity, Pride, Fear, Fear of Others, Rebellion, Unbelief, Lust, Suicide, Homosexuality, Despair, Resentment, Tongues, Non-Acceptance, Liar, Self-hate, and so forth. They also find demons matching the varied names the Bible attaches to the evil one: Lucifer, Beelzebub, Satan, Appollyon.” Ibid., 124, 137.

¹³⁶Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 142.

importance of Christ's sacrifice on the cross and a believer's call towards progressive sanctification in "works of faith and obedience."¹³⁷

Powlison Engaged

Seventeen years after publishing *Power Encounters*, Powlison contributed one of the four major viewpoints in *Understanding Spiritual Warfare* along with Walter Wink, Gregory Boyd, and C. Peter Wagner as the other major contributors.¹³⁸ Although abbreviated, his comments are almost identical to those presented in *Power Encounters*. It is interesting and instructive to note how some of the other authors interact with and engage Powlison on his claims.

Boyd notes his appreciation for how Powlison "calls attention to our need to always bear in mind our massive ignorance of the hows and whys of spiritual warfare."¹³⁹ This affirmation derives from Powlison's helpful statement,

We don't need to sort out where "flesh" ends and "world" begins, where "world" ends and "devil" begins. We don't need to determine where the devil's role in moral blinding and in inflicting destruction begin and end. We can't see through the fog of war. But Christ's truth and power address all dimensions simultaneously. We intercede with our Lord to comprehensively deliver us from evil.¹⁴⁰

Boyd however is concerned that Powlison's approach to spiritual warfare is "overly domesticated," writing,

While I fully empathize with Powlison's concern to avoid unbiblical and sensationalist practices that unfortunately characterize far too many deliverance ministries, I worry that Powlison has gone to the other extreme, suggesting that

¹³⁷"Tough battles do not point to demonization. They point to the Lord Jesus as the Savior from our sins. . . . gaining an understanding of progressive sanctification in a Christian culture habituated to look for quick fixes . . . Engaging evil with truth, by contrast, seems dry, weak, dull, old-fashioned, and unspiritual. . . . and the powers of darkness are best felled by the small, weak words and works of faith and obedience." Ibid., 150-52.

¹³⁸Beilby and Eddy, *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, 89-127.

¹³⁹Ibid., 117.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., 108. This quote represents a very helpful development from Powlison's statements in 1995.

spiritual warfare *never* involves unusual practices such as “binding and loosing” and making authoritative pronouncements.¹⁴¹

Boyd believes Powlison’s approach to “humanize the bizzare” with a “no-fireworks” response “conforms much better to the ‘normal’ of Western society than it does to the precedent set by Jesus and his disciples.”¹⁴² Boyd challenges Powlison’s approach, presenting that “aside from teaching, the two activities Jesus engaged in most frequently were casting out demons and healing people from afflictions.”¹⁴³ Boyd also emphasizes how Jesus “passed this ministry and authority on to his disciples, and according to the book of Acts, they used it in a manner that closely followed his example.”¹⁴⁴ Boyd concludes his response to Powlison by reemphasizing that “I believe Powlison has unwittingly overreacted to the excesses of many contemporary deliverance ministries and has consequently overly domesticated, and overly Westernized, another important dimension of spiritual warfare.”¹⁴⁵ Boyd’s response is a biblical response to the classic mode of spiritual warfare that necessitates a reconsideration of what they believe about the continuation of demonic influence in people’s lives and how Christians have been instructed and guided to respond in such scenarios.

¹⁴¹Beilby and Eddy, *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, 119-20.

¹⁴²“I would argue that Powlison’s assessment of what constitutes ‘bizarre’ behavior in the first place, as well as what constitutes ‘fireworks’ and ‘fuss and feathers’ is completely predicated on the modern Western worldview. In the culture of Jesus and his disciples, as well as in most cultures outside modern Western culture, it is not all that unusual to have people manifest demons by behaving the way this lady did and the way demonized people in the Gospels and Acts behaved. Nor is it at all that unusual to have people respond to these manifestations in the confrontational way Jesus and his disciples did. The question for Powlison then becomes: Why should modern Western disciples of Jesus allow the ‘normal’ of their culture to take precedence over the example set by Jesus and his disciples?” *Ibid.*, 121.

¹⁴³*Ibid.*, 120.

¹⁴⁴“E.g., Matt. 10:1; Mark 6:7; John 14:12; cf. Acts 3:6; 5:16; 8:6-7; 19:12. It’s worth noting that healings and exorcisms continued to play a central role in the ministry of the postapostolic church.” *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵“As we fight the powers by loving and serving others the way Jesus did, we must expect at times to confront demonized people in ways that involve ‘fireworks . . . fuss and feathers . . . binding and loosing’ as well ‘authoritative pronouncements’—in short, in ways that look like the warfare ministry of Jesus and his disciples.” Beilby and Eddy, *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, 120.

C. Peter Wagner and Rebecca Greenwood also give a response to Powlison’s classical model, with several helpful points that are relevant towards analyzing the beliefs and practices of Anderson. They write concerning Powlison’s word choice in naming his approach “The Classic Model” that if “he means to imply that issues of spiritual warfare such as those discussed in this book have appeared on the Christian landscape only in recent times, it would be inaccurate.”¹⁴⁶ In responding to Powlison’s supposed implications in his titling, one must look at his use of historical reference in his contribution to *Understanding Spiritual Warfare* as well as in *Power Encounters*. In both of these works, along with his article titled “Deliverance Model in Historical Perspective,” Powlison’s main historical references are brief, generalized, and only to the period of the Puritans.¹⁴⁷

Powlison claims that “although the practice of exorcism has enjoyed popularity at various times and places in church history, the use of exorcism as a means of accomplishing sanctification—or creating conditions for successful evangelism—is a recent innovation.”¹⁴⁸ At one point, Powlison does describe the early church fathers, writing,

Attentive to Scripture’s emphases, the framers of the ancient, abiding creeds (Apostles’, Nicene, Athanasian) chose to trace the shape of the triune God’s person, work, and promises. They made no direct mention of the roiling complex of evil: flesh, world, devil. But every baptismal liturgy contained a dramatic renunciation of the authority of the flesh, world, and devil.¹⁴⁹

Powlison’s writings would be helped by a more thorough study, awareness, and inclusion of early church history on the subject of demonic encounters in evangelism and discipleship before making such sweeping claims. Wagner and Greenwood helpfully

¹⁴⁶Beilby and Eddy, *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, 124.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., 89; David Powlison, “Deliverance Model in Historical Perspective,” *Christian Research Journal* 21, no. 2 (1998), accessed January 4, 2014, www.equip.org.

¹⁴⁸Powlison, “Deliverance Model.”

¹⁴⁹Beilby and Eddy, *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, 89.

point out a work on the subject, *Christianizing the Roman Empire (AD 100-400)*, where its author Ramsay MacMullen explains the importance of exorcisms in the expansion of the early church:

The demand that the believer deny the title of god to all but one . . . [maintaining] an evident readiness for battle . . . a view of wickedness in the world that saw, all round, demons and their terrestrial agents ever at work against good Christians . . . emphasis on miraculous demonstration, head-on confrontation with supernatural beings inferior to God, and contemptuous dismissal of merely rational, especially Greek philosophical, paths toward true knowledge of the divine.¹⁵⁰

Wagner and Greenwood conclude that if “such confrontation with demons was part of the lifestyle of the church through its first three hundred years or so, could a case not be made that this is, in fact, the classic view of spiritual warfare?”¹⁵¹

A Classic Alternative? Summarized

Powlison addresses EMM and Anderson in a very gracious and balanced manner. His approach is broad, with many great points and cautions. EMM proponents would do well to consider his perspectives on the sovereignty of God, the essential personal responsibility of believers, and the distinctive between exorcism and discipleship. His cautions towards ancestral spirits, generational curses, overly authoritative rebuking prayers, ignorance of medical treatments, and evidential pragmatism and anecdotalism are also helpful considerations.

Powlison’s insights towards Anderson are important to consider, but his treatment and references of Anderson are inadequate considering the direct claims and critiques made towards Anderson’s writings. Powlison’s claims in regard to the practice of spiritual warfare need to be reevaluated and clarified concerning his western influence and consideration of early church history with a greater direct engagement towards the writers he critiques. A newer version of *Power Encounters* would be greatly helpful,

¹⁵⁰Beilby and Eddy, *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, 124-25; Ramsay MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire: A.D. 100-400* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), 110-12.

¹⁵¹Beilby and Eddy, *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, 125.

especially considering the changes and updates to Anderson's writings and theology in more recent years. In conclusion, I believe that Anderson and Powlison have a significant amount of agreement in both theology and practice, with fewer differences than one might expect. Nevertheless, several of Powlison's areas of critiques will be applied towards Anderson's ministry in chapter five.

The Bondage Maker? Christian Research Institute's Critical Analysis of Neil Anderson

Portions of Powlison's work show up and are referenced within the Christian Research Journal's posts on Anderson, included as a "companion" to Elliot Miller's articles on Anderson as "The Bondage Maker."¹⁵² Apart from Powlison, the other major critique of Anderson come from the Christian Research Institute, led by president Hank Hanegraaff. The critique was seen most clearly through a position statement as well as a series of four cover stories in their journal, referring to Anderson as "The Bondage Maker."¹⁵³ Although chapter 2 introduced these criticisms, this section of the book will present Anderson's response as well as the details of the critique more fully.

¹⁵²Powlison, "Deliverance Ministry."

¹⁵³Elliot Miller, "Neil Anderson and Freedom in Christ Ministries: A General Critique," *Christian Research Journal* 21 (1998), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.equip.org/articles/neil-anderson-and-freedom-in-christ-ministries-a-general-critique->; Elliot Miller, "The Bondage Maker: Examining The Message and Method of Neil T. Anderson, (Part 1), Sanctification and the Believer's Identity in Christ," *Christian Research Journal* 21 (1998), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.equip.org/articles/the-bondage-maker-examining-the-message-and-method-of-neil-t-anderson-part-one->; Elliot Miller, "The Bondage Maker: Examining The Message and Method of Neil T. Anderson, (Part 2), Spiritual Warfare and the 'Truth Encounter,'" *Christian Research Journal* 21 (1998), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.equip.org/articles/the-bondage-maker-examining-the-message-and-method-of-neil-t-anderson-part-two-spiritual-warfare-and-the-truth-encounter->; Elliot Miller, "The Bondage Maker: Examining The Message and Method of Neil T. Anderson, (Part 3), Spiritual Warfare and the Seven 'Steps to Freedom,'" *Christian Research Journal* 21 (1998), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.equip.org/articles/the-bondage-maker-examining-the-message-and-method-of-neil-t-anderson-part-three-spiritual-warfare-and-the-seven-steps-to-freedom->; Bob Passantino and Gretchen Passantino, "The Bondage Maker: Examining the Message and Method of Neil T. Anderson (Part 4), Spiritual Warfare and the Myth of Satanic Conspiracies and Ritual Abuse," *Christian Research Journal* 21 (1998), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.equip.org/articles/the-bondage-maker-examining-the-message-and-method-of-neil-t-anderson-part-four-spiritual-warfare-and-the-myth-of-satanic-conspiracies-and-ritual-abuse->; Elliot Miller, "Deliver Us from Deliverance Ministry," *Evangelical Theological Society Northwest* (Spring 2001), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.westernseminary.edu/papers/Faculty/Breshears/Miller.doc>.

Anderson's Understanding of CRI's Critique

In my interview with Anderson, he acknowledged and discussed CRI's critique of his ministry. Later, in his memoirs, *Rough Road to Freedom*, Anderson shared more of these details in printed form. Anderson explains,

A nationally syndicated radio ministry was publicly criticizing me. The host was telling people to burn *The Bondage Breaker*. They published a journal and printed four inflammatory articles about me. In the first article, entitled "The Bondage Maker," I was "a New Age, Catholic, Robert Schuller." The slander continued for several years. When the negative criticism first started, I was surprised and thought it was just a misunderstanding. I had twice been a guest on this radio program, and I knew several of the staff. Some were former students of mine. So I sent them a number of my books and tapes hoping that would clarify the issue, but the negative criticism only increased.¹⁵⁴

Anderson continues in sharing details concerning his attempts to clarify and reconcile with CRI. He utilized one of his coauthors and friends, Robert Saucy, to help him interact with Hanegraaff and Miller.¹⁵⁵ Anderson references Saucy's influence, encouragement, and guidance as essential during this time of trial and through most of his ministry.¹⁵⁶ Anderson then asked for correction from twenty five churches and ministries, the radio broadcast ministry involved, and the National Religious Broadcasters.¹⁵⁷ Finally, Anderson asked Saucy to contact three well-known theologians, Bruce Ware, Millard Erickson, and Bruce Demarest, to read five of Anderson's books

¹⁵⁴Anderson, *Rough Road*, 238.

¹⁵⁵"No attempt was ever made to contact me before or during this period of criticism. So I made an appointment to see the host along with Dr. Robert Saucy. He was on the board of Freedom in Christ Ministries at that time, and held the position of Distinguished Professor of Systematic Theology at Talbot School of Theology. Unfortunately Dr. Saucy had to cancel so we rescheduled another meeting a month later. To my surprise and disappointment, the public criticism increased before we could even meet. So I canceled the second meeting, and decided that I had little recourse but to forgive the host and move on." Ibid., 239.

¹⁵⁶"No person helps me more in the area of my message than my dear colleague Dr. Robert Saucy. I am fully aware of my need to be accountable to others, not just for moral reasons, but for credibility of the message and the integrity of the ministry. Bob, you have been my rudder (and sometimes my anchor when I was tempted to proceed without due reflection) in the sea of spiritual conflicts. I'm indebted to you, and so is the body of Christ. It was a privilege to coauthor *God's Power at Work in You* with you. It helped to crystallize my thinking on sanctification." Neil Anderson, *Bondage Breaker* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2000), 4.

¹⁵⁷Anderson, *Rough Road*, 240

and submit their own critiques towards Anderson with CRI leadership invited to the meeting.¹⁵⁸ CRI declined to attend, indicating the only interaction they would have with Anderson would be in a publicized debate.¹⁵⁹

Anderson continued the planned theological consultation anyhow, sharing “I attended the meeting with the three theologians with plans already underway to write second editions of *Victory over the Darkness* and *The Bondage Breaker*. . . . their feedback was valuable to me in finishing the second editions, published in the year 2000.”¹⁶⁰ The theologians not only offered Anderson corrections to his works and theology, but stated,

In our judgment, Anderson stands well within the bounds of Christian orthodoxy, and in no respect do we consider his teachings heretical . . . We believe that the treatment of sanctification and growth in holiness presented in Dr. Anderson’s and Dr. Saucy’s recent book, *The Common Made Holy* (1997), represents a more biblically nuanced and balanced treatment on the subject versus earlier works, such as *Victory over the Darkness* (1990) and *The Bondage Breaker* (1990). Critics should recognize the development in Dr. Anderson’s thinking, which by his own admission, is currently taking place.¹⁶¹

Anderson concedes that he has been criticized as being too anecdotal, but sees instructive value in sharing his experiences while affirming “that God’s word is the sole authority for faith and practice.”¹⁶² He remarks that while he is grieved to “see brothers

¹⁵⁸“I want to thank Dr. Bruce Ware, Dr. Millard Erickson, and Dr. Bruce Demarest, who graciously agreed to read five of my books related to this subject. They have offered important suggestions to help me refine my message of freedom in Christ.” Anderson, *Bondage Breaker*, 4; Anderson, *Rough Road*, 241. Note that their written suggestions are shared in appendix 3.

¹⁵⁹“Saucy contacted three well-known theologians, who read five of his books, *The Bondage Breaker*, *Victory over the Darkness*, *Helping Others Find Freedom in Christ*, *Finding Hope Again*, and *The Common Made Holy*, again invited the radio host who responded ‘we would be very willing to have our criticism of your theology judged by the larger body of Christ, say, in a public, advertised debate . . . [but] we will never submit to having truth determined by the vote of a panel of three theologians selected by the NRB who may or may not be as competent as we are to judge these matters’ . . . [Anderson writes] this is pretty tough talk when the host hadn’t even completed a college degree, much less a seminary degree.” Anderson, *Rough Road*, 241.

¹⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 242.

¹⁶¹Anderson, *Rough Road*, 243.

¹⁶²“I am too anecdotal, was another criticism that I have heard. . . . My experience of growing in Christ and ministering with others has caused me to grow in my understanding of the Bible, but

and sisters in Christ attacking one another,” he and his staff have chosen to forgive CRI’s leadership.¹⁶³ Anderson still remains confused as to why the attacks came towards his ministry in the manner in which they did, but encouraged those who are “concerned with my theology” to engage his responses on his ministry’s website and through more recent writings.¹⁶⁴ Anderson concedes that

the radio slander and libel did have an impact on our ministry. Conferences were canceled, and we had to scale down our ministry in the States. But there is a silver lining in every cloud. God used this to expand our ministry overseas. As a result the message is far better known in Europe, Africa, Asia, and South America.¹⁶⁵

Anderson laments regarding his relationship with CRI that “to this day, they have not called, or written me or my office, for the purpose of setting up a meeting to discuss my message or ministry.”¹⁶⁶ Despite the manner in which CRI confronted and failed to personally interact with Anderson, their writings remain the most academic, critical, and detailed analysis of Anderson’s writings and ministry. The first three articles, of the series of four articles, on Anderson were written by Elliot Miller, current editor of CRI’s *The Christian Research Journal*, with the final article being written by Bob and Gretchen Passantino.

shouldn’t it? I look to the Bible for answers and I have always believed that God’s word is the sole authority for faith and practice. It seems like those who use the anecdotal argument have no anecdotal experiences to share themselves.” Ibid.

¹⁶³“I have chosen to forgive this man, and so has our staff.” Ibid., 242.

¹⁶⁴“I am still puzzled to this day why this attack from the radio program even happened. What possible harm was I doing? What is the worst thing that can happen if you take a person through the Steps to Freedom in Christ? You can’t hurt a person with the process, their wounds could be healed, and they just might be set free from their past. Plus, they are really going to be ready to participate in communion next Sunday. . . . For those who are concerned with my theology, I encourage them to visit our website (www.ficm.org). I have answered the most common questions that we receive. Also, I have written a practical, systematic theology entitled, *The Daily Discipler*.” Ibid., 246.

¹⁶⁵Ibid.

¹⁶⁶Ibid., 241.

The Bondage Maker (Part 1)

In this opening article of the series, Miller concedes concerning Anderson that “some of his teachings are helpful” but asserts that “many others would be more aptly described as bondage making than as bondage breaking.”¹⁶⁷ He affirms that Anderson is a “respectable personality and teacher” whose foundational works “contain much sound theology, spiritual insight, and practical wisdom” but simultaneously are “riddled with seriously flawed assumptions that can lead uncritical Christians into various kinds of bondage.”¹⁶⁸

Miller particularly emphasizes Anderson’s misunderstanding of sin nature and Christian growth.¹⁶⁹ In addition, he highlights “controversial components” such as Christians having demons, speaking to the devil, renunciation of past sins, and overemphasis on satanic ritual abuse.¹⁷⁰ Miller bemoans Anderson’s influence, writing,

Anderson is bound to provoke controversy wherever he goes because he combines in one person numerous conflicting elements in today’s Christianity. He has one foot planted firmly in conservative Protestant theology, with the other just as firmly planted in the sensationalism, speculation, and subjectivism that have come to characterize significant sectors of the evangelical church. In the same church, therefore, some members likely will be attracted to his message while others probably will be repelled by it.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁷Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 1),” 1.

¹⁶⁸“In many ways Neil Anderson is a respectable personality and teacher. . . . His books—including his foundational works, *Victory over the Darkness* and *The Bondage Breaker*—contain much sound theology, spiritual insight, and practical wisdom. In some respects they have no doubt benefited many who have read them. Nonetheless . . . they also are riddled with seriously flawed assumptions that can lead uncritical Christians into various kinds of bondage—an ironic effect for a ministry whose purpose is to set Christians free.” Ibid., 3.

¹⁶⁹“It is unusual and troubling in two respects: (1) it denies that the Christian still possesses a sin nature; (2) it teaches that correct self-perception is the critical issue for holy and victorious Christian living.” Ibid., 6.

¹⁷⁰“Controversial components in Anderson’s message include not only his teaching that Christians can have demons but also his belief that Christians should speak to the devil, that they must specifically identify and renounce past sins in order to be free of them, that they do not possess a sin nature, that correct self-perception is the key to sanctified living, and that satanic ritual abuse and multiple personality disorder are common problems caused by a vast satanic conspiracy. Also subject to criticism are his methods for finding scriptural, historical, and contemporary support for his claims.” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 1),” 4.

¹⁷¹Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 1),” 5.

Miller also questions those Christian leaders who have endorsed Anderson’s message, holding that they “tend to overlook, rationalize, or minimize the elements that conflict with their traditional views” and argues that they “have endorsed his message without fully understanding its controversial dimensions.”¹⁷² Miller continues his list of concerns with Anderson’s influence, expressing “although Anderson persuasively projects the image of a responsible, balanced teacher, he often does not deliver on the substance of the same.”¹⁷³ Is Anderson “logically inconsistent”? Does Anderson hold to “bondage making teachings”? As Miller brings up individual critiques, they will be applied towards Anderson’s writings.

Sin nature. Miller emphasizes that “Anderson’s most foundational teaching is that Christians are ‘saints who occasionally sin.’”¹⁷⁴ Anderson and FICM President Rich Miller debate the inclusion of the word “occasionally” as an addition from the editors that was not caught before printing.¹⁷⁵ Although “occasionally” appears in the first edition of *Victory Over Darkness*, in the 2000 edition Anderson writes “we are saints who sin, but we have all the resources in Christ we need not to sin.”¹⁷⁶ Miller writes that

¹⁷²“Those mainstream evangelicals who resonate with these and other aspects of his message tend to overlook, rationalize, or minimize the elements that conflict with their traditional views. Thus many Christian leaders have endorsed his message without fully understanding its controversial dimensions.” Ibid.

¹⁷³“I do not mean to suggest that Anderson deliberately lulls his audience into a state of passive acceptance and then slips in his controversial teachings. The root problem with his teaching appears rather to be logical inconsistency.” Ibid.

¹⁷⁴Ibid., 6.

¹⁷⁵Rich Miller, President of FICM explains that Anderson believes the word “occasionally” was inserted by the publisher and was not part of his original wording. Anderson’s clarification in later writings communicates that he does not minimize sin. Anderson confirms this event, explaining “Sadly, it is true and I didn’t catch it. The devil has had a field day with that one. I wasn’t very prepared for the critics when I first started to write. I had no idea that there were people ready to pounce if they find a pit in the cherry pie. But I also assume the responsibility to make sure there are no pits, which is nearly impossible, but one still has to try.” Neil Anderson, interview by author, January, 4, 2014.

¹⁷⁶“A Christian, in terms of his or her deepest identity, is a saint, a spiritually born child of God . . . In the King James Version of the Bible, believers are called ‘saints,’ ‘holy ones,’ or ‘righteous ones’ more than 240 times. In contrast, unbelievers are called ‘sinners’ more than 330 times. Clearly, the term

“it is important to clarify that Anderson does not deny the ongoing reality of sin in the life of the believer,” but still holds to Anderson having a fundamental misunderstanding of sin nature.¹⁷⁷ Miller rebukes Anderson for referring to the flesh as “sin-trained” instead of sinful, arguing that “despite his verbal assent to crucifying the flesh, he does not truly call for crucifying it but rather reforming (i.e., reprogramming) it.”¹⁷⁸

Miller offers multiple critiques on how Anderson makes “minimizing statements on sin’s place and power in the Christian’s life.”¹⁷⁹ He believes that Anderson “demonstrates a surprising lack of appreciation for the scope of sin.”¹⁸⁰ He insinuates that Anderson holds to an almost perfectionistic point of view, that “Christians no longer have sin natures.”¹⁸¹

‘saint’ is used in Scripture to refer to the believer, and ‘sinner’ is used in reference to the unbeliever. Although the New Testament provides plenty of evidence that the believer sins, it never clearly identifies the believer as a sinner.” Anderson, *Victory Over Darkness* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2000), 46-51. My brief search yielded similar results with *hagios* (60 times as “saints), *qadowsh* (12 times as “saints/holy ones”), *qaddiysh* (7 times as “saints/holy ones”), *tsaddiyq* (205 times as “righteous ones), *dikaios* (79 times as “righteous ones”). This search also yielded *poneros* (77 times as “evil/wicked”), *adikos* (12 times as “unrighteous/wicked”), *harmartolos* (47 times as “sinner”), *rasha* (264 times as “wicked”). This was only a brief survey, but a more comprehensive examination with greater linguistic and contextual evaluation would be helpful to further examine and consider the linguistic usage of “sinner” and “saint.”

¹⁷⁷Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 1),” 7.

¹⁷⁸“The flesh is sinful, not sin-trained. Given Anderson’s definition of the flesh, it is no wonder that in teaching on sanctification his central emphasis is the ‘renewing of the mind.’” Ibid., 8.

¹⁷⁹“Notice how Anderson describes the difference between the old and the new self: ‘Your old self—the sinner—and your old nature—characterized by the sin which was inevitable since you were separated from God—are gone forever because you are no longer separated from God.’ Later he adds that ‘sin is living our lives independent of God.’ Throughout his books, this is the way he prefers to describe sin, rather than describing it, say, as lawlessness (1 John 3:4) or unrighteousness (1 John 5:17).” Ibid., 9.

¹⁸⁰“When Anderson refers to the ‘residual’ effects of the bygone Adamic nature and optimistically states that saints only occasionally sin, he demonstrates a surprising lack of appreciation for the scope of sin (it includes the thoughts of the heart as well as deeds; acts of omission as well as commission; indeed, anything that falls short of God’s perfect holiness—Gen. 6:5; Matt. 5:21–22, 27–28; 15:18–20; James 4:17; Rom. 3:23), its depth—even within the Christian’s heart, and the frequency with which it manifests itself (e.g., Rom. 7:21; James 3:2).” Ibid., 8.

¹⁸¹“Anderson’s simplistic understanding of the old and new natures (relationship with God or lack thereof being the only essential features) explains why he believes that Christians no longer have sin natures—they now have a relationship with God.” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 1),” 10.

Miller references Anderson's statement that "any thoughts which do not 'joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man' (Romans 7:22) are from Satan" to claim that Anderson is abdicating personal responsibility of the believer and clinging to a "devil made me do it" mentality."¹⁸² Anderson though writes a statement quite opposite to Miller's accusation,

No one can say, "The devil made me do it" or "The attraction of the world was too powerful, I couldn't help myself." God always provides for us a way of escape (1 Corinthians 10:13). We are the agents of our own choice to sin. Despite the flesh, the world, and the underlying powerful influence of the god of this world, those who choose to sin are credited with responsibility for their actions . . . we must make the responsible choice to serve our Lord rather than give in to the temptations to sin.¹⁸³

Although Miller's inference seems out of the context of the whole of Anderson's *The Bondage Breaker* (1990), Anderson seems to respond to this accusation in his 2000 edition by expanding this particular section to include an affirmation that "I don't care whether the negative or condemning thoughts are coming from a speaker on the wall, from their own memories, or from the pit of hell. The only way these thoughts can have any control over them is if they believe them."¹⁸⁴ What is extremely interesting about Anderson's update is that it sounds very similar to a concluding thought of Miller's that "it really does not matter whether a thought originates from Satan or the Christian."¹⁸⁵

¹⁸²Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker* (1990), 218. "There is a biblical basis for saying some of our evil thoughts are provoked by Satan (e.g., 1 Chron. 21:1; Matt. 16:23; John 13:2; Acts 5:3), but there is no biblical basis for saying all of them do (James 1:14; 4:1; Rom. 8:7; 1 Pet. 2:11; Gal. 5:17). Anderson fails to recognize that evil can originate from ourselves (our flesh) and yet we can still gain victory over the power and guilt of sin through Christ's cross and indwelling Spirit (see, e.g., Heb. 9:13–14; Gal. 5:16–25). His desire to protect us from responsibility for the evil in our hearts contradicts his own emphasis that we should take responsibility and not fall into a 'devil made me do it' mentality." Miller, "The Bondage Maker (Part 1)," 21.

¹⁸³Anderson and Saucy, *The Common Made Holy*, 345. This quote is from 1997, before Miller's "The Bondage Maker" was published.

¹⁸⁴Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 264.

¹⁸⁵Miller finishes this statement by saying "because the Christian should not be making any claims to personal righteousness before God in the first place." Miller, "The Bondage Maker (Part 1)," 22.

Belief vs. Obedience. Out of this understanding of sin nature, Miller believes that Anderson has failed to place enough emphasis on obedience, stating that Anderson offers “a cognitive rather than a volitional (moral) solution.”¹⁸⁶ Miller offers that “the biblical answer to the flesh is far more radical: it needs to be put to death.”¹⁸⁷ He believes that Anderson’s “emphasis on identity is basically a self-esteem emphasis” as he repeatedly puts the cognitive ahead of the volitional.”¹⁸⁸

Miller continues by comparing Anderson to Charles Schuller and Norman Vincent Peale with his incorporation “into Christian discipleship pop psychology’s debatable proposition that repeating positive affirmations improves self-image and confidence.”¹⁸⁹ Does Anderson do this? Does Anderson fail to present an honest confrontation of sin? Does Anderson fail to present the serious offense of sin to God and fail to exhort believers to be “doers of the word” and not mere hearers (Jas 1:22)?

A quick reference to Anderson’s presentation of the “Steps to Freedom in Christ” in *The Bondage Breaker (1990)*, the emphases on cooperative growth and volitional response in *Victory Over Darkness (1990)*, his personal applications in *Walking in the Light (1992)*, and “The Power of Our Actions” chapter in *The Common Made Holy (1997)* demonstrate that Miller has overstated his point. Anderson does use phrasing that mimics positive thinking trends of the day, using a chapter title in *Victory over the Darkness (1990)* called “The Power of Positive Believing” which is retitled “The Power of Believing the Truth” in 2000. He also titles one chapter “Becoming the Spiritual Person You Want to Be” in in *Victory over the Darkness (1990)* which is retitled

¹⁸⁶Ibid., 12.

¹⁸⁷Ibid., 11.

¹⁸⁸“His key emphasis is that believers need to understand who they really are in Christ. Correct self-perception is the linchpin of Anderson’s approach to sanctification.” Ibid., 11-13.

¹⁸⁹“It’s a matter of emphasis. Anderson repeatedly puts the cognitive ahead of the volitional and thus ends up doing to the gospel something not unlike what Schuller and Norman Vincent Peale did before him, even if in doing so he more strictly employs evangelical terminology and motifs.” Ibid., 12.

“Becoming the Spiritual Person God Wants You to Be” in 2000. These chapter titles are interestingly similar to well-known book titles by Peale and Schuller, but it is also important to acknowledge the changes evident in the progression of Anderson’s writings.¹⁹⁰ In the second edition of Anderson’s *Victory Over the Darkness*, he acknowledges,

A lot of water has gone under the bridge since the first edition went into print. I have gained a lot of experience in writing and I have matured considerably myself. Consequently I believe this second edition is a much better book than the first edition.¹⁹¹

Miller likewise accuses Anderson of making sanctification a “subjective, self-centered perspective.”¹⁹² Miller makes many observations about Anderson’s teachings that seem to be out of context with the whole of Anderson’s works. Noting Anderson’s changes and improvements in later writings, many of Miller’s observations are with some merit and value. But in order to make his case, Miller seems to overstate his points and ignore aspects of Anderson’s writings that may undermine the force with which Miller desires to label and accuse Anderson. This imbalanced approach to Anderson seems to validate some of Anderson’s narrative of responses he received from CRI in the course of Anderson’s attempted reconciliation and mediation.

Saint vs. sinner. Miller acknowledges that “the Bible does generally call Christians saints and not sinners (believers are called sinners in 1 Timothy 1:15, James

¹⁹⁰Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness (1990)*, 7; Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness*, 10. A seeming play on Norman Vincent Peale’s *The Power of Positive Thinking*. Also note the similarity with Robert Schuller’s *You Can Be the Person You Want to Be*.

¹⁹¹Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness*, 13.

¹⁹²“Anderson does believe that sanctification is a supernatural work of God. But, despite occasional attempts to bring balance, his emphasis on self-perception could allow the skeptic to argue that the power of positive thinking (or “positive believing,” as he puts it) is sufficient to explain the changes in Christians’ lives. Whether or not one is a child of God could seem immaterial—if one believes this to be the case, his or her behavior will conform to that belief. . . . his emphasis on the believer’s identity—as though that is the key aspect—orientates everything around a subjective, self-centered perspective.” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 1),” 13.

4:1–9, 5:19–20, and Galatians 2:17).¹⁹³ In Anderson’s revised edition of *Victory Over the Darkness*, he responds to three of these four references, helpfully explaining why he believes these references do not validate a claim towards referencing Christians as sinners.¹⁹⁴ Despite the scarcity and debatable nature of such biblical references, Miller still thinks it important to emphasize that “it is no more unbiblical for us to say we are sinners than it was for Paul in 1 Timothy 1:15, for ‘nothing good lives in me, that is, in my flesh.’”¹⁹⁵

Miller also holds that Anderson’s “references to Christians as saints (holy ones) more as referring to an imparted (actual) holiness than to an imputed (legally transferred from Christ’s account) holiness.”¹⁹⁶ He continues such accusations, detailing that Anderson “seems to fuse the extrinsic act of God called justification (on which the Christian’s relationship with God is based) with the intrinsic act of God called regeneration (in which the Christian’s relationship with God is empirically established).”¹⁹⁷ Miller does not give adequate enough attention to Anderson’s developing theological understanding, which shows up in *The Common Made Holy*, a work intentionally designed to communicate and speak to deeper theological concepts.¹⁹⁸ Miller seems to have noticed this portion of Anderson’s writings, for he footnotes a reference to it while relegating its relative unimportance:

¹⁹³“Because the term sinner usually connotes someone whose life is characterized by unrepentant sin (e.g., 1 Tim. 1: 9; 1 Pet. 4:18).” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 1),” 19.

¹⁹⁴“Referring to them as ‘sinners’ fits the description of those who have not come to repentance and faith in God, as the rest of Scripture clearly identifies believers as saints who still have the capacity to sin.” Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness*, 48-50.

¹⁹⁵Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 1),” 19.

¹⁹⁶“He also interprets New Testament references to Christians as saints (holy ones) more as referring to an imparted (actual) holiness than to an imputed (legally transferred from Christ’s account) holiness: ‘A saint is literally a holy person. . . . You were ‘sanctified in Christ’—made a saint by participating in the life of the only true holy one, Jesus Christ.’” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 1),” 6.

¹⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁹⁸Anderson, *The Common Made Holy*, 57-75.

An unambiguous statement of forensic justification is set forth in his *The Common Made Holy*. ([Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1997], 64–67.) But since the book is coauthored with theologian Robert L. Saucy (who may well be responsible for the improved theology), and since the problematic statements noted in Anderson’s other books have not been revised, Anderson’s teaching on justification remains a cause for concern.¹⁹⁹

Miller’s language in this footnote deemphasizes the helpful changes in Anderson’s theology, without referencing the entirety of chapter 16, and discredits its importance rather than affirming it as a positive improvement. Anderson certainly could have been clearer in his original works, but Miller certainly could have been more gracious in acknowledging the evidential growth and improvement in *The Common Made Holy* that would become even more evidenced in his second edition works.

Anderson and Miller seem to define and use terms such as “flesh,” “sin nature,” “old nature,” and “new nature” differently. Although this does not account for all of their disagreements, or presume that semantic clarity will bring them in line with one another, it is important to recognize these differences are more than theological, they are sometimes communication and misunderstanding issues. Miller makes many serious statements and assertions concerning Anderson’s understanding of sin nature.²⁰⁰

Anderson comprehensively lays out his understanding of sin nature in chapter 16 of *The Common Made Holy* (republished as *God’s Power at Work in You* in 2001). Anderson and Saucy also specifically offer more concise replies to the questions “Do Christians Still Have a Sin Nature?” and “‘Sinners’ Who Are Forgiven or ‘Saints’ Who Sin’?” freely through the Freedom in Christ website which is also shared in appendix 4.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 1),” 16.

²⁰⁰“Anderson gets into theological trouble because of his inadequate understanding of what the term nature means. Nature here refers to one’s disposition, inclination, or bent—the principle or law that governs one’s behavior. . . . When Anderson writes that ‘no person can consistently behave in a way that is inconsistent with how he perceives himself,’ he fails to recognize that it is not one’s self-perception but rather one’s nature with which one cannot behave inconsistently. If Christians had only a Christ like nature they could only behave like Christ.” Ibid., 17-18.

²⁰¹“About Us,” Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed January 4, 2014,

Demonic possession of Christians. Miller then confronts Anderson's statements that insinuate that Christians may be possessed by demons. In Anderson's seventh step in *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* Anderson uses spatial language that suggests self-deliverance of a demon.²⁰² In teaching believers how to help other believers, Anderson similarly offers another prayer that seems to suggest self-deliverance of a demon.²⁰³ Interesting changes appear in Anderson's prayers within *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* in his 2000 edition of *The Bondage Breaker*, that demonstrate a move of Anderson toward eliminating language that suggests possession.²⁰⁴ In his third edition of *The Steps to Freedom in Christ (2004)* Anderson even removes the use and concept of the term "familiar spirit."²⁰⁵

Miller addresses Anderson's teaching "that Christians can have demons" to illustrate his concern that "if we are combating an alien personality (Satan) working within our very beings, we will focus our response directly on him—as does Anderson's entire approach to spiritual warfare."²⁰⁶ Miller again makes absolute statements towards

<http://www.ficm.org/about-us/faq/position>.

²⁰²Miller, "The Bondage Maker (Part 1)," 3; "I reject any and every way in which Satan may claim ownership over me. I declare to be eternally and completely signed over and committed to the Lord Jesus Christ. I now command every familiar spirit and every enemy of the Lord Jesus Christ that is in or around me to flee my presence and never to return." Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker (1990)*, 203.

²⁰³"I now claim that authority over all enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ in and around this room and especially in (name). . . . We agree that every evil spirit that is in or around (name) be bound to silence. They cannot inflict any pain, speak to (name)'s mind, or prevent (name) from hearing, seeing, or speaking. Now in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I command you, Satan, and all your hosts to release (name) and remain bound and gagged so that (name) will be able to obey God." Ibid., 217.

²⁰⁴"In the name and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, I command Satan and all evil spirits to release me in order that I can be free to know and to choose the will of God. . . . I command every evil spirit to leave my presence. I belong to God and the evil one cannot touch me. . . . I command Satan in the name of Jesus to leave my presence. . . . I now command every familiar spirit and every enemy of the Lord Jesus that is influencing me to leave my presence. Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 200-52.

²⁰⁵Anderson, *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*, 20.

²⁰⁶"As in the prayer reproduced above (taken from one of his seven 'steps to freedom'), Anderson teaches that Christians can have demons, but he also stresses that demonized believers have the authority and responsibility to resist the devil personally rather than relying on other Christians to cast the demons out of them." Miller, "The Bondage Maker (Part 1)," 3.

Anderson, saying that “Anderson fails to recognize that evil can originate from ourselves (our flesh).”²⁰⁷ Such absolute statements may seem to embolden his position, but ultimately hurt his argument when it is easily discovered multiple places where Anderson addresses evil from within such as,

A continual ongoing antagonism between the “flesh” (or the old tendency to live life independently of God) and the Spirit (who lives in us and leads us in holiness). The battlefield of this war is the life of every believer; this combat with sin is seen when Paul talks about us continually “putting to death [present tense] the deeds of the body.” (Romans 8:13 NASB)²⁰⁸

Miller would be more correct and justified in arguing that Anderson overemphasizes Satan’s role and influence on the believer, which even Anderson’s theological changes in his own writings have indicated over time. Miller is right in saying that Anderson argues or implies at times that a Christian may be inhabited by demons.²⁰⁹ Miller cannot overlook Anderson’s writings when he gives greater attention to the influence of the world and the flesh and makes statements such as “despite the

²⁰⁷“Anderson fails to recognize that evil can originate from ourselves (our flesh) and yet we can still gain victory over the power and guilt of sin through Christ’s cross and indwelling Spirit (see, e.g., Heb. 9:13–14; Gal. 5:16–25). His desire to protect us from responsibility for the evil in our hearts contradicts his own emphasis that we should take responsibility and not fall into a ‘devil made me do it’ mentality.” Ibid., 22.

²⁰⁸Anderson and Saucy, *The Common Made Holy*, 105. Another helpful reference on the subject is found in *The Common Made Holy*, p.97-98 where Anderson writes “Remember, it is our responsibility to not allow sin to reign in our mortal bodies. . . . The true Christian hates the sin that enslaves him. . . . Every believer’s nature has positive propensities; this is true of the most defeated Christian. He may still have remnants of his old desires, but they are not dominant anymore. His heart has been changed so that his deepest desire is now toward God and His way. The new prevailing disposition is a love for God and a love for that which is God—that is, His Son, His people, and His righteous ways.”

²⁰⁹“In *Victory* Anderson never explains exactly who this second ‘player’ that is not ‘me,’ but dwells ‘in me,’ is. His answer is provided in *Released from Bondage*: ‘I personally believe that the word sin in Romans 6:12 is personified, referring to the person of Satan Satan is sin: the epitome of evil, the prince of darkness, the father of lies. I would have a hard time understanding how only a principle (as opposed to an evil personal influence) would reign in my mortal body in such a way that I would have no control over it. Even more difficult to understand is how I could get a principle out of my body. Paul says, ‘I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good’ (Romans 7:21). What is present in me is evil—the person, not the principle—and it is present in me because at some time I used my body as an instrument of unrighteousness.” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 1),” 20.

flesh, the world, and the underlying powerful influence of the god of this world, those who choose to sin are credited with responsibility for their actions.”²¹⁰

The Bondage Maker (Part 2)

In Miller’s second part to his series of articles, he elaborates and continues his concerns with Anderson’s ministry and writings. Although there are areas of overlap and restatement between articles, Miller succeeds in progressively presenting his case against Anderson.

Satan as ‘god’ and ‘ruler.’ Miller argues that Anderson’s “assertion that Satan has dominion over the earth and its creatures” is another serious problem to be considered.²¹¹ Miller points out that,

The Bible does not say—as Anderson represents—that Satan is ruler over the earth (Greek: *ge*), but rather over this world (Greek: *kosmos*) or age (Greek: *aion*). As a theologian, Anderson should know that these terms, when used in relation to Satan, refer to the present dark spiritual system in which humanity blindly participates (e.g., 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2; 6:12).²¹²

Miller attributes this misinterpretation as “one of the reasons Satan looms so large in Anderson’s worldview.”²¹³ Is Miller correct in his assertions? Even Powlison-labeled EMM proponent theologians, such as Wayne Grudem, acknowledge that “Scripture does not teach that Satan rules over the entire world, but that he is ruler over

²¹⁰“Our own tendency toward sin therefore is what needs to be dealt with directly, not the devil. As will become painfully clear in Part Two, Anderson’s inadequate view of the flesh has led him to an exaggerated view of the devil.” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 1),” 21; Anderson and Saucy, *The Common Made Holy*, 345. Anderson and Saucy’s explanation of sanctification from p.309-58 (chapter 16) help clarify that Anderson clearly does communicate a more balanced (than Miller implies), biblical perspective on the roles of the world and the flesh in relation to the believer.

²¹¹Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 2),” 1.

²¹²Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 2),” 5.

²¹³*Ibid.*, 4.

the system of sinful opposition to God.”²¹⁴ If this assertion of Anderson’s is wrong, does it taint all of Anderson’s theology?

Anderson remarks concerning Christians, “Satan is the ruler of this world, but he is no longer our ruler, for Christ is our ruler. . . . But as long as we live on the earth, we are still on Satan’s turf.”²¹⁵ Anderson then continues, stating that “Yes, believers can be controlled by Satan if they fail to take a stand against him. *Ownership* is never at stake, however. We belong to God, and Satan can’t touch our basic identity in Him.”²¹⁶ Anderson’s progressive understanding of Satan’s power and authority seems indicated in his 2000 version of *The Bondage Breaker* with addition and expanded insights and clarifications such distinguishing between levels of Satan’s influence, control, and ownership and a rephrasing that Satan “can gain some measure of control over our lives if we are deceived and believe his lies. . . . We may be demon-oppressed, but we are always Holy-Spirit possessed.”²¹⁷ While not eliminating his claim that “the whole world is under the control of the evil one,” Anderson does present a more holistic and biblical view of Satan and the demonic in his practical presentation of his systematic theology, *The Daily Discipler* (2005).²¹⁸

Ignoring mental problems? Miller still holds that Anderson’s “writings on the subject present an odd mixture of mature biblical insight and naive, uncritical, illogical, and unbiblical ideas.”²¹⁹ Miller continues, writing, “Many of the problems

²¹⁴“John frequently uses ‘the world’ or ‘this world’ to refer to the present evil world system in opposition to God: John 7:7; 8:23; 12:31; 14:17, 30; 15:18, 19; 16:11; 17:14. . . . Compare Paul’s phrase ‘the god of this world.’ (2 Cor 4:4).” Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 414.

²¹⁵Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker* (1990), 99.

²¹⁶Ibid.

²¹⁷Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 112-14.

²¹⁸Neil T. Anderson, *The Daily Discipler* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2005), 48-49, 428-69, 540-49.

²¹⁹“His responsible sounding statements disarm his audience so that they are slow to recognize

Anderson attributes to spirits seem rather to be rooted in the emotional instability and weak egos (senses of identity) of those who seek his help (e.g., people who are suggestible and experience out-of-control thoughts).²²⁰ Miller admits that Anderson acknowledges chemically induced mental problems, but bemoans how “he consistently opts for a spiritual (demonic) explanation when people come to him claiming that they hear voices speaking to them.”²²¹

While Anderson does emphasize Satan’s role in the “voices” that people hear, he never discourages medical treatment and sees his emphasis as a corrective to a rationalist worldview that totally ignores the spiritual possibilities when considering mental issues.²²² Anderson illustrates his concern for a medical/scientific and spiritual understanding:

What is being passed off as mental illness oftentimes is nothing more than a battle for the mind. “You have a chemical imbalance,” is the common medical explanation given to those who are hearing voices, plagued with negative thoughts, having panic attacks, or struggling with chronic depression. The assumption is that the problem is organic (that is a hardware problem), and a prescription is usually given in an attempt to correct the problem. While it’s true that our body chemistry *can* get out of balance and hormonal problems *can* cause sickness and disorientation, still, we have to ask questions that consider other possibilities.²²³

Although Anderson does believe medicine and science offer answers, he also believes there are many questions that they cannot answer without a biblical and spiritual understanding. In 2000, Anderson partnered with a licensed psychotherapy doctor and nurse to publish *Christ Centered Therapy* which seeks to “thoroughly integrate

the depth of the problems underlying his approach.” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 2),” 2.

²²⁰Ibid., 3.

²²¹Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 2),” 3.

²²²Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker* (1990), 107-8.

²²³Anderson, *The Common Made Holy*, 170-71.

psychology and theology . . . utilizing the contributions of science in an uncompromisingly biblical framework.”²²⁴

The believer’s authority. Miller believes that Anderson overestimates the believer’s authority over the demonic. He advocates that “binding” and “loosing” are merely for church discipline and that Anderson uses passages justifying the believer’s authority outside of their original context.²²⁵ Miller holds,

Nowhere does Scripture state that believers have authority over Satan himself. Those biblical passages that do speak of believers’ authority over the demonic realm apply strictly to driving demons out of lost human beings (Matt. 10:1; Mark 6:7; Luke 10:19; Acts 8:7). They are never applied to pastoral counseling or the believer’s personal battle with the devil.²²⁶

Miller does correctly point out some passages that Anderson may have overemphasized or used out of context, but he does not make the case that believers are absent Christ’s authority over the demonic.²²⁷ He, like Powlison, does not make a fully developed case for cessationism of spiritual gifts and ignores the many occurrences of

²²⁴Neil T. Anderson, Terry Zuehlke, and Julianne Zuehlke, *Christ Centered Therapy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), back cover.

²²⁵Many of Anderson’s originally communicated views on the believer’s authority in Christ can be found in *The Bondage Breaker* (1990), 57-73.

²²⁶“The biblical evidence suggesting that believers have been given direct authority over the demonic realm is scantier than is usually supposed. Anderson applies Matthew 12:29 (‘first binds the strong man’) to believers, when it is obvious from the preceding seven verses that Jesus was referring to Himself alone. Matthew 18:18 (‘bind’ and ‘loose’) refers to church discipline, not spiritual warfare, as the larger context makes entirely clear, Anderson uses Ephesians 1:18-21 (Christ is seated above all authorities and powers) combined with Ephesians 2:5-6 (believers are seated with Him) as proof of the believer’s authority over the devil. But rather than dealing with spiritual warfare, these passages speak of Christ’s exaltation by the Father and the believer’s acceptance and exaltation before the Father in Christ. One should therefore be careful not to infer too much from them.” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 2),” 6.

²²⁷“Anderson further equates the dominion given by God to Adam over the animals (Gen. 1:28) with the authority given by Christ to His disciples over evil spirits (Matt. 10:1; Luke 10:17-20), but there is no biblical reason to think they are the same authority. . . . Although Jesus does say in Matthew 28:18 that all authority has been handed over to Him, He does not hand that authority *carte blanche* over to believers. Rather, on the basis of that authority, He commissions them to go and make disciples of all the nations, and for that work He delegates to them the authority to do a limited number of things (e.g., remit sins—John 20:21-23). Furthermore, 1 John 3:8 (‘The Son of God appeared . . . to destroy the devil’s work’) does not speak of believers, as Anderson suggests. The devil’s work was destroyed once-and-for-all on the cross (John 12:31; Col. 2:15).” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 2),” 5-6.

demonic deliverance in the book of Acts. Miller himself seems to suggest an understanding of taking authority against the demonic but could better clarify his viewpoints on the Spirit's work and empowerment in the believer "believer's personal battle with the devil" and how that is distinguished from a believer's authority in Christ.²²⁸

Verbal rebuking of Satan. Miller transitions into a rebuke of Anderson's verbal attacks at Satan through "prayers involving speaking to Satan and even protracted speeches to the devil."²²⁹ He explains this practice as a derivative of Anderson's misplaced emphasis on the "authority of the believer over the devil."²³⁰ Miller references Jude 8-9 as a corrective to the practice of rebuking language and helpfully explains that

the critical point to be observed in all New Testament cases where Jesus or His followers address Satan or his demons is that they are speaking to visible manifestations, typically demons possessing human beings. Biblically, invisible creatures—whether angels, saints, or demons—are never spoken to in a manner resembling prayer. This is a form of address reserved for God alone.²³¹

Although Miller seems to allow an opening, in the above statement, towards limited use of verbal rebuke (in times of visible/audible manifestation), he continues to press a case that seems to advocate no verbal engagement with Satan. Miller maintains, "while believers do not have the prerogative to say, 'I command you, Satan (to do this or not do that),' Jesus does."²³² He is rightly puzzled by the emphasis in speaking prayers

²²⁸"Biblically, deliverance from demonization is a 'power encounter.' In the rare cases where it would occur today, it would simply and exclusively involve a Christian exercising the authority of Jesus' name to cast a demon out of someone who is not a Christian and therefore is not capable of conducting a 'truth encounter.'" Ibid., 12.

²²⁹"Anderson's entire approach to spiritual warfare is based on the authority of the believer over the devil. This is manifest particularly in his emphasis on 'binding and loosing.'" Ibid., 7.

²³⁰Ibid.

²³¹"The most obvious biblical refutation of the practice of verbally rebuking Satan is Jude 8-9." Ibid., 8.

²³²"Believers are indeed positionally seated with Him in heavenly places and are thus made partakers in His victory. They therefore can be confident that if they resist the devil, he will flee from them

aloud to Satan while emphasizing silent prayers to God.²³³ Miller also confronts Anderson's binding language and dismisses the logic that is used to justify its practice.²³⁴ Miller concludes his concerns on the area of vocal confrontation of Satan, stating that "Anderson's interpretation makes it primarily a ritualistic response to the tempter that feeds a magical world view (i.e., that the devil can be overcome with the correct verbal formula rather than the correct moral choices)."²³⁵ Miller's points on this subject are well justified scripturally. Anderson's overall methodology of prayer reflects a growth in more recent years and publications, but there remains an obvious presence of rebuking and binding language in his suggested prayers, a presence that should be reconsidered.²³⁶

Demonization of believers. Miller again accuses Anderson of advocating for the possession of believers, even though he had already given much attention to this issue

(James 4:7). . . . The practice of directly rebuking Satan is wrong regardless of who does it, save the Lord Himself." Miller, "The Bondage Maker (Part 2)," 7-9.

²³³"Anderson's argumentation leads to the astonishing conclusion that believers should be speaking to the devil aloud but should not exercise the same liberty when it comes to God—at least not when they are communicating sensitive information. This is implied by Anderson's statement, 'Your unspoken communion with God is your private sanctuary; Satan cannot eavesdrop on you.' It is further insinuated one paragraph down, where, in describing his response to a satanic attack, he recalls, 'In the sanctuary of my heart, out of Satan's earshot, I submitted to God by praying' . . . Then he addressed the devil out loud, and the attack was over. Such biblically insupportable teaching inhibits a practice that has great biblical precedent and for many believers is the most comfortable and natural way to pray. Why not simply trust that God will not allow Satan to take advantage of something uttered to Him in the confidence of prayer?" Ibid., 8.

²³⁴"To resist the devil by verbally 'binding' him rather than by simply resisting his temptation contradicts the very premillennial perspective that Anderson and his coauthor, Robert L. Saucy, hold, that it is not the will of God for Satan to be bound until the return of Christ (Rev. 20:1-3). According to classic premillennialism and other end-times views as well, God has ordained both that Satan should be free to move about tempting Christians and that Christians can make him go away only by standing firm in obedience to Christ. Thus, Satan's not being bound serves a divine purpose in the character development of Christians." Ibid., 10.

²³⁵"Scripture never instructs believers to speak to Satan, nor on the face of it does it seem a desirable or edifying practice. Instead of spiritual warfare being primarily a moral response to temptation that builds character." Ibid., 9-10.

²³⁶In the third edition of *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* (2004) there are six commands directed at Satan and one "binding" command. In the first edition of *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* (1990) there are four commands directed at Satan and a lengthier "binding" and "gagging" command.

in his previous article.²³⁷ Miller seems to overemphasize his point rather than provide new evidence or claims. It is still plain that Miller's definition of demonized means total control/possession and Anderson's definition is more directed towards influence/partial control.²³⁸

Miller again rightly affirms that "a strong case can be made that the subject of deliverance is always nonbelievers, both before and after the cross" revoking Anderson's assumption "that the subject of deliverance is often believers."²³⁹ He helpfully adds that "buried in Anderson's arguments is the assumption that there is no essential difference between dealing with demons afflicting unbelievers and those attacking believers."²⁴⁰ This point also illustrates Miller's critique of a "self-deliverance" approach since Christians should never need to deliver themselves from any spirit anyhow.²⁴¹ Miller is

²³⁷"When Anderson teaches that Christians can be controlled by demons, he places himself in a teaching lineage that can be traced from the turn-of-the-century Welsh revival writer Jessie Penn-Lewis to the late Dallas Seminary theologian Merrill F. Unger (*What Demons Can Do to Saints*, Moody Press, 1977) and Moody Bible Institute professor C. Fred Dickason (*Demon Possession and the Christian: A New Perspective*, Moody Press, 1987). In fact, Anderson calls Penn-Lewis's *War on the Saints* (The Overcomer Literature Trust, n.d.) a 'Christian classic,' and he approvingly quotes Dickason and Unger on the subject of Christian demonization and deliverance. Teaching this doctrine also puts Anderson in company with such controversial Pentecostal/charismatic teachers as Don Basham (*Can a Christian Have a Demon?* Whitaker Books, 1971), Frank and Ida Mae Hammond (*Pigs in the Parlor*, Impact Books, 1973), John Wimber (the recently deceased spiritual leader of the Vineyard 'Third Wave' charismatic movement), and Bob Larson (*In the Name of Satan*, Thomas Nelson, 1996)." Miller, "The Bondage Maker (Part 2)," 10-11.

²³⁸"The term demonized (Greek: daimonizomai; usually translated 'demon possessed' and used interchangeably in Scripture with the phrase, 'have a demon') can be succinctly defined as the condition of being indwelt and controlled by an evil spirit . . . Drawing on the epistles rather than the Gospels for his model, Anderson advocates a different approach. . . . Anderson inconsistently derives the concept of demonization from the Gospels (since it is not mentioned in the epistles) but then partially defines it by what the epistles do say about the devil's assault on believers." Ibid., 11-13.

²³⁹Ibid., 13.

²⁴⁰"As a direct consequence of his failure to distinguish between the two in his interpretation of Scripture, Anderson inappropriately merges them (incorporating elements of exorcism and traditional spiritual warfare) in his teaching and practice as well. The result of this error is that believers are left feeling vulnerable to invasion and control by evil spirits." Miller, "The Bondage Maker (Part 2)," 14.

²⁴¹"The 'disarming' of the rulers and authorities at the cross (Col. 2:15) does not mean that believers are now able to deliver themselves from demons, since, as a result of that disarming, they can't be possessed by demons in the first place! It rather refers to Christ's providing believers with a firm basis for victory in spiritual warfare, since he canceled the claims of the Law against them (v. 14) and thus rendered powerless 'him who holds the power of death' (Heb.2:14)." Ibid.

correct in this assertion and later in the book a recommendation will be made for Anderson to place a greater emphasis on differentiating between a believer's and non-believer's approach to spiritual warfare.

Anderson's works do, as a whole, fail to present a distinct evangelistic approach and gospel presentation towards nonbelievers but instead treat "all demonic assaults on humans as one spectrum."²⁴² By using the same approach towards believers and non-believers, Anderson inadvertently communicates the concept of demonic possession of believers.²⁴³ Miller explains it this way, writing "Anderson has found a way to deny that Christians can be demon possessed even while affirming that whatever happen to people whom our Bibles call 'demon possessed' can happen to Christians."²⁴⁴ Miller himself offers a helpful distinguishing of terms and approaches, presenting,

Biblically, demonization or demon possession = demonic control of a lost soul from within = no ability to resist. Thus, deliverance for the possessed can only come from intervention by an outside agent. On the other hand, spiritual warfare = demonic attack (influence) on a believer from without = ability to resist. Thus, lasting victory for the Christian can only come when he or she assumes responsibility to stand against the onslaught of the devil.²⁴⁵

If Anderson had used a similar, simplified, distinguishing of approaches and terms early in his writings he may have avoided the confusion and need for clarification and development of his theology over time.²⁴⁶ While emphasizing the confrontation of the demonic attacks towards Christians, Anderson expressed in 1990 that "I don't think

²⁴²"Instead of seeing that the saved and the unsaved are in two different categories, with their own distinctive spectrums of possible demonic influence, Anderson treats all demonic assaults on humans as one spectrum. Thus, according to Anderson, Christians who allow themselves to be influenced by the devil long enough could potentially wind up in a state like the Gadarene demoniac!" Ibid., 13.

²⁴³"Anderson assumes that the subject of deliverance is often believers, both before and after the cross. In fact, a strong case can be made that the subject of deliverance is always nonbelievers, both before and after the cross." Ibid.

²⁴⁴Ibid., 15.

²⁴⁵Miller, "The Bondage Maker (Part 2)," 15.

²⁴⁶"Anderson's interchangeable use of influence and control clouds the distinctions between them and allows him to smuggle in the controversial implications of control under cover of the noncontroversial implications of influence." Ibid.

there is such a thing as an exorcist or that there is a gift of exorcism.”²⁴⁷ Miller, however, recognizes that levels of demonic influence can progress, but denies the use of the term “control” and inhabitation language when addressing a believer.²⁴⁸

Miller also highlights Anderson’s inconsistent position towards the book of Acts. Anderson references a “sharp distinction between the Gospels and the Epistles” but then tries to write off the exorcisms within Acts as “a transition between the cross and the completion of the Scriptures,” ignoring its chronological overlap with the Epistles.²⁴⁹

Miller points out that the

problem with Anderson’s argument is that instances of demonization are also recorded in the Book of Acts, and, as in the Gospels, they are dealt with by interventions from God’s authorized agents—despite the fact that Christ’s death and resurrection had already occurred (Acts 5:16; 8:5-7; 16:18; 19:12). This contravening fact should have discouraged Anderson from advancing such an argument in the first place.²⁵⁰

Miller continues his counterargument towards Anderson stating that “the examples of demonic expulsion in Acts are clearly presented as signs of the power of God with not only the apostles but also ordinary disciples (Acts 8:5-7), not as an obsolete practice that the church was slow in giving up.”²⁵¹ Miller’s suggestion is to not write off the modern possibility of exorcisms, but to correctly place them as an evangelistic event that occurred from an external source. Miller rightly surmises that Anderson’s emphasis on the Epistles ignores the continuation of exorcisms in unbelievers yet mixes its elements into a self-deliverance version towards the discipleship of believers.

²⁴⁷Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker* (1990), 205.

²⁴⁸“If believers persist in sin, they definitely increase their vulnerability to Satan’s deception and oppression, but not to his inhabitation and control, because these are things that cannot happen to believers. The presence of the Holy Spirit within believers—which is not conditioned on their obedience—guarantees this (2 Cor. 6:14-18; cf. Matt. 12:43-45; 1 John 4:4; 5:18).” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 2),” 17.

²⁴⁹Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 208.

²⁵⁰Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 2),” 13.

²⁵¹Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 2),” 14.

Summary. Miller commends Anderson “for instructing believers that they are responsible for resisting the devil—no one else can do it for them.”²⁵² Miller also affirms that Anderson “is correct that Satan’s only power where believers are concerned is in deception, and they can overcome him with truth.”²⁵³ He maintains that Anderson’s main failure is in “framing this battle in the context of demonization and deliverance.”²⁵⁴ Miller seems to allow for the possibility of exorcism, while emphasizing the need for “critical distinction between the severe affliction of demonization (demon possession) that is always dealt with by deliverance, and the harassment of the devil experienced by every believer that is always dealt with by personal resistance.”²⁵⁵ He has proven that, especially in his early writings, Anderson “consistently blurs these two biblically distinct phenomena together until they become gradations in a continuum; that is, varying degrees of the same affliction.”²⁵⁶ Miller concludes by assessing Anderson’s “emphasis that Christians can and must resist the devil is a refreshing departure from typical deliverance teaching, the manner in which he teaches them to resist presents additional causes for concern.”²⁵⁷

²⁵²“What does differentiate him from the majority of deliverance teachers is not his ideas on demonization but rather his ideas on deliverance. The standard model for deliverance—what John Wimber termed the ‘power encounter’—is based on the Gospels and the Book of Acts, where Jesus and His disciples directly confronted the demons in possessed individuals and commanded them to depart. Drawing on the epistles rather than the Gospels for his model, Anderson advocates a different approach: ‘Since Satan’s primary weapon is the lie, your defense against him is the truth. Dealing with Satan is not a power encounter; it’s a truth encounter. When you expose Satan’s lie with God’s truth, his power is broken.’” Ibid., 12.

²⁵³Ibid.

²⁵⁴Ibid.

²⁵⁵“In the rare cases where it would occur today, it would simply and exclusively involve a Christian exercising the authority of Jesus’ name to cast a demon out of someone who is not a Christian and therefore is not capable of conducting a ‘truth encounter.’” Ibid., 12-13.

²⁵⁶Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 2),” 12-13.

²⁵⁷Ibid., 19.

The Bondage Maker (Part 3)

Second blessing theology and *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*. Miller contends that Anderson's "emphasis on his seven 'steps to freedom'" is so great that "they become a virtual 'second work of grace.'"²⁵⁸ Anderson does introduce the Steps as the "biblical steps to freedom" that will allow you to "experience His freedom."²⁵⁹ He concludes the presentation of his steps by saying, "once you have secured your freedom by going through these seven steps."²⁶⁰

Anderson does also qualify this seemingly absolutism by saying "even if your problems stem from a source other than those covered in these steps, you have nothing to lose by going through them" asserting that "the worst that can happen is that you will get right with God on these issues."²⁶¹ He also concludes with another qualification that "one victory does not constitute winning the war. . . . freedom must be maintained."

Miller believes that Anderson's language used to describe the "freedom" that these steps will lead a believer towards is

the same kind of language most evangelicals reserve for salvation, or as some Christian traditions use for a "second work of grace" (e.g., sanctification or the baptism in the Holy Spirit). Anderson even compares the effect in the spiritual realm that transpires when someone sincerely recites the printed prayers of the steps with that which transpires when one prays to accept Christ as Savior.²⁶²

Miller also criticizes Anderson's promotion of his own books in a way that cast "his ministry in a uniquely important role in the historical and contemporary church."²⁶³

²⁵⁸"Only as we walk through the seven steps can that freedom be realized." Miller, "The Bondage Maker (Part 3)," 1-3.

²⁵⁹"In this chapter I want to present seven specific steps to freedom you need to take in order to experience full freedom and victory that Christ purchased for you on the cross." Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker* (1990), 185-86.

²⁶⁰Ibid., 203.

²⁶¹Ibid., 187.

²⁶²Miller, "The Bondage Maker (Part 3)," 1.

²⁶³"In his various books, Anderson repeatedly advises his readers that they should also read several of his other books so that they will be fully equipped to walk effectively through the steps. He seldom recommends books by other authors. Thus, although Anderson is not given to making boastful

Anderson's statements concerning *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* are further clarified in light of changes found in the second edition of *The Bondage Breaker* where Anderson states,

There is only One who sets you free—Christ. The Steps to Freedom don't set you free; they are just a tool that can be used rightly or wrongly. What sets you free is your response to Christ in repentance and faith. The primary focus of the Steps is your relationship with God. Many people can and do go through the Steps on their own. The process is unique to each person, because the one who is praying is the one who needs the help, and that person is praying to the only One who can help him or her.²⁶⁴

Miller acknowledges that “forgiveness is certainly obtained instantaneously through repentant confession” but finds “presumptuous” to think that such an instant confession might “cancel all ground that the enemy gained.”²⁶⁵ Anderson counters this accusation in later writings through a greater emphasis on ongoing discipleship and “maintaining your freedom.”²⁶⁶

Ritualistic steps and prayer. Another concern of Miller's towards the Steps is that “prescribed prayers” and the idea that they can “cancel the workings of evil spirits is far more reminiscent of traditional magic doctrine . . . than anything found in the

claims about himself, the implications of what he does say about the steps to freedom and his own books certainly do cast his ministry in a uniquely important role in the historical and contemporary church. He would have us believe that he has recovered and explicitly outlined the steps to freedom that were only implicitly revealed in Scripture—steps necessary for Victorious Christian living.” Ibid., 3.

²⁶⁴Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 267.

²⁶⁵“While forgiveness is certainly obtained instantaneously through repentant confession, it is presumptuous to think that after having willfully indulged in sin over a long period of time, the believer can, through a verbal proclamation, instantly cancel all ground that the enemy gained (properly understood as external influence and not internal presence or control). According to Scripture, deliverance from the power of sin and restoration to a right relationship with God essentially take place in the realm of the heart (e.g., Prov. 4:23; Isa. 29:13; Joel 2:12-13; Matt. 15:19). Deliverance and restoration involve a transaction between the believer and God, not Satan (see, e.g., Ps. 51)—a turning of the will prompted by His Spirit (2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:2; John 16:8) that is deepened and confirmed over time (e.g., Phil. 2:12; 1 Pet. 5:8-10; 2 Pet. 1:3-11). Anderson's instantaneous verbal solution amounts to magical thinking, a defect in his approach that becomes even more apparent in step seven.” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 3),” 7.

²⁶⁶Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 242-52; Anderson, *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*, 21-23; Anderson and Miller, *Walking in Freedom: 21 Days to Securing Your Identity in Christ*.

Bible.”²⁶⁷ He argues that Anderson makes it “absolutely essential to confess and renounce past sins if one wants to be free of them.”²⁶⁸ Miller remarks of the irony that prayers and processes designed to set people free, “actually lead them a step further into superstition and fear.”²⁶⁹ Anderson also highlights prayers concerning demonic influence over spaces and objects, that Miller further feeds speculative fears.²⁷⁰ Miller describes the process of the Steps, summarizing Anderson’s view of them as a process of “renunciation and annunciation” that is “key to finding freedom.”²⁷¹ He points to Anderson’s concept of renunciation and argues that “actually lead them a step further into superstition and fear.”²⁷²

Renunciation. Miller believes the topic of renunciation is worthy of more attention. He sees Anderson’s understanding of renunciation as “central” and “absolutely essential” that Anderson would “rather be safe than sorry, even if it means renouncing

²⁶⁷“The idea that by reciting prescribed prayers believers can cancel the workings of evil spirits is far more reminiscent of traditional magic doctrine, which holds that humans can control the spirit world through correct verbal formulae and ritual, than anything found in the Bible.” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 3),” 9.

²⁶⁸“But even the traditions that do ritually practice renunciation do not hold that every past sin must be specifically named and renounced.” Ibid., 10.

²⁶⁹Ibid., 11.

²⁷⁰“In his prayer for ‘Living in a Non-Christian Environment,’ spirits may have seized the opening provided by nonbelievers to attach themselves to the very spaces and objects of the home. You may be their victim if you don’t use prayers like those Anderson suggests to cleanse the home of their influence.” Ibid., 11. An even greater emphasis is given towards spaces and objects in the second and third editions of *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*.

²⁷¹“The steps to freedom are usually completed in one appointment that takes from three to five hours. The process is typically facilitated by a ‘committed Christian’ (in the company of a ‘prayer partner’) who has gone through the steps himself (or herself) and has been trained by Anderson’s book *Helping Others Find Freedom in Christ* and/or advanced workshops provided at Freedom in Christ events. The leader walks the Christian seeking freedom through a series of personal inventories and prescribed prayers and declarations in which Satan’s lies are renounced and God’s truth is announced. Anderson considers such renunciation and annunciation key to finding freedom.” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 3),” 4.

²⁷²Ibid., 11.

sins one has not actually committed.”²⁷³ Miller points out that Anderson tries to legitimize this process in church history, but Miller repudiates it based on the absence of the practice in the evangelical churches today.²⁷⁴ Miller explains its absence today based on the fact that “it cannot be derived from Scripture alone.”²⁷⁵ Miller’s concern is that Anderson does not look at past sins as having a possible influence in the present, but as them definitely having an influence in the present.²⁷⁶ Miller is extremely concerned about Anderson’s practice of renunciation, for “much of the fear and superstition engendered by Anderson’s teachings is related to his central emphasis on renunciation.”²⁷⁷ The topic of Anderson’s usage of renunciation will be addressed in greater detail in the next chapter.

Anecdotal. Miller addresses Anderson’s use of stories as excessive and utilized to validate his writings and ministry.²⁷⁸ Anderson acknowledges this criticism,

²⁷³“Central to Anderson’s concept of renunciation is the idea that once one engages in a forbidden practice, Satan gains a foothold in one’s life that will never be broken until that sin is identified and rejected.” Ibid., 4.

²⁷⁴“For Anderson, it is absolutely essential to confess and renounce past sins if one wants to be free of them. He describes renunciation as a greater concept of repentance. ‘The problem is, ‘Oh, I’ve confessed it.’ Well, that deals with your relationship with God but it doesn’t deal with the entrapment of sin. It really doesn’t. Now, that’s not to put down confession, that’s an honest agreement before God, but all that’s in terms of reality isn’t there. You haven’t dealt with the entrapment of sin. Repentance is a broader concept. I renounce that, I accept this. And we found the necessity to do that with every lie we exposed.’ Anderson finds legitimation for this practice in church history: ‘The early church included in its public declaration of faith, ‘I renounce you, Satan, all your works and ways.’ The Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, and many other liturgical churches still require this renunciation as part of confirmation.’ For some reason it has disappeared from most evangelical churches.” Ibid., 9-10.

²⁷⁵“It is no mystery that most evangelical churches have not retained this rite, since—unlike baptism or communion—it cannot be derived from Scripture alone. But even the traditions that do ritually practice renunciation do not hold that every past sin must be specifically named and renounced.” Ibid., 10.

²⁷⁶“Rather than seeing a past involvement in occultism as a possible problem in the present because some of the beliefs or practices may be retained (e.g., an ongoing curiosity about horoscopes), Anderson sees it as a definite problem in the present. He insists that Satan gained a foothold in the individual’s life through that involvement that will not be released until the sin is specifically identified and renounced.” Ibid., 11.

²⁷⁷Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 3),” 13.

²⁷⁸“Anderson’s books are laden with testimonials of people who have applied his teachings and

but counters that he never strays from seeing and teaching Scripture is the “sole authority for faith and practice” but sees it helpful and instructive to share stories of the Lord’s work.²⁷⁹ Miller also picks out one of Anderson’s narratives concerning his own personal demonic experience, affirming that “many of us have had strange experiences that for a moment seemed to be supernatural manifestations of evil. But in the cold light of day, how many of us would print them in a book discussing what Christians might expect to encounter in spiritual warfare?”²⁸⁰ It is hard to know what Miller might mean by this, so one cannot speculate. A fair question for Miller would be if it is proper to relate true events in order to illustrate a teaching? If that is a proper practice, is his statement concerning Anderson’s experience insinuating that it was a false experience or that it did not serve an instructive purpose? Regardless of Miller’s motives in highlighting Anderson’s story, Anderson chose to remove it from his second edition of *The Bondage Breaker*.²⁸¹

found freedom in Christ. The reactions from his counselees and conference participants included in his books always conform to and confirm his theology and expectations. He clearly thinks that these testimonies go a long way toward validating his ministry.” Ibid., 3.

²⁷⁹“I am too anecdotal, was another criticism that I have heard. . . . My experience of growing in Christ and ministering with others has caused me to grow in my understanding of the Bible, but shouldn’t it? I look to the Bible for answers and I have always believed that God’s word is the sole authority for faith and practice. It seems like those who use the anecdotal argument have no anecdotal experiences to share themselves.” Anderson, *Rough Road*, 243.

²⁸⁰“Even in his own home, Anderson is apparently not safe from frightening demonic attacks. One morning when he was getting ready to “expose the strategies of Satan” in a chapel service, Anderson stepped out of the shower to notice “several strange symbols traced on the fogged-up mirror.” Suspicious that this was a diabolical attempt to dissuade him from delivering his chapel message, he went down to eat breakfast alone. “Suddenly I felt a slight pain on my hand that made me flinch. I looked down to see what appeared to be two little bite-marks on my hand. ‘Is that your best shot?’ I said aloud to the powers of darkness attacking me. ‘Do you think symbols on the mirror and a little bite are going keep me from giving my message in chapel today? Get out of here.’ The nuisance left, and my message in chapel went off without a hitch.” I think it would be fair to say that many of us have had strange experiences that for a moment seemed to be supernatural manifestations of evil. But in the cold light of day, how many of us would print them in a book discussing what Christians might expect to encounter in spiritual warfare?” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 3),” 12; Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker* (1990), 85-86.

²⁸¹Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 100-102.

Familiar spirits. Miller confronts Anderson’s belief in generational sins and familiar spirits. Miller ascertains that much of Anderson’s doctrine on this topic is experientially validated, for he holds that Exodus 20:4-5 is not referencing evil spirits, but circumstantial punishments onto the next generation. In a similar way Miller highlights how Jeremiah 32:19 and Ezekiel 18 communicate the continuation of punishment if parental sin is not repented of by children. He argues that “by confusing the punishment for sin with the sin itself, Anderson makes God the transmitter of sin from one generation to the next.”²⁸²

Interestingly, Anderson’s references to ancestral sin and spirits change across his writings. In *The Bondage Breaker* (1990) he references spiritual guardians and familiar spirits.²⁸³ In the 2000 edition of *The Bondage Breaker* Anderson uses the phrases “any demonic working that has been passed down to me from my family” and “satanic assignments” while issuing a command towards “every familiar spirit.”²⁸⁴ Also published in 2000, the presentation of step seven in *Christ Centered Therapy* omits the term “familiar spirit” in the prayer but includes the statement that “familiar spirits can be passed on from one generation to the next if not renounced and if your new spiritual heritage in Christ is not proclaimed.”²⁸⁵ In 2003, Anderson dedicates an entire chapter to ancestral sin but does not mention familiar or generational spirits at all; he only speaks to their influence and modeling effects, writing “we are not guilty because of our parent’s

²⁸²“This experiential ‘validation’ must be the true basis for Anderson’s doctrine, for it is difficult to imagine that he came to this belief from a serious study of the Scripture passages he quotes. One need only examine the wording of Exodus 20:4-5 to note its complete lack of reference to evil spirits. The natural interpretation is that God would visit circumstantial punishments (not evil spirits) on those who hate Him. In the same sense, just because Jeremiah said the Lord would repay the parents’ iniquities ‘into the bosom’ of their children, it does not follow that the parents’ areas of moral weakness would be passed on to their children. Rather, this phrase is simply an idiomatic way of saying that the punishment of the parents would be visited on the children (note the word ‘repay’), if the children do not repent of their parents’ sins.” Miller, “The Bondage Maker (Part 3),” 8.

²⁸³Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker* (1990), 202-3.

²⁸⁴Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 241-42.

²⁸⁵Anderson, Zuehlke, and Zuehlke, *Christ Centered Therapy*, 406-7.

sins. Yet because they sinned, we are vulnerable to what they have taught and modeled for us.”²⁸⁶

In his third edition of *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* (2004) Anderson also removes the use and concept of the term “familiar spirit” but still references the “sins of my ancestors that have been passed down through family lines.”²⁸⁷ He helpfully clarifies the responsibility for sin though, stating “the iniquities of one generation can adversely affect future ones unless those sins are renounced, and your new spiritual heritage in Christ is claimed. This cycle of abuse and all negative influences can be stopped through genuine repentance.”²⁸⁸

Miller does not write the fourth part to “The Bondage Maker” series by The Christian Research Institute, but the article is instead written by Bob and Gretchen Passantino. The focus of the article is from a professional counseling perspective, highlighting claims concerning satanic ritual abuse and dissociative disorders. Since one of the delimitations of this book is to not attempt to analyze Anderson’s works from a psychological or counseling methodology approach, this article is not presented or considered. There are some non-counseling elements within this article directed against Anderson, but they are mere generalizations and repeated claims that Miller already presented sufficiently.

The Bondage Maker? Summarized

Miller’s articles for the Christian Research Institute constitute the most heavily researched and academic critique of Neil Anderson. It is surprising and concerning to hear Anderson’s relation as to how the events transpired between CRI and Anderson, for it seems that several of CRI’s concerns might have been relieved or lessened through

²⁸⁶Anderson, *Discipleship Counseling*, 328-44.

²⁸⁷Anderson, *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*, 20.

²⁸⁸Ibid.

private dialogue. Despite the manner in which the interactions took place, Miller's published articles speak for themselves.

Miller is extremely thorough in the issues he raises concerning Anderson's writings. Some of his points are well proven, established, and still need to be addressed by Anderson. Many of Miller's concerns have been addressed in Anderson's second editions of his books, as Anderson attests that these more recent writings represent an improvement in his communication and a maturation of his theology. Still some of Miller's claims seem to be over exaggerated for their impact or in their content. I believe that some of Miller's accusations would have become less significant if more attention and credit was given to *The Common Made Holy* in particular. CRI continues to hold to a position statement that still references Anderson as a "bondage maker" and gives no reference of Anderson's writings over the past sixteen years (since 1997). Only seven of Anderson's now over sixty works are footnoted in CRI's articles. Most of those referenced have been republished as a new edition since CRI's article series. Given CRI's mission to equip believers with "carefully-researched information," they should either remove their content or invest some time in researching and updating their categorization of Anderson and his ongoing ministry work.²⁸⁹ The next chapter will continue the critiques of this chapter with greater attention given to those issues in Anderson's approach that need greater clarity or correction.

²⁸⁹"CRI's public mission statement is 'To provide Christians worldwide with carefully researched information and well-reasoned answers that encourage them in their faith and equip them to intelligently represent it to people influenced by ideas and teachings that assault or undermine orthodox, biblical Christianity.'" Christian Research Institute, accessed January 4 2014, <http://www.equip.org/about/our-mission>.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF NEIL T. ANDERSON'S UNDERSTANDING OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP

Issues Needing Resolution

Although some of Anderson's writings have already been used to clarify his positions in response to critiques in the previous chapters, there are still several issues that need resolution. As this book has shown, Anderson's approach to spiritual warfare is generally orthodox in respect to Scripture, early church history, the Lausanne Movement, and a contemporary understanding of spiritual warfare. In Powlison's critique, one sees some misunderstandings of Anderson's position on spiritual warfare, but discovers that Anderson's actual understanding of spiritual warfare appears to be much closer to Powlison's own "classic view" than Powlison realizes. Future writings by Powlison would be greatly assisted by including quotes, specific references, and interactions with Anderson's writings and positions.

Miller's critique of Anderson demonstrates that he has some areas of significant misunderstanding. Most of these conflicts would have been clarified and resolved through a greater use of *The Common Made Holy* and less overstatement by Miller in making his argument. Despite these concerns, Miller's critiques present many of the issues that need further clarification by Anderson. This chapter's main approach will be to overview Anderson's views on some remaining issues. In representing Anderson's views, a greater emphasis will be placed on *The Daily Discipler*, one of his

more recent works which was written as “a practical, systematic theology book.”¹ This work will help demonstrate which specific components of Anderson’s understanding of spiritual warfare need clarification or are unorthodox. This chapter will also analyze and determine Anderson’s orthopraxy in his approach to spiritual warfare. His orthopraxis will be considered specifically in the areas of evangelism, discipleship, Scripture and prayer, and spiritual warfare.

Anderson’s Understanding of Evangelism and the Gospel

This section will evaluate Anderson’s understanding of evangelism and the gospel. I will specifically address his evangelistic appeal and gospel presentations, his understanding of repentance and faith, his concept of the “whole Gospel,” as well as his apparent advocacy towards “carnal Christianity.”

Scripture offers a primary focus on the task of sharing the good news of Jesus.² In emphasizing evangelism, Paul demonstrates an understanding that “there is no doubt that Christians are ‘in a state of war’ on account of the activities and the influence of Satan, God’s enemy (Eph 6:10-18).”³ Does Anderson demonstrate a biblical focus on evangelism in his approach to spiritual warfare? No.

¹Neil T. Anderson, *The Daily Discipler* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2005), 13.

²“The Twelve were called by Jesus to become ‘fishers of people’ (Mk 1:17; cf. Mt 10:1), and they were sent out to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God and to heal the sick and drive out demons (Mt 10:5-8; cf. Lk 9:1-5). After Jesus’ resurrection, they were commissioned to ‘go and make disciples of all nations’ (Mt 28:19; cf. Acts 1:8).” Eckhard Schnabel, *Paul the Missionary: Realities, Strategies and Methods* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008), 28. Jesus’ call to them was not for self-improvement or conflict resolution, but for salvation and multiplication for His glory.

³“Again, when we consider Paul’s paradigm and principles concerning missionary work and the truth of the gospel, there is no doubt that Christians are ‘in a state of war’ on account of the activities and the influence of Satan, God’s enemy (Eph 6:10-18). And there is no doubt that missionaries and pastors encounter the reality of the spirit world as they proclaim the news of Jesus Christ and seek to help new converts to grasp and apply the consequences of the gospel for their lives. Whatever territorial ‘responsibilities’ some demons might have- Scripture is far from giving a clear and unified teaching on these matters—it appears to be the Western technocratic spirit that transforms prayer against the attacks of Satan into a strategic tool that is expected to make missionary work more effective.” *Ibid.*, 457. Note, although the quote includes a reference to the engagement of territorial spirits, Anderson never advocates for any differing evangelistic strategy based on the concept of territorial spirits. Anderson does believe

Spiritual Warfare and Evangelism

Several times in the Old Testament, and many times in the New Testament, there are references to conversion as a process of turning away from demonically connected idol worship.⁴ Jesus' example in confronting Satan's temptations further demonstrates the seriousness of false worship, for "to worship other gods is to worship satanic demons; to bow down to Satan is to treat him as divine."⁵ When Paul shares of his own conversion in an evangelistic encounter with King Agrippa, Paul "deems this turning from idols as tantamount to being released from the power of Satan (Acts 26:18)."⁶ Even John demonstrates this understanding in Revelation when he

portrays the finally impenitent and rebellious as those who, even after the initial manifestations of God's judgment, refuse to turn from their idolatry: They "did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood-idols that cannot see or hear or walk" (Rev 9:20).⁷

When evangelism occurs across cultural barriers or boundaries, missiological considerations of how to describe and engage non-Christian religions are important;

there is some scriptural indication of hierarchies and territorial assignments of the demonic, but does not see any scriptural support for differing evangelistic strategies or techniques based on that understanding.

⁴"Only rarely do Old Testament texts connect the worship of other gods with demons, but the rarity should not lead us to overlook the fact that the connection was made, for it was certainly picked up and amplified theologically in the New Testament. Thus, for example, it is an assumption made by Paul, doubtless with what he regarded as scriptural legitimacy, that flirting with idols could lead to participation with demons. (1 Cor 10:18-21). . . . In what was probably his earliest letter Paul recalls how the Thessalonians 'turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God' (1 Thess 1:9)." Wright references Brian Wintle's claim that "the clear implication being that their former worship of idols had been the worship of dead and false gods." Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006), 146.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Jesus' response to Satan's temptation to bow down was "a text drawn from Deuteronomy: 'Fear the Lord your God, serve him only'—a text immediately followed by the words, 'Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you' (Deut 6:13-14; Mt 4:10). . . . Matthew sees Jesus the man and the Messiah standing in the identity and place of Israel, and being tested like them in the wilderness, it was a serious question whether, like them, he could also be sucked into the idolatry of the nations by worshiping the Satan who stood behind the gods of the nations. The reversible nexus is clear: to worship other gods is to worship satanic demons; to bow down to Satan is to treat him as divine, which he is not, and thereby to be unfaithful to the living God of Israel." Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

understanding what practices are cultural and what are demonic.⁸ In evangelistic encounters with non-Christian religious belief, one must understand that “Idolatry is wasted effort and dashed hopes.”⁹ Scripture consistently teaches that “the struggle with idolatry as a battle between YHWH, the living God, and all those forces that oppose him” and that “only the gospel exposes the cancer of idolatry.”¹⁰ Spiritual warfare must be seen not as,

a matter of triumphalism pervaded by a horrid spirit of gloating superiority, in which we become obsessed with “winning a victory.” Rather it is a matter of deep compassion for those oppressed by the forces of evil and idolatry-with their attendant social, economic, political, spiritual, and personal effects. We battle with idolatry because, like the God whose mission we thereby share, we know that in doing so we seek the best interests of those we are called to serve in his name. We combat idolatry not only to glorify God but also to bless humanity. Spiritual warfare, like all forms of biblical mission, is to be motivated by and exercised with profound love, humility, and compassion-as modeled in Jesus himself.¹¹

Does Anderson confront idolatry through evangelism? Does Anderson engage in and see spiritual warfare as an evangelistic and missiological task? No.

Anderson and Evangelism

Anderson’s approach to spiritual warfare is rarely evangelistic. References to evangelism are sometimes made, but evangelism itself is seldom attempted.¹²

⁸“Missiologically, these reflections clearly bear on the pressing question of the contemporary plurality of religions. What should be our biblically grounded response to the gods of the nations in our world today? At the very least it is clear that we cannot adopt simplistic categorizations, such as the view that all non-Christian religion is entirely demonic or that it is all purely cultural. The Bible’s own subtle analysis of ‘other gods’ makes such binary opposites completely unsatisfactory.” Wright, *The Mission of God*, 163.

⁹“What makes them into gods is that we insist on believing the spurious promises they make (or that we implicitly attribute to them). We keep on paying the enormous sacrifices they demand for our loyalty. And we keep on hoping against hope that they will not let us down. But of course, they always do in the end.” Ibid., 176.

¹⁰Ibid., 177-79.

¹¹Ibid., 179.

¹²Anderson emphasizes how he derives his “methodology for dealing with the kingdom of darkness primarily from the Epistles rather than the Gospels and the book of Acts” because “our approach to evangelism changed after Pentecost and so has our approach to resolving spiritual conflicts.” Neil T. Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2000), 255-56.

Anderson's understanding of spiritual warfare is almost exclusively portrayed as an issue of Christian believers resolving personal spiritual conflicts. The "gospel" message is referenced repeatedly in his writings, but it is almost always shared with a discipleship focus in order to ensure a foundational understanding essential for victorious and free Christian living, rather than an evangelistic appeal directed at the lost.

In my research of Anderson's over sixty works, I could only find two evangelistic gospel presentations: in his third edition of *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* and a fourth of the way into his theology work, *The Daily Discipler*. In *The Daily Discipler*, a devotional-style practical theology work, it is not until day fifty-nine that the Gospel is shared in the context of "The Sinner's Prayer."¹³ Although its content is fairly orthodox, it does fail to include a confession of belief in the resurrection as part of the prayer, but mentions the resurrection both before and after the prayer as an essential component of the gospel. In the third edition of *The Steps to Freedom in Christ (2004)*, Anderson does include his most comprehensive presentation of the gospel. Although present in this separate version of the Steps, presentations of the Steps in recent works such as *Liberating Prayer (2012)* do not include a gospel presentation.¹⁴

When asked about his purposes of the new introduction to *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*, Anderson shares that

a lot of people use the Steps on their own. I wanted to clarify the gospel up front and give them a chance to make a decision for Christ if they haven't. I usually don't go over that when I lead people through the Steps. Also, I always give them their copy when I am done. Many will go through it again on their own. The intro is not intended to give them the assurance, but an opportunity to make that decision if they haven't before. For some it clarifies the gospel, but I have discovered that assurance comes after repentance.¹⁵

¹³Anderson, *The Daily Discipler*, 138. This should be included at the beginning of the book.

¹⁴Neil T. Anderson, *Liberating Prayer: Finding Freedom by Connecting with God* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2012).

¹⁵Neil T. Anderson, interview by author, January 4, 2014.

In Anderson's *Discipleship Counseling*, a work that focuses on how to use the Steps, Anderson described what to do if a non-Christian comes to a counseling appointment:

Sometimes non-Christians who have been searching come to an appointment with their hearts so warm and hungry that they gladly choose to believe the truth and invite Christ into their lives. It is not necessary to belabor this portion of the session or require that they word their testimonies exactly the way you would. These are wounded people who are seeking to be made whole in Christ. As they go through the Steps, they will affirm their relationship with Christ in many more ways. Assurance of salvation comes as they work through the Steps.¹⁶

Anderson's introductory statements on the gospel in his third edition of the Steps are to be applauded, but its inclusion and emphasis need to be extended into all of his works and presentations of the Steps. There is a noticeable assumption in all of Anderson's works that the reader is a Christian. This assumption is one of the most significant flaws with his approach to spiritual warfare. His gospel approach is more of an assumed that if they are not a believer going into his books or the Steps, they will hopefully become one as they encounter God's truths. This assumed and *laissez faire* approach to evangelism is not a biblical or historical approach to Christian evangelism.

Little Heaven, Little Hell

Although Jesus gives much attention to the eternal separation of non-believers from himself in a literal hell, Anderson seldom references hell at all. Anderson's descriptions of punishment for unbelief again seem more targeted towards believers who have not yet been "set free" and are currently living "in bondage." In my research on his works, I struggled to find references and descriptions and warnings concerning a literal hell.¹⁷ Where Satan's judgment and defeat are described, hell is more referenced as a

¹⁶Neil T. Anderson, *Discipleship Counseling* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2003), 215-16.

¹⁷In one of his two gospel presentations, Anderson references hell, stating, "In our sinful state, we can only throw ourselves upon the mercy of God. If by the grace of God we receive mercy in this lifetime, we shall not have to face what we justly deserve in eternity. If God were to give us what we deserve, we would all reap eternal damnation." Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 138.

place for Satan and his demons than for non-believers.¹⁸ This lack of attention towards a biblical understanding of hell is concerning.

This lack of eternal focus is also reflected in his understanding of salvation. Concerning the “whole gospel,” Anderson rightly asserts that eternal life “is not something we get when we physically die. We are eternally and spiritually alive the moment we are born again.”¹⁹ Although this particular statement is a helpful and biblical perspective, Anderson rarely focuses on eternal life in heaven. Anderson consistently places greater emphasis on spiritual life now, but gives little time and attention towards presenting and developing a biblical theology of heaven and eternity with Christ.

This lack of presentation on heaven and hell has significant implications in both evangelism and discipleship. It directs the attention of both believers and non-believers towards the here and now, and makes the gospel more self-focused on an improved earthly life (“set free”), than on a biblical balanced focus towards eternal death in hell or eternal life in heaven. Such an increased eternal focus would overflow into a more God-focused and biblical gospel sharing towards others.

Lack of Evangelistic Emphasis

Anderson’s absence of evangelistic emphasis is concerning because “Evangelism is more than a strategy, technique, or program. Instead it is taking the gospel of light into the kingdom of darkness.”²⁰ In order to justify this absence of evangelism, one could attempt to argue that Anderson’s works are discipleship focused,

¹⁸“Jesus asserted that ‘the eternal fire’ had been prepared for ‘the devil and his angels’ (Matt. 25:41) . . . According to John’s version ‘the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever’ (Rev. 20:10). His doom will be to share the eternal punishment of those whom he deceived (see Rev. 20:12-14).” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 438-39.

¹⁹Ibid., 42-43.

²⁰Chuck Lawless, “Spiritual Warfare: Reaching People by Taking on the Enemy,” in *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook: Expert Advice on Reaching Others for Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008), 107.

but such a defense would fail to see the inseparable nature of evangelism and discipleship. The call to God's primary commands to love God and love others (Mark 12:30-31) binds evangelism and discipleship together. Some of God's characteristics such as His love, goodness, justice, and wrath can only be seen with balanced biblical attention given towards eternity in heaven or hell.²¹ Anderson's helpful focus on Christian identity that transforms one's ethical and moral behavior through right belief is to be encouraged.²² Anderson's approach to recovery and freedom cannot stop short in seeing that "the purpose of that ethical visibility is ultimately to bring the nations to glorify God."²³ This absence of evangelistic action is especially significant because a true understanding of and engagement in spiritual warfare can never be separated from a balanced presentation of the gospel through a biblical approach to evangelism.²⁴ God does not want to just set his captives free for their sakes alone, he designed such freedom for the ultimate honor of His name as His people not only live more holy lives, but reach active rebels with the freeing and life-giving message of the gospel.

²¹"Comparing Paul's theological argument to Christians in Romans 1 with his evangelistic preaching to pagans recorded in Acts, there is a marked difference of tone, even though there is certainly no clash of fundamental conviction. Romans, written to Christians, highlights the wrath of God. Acts, referring to speeches made to pagans, highlights God's kindness, providence, and patience. Both, however insist on God's judgment." Wright, *The Mission of God*, 182.

²²"In communicating the gospel to an addict, we are not discussing self-help or a twelve-step program. Individuals must be convinced of this fundamental truth: Only God can save me. . . . God desires us to be free so that we may enjoy his Son and capture the moments of life to honor him. The following biblical model is based on the realization that when one is in Christ, he is in fact free. . . . What can break the bond of self-imprisoned addiction? Simply put, the gospel and only the gospel. Jesus did not go to the cross so that we could be in a constant state of 'recovery.' . . . He died that the addict may be recovered." Brent Crowe, "Addicts," in *The Complete Evangelism Guidebook*, 297.

²³"Referencing 1 Peter 2:9-12, 'The flow of logic from verses 9-10 through verses 11-12 (which is sadly sometimes broken up by paragraph divisions), thus runs as follows: If this is what you are (your identity, through election, redemption, and covenant) then this is how you must live (your ethics) and this is what will result among the nations (your mission) The message is plain. Christians are to be as visible to the nations by the quality of their moral lives as Israel had been intended to be (but failed).'" Wright, *The Mission of God*, 389.

²⁴"In short, as God's covenant people, Christians are meant to be: a people who are light to the world by their good lives (1 Pet), a people who are learning obedience and teaching it to the nations (Mt), a people who love one another in order to show who they belong to (Jn). It would be hard to find a more concise articulation of the integration of Christian ethics and Christian mission." *Ibid.*, 392.

Repentance and Faith

Although Anderson's message is not evangelistic, his continual focus on repentance and faith highlights essential relational components of an orthodox understanding of the gospel.²⁵ Anderson argues that such a focus on repentance and faith is essential not only in justification, but also in sanctification.²⁶ His approach often skips over and assumes the justification component, thus placing an almost exclusive emphasis on sanctification.²⁷ This imbalanced emphasis on sanctification over and above justification results in an imbalanced presentation of the seriousness of sin as a rebellion against God. Mankind's wickedness and God's wrath and inevitable judgment are not frequently highlighted or emphasized, which leads to a less significant appreciation of and attention towards the magnitude and scope of God's mercy and grace in His saving work. Anderson defines repentance as "changing what you believe" and explains that the confession of sin clears "the way for the fruitful expression of righteousness in your daily life."²⁸ Anderson's understanding of repentance also seems to be more self-focused in its described effects.

²⁵"We see these two vantage points positioned together in Romans 8:22-23. In this passage we see that the gospel is the fulfillment of the longing of all fallen creation but also (and chiefly) the fulfillment of the longing of mankind, the only creature made in God's image." Matt Chandler, *The Explicit Gospel* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 17.

²⁶He further explains that "we are saved and sanctified by faith" and that "repentance is impossible without Christ, for He is the one who grants repentance (2 Tim. 2:24,25)." Anderson believes that "we cannot require one to repent in order to be saved because they need the life of Christ in order to repent. However, repentance, which literally means a change of mind, is happening the moment one chooses to believe." Neil T. Anderson, interview by author, December 3, 2011.

²⁷"In Romans 1-4 . . . it is God to whom they are accountable . . . their problem is that they rebelled against God . . . God's solution to humanity's sin the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ . . . they themselves can be included in this salvation. We might summarize these four major points like this: God, man, Christ, and response. . . . The necessary response: repentance and faith, evidenced by the act of baptism. . . . forgiveness of sins emphasis" in Acts 3:18-19, Acts 10:39-43, Acts 13:38-39. . . . first the bad news: God is your Judge, and you have sinned against him. And then the gospel: but Jesus has died so that sinners may be forgiven of their sins if they will repent and believe in him." Greg Gilbert, *What is the Gospel?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 28-36.

²⁸Anderson, interview, December 3, 2011; Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 98.

Renunciation, Confession, and Repentance

When asked to define and relate renunciation, confession, and repentance, Anderson describes them as negative (renunciation) and positive (confession) proclamations that result in life change (repentance).²⁹ Anderson holds that as conversion occurs, new believers must enter into the church with “some form of repentance” and renouncing of Satan and his ways. Without such repentance, Anderson holds that believers will have unfruitful lives characterized by bondage to sin. He sees this message of repentance biblically described as necessary in both salvation and sanctification.³⁰

Although Anderson finds that many of his writings have met these goals, he believes that there is still a need for laying out “a comprehensive means by which one can repent.” Anderson’s interest in a repentance model shows up in *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* but is something that he sees occurring in the early church. He longs for additional research and writings that look into how believers can do repentance “today in a better way.”³¹ Anderson believes that *Discipleship Counseling* is his “biggest

²⁹When asked, “How would you define renunciation, confession, and repentance? What are their relationships with one another?” Anderson replies “Therefore having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways (2 Cor. 4:1,2). Renunciation [literally: to tell from] is like saying ‘no’ in a definitive way; to disown or disavow. It can be for past deeds as above, or the forbidding of things disowned. Confession means to agree with God. The confessional person is the one who walks in the light as He is in the light. It is saying ‘I did it.’ Repentance means a change of mind or purpose for the better. These are overlapping concepts, but repentance implies a definitive change in view and behavior. People can own up to their past by renouncing and confessing, but not necessarily change. Repentance says, ‘I used to believe this and therefore lived that way. Now I believe this and therefore I live a different way.’ If they profess to believe differently and don’t live differently they just may be visited by John the Baptist, i.e. ‘Go back and bring forth fruit in keeping with your repentance.’” Neil T. Anderson, interview by author, January 4, 2014; “Confession is the first step to repentance, but it is possible for people to admit they are wrong and never change. ‘Repentance’ literally means ‘a change of mind resulting in a change of living.’ . . . If we have truly repented, we have had a change of mind and attitude and therefore no longer live the way we did before. On the other hand, we have not really repented unless we have changed the way we live. . . . Repentance is always a turning away from sin toward God.” Referencing Matthew 3:7-8, Anderson points out that “John insisted that repentance be accompanied by the fruit of repentance: a changed life.” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 64.

³⁰Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

³¹Ibid.

contribution to the Church, because it has the potential to move the church away from secular counseling to genuine repentance and the ministry of reconciliation.”³²

Anderson distinguishes remorse from conviction by explaining that biblical conviction is a Spirit-produced sorrow that “draws you to confront Christ and confess your wrong” in repentance.³³ Hermas holds a similar stance on repentance with a more discipleship focus, writing that instead of fearing the devil, the “angel of repentance” reminds believers that he was sent to be with those “who repent with all your heart, and to make you strong in faith.”³⁴ In the midst of repentance, there is not only strengthening, but there is healing of “former sins” by Christ.³⁵ Anderson advocates, based on Romans 6:1-13 that “personal revival and victory come when we clean out the temple through genuine repentance, choosing to consecrate ourselves and our bodies to God as instruments of righteousness.”³⁶ Anderson’s understanding of renunciation, confession, and repentance are mostly orthodox, but he fails in his orthopraxy by not presenting them more clearly and consistently with a focus on conversion.³⁷

³²Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

³³“Confession is the first step in repentance, but that by itself will not resolve the entrapment of sin. We need to renounce every use of our bodies as instruments of unrighteousness and then submit our bodies to God as living sacrifices.” Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 158, 303.

³⁴Hermas, *The Pastor of Hermas (ANF 2:20)*, accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf02.ii.iii.html>.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 302. Also evidenced in Acts 20:21, 26:20, 2 Chr 7:14, 2 Tim 2:25-26 (God grants repentance).

³⁷“The word ‘confess’ (*homolegeo*) literally means ‘to speak the same thing’ (*homos*, same, and *lego*, to speak) or ‘to agree with.’ It is the opposite of denial, whether spoken or unspoken. Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 358; “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness’ (1 John 1:9). As believers, our sins are not forgiven because we confess them; our sins are forgiven because ‘the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin’ (v.7). The Cross is the only moral ground on which God can forgive us. Conversely, as believers, we are not unforgiven if we fail to confess all known sin. He is faithful to forgive us because He has promised to do so, and He is just because His Son died for our sins. . . . James, too, urges us to confess our sins one to another (see Jas. 5:16) in order to be healed. Confession brings healing to the soul and provides a breakthrough to community so that we can have fellowship with God and one another.” Ibid., 62-63.

“The Whole Gospel”

Anderson likes to characterize many gospel presentations as incomplete, referring to his own approach as “the whole gospel.” He believes most evangelistic approaches merely offer a forgiveness of sins, while his approach includes an “offer of life” and the defeat of Satan as the other essential components.³⁸ Anderson reminds his readers to “always keep in mind that eternal life is not something that we get when we physically die. We are eternally and spiritually alive the moment we are born again.”³⁹

He particularly emphasizes the defeat of Satan as “the other third of the gospel is what most of the world is waiting to hear.”⁴⁰ Anderson explains that understanding the “whole gospel” with Satan’s defeat “changed how I taught evangelism, how I did ministry, and most important it changed how I perceived myself and other believers. I was about to discover who I really am.”⁴¹ Is Anderson’s understanding of “the whole gospel” that novel and unique? No. Is his gospel understanding orthodox? Yes.

Greg Gilbert emphasizes that the gospel must focus on Christ’s death and resurrection and the human response seen in repentance from sin and faith in Christ.⁴²

³⁸“Even if you knew that the gospel included forgiveness and new life in Christ, you are still a third short of the whole gospel. . . . Jesus referred to Satan as the ruler of this world (John 16:11), and said that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one (1 John 5:19). So what did Jesus come to do? ‘The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil’ (1 John 3:8 ESV).” Neil T. Anderson, *Rough Road: A Memoir* (Grand Rapids: Monarch Books, 2012), 117.

³⁹Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 43.

⁴⁰“Many western Christians are not aware that the dominant religion of the world is spiritism. When I travel to Third World countries the disarming of Satan is the ‘good news’ that they are waiting to hear. (Colossians 2:13-15 ESV).” Anderson, *Rough Road*, 117.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²“If we say merely that God is redeeming a people and remaking the world, but do not say *how he is doing so* (through the death and resurrection of Jesus) and *how a person can be included in that redemption* (through repentance from sin and faith in Jesus), then we have not proclaimed the good news. We have simply told the narrative of the Bible in broad outline and left sinners with their faces pressed against the window, looking in.” Gilbert, *What is the Gospel?*, 107.

Gilbert also highlights progressive life changes as an evidence of salvation.⁴³ R. C. Sproul mentions that Christ's atonement sets Christians free "from the dominion of sin and Satan, and to make us God's children and friends."⁴⁴ Mark Dever, in sharing his gospel understanding, proclaims both repentance and faith as responses and forgiveness and eternal life as a relationship gifts from God.⁴⁵ John Piper highlights Christian identity through the imputed righteousness of God towards "imperfect saints" as important in both salvation and sanctification.⁴⁶

In light of both the above comments and previous disclosures throughout the book, Anderson's understanding of the gospel is orthodox, but is not as novel as he might imply. Although he is correct in asserting that many western approaches do not emphasize Satan's defeat as one of the primary characteristics of the gospel message, Anderson cannot biblically, historically, and theologically support the claim that the

⁴³"When a person genuinely repents and believes in Christ, the Bible says that he is given new spiritual life. . . . When that happens, our life changes- not immediately, not quickly, not even necessarily steadily. But it does change. We begin to bear fruit." Gilbert, *What is the Gospel?*, 82.

⁴⁴"God declares us just, remits our sins, and adopts us as children, by his grace alone, and through faith alone, because of Christ alone, while we are still sinners (Rom 4:5). We deny that believers must be inherently righteous by virtue of their cooperation with God's life-transforming grace before God will declare them justified in Christ. We are justified while we are still sinners." R. C. Sproul, *Getting the Gospel Right: The Tie That Binds Evangelicals Together* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 187, 192.

⁴⁵"The good news is that the one and only God, who is holy, made us in his image to know him. But we sinned and cut ourselves off from him. In his great love, God became a man in Jesus, lived a perfect life, and died on the cross, thus fulfilling the law himself and taking on himself the punishment for the sins of all those who would ever turn and trust in him. He rose again from the dead, showing that God accepted Christ's sacrifice and that God's wrath against us had been exhausted. He now calls us to repent of our sins and to trust in Christ alone for our forgiveness. If we repent of our sins and trust in Christ, we are born again into new life, an eternal life with God." Mark Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 43.

⁴⁶"In the New Testament justification does involve a positive imputation of divine righteousness to believers, and this righteousness does not 'consist of faith,' but is received by faith. . . . God's imputed righteousness, and our right standing with God, over against our sin (Romans 6:7) is the clear and distinct and necessary ground for sanctification-our liberation from sin (v.6), 'no longer enslaved to sin. . . . The Son of God became flesh so that the 'condemnation' of sin might be on him (who had no sin)." John Piper, *Counted Righteous in Christ: Should We Abandon the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2002), 51, 53, 77-79. Piper's use of "imperfect saints" would be a helpful terminology to be used to communicate both the ongoing struggle with sin and the imputed righteousness of God as saints.

“primary evangelistic appeal of the early church was to offer freedom from spiritual bondage, and being able to help was a test of orthodoxy.”⁴⁷

Carnal Christians

In *Victory Over the Darkness*, Anderson uses the term “carnal Christians” to describe a category of believers who “are not able to receive the solid food of God’s Word” because of “unresolved conflicts in their lives.”⁴⁸ He explains that these carnal Christians do not “know who they are in Christ, nor do they understand what it means to be a child of God.”⁴⁹ Accordingly, he holds that these Christians “are Christians, but they are not growing and bearing fruit.”⁵⁰ Anderson continues this theme, arguing from First Corinthians 2:14-3:3 for three categories of people: the natural person, the spiritual person, and the fleshly person.⁵¹ Does Anderson advocate for and believe in “carnal Christianity”? Yes. Is there such a thing as a “carnal Christian”? No.

Anderson’s claims in *Victory over the Darkness* are problematic, not because of the categories of “natural” (non-believer) or “spiritual” (believer), but because he advocates for a “fleshly” category of Christians that demonstrate no spiritual growth or fruit, whose life looks and sounds like a non-believers.⁵² Anderson’s claims are troubling and at odds with other places in his writings where he clearly delineates that there are

⁴⁷Anderson, *Rough Road*, 186.

⁴⁸Neil T. Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2000), 16.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid., 20.

⁵¹Ibid., 89-106.

⁵²“Notice that the spirit of the fleshly person is identical to that of the spiritual person. The fleshly person is a Christian, spiritually alive in Christ and declared righteous by God; but that is where the similarity ends. Instead of being directed by the Spirit, this believing man chooses to follow the impulses of his flesh. As a result, his mind is occupied by carnal thoughts and his emotions are plagued by negative feelings. Although he is free to choose to walk after the Spirit, he continues to involve himself in sinful activity by willfully walking after the flesh. . . . He often exhibits the same troubling physical symptoms experienced by the natural person because he is not operation in the manner God created him to operate.” Ibid., 97.

only two categories of people, “sinners” and “saints.”⁵³ He rightly explains that believers still struggle with sin, like Paul, as both an external attack from Satan and the world and as an internal sin struggle.⁵⁴ Anderson is quick to both assume and reassure his readers of their identity as Christians, but does not encourage them to “Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith” (2 Cor 13:5). Are Anderson’s statements on “carnal Christians” that concerning and serious? Yes.

In 1918 Lewis Sperry Chafer wrote *He that is Spiritual*, describing how the

“carnal” Christian is also characterized by a “walk” that is on the same plane as that of the “natural” man. “Are ye not carnal, and walk as men” (cf. Second Corinthians 10:2-5). The objectives and affections are centered in the same unspiritual sphere as that of the “natural” man.⁵⁵

Chafer advocates, like Anderson, for two classes of Christians. Chafer describes the change from “carnal” to “spiritual” as “a distinct form of salvation.”⁵⁶ He clarifies this statement, arguing that “Sinners are not saved until they trust the Saviour, and saints are not victorious until they trust the Deliverer. God has made this possible through the cross of His Son. Salvation from the power of sin must be claimed by faith.”⁵⁷ Many of Anderson’s statements are strikingly similar to Chafer’s claims concerning the categories of “carnal” or “fleshly” people.

⁵³“Paul knows what is right and wants to do what is right, but for some reason he cannot (see Rom. 7:15-16). Paul isn’t the only player in this battle, however. There is sin living inside him (see v.17). . . . Evil is right there with him (see Rom. 7:21), but he does not consider himself evil.” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 306.

⁵⁴“Death is the end of a relationship, not the end of existence. We are now rightly related to God, and we are no longer *in Adam* nor are we in the kingdom of darkness. We are *in Christ*, and the law of life in Christ Jesus has set us free from the law of sin and death (see Rom. 8:2). The law of sin and death is still operative because we cannot do away with a law. Sin is still appealing and powerful, and physical death is still imminent for all of us.” Ibid., 142.

⁵⁵Lewis Sperry Chafer, *He That Is Spiritual* (New York: Our Hope, 1918), 19-21.

⁵⁶“The Bible treats our deliverance from the bond-servitude to sin as a distinct form of salvation and there is an analogy between this and the more familiar aspect of salvation which is from the guilt and penalty of sin.” Ibid., 141.

⁵⁷“There are a multitude of sinners for whom Christ has died who are not now saved. On the divine side, everything has been provided, and they have only to enter by faith into His saving grace as it is for them in Christ Jesus. Just so, there are a multitude of saints whose sin-nature has been perfectly judged

In 1919, B.B. Warfield helpfully reviewed Chafer's work and claims.

Warfield's review of Chafer is also useful in considering Anderson's similar claims.

Warfield summarizes his review stating that "It is a grievous error to teach that a true believer in Christ can stop short in 'carnality.'"⁵⁸ He continues by arguing that "Chafer's characterization of the carnal man actually 'assigns to the lower class [of Christians] practically all the marks of the unregenerate man.'"⁵⁹ Warfield explains and corrects Chafer's understanding, asserting that "There are not two kinds of Christians, although there are Christians at every conceivable stage of advancement towards the one goal to which all are bound and at which all shall arrive."⁶⁰ Warfield follows Chafer's conclusions and show how they head towards the heretical teaching of "perfectionism" through a "second blessing" experience.⁶¹ In the next section I will evaluate whether

and every provision made on the divine side for a life of victory and glory to God who are not now realizing a life of victory. They have only to enter by faith into the saving grace from the power and dominion of sin. . . . Sinners are not saved until they trust the Saviour, and saints are not victorious until they trust the Deliverer. God has made this possible through the cross of His Son. Salvation from the power of sin must be claimed by faith." Chafer, *He That Is Spiritual*, 146.

⁵⁸"It is a grievous error to teach that a true believer in Christ can stop short in 'carnality,' and, though having the Spirit with him and in him, not have Him upon him to use a not very lucid play upon prepositions in which Mr. Chafer indulges." Benjamin B. Warfield, review of *He That Is Spiritual*, by Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Princeton Theological Review* 17 (April 1919), 322-27.

⁵⁹"Chafer is betrayed (p. 29) into drawing out a long list of characteristics of the two classes of Christians, in which he assigns to the lower class practically all the marks of the unregenerate man. Salvation is a process; as Mr. Chafer loyally teaches, the flesh continues in the regenerate man and strives against the Spirit he is to be commended for preserving even to the Seventh Chapter of Romans its true reference but the remainders of the flesh in the Christian do not constitute his characteristic. He is in the Spirit and is walking, with however halting steps, by the Spirit, and it is to all Christians, not to some, that the great promise is given, 'Sin shall not have dominion over you,' and the great assurance is added, 'Because ye are not under the law but under grace.'" Ibid.

⁶⁰"He who believes in Jesus Christ is under grace, and his whole course, in its process and in its issue alike, is determined by grace, and therefore, having been predestined to be conformed to the image of God's Son, he is surely being conformed to that image, God Himself seeing to it that he is not only called and justified but also glorified. You may find Christians at every stage of this process, for it is a process through which all must pass; but you will find none who will not in God's own good time and way pass through every stage of it. There are not two kinds of Christians, although there are Christians at every conceivable stage of advancement towards the one goal to which all are bound and at which all shall arrive." Ibid.

⁶¹"He does teach that there are two kinds of Christian, the 'carnal' and the 'spiritual,' and he does teach that it is quite unnecessary for spiritual men to sin and that the way is fully open to them to live a life of unbroken victory if they choose to do so. . . . Mr. Chafer opens his book with an exposition of the

Anderson actually advocates for “perfectionism” or “second blessing” experiences. It is concerning and obvious that Anderson, like Chafer, wrongly advocates for two classes of Christians.

Summary of Anderson’s Understanding of Evangelism and the Gospel

Although Anderson should be applauded for an orthodox understanding of the gospel, some of his views should be clarified or corrected. Evangelism is an inseparable aspect of spiritual warfare and Anderson fails to recognize and implement such a practice. Anderson’s writings are likewise lacking focus on a biblical presentation of heaven and hell, which consistently directs the reader’s focus towards a more temporal rather than eternal mindset. While Anderson claims to fully understand the “whole gospel,” he fails to evangelistically apply it, presenting it only as a post-salvation oriented knowledge. Anderson’s emphasis on repentance is helpful, but his ministerial focus is almost exclusively on believers, without adequately differentiating between a non-believer and a believer. Anderson makes claims similar to Chafer’s that unhelpfully imply a direction towards “perfectionism” through a “second blessing” in discipleship.

Anderson’s Understanding of Discipleship

The main emphasis of Anderson’s ministry is focused on discipleship, or sanctification. Anderson describes “positional sanctification” as meaning “that we are spiritually alive in Christ.”⁶² He explains that “at the moment of our salvation, we are set

closing verses of the second and the opening verses of the third chapters of I Corinthians. Here he finds three classes of men contrasted, the ‘natural’ or unregenerated man, and the ‘carnal’ and ‘spiritual’ men, both of whom are regenerated, but the latter of whom lives on a higher plane. ‘There are two great spiritual changes which are possible to human experience,’ he writes (p. 8), ‘the change from the ‘natural’ man to the saved man, and the change from the ‘carnal’ man to the ‘spiritual’ man. The former is divinely accomplished when there is a real faith in Christ; the latter is accomplished when there is a real adjustment to the Spirit. The ‘spiritual’ man is the divine ideal in life and ministry, in power with God and man, in unbroken fellowship and blessing.’ This teaching is indistinguishable from what is ordinarily understood by the doctrine of a ‘second blessing,’ ‘a second work of grace,’ ‘the higher life.’” Warfield, review of *He that is Spiritual*.

⁶²Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 57.

apart, or separated, unto God and thus participate in God's holiness."⁶³ He quotes from the *Westminster Catechism* to further define sanctification, articulating that "the process of growing from carnality to Christ-likeness is commonly called progressive sanctification."⁶⁴ Anderson discerns that "we are saved by faith, and we are sanctified by faith in God through the power of the Holy Spirit."⁶⁵ He explains that Christians have responsibility in sanctification as "agents of our own sanctification" and that they must understand that "the world, the flesh and the devil oppose the will of God and therefore are enemies of our sanctification."⁶⁶ Anderson makes the case that our responsibility is repentance and faith because "God's will for our lives is our sanctification (see 1 Thess. 4:3). His number one priority is that we conform to the image of God. . . . 'Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth' (John 17:17)."⁶⁷ Anderson's maintenance that this is God's "number one priority" explains why he emphasizes discipleship, often to the neglect of an evangelistic and missional focus.

Anderson's main focus in sanctification is standing firm against the tactics of the devil. Robert Coleman, author of one of the most published books on evangelism, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, likewise asserts the importance of discipleship in order

⁶³Ibid., 56.

⁶⁴"The *Westminster Catechism* defines sanctification as, 'The work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God and are enabled more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness.'" Ibid., 58.

⁶⁵"After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?' (Gal. 3:3). We are saved by faith, and we are sanctified by faith in God through the power of the Holy Spirit. That is why Jesus prayed, 'Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth' (John 17:17). . . . Although the Bible speaks of 'past tense,' or positional, sanctification more frequently than 'present tense,' or progressive sanctification, the concept of progressively being made holy is a dominant theme in the New Testament. Terms like 'growth,' 'renewing,' 'edification,' 'building up,' 'transformation,' 'purification' and 'renewing' are all related: they refer to the process of conforming to the image of God." Ibid., 58-59.

⁶⁶Ibid., 59.

⁶⁷"Repentance and faith in God have been and will continue to be the answer until Christ returns." Ibid., 353, 407.

to resist the enemy Satan.⁶⁸ Anderson seeks to wake believers and the church up to the real spiritual conflict involved in sanctification. Coleman affirms this as well, writing that “the church must recognize that we are in spiritual warfare. Anyone not willing to live under orders and endure hardships as a soldier of Christ will be no match for the enemy.”⁶⁹ Other contemporary works on discipleship affirm, like Anderson, the importance of progressive sanctification while understanding and remaining aware of active spiritual opposition.⁷⁰

⁶⁸“Before they should be turned loose from our control, they need to be thoroughly established in the faith that overcomes the world. The devil, assisted by all the demons of hell, will seek to defeat them by every cunning device at his command. The world to which they are going lies under his evil spell. It will be a battle all the way. Every inch of progress will have to be won by conquest, for the enemy will never surrender. Nothing less than the infilling of the Spirit of Christ will be sufficient to meet the challenge. Unless they live in his communion, and go forth in his purity and power, they can easily be overwhelmed by the forces amassed against them, and all our work with them be nullified.” Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 2008), 106.

⁶⁹“This was their martyrdom—a daily dying with Christ—that put a song in the heart of the church. Realizing they were dead, buried, and raised with Christ, what had they to fear? They belonged to Him who had defeated every enemy. So whether they lived or died, what difference did it make? They were ‘the Lord’s’ (Rom 14:8). . . . In this confidence they went forth boldly to challenge ‘the power of Satan’ (26:18). There was no illusion in the mind of the church about her enemy. The struggle in the world was not with ‘flesh and blood,’ but against might forces of evil (26:18), ‘powers’ and ‘principalities,’ rulers of darkness in high places (Eph. 6:12). All the legions of hell were arrayed against the servants of God, and they knew full well that the devil would seek to defeat, or at least nullify, the work of God (13:10; cf. John 13:2; 2 Cor. 4:4; 1 Peter 5:8). . . . Many churchmen today seem oblivious to this satanic conspiracy. It is like caring for casualties on a battlefield without ever trying to stop the instigator of the carnage. Beelzebub is quite accommodating to such naiveté. He will allow almost any program to go on, even the appearance of church growth, as long as it does not interfere with his control. By avoiding conflict with the adversary, things may move along contentedly for a while, but in the end there will be destruction. . . . This is a battle unto death. We must come under strict discipline of body, mind, and spirit. There is no place in this service for the double-minded or the sluggard. Only those who are crucified with Christ will know the victory that overcomes the world.” Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Discipleship* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 1998), 97-98.

⁷⁰“A disciple, *mathetes*, is a leaner or follower—usually someone committed to a significant master. . . . The term disciple-making comes from the verb *matheteusate*, which means to ‘make disciples’ (Matthew 28:19). . . . discipleship is the state of being a disciple . . . a sense of journey, the idea of becoming a disciple rather than having been made a disciple. . . . the brutal truth is that around 90 percent of people who leave behavioral change programs revert back to their former behavior.” Robert Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2006), 32-39. “The leadership of the church must view its job as that of making disciples who can make disciples. . . . They also do not understand that by receiving Christ they have just become an enemy of the Devil and that they need to put on the spiritual armor (see Ephesians 6:10-17) that God provides. The job of a disciple-maker is to explain what happens when someone is born into the family of God and what will happen next. . . . A reproducible process enables the next generation of leaders to

Lack of Clarity and Distinction in Evaluating One's Faith in Christ

As mentioned in the section on evangelism, Anderson fails to distinguish whether the reader is a believer or not, instead assuming that they are already believers or will become one as they progress through *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*. Although he occasionally references the characteristics of a “true believer,” such content is scattered and slim.⁷¹ Such an oversight of looking for the fruit of the Spirit causes confusion in evaluating demonic phenomena, whether or not a Christian can be “possessed” or controlled by the demonic.⁷² While the spectrum of demonic possession will be considered in an upcoming section of this chapter, scripture and church history consistently point to demonic possession as only occurring in non-believers.⁷³ This confusion in Anderson’s writings may leave readers wondering if a believer needs “deliverance” from an evil spirit.

Obedience

Anderson’s heavy emphasis on right belief opened himself up to Miller’s accusations of a neglect of obedience and an emphasis on positive thinking. Does

understand what to do and how to do it.” Jim Putman, *Real-Life Discipleship: Building Churches that Make Disciples* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2010), 61, 94, 179.

⁷¹“Living a righteous life, bearing fruit and loving our neighbor as ourselves are the marks of a true believer.” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 538.

⁷²“To be indwelt by the Spirit is to bear the fruit of the Spirit . . . These elements [Galatians 5:22-25] are both the fruit and the evidence of our justification; but are not the cause or ground of our justification. They are the fruit of those whom God has already declared just and adopted, and whose sins God has already remitted.” Sproul, *Getting the Gospel Right*, 162.

⁷³“Did not use this [knowledge] properly, they were, through the fraud of the Serpent, stripped naked. . . . For he who thinks he knows anything without true knowledge, and such as is witnessed to by life, knows nothing, but is deceived by the Serpent, as not loving life. . . . thou shalt always gather in those things which are desired by God, which the Serpent cannot reach, and to which deception does not approach.” Mathetes, *The Epistles of Mathetes to Diognetus* (ANF 1:25), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.iii.ii.html>. “So also the devil goes to all the servants of God to try them. As many, then, as are full in the faith, resist him strongly, and he withdraws from them, having no way by which he might enter them. He goes, then, to the empty, and finding a way of entrance, into them, he produces in them whatever he wishes, and they become his servants.” Hermas, *The Pastor of Hermas* (ANF 2:20), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf02.ii.iii.html>.

Anderson fail to present the importance of obedience? No. Does Anderson endorse positive thinking as a solution to life's problems? No.

Anderson consistently presents a message that repentance is not mere changed belief, but that genuine repentance “means a change of mind and way of life.”⁷⁴ Anderson mentions that “We cannot just sit around and try to have positive thoughts. Our thoughts must result in appropriate behavior. Everything we do is a product of our thoughts. In other words, we don't do anything without first thinking it.”⁷⁵ Anderson connects the cognitive with behavioral by observing, “we learn far more by doing than we do by just hearing.”⁷⁶ Anderson does not advocate some sort of positive thinking “gospel,” but instead consistently advocates for a combination of right belief and right action.⁷⁷ He continues to highlight and emphasize God's role in sanctification while maintaining personal responsibility in the discipleship process.⁷⁸

While emphasizing obedience, Anderson does not overstep and advocate for a salvation by works. Referencing Philippians 2:12-13, Anderson explains that “We don't

⁷⁴“Submitting to God involves more than confession. It requires genuine repentance which means a change of mind and way of life.” Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 150.

⁷⁵“Circumstances may not always allow us to be happy, but we can always rejoice in the Lord. . . . We are called to turn on the light. We win the battle for our minds by choosing the truth. Trying not to think negative thoughts is futile, because it just reinforces the negative thought. . . . It is in our day-to-day living in this fallen world that we have to put our positive thoughts into action.” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 240-41.

⁷⁶“Teachers have to walk their talk in order to be effective in ministering to others.” Ibid., 243.

⁷⁷He again encourages “choosing truth, living a righteous life, and donning the armor of God” as essential individual responsibilities of the believer . . . If we fail to cover ourselves with the armor God has provided, we are vulnerable in those exposed areas.” Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 193. “God will enable us to do all that He has commanded, but He will not believe for us, forgive others for us, repent for us or assume any of our other responsibilities that He has clearly delegated to us. . . . we will never experience victory, wholeness, mental, emotional, and spiritual health unless we assume our own personal responsibility for the same.” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 402-4.

⁷⁸“Only God can change us, make us whole, bind up our broken hearts and set us free. Any lasting change will be directly related to what each individual person has chosen to believe and to do in response to God. . . . We cannot just ‘let go and let God’ be the One who perfects us; we must also assume our responsibility and do our part. . . . Attributing Satan's activities to the flesh, which is a common error in the Western church, leads only to self-condemnation and defeat. On the other hand, blaming the devil for our own carnal nature is a lame excuse and just as defeating.” Ibid., 402-4, 450, 544.

work for our salvation, but working it out is a rigorous process that is being opposed by the world, the flesh, and the devil. Whether we like it or not, we are in a battle against evil forces (see Eph. 6:10-20).⁷⁹ Although Anderson helpfully emphasizes personal responsibility and obedience, the rationale and motivation behind such obedience often comes across as self-serving, to more fully experience “Freedom in Christ.” John Piper helpfully connects obedience with its primary biblical rationale and motivation, stating “our own works—the fruit of the Holy Spirit . . . exist to display the beauty and worth of Christ whose sacrifice and obedience (counted as ours through faith alone) are the only and all-sufficient security for the fact that God is completely for us.”⁸⁰ Contrary to Miller’s assertions, Anderson helpfully articulates both right belief and right practice as a corrective to what he often sees as a moralistic emphasis.

Repentance as a “Second Work of Grace”

Connected with Anderson’s use of “carnal” or “fleshly” language and concepts is the concern that he may advocate that Christians experience a sort of “second blessing” or that his focus on repentance is a “second work of grace.” Sproul argues, like Anderson, that “Sanctification means ongoing repentance, a life of turning from sin to serve Jesus Christ is grateful reliance on him as one’s Lord and Master (Gal. 5:22-35;

⁷⁹Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 482.

⁸⁰“Our obedience does not add to the perfection and beauty and all sufficiency of Christ’s obedience in securing the reality that God is for us; it displays that perfection and beauty and all-sufficiency. Our works of love are as necessary as God’s purpose to glorify himself. That is, they are necessary because God is righteous—he has an eternal and unwavering commitment to do the ultimately right thing: to make the infinite value of his Son visible in the world. . . . What makes radical, risk-taking, sacrificial, Christ-exalting works of love possible is the fact that Christ’s perfect obedience (counted as our righteousness) and Christ’s perfect sacrifice (counted as our punishment) secured completely the glorious reality that God is for us as an omnipotent Father who works all things together for our everlasting joy in him. If we begin to deny or minimize the importance of the obedience of Christ, imputed to us through faith alone, our works will begin to assume the role that should have been Christ’s.” John Piper, *The Future of Justification: A Response to N.T. Wright* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2007), 187.

Rom.8:4, 13-14).”⁸¹ Pastor Mark Dever, points out that “The word for ‘repent’ is *metanoia* and means literally ‘to change your mind.’”⁸² He connects repentance as a changing of the mind based on the good news of the gospel, resulting in a change of action.⁸³ Anderson’s view of repentance does not cross over into the realm of a “second work of grace” or a “second blessing” experience.

Cheap Grace?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer warns of a “cheap grace” that

is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.⁸⁴

Bonhoeffer argues for a biblical understanding of grace, which he terms “costly grace,” which is “is the gospel which must be sought again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock.”⁸⁵ Does Anderson’s understanding of the gospel in discipleship communicate an understanding of “cheap grace”? No.

Bonhoeffer emphasizes “complete truthfulness” as arising when “sin has been uncovered, and forgiven by Jesus.”⁸⁶ Anderson’s Steps seem to be a model that pursues

⁸¹“We reject any view of justification which divorces it from our sanctifying union with Christ and our increasing conformity to his image through prayer, repentance, cross-bearing, and life in the Spirit.” Sproul, *Getting the Gospel Right*, 192.

⁸²Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*, 42.

⁸³“We change the way we act; we do. But we only change the way we act because we change what we believe. The good news of Christianity has cognitive content; it’s not simply religious enthusiasm or a deep personal intuition. It is new; it is tidings, the latest. It says something. The gospel is news!” Ibid.

⁸⁴Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Touchstone, 1995), 44-45.

⁸⁵“Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it causes us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son.” Ibid., 45.

⁸⁶Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, 138.

such an uncovering of sin and is a model that encourages believers to seek forgiveness from Christ. Bonhoeffer's theology also reveals a suffering as "the badge of true discipleship."⁸⁷ Anderson's theology of suffering does seem absent at times, for many of his writings advocate for repentance and belief towards the relief of suffering. However, in *The Daily Discipler*, Anderson dedicates a small section towards suffering, emphasizing its role for "righteousness sake," character building, deepening our love of God, and increasing our dependence upon God.⁸⁸ This section on suffering is helpful, but these truths should be more apparent in his other writings.

"Sinner Saved By Grace" versus "Saint Who Sins"

Anderson has been criticized for emphasizing a change in terminology for referring to Christians as "saints who sin" instead of "sinners saved by grace."⁸⁹

Bonhoeffer articulates one of the best defenses of such a change in verbiage,

That is why Christians are no longer to be called sinners, in the sense of men who are still living under the dominion of sin (ἀμαρτωλοί—the only apparent exception is in 1 Tim. 1:15, but that is a personal confession). On the contrary, they were once sinners, ungodly, enemies (Rom. 5:8, 19; Gal. 2:15, 17), but now through Christ they are holy. As saints they are reminded and exhorted to be what they are. But this is not an impossible ideal, it is not sinners who are required to become holy, or that would mean a return to justification by works and would be blasphemy against Christ. No, it is saints who are required to be holy, saints who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus through the Holy Spirit.⁹⁰

⁸⁷Ibid., 91.

⁸⁸Anderson, *The Daily Discipler*, 288-95.

⁸⁹"In the Bible, all believers are described as 'saints,' which means 'holy ones' (see 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:1). Being a saint does not necessarily reflect any present measure of growth in character, but it does identify those who are rightly related to God. In Scripture, believers are called 'saints,' 'holy ones' or 'righteous ones' more than 200 times. In contrast, unbelievers are called 'sinners' over 300 times. Clearly, the term 'saint' is used in Scripture to refer to the believer and 'sinner' is used in reference to the unbeliever." Ibid., 110.

⁹⁰Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, 281.

Bonhoeffer continues this understanding by emphasizing that Christians should live in accordance with their “calling and of the gospel in every sphere of life.”⁹¹ Piper likewise explains that from Romans 5 that “In Adam all men were appointed (katestathēsan) ‘sinners,’ but all who are in Christ are appointed (katestathēsontai) ‘righteous’ (5:19). In Adam all received condemnation; in Christ all receive justification (5:18).”⁹² Piper further describes that “Justification is not liberation from sinning, but a declaration of righteousness.”⁹³ Anderson seems correct in placing such an emphasis on the word “saint” when referring to believers.⁹⁴ Does Anderson’s avoidance of the term “sinner” towards believers indicate that he has an incorrect understanding of sin nature?

Sin nature. Although Anderson’s model of repentance encourages an ongoing uncovering of sin, his understanding of sin and sin nature must be evaluated. When Anderson was confronted by Rich Miller and CRI, he consulted with a group of theologians who submitted their assessment of his ministry and writings in an unpublished letter.⁹⁵ Anderson would quote a portion of the letter from Bruce A.

⁹¹“It is the duty of the saints to walk worthily of their calling and of the gospel in every sphere of life (Eph.4:1; Phil. 1:27; Col. 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:212). But the only way to do this is by daily recalling the gospel on which their whole life depends. ‘Ye were washed, ye were sanctified, ye were justified.’ (1 Cor. 6:11). It is by living daily on this recollection that the saints are sanctified. . . . sin can no longer have dominion over them because its sovereignty has already been broken. . . . Their breach with the past is an accomplished fact. Their ‘former’ manner of life has come to an end (Eph. 4:22). ‘Ye were once darkness, but now are light in the Lord’ (Eph. 5:8).” Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, 281.

⁹²Piper, *Counted Righteous*, 103.

⁹³“When Paul put Psalm 32:1-2 and Genesis 15:6 together, he saw two essential aspects of justification: forgiveness and imputation- ‘blotting out’ and ‘crediting to.’” Ibid., 104-5, 118.

⁹⁴“Although the New Testament teaches that believers can and do sin, it never clearly identifies the believer as a ‘sinner.’ Paul’s reference to himself as ‘the worst of sinners’ (1 Tim 1:16) seems to contradict his teaching. Despite the use of the present tense by the apostle, Paul is actually referring to his pre-conversion opposition to the Gospel. . . . The term ‘sinner,’ therefore, does not describe him as a believer, but is rather used in remembrance of what he was before Christ took hold of him. . . . As believers, we are not trying to become saints; we are saints who are becoming like Christ. Being saints is part of our positional sanctification. In no way does this deny the continuous struggle with sin.” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 111.

⁹⁵Bruce A. Demarest, Millard J. Erickson, and Bruce A. Ware, letter to Freedom in Christ Ministries with an analysis of the works of Neil T. Anderson commissioned by Freedom in Christ

Demarest, Millard J. Erickson, and Bruce A. Ware in 2012 in *Rough Road to Freedom*, implying that he had the overarching approval of the theologians, but the full version (see appendix 3) includes many critiques.⁹⁶

Demarest, Erickson, and Ware had concerns about Anderson's anecdotalism and other issues, but their main concerns revolved around sin and sin nature. They remarked that "Anderson denies that a Christian has a sin nature" in way that concerned the theologians of "a minimizing of the real and ongoing presence and power of sin."⁹⁷ The theologians remarked that if a Christian

thinks of himself as a saint and *not* a sinner, he or she might be tempted to attribute sinful inclinations and deep struggles with sinful desires to some external cause, such as demon oppression. The believer then might be led to discount the depth and corruption of the sin in his or her own life.⁹⁸

Demarest, Erickson, and Ware warn against reducing "ongoing sin to the weaker notion of a *pattern* of thinking and behavior carried over from one's pre-Christian life."⁹⁹ They encourage greater attention towards particular passages of Scripture as well as a reformation of Anderson's hardware/software analogy to include an understanding of the "fundamental problems with the new hard drive as well as with the programming."¹⁰⁰ The theologians summarize their concerns that the "basic problem of Christians as it relates to sin is fundamentally ontological and only secondarily functional."¹⁰¹ Their

Ministries (La Habra, CA), November 15, 1999. This letter was requested by the author to Neil T. Anderson who responded that he did not possess it any longer (despite quoting it in a 2012 publication). In due diligence in the course of research, the author obtained a complete copy from Bruce Ware. The letter also affirms Anderson's strengths addresses issues such authoritative language, ancestral spirits, anecdotalism, cognitive versus volitional response, and other issues that are covered in this book. Their treatment of sin and sin nature are most helpful to this book's argument.

⁹⁶Anderson, *Rough Road*, 243; Demarest, Erickson, and Ware, letter and analysis to Freedom in Christ Ministries.

⁹⁷Demarest, Erickson, and Ware, letter and analysis to Freedom in Christ Ministries.

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹Ibid.

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

¹⁰¹Demarest, Erickson, and Ware, letter and analysis to Freedom in Christ Ministries.

emphasis on a greater depth of understanding of sin and sin nature parallels Powlison's concerns about the "Pelagian view of sin."¹⁰² Despite their concerns about Anderson's treatment of sin and sin nature, Demarest, Erickson, and Ware affirm that "Anderson's views do not transgress the boundaries of Christian orthodoxy" and "do not constitute such major theological or practical difficulties as to warrant sustained public refutation and denunciation."¹⁰³ Nonetheless, they encourage Anderson towards "more precise articulation" and "theological refinements" while affirming his ministry as having an overall "great benefit to the church."¹⁰⁴ Does Anderson show changes or improvements in his understanding of sin and sin nature since the evaluation of Demarest, Erickson, and Ware? No.

Anderson's primary address of "the flesh" is found in chapter 16 of *The Common Made Holy* (1997). This work was republished as *God's Power at Work in You* (2001), but no changes are noticed that incorporate the recommendations from Demarest, Erickson, and Ware, but a few anecdotal illustrations are removed. Anderson also shares an excerpted response to sin nature concerns through Freedom in Christ Ministries' website (see Appendix 4).¹⁰⁵ In this article, Anderson again affirms his understanding

¹⁰²"The biblical picture of residual sin in believers impels us to even greater dependence on God, by whose power we may overcome sinful thoughts, passions, and behaviors. . . . there appears to be a tendency to attribute to Satan or demonic activity what more correctly should be attributed to pervasive human sinfulness. . . . We encourage Dr. Anderson to affirm with Luther that believers are *simul justus et peccator*, simultaneously righteous and sinful, saints and sinners." Demarest, Erickson, and Ware, letter and analysis to Freedom in Christ Ministries. "Most EMM advocates have a 'Pelagian' view of sin: they believe sin consists of conscious willed actions where one could have chosen the alternative. . . . it is inadequate for the 'bondage of the will,' the deep compulsions, the habitual and instinctive darkness of the human soul—as described in Genesis 6:5, Psalm 19:12, Ecclesiastes 9:3, Ephesians 4:17-22, and James 3:14-4:12. The Augustinian view of sin, by contrast, takes seriously both willed sin and blind willfulness. The EMM view of demonized sin is an inadequate way of accounting for 'dark things' on the human soul; it substitutes for Augustinian self-knowing. Although the Pelagian view is inadequate and misleading, it is not necessarily fatal to vital Christian life." Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 122.

¹⁰³Demarest, Erickson, and Ware, letter and analysis to Freedom in Christ Ministries.

¹⁰⁴Ibid.

¹⁰⁵Neil T. Anderson, "Do Christians Still Have a Sin Nature?" Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed March 25, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>. Other articles published through Freedom in Christ Ministry are Robert Saucy, "The Nature of the Flesh and it's Dynamic in the Believer," Freedom in Christ

that Christian's do not have a sin nature but can make choices to "live according to the spirit or the flesh."¹⁰⁶ In Anderson's 2012 publishing of *Rough Road to Freedom* he continues to use the hardware/software and virus analogy, affirming his continued belief that "the primary focus of Scripture is on the software, that is the mind."¹⁰⁷

Anderson sees that the source of "every temptation is first a thought introduced to your mind by your own carnality or the tempter himself. If you ruminate on that thought and consider it an option, you will eventually act on it, and that's sin."¹⁰⁸ *The Heidelberg Catechism* (AD 1563) articulates that sin occurs through "the instigation of the devil (John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 11:3; Genesis 3:4) and his own wilful disobedience."¹⁰⁹ Some spiritual warfare advocates communicate the concept of "sin demons": types of demons that target people with specific temptations. Anderson does not advocate for such an understanding.¹¹⁰ While not advocating for a sin nature in believers, Anderson does see sin as having both external and internal origins through tempting influences in the flesh, world, and Satan. If these influences are properly identified and resisted, is it possible to be "perfected" and without sin? No.

Ministries, accessed March 25, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>, and Robert Saucy, "'Sinners' Who Are Forgiven or 'Saints' Who Sin?" Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed March 25, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>. While these last two articles are not written by Anderson, both he and FICM affirm them.

¹⁰⁶Anderson, "Do Christians Still Have a Sin Nature?"

¹⁰⁷Anderson, *Rough Road*, 152.

¹⁰⁸Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 148.

¹⁰⁹*The Heidelberg Catechism*, 1, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/creeds-confessions/catechisms/the-heidelberg-catechism.html>

¹¹⁰Anderson, interview, January 4, 2014. Anderson believes the cause is not the same as the effect.

Perfectionism. Anderson clearly communicates that Christians cannot become perfect or sinless. Anderson asserts that “Positional sanctification does not mean that as believers we are sinless and perfect.”¹¹¹ He further illustrates his understanding:

Learning to every thought captive in obedience to Christ takes time and commitment, but it can be done. The next day we take two steps forward and one back, then three steps forward and one back. If we stay committed to the process, it will soon become 20, 30, and 40 steps forward and one back.¹¹²

Even though spiritual growth is possible, sinlessness is not possible outside of heaven. Bonhoeffer proclaims that for this reason, “the preaching of forgiveness must always go hand in hand with the preaching of repentance.”¹¹³

Summary. Anderson’s inadequacies in his understanding of sin and sin nature are not mere semantic issues. Throughout his writings, his understanding of sin seems to be imbalanced towards the cognitive with a need for greater emphasis on the volitional. He also seems to indicate and imply that the main problem of sin is in limiting Christian victory rather than being an offense to the holiness of God. Anderson’s views on carnal Christianity and almost exclusive address towards believers, to the exclusion of addressing non-believers through the law (Rom 3:19-20), also corrupt his understanding of sin. Powlison’s description of the Pelagian view of sin also fits Anderson’s view of sin as an “inadequate and misleading” understanding, but also an understanding that “it is not necessarily fatal to vital Christian life.”¹¹⁴ Despite Anderson’s needed theological improvement in the area of sin and sin nature, is Anderson’s understanding of Christian identity correct? Yes.

¹¹¹Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 56.

¹¹²Ibid., 239.

¹¹³“Confession is thus a genuine part of the life of the saints, and one of the gifts of grace. But if it is wrongly used, punishment is bound to ensue. In confession, the Christian is conformed to the death of Christ.” Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, 287-89.

¹¹⁴Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 122.

Identity in Christ

John Bunyan, Puritan author of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, explains that when he understood his Christian identity in his union with Christ, he felt a freedom such as “my chains fall off my legs indeed.”¹¹⁵ Anderson’s actual truth encounter approach to discipleship in spiritual warfare appears to be orthodox, corresponding early church father Tatian’s (AD 110-72) affirmation that demons “depart in terror” when “smitten by the word of God.”¹¹⁶ Anderson emphasizes that for Christians, “to be spiritually alive is to be in union with God” or “in Christ.”¹¹⁷ John Piper similarly emphasizes Christian identity for “our union with Christ in his death for us secures our justification, which then leads, as a result, to our moral transformation.”¹¹⁸ Piper holds that understanding our reality “in Christ” is “all-important for understanding justification” and that “If obedience does not emerge by faith, we have no warrant to believe we are united to Christ or justified.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵“I also saw moreover, that it was not my good frame of heart that made my Righteousness better, not my bad frame of mind that made my Righteousness worse; for my Righteousness was Jesus Christ Himself, *The same Yesterday, To-day, and forever*, Heb. Xiii. 8. Now did my chains fall off my legs indeed; I was loosed from my afflictions and irons; my temptations also fled away . . . In Christ my Lord and Saviour. Now Christ was all; all my Righteousness, all my Sanctification, and all my Redemption. Further, the Lord did also lead me into the Mystery of Union with the Son of God.” John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (London: Methuen, 1903), 122-24.

¹¹⁶Tatian, *Address of Tatian to the Greeks* (ANF 2:65), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf02.iii.ii.html>.

¹¹⁷Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness*, 30-31.

¹¹⁸“This is the same logic we saw in Romans 6:6-7. We were crucified with Christ so that we might not serve sin (v.6), because the one who has died is justified from sin (v.7), and on the basis of that justification, moral transformation becomes possible. . . . Pastorally the full meaning of justification, as pardon and imputed perfection, has proved to be a mighty antidote to despair for the saints.” Piper, *Counted Righteous*, 80, 124.

¹¹⁹“The reality of being ‘in Christ’ is all-important for understanding justification. . . . The implication [of 2 Cor 5:21, Phil 3:9, Gal 2:17] seems to be that our union with Christ is what connects us with divine righteousness. This truth raises the importance of 1 Corinthians 1:30. . . . We are united to Christ in whom we are counted as perfectly righteous because of his righteousness, not ours. The demand for obedience in the Christian life is undiminished and absolute. If obedience does not emerge by faith, we have no warrant to believe we are united to Christ or justified (Matthew 6:15; John 5:28-29; Romans 8:13; Galatians 6:8-9; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; James 2:17; 1 John 2:17; 3:14).” Piper, *Counted Righteous in Christ*, 84-85, 123.

While Anderson holds to the importance of understanding our identity, “in Christ,” he does not carry that out to a conclusion that a lack of obedience is grounds for questioning our assurance of faith. Anderson admits that he resists questioning someone’s salvation, for he saw in his own life a prolonged period apart from understanding one’s identity in Christ.¹²⁰ Anderson does maintain a healthy balance between belief and practice, asserting that “Having an intellectual knowledge of something doesn’t always translate into an inner reality” and that “It is not what we do that determines who we are. Who we are determines what we do.”¹²¹ Anderson does rightfully insist on the priority of understanding one’s identity in Christ, but would be helped by contrasting Christian identity with a non-believer’s identity. Such a comparison would function well as both an evangelistic and discipleship tool.¹²²

Summary of Anderson’s Understanding of Discipleship

Much of Anderson’s understanding and focus on discipleship is helpful and “of great benefit to the church,” but significant points of theological and practical concern remain and should not be overlooked.¹²³ Some of his obvious strengths are seen in his emphasis on personal responsibility in repentance and obedience, avoidance of “second blessing” or “second work of grace” heresies, and a proper understanding of Christian

¹²⁰“They knew the verse, but not the truth. I didn’t question their salvation, because I had become a Christian and served God for years before my eyes were fully opened to the truth of who I am in Christ. Without this revelation I could never write the books I have written, nor have the ministry I now have.” Anderson, *Rough Road*, 123.

¹²¹Ibid., 118, 121.

¹²²“John calls Satan the ‘evil one’ (1 John 2:13-14; 3:12; 5:18-19), and credits him for being the instigator of human sin and depravity. ‘He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning’ (v.8). The term ‘from the beginning’ refers to Satan’s rebellion against God before the fall of Adam and Eve (see also John 8:44). According to John, those who continue to sin belong to the devil (see 1 John 3:8,12), and are his children (see 1 John 3:10). Even though the whole world is under the control of the evil one, we know that we are children of God (see 1 John 4:1-4) and Satan cannot touch us (see 1 John 5:18-19).” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 48.

¹²³Demarest, Erickson, and Ware, letter and analysis to Freedom in Christ Ministries.

identity. Despite these strengths, some areas of improvement remain particularly in regard to sin and sin nature. Anderson over-emphasizes discipleship to the neglect of evangelism and missions. In the presence on ongoing, unrepentant sin, he fails to exhort believers to “examine themselves” (2 Cor 13:5) to see if they are in the faith. Finally, Anderson’s emphasis on “living free in Christ” seems to transition the underlying motivation for obedience away from God’s glory towards more self-serving motives. Overall, given the scope of Anderson’s writings, the strengths of Anderson’s understanding and approach to spiritual warfare in discipleship outweigh its weaknesses.

Scripture and Prayer: Understanding of Communication with God in Evangelism and Discipleship

It is important to understand how Anderson uses Scripture and prayer in the context of evangelism and discipleship. Anderson’s works are full of numerous scriptural references and encouragements towards prayer, but it is essential to evaluate whether his approach is biblically balanced.

Acts versus Epistles

Anderson often appeals to the Epistles as normative for the Church Age when discerning how to respond to the demonic today.¹²⁴ He explains concerning the term “demonization,” that “the term never occurs in the Epistles, so we have no way of knowing how it would apply to believers in the Church Age.”¹²⁵ Such terminology changes in usage also lead him towards methodological changes. Anderson emphasizes how he derives his “methodology for dealing with the kingdom of darkness primarily

¹²⁴“Spirit-filled disciples exercising their authority in Christ over demons were ministers of deliverance in the Gospels and the early chapters of Acts. . . . After the Cross, Satan was defeated and in this present Church Age every believer has the same power and authority to do God’s will. That is why there are no instructions for casting out demons within the Church. It is no longer outside the minister’s responsibility. The deliverer is Christ, and He has already come and we don’t get our information from evil spirits.” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 410.

¹²⁵Ibid., 542.

from the Epistles rather than the Gospels and the book of Acts” because “our approach to evangelism changed after Pentecost and so has our approach to resolving spiritual conflicts.”¹²⁶

Anderson refers to a “huge learning curve” that occurs in Acts that is significant to understanding discipleship and a balanced perspective on spiritual warfare. He argues that “people who do not understand the book of Acts as a transition book will end up digging up hankies from Paul’s grave hoping people will be healed and stuff like that.” Much of Anderson’s theology is based upon the fact that he does not believe “the world has changed much” since Pentecost. Anderson describes

the power-encounter method was derived from the gospels, with little attention given to the epistles. Before the cross, Satan was not disarmed. . . . Since Pentecost every believer has the power and authority to do God’s will, because every child of God has the same position in Christ, and is possessed by the same Holy Spirit. . . . The answer in this church age is repentance and faith in God.¹²⁷

Is Anderson correct in seeing such a change in our response and methodology after Pentecost? Is it right to see Acts only as a “transition book”? No.

As seen in chapter three, Scripture, church history, and the modern understanding of spiritual warfare all point to the continuation of spiritual warfare as seen post-Pentecost. Although Acts is a historical book, it speaks and describes the same time period as most of the Pauline Epistles that Anderson references for his “Church Age” methodology. It is wrong to consign the occurrences and descriptions of Acts as separate and distinct from the work of God in the Epistles. When personally asked whether or not there is a change between power encounters and truth encounters at Pentecost, Anderson writes differently than in his books, arguing for the continuation of the believer’s power and authority in Christ as described in the gospels, but advocating for little need and

¹²⁶Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 255-56.

¹²⁷Anderson, *Rough Road*, 141-42.

emphasis on the power encounter today.¹²⁸ Anderson would be helped by greater clarity on this subject, which would also connect with our understanding of his views concerning demonization of non-believers versus believers.

How Is Scripture Used Evangelistically?

As previously stated, Anderson is weak in the area of evangelism. Accordingly, most scriptural use is focused more on the believer's sanctification rather than with an evangelistic or missional focus. Anderson's emphasis on the mind's renewal would suggest that in evangelism, he would put a strong emphasis on the use of Scripture just as he does in discipleship. He holds that "Even if we have heard the good news so as to believe unto salvation, we still need to have an increasing knowledge of the truth in order to live liberated lives."¹²⁹ Anderson uses Scripture accurately in the few occasions where he is evangelistic in his writings.

How Is Scripture Used to Make Disciples?

Anderson places great emphasis on using Scripture to make disciples. He has a high view of God's Word and reminds us that

if we are going to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, we have to study God's Word. There are no shortcuts. Nobody can study for us. . . . God's Word

¹²⁸When asked, "In regard to Pentecost, was pre-Pentecost primarily a 'power encounter approach' and post-Pentecost a 'truth encounter approach'? Or does the 'power encounter' still apply today at times? Did the 'truth encounter' apply pre-Pentecost?" Anderson replied, "The gospels clearly present the case that Jesus had authority over demons, which He conveyed to the twelve and the seventy. Authority (the right to rule) and power (the ability to rule) are the critical issues in spiritual warfare. You can't have two sovereigns ruling in the same sphere at the same time. That had to be resolved and it was. 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth' . . . The conferring of that authority and power came at Pentecost thus enabling the Church to carry on the work of Christ. That doesn't mean that we don't have to directly confront the kingdom of darkness at times. 'Power Encounter' implies two raw powers doing battle, which I think conveys the wrong message. Truth sets us free. Every believer has the authority and the power to live the Christian life, as long as they abide in Christ." Anderson, interview, January 4, 2014.

¹²⁹"People are in bondage to what they have been taught or to what they have chosen to believe in the past. If truth sets people free, then lies will keep them in bondage. . . . It is not the trauma experiences themselves that are keeping believers in bondage. Rather, they are in bondage to the lies they have believed as a result of those negative experiences." Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 162-63.

sitting on the shelf will not transform us. The truth has to be in our hearts. It is not enough to think about Scripture—we have to think scripturally. Wisdom is seeing life from God’s perspective.¹³⁰

Anderson believes that believers must make conscious decisions to put off their old beliefs and lifestyles and be transformed by God’s truths in our mind, “the control center of our thoughts, attitudes and actions.”¹³¹ Anderson preaches that “the Word of God is the only offensive weapon in the armor of God” so one must speak God’s truths aloud whenever we are under attack by Satan, the world, or our flesh.¹³² He points out that in Paul’s Epistles, he commonly first deals with “theological issues” before presenting the practical imperatives.¹³³

How Is Prayer Used Evangelistically?

Similar to Anderson’s scarce use of Scripture in evangelism, there are few evangelistic examples of prayer usage. In his two main evangelistic presentations, Anderson uses a short prescriptive prayer, commonly known as “sinner’s prayers.”¹³⁴

¹³⁰Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 242.

¹³¹“We were all conformed to this world. Even as believers we will remain conformed to this world if we continue living as we always have. So we must make a conscious decision to put aside the lifestyles of this ‘present evil age’ (Gal. 1:4).” Ibid., 235.

¹³²“It is the ‘sword of the Spirit’ (Eph. 6:17). Paul uses *rhema* instead of *logos* for ‘word’ because the Greek word ‘rhema’ carries the idea of proclamation. Our defense against the direct attacks from the evil one is to speak aloud God’s truth. In addition to thinking and believing God’s Word, we need to speak it because Satan is not omniscient, and he doesn’t perfectly know what we are thinking.” Ibid., 492.

¹³³“The apostle Paul’s epistles have a common order. The first half deals with theological issues and the second half is practical, that is the indicative preceded the imperative (being before doing).” Anderson, *Rough Road*, 229.

¹³⁴“Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for sending Jesus to die on the cross for my sins. I acknowledge that I have sinned and that I cannot save myself. I believe that Jesus came to give me life, and by faith I now choose to receive You into my life as my Lord and Savior. By the power of your indwelling presence enable me to be the person You created me to be. I pray that You would grant me repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth so that I can experience my freedom in Christ and be transformed by the renewing of my mind. In Jesus’ precious name I pray. Amen.” Anderson, *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*, 3; “Dear heavenly Father, I confess that I have sinned and that I am a sinner by nature. I know that I am spiritually dead because of my sin and not worthy to be your child. I am in great need of your grace and I throw myself upon your mercy. I am sorry for my sins, and I humbly ask for your forgiveness. I choose to believe that Jesus died for my sins on the Cross, and I choose to believe that He came to give me eternal life. As an act of faith, I receive you into my life, and I pray that You would

These prayers are biblical in covering most elements of salvation, but are missing any reference towards the resurrection of Christ (Rom 10:9-10) as well as neglecting the defeat of Satan, which he claims to be the third component of the “whole gospel.” The descriptions leading into and following the prayer do mention Christ’s resurrection. The prayer in the third edition of *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* is also missing any reference to eternal life and forgiveness. Increased use of evangelistic prayer at the beginning of the Steps and in Anderson’s works would greatly ensure that readers understand the gospel and that the truths and promises included in his works are particularly directed towards believers.

How Is Prayer Used in the Discipleship Process?

Anderson uses prayer extensively in his works and especially through *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* which has over thirty-five discipleship prayers in its twenty-two pages. Anderson holds that his prayers are not meant to be formulaic or prescriptive, but rather instructive in order to teach believers how to pray.¹³⁵ He believes that one of the greatest successes seen in his discipleship counseling approach is Christians learning how to pray for themselves rather than remaining dependent on others for prayer.¹³⁶

Anderson describes that our prayers are designed to “ascertain God’s will” and not to ask for “selfish wants.”¹³⁷ He argues that communication with God progresses

enable me to be the person that You created me to be. I choose from this day forward to repent by turning away from sin and to live a righteous life by faith in the power of the Holy Spirit. I ask all this in the wonderful name of Jesus, whom I confess to be my Lord and my Savior. Amen.” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 138-39.

¹³⁵Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

¹³⁶Ibid. “We cannot ask other people to do our praying for us.” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 404. “There is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus . . . Since I am not supposed to function as a medium, I thought, instead of me praying for wisdom on their behalf, why don’t I have them pray? My ministry took a 180-degree turn overnight. That simple concept has changed the way I do ministry. . . . I believe in intercessory prayer, but God never intended that to replace an individual’s responsibility to pray.” Anderson, *Rough Road*, 156

¹³⁷“Worship is ascribing to God His divine attributes. . . .We try to ascertain God’s will in

through three levels of prayer in petition, dialogue, and intercession.¹³⁸ Anderson recognizes that “We will never be effective in prayer if we go to God in emergencies and then return to managing our own lives when the crisis passes.”¹³⁹ The content of our prayers must be in Jesus’ name, which “means that we pray in a way that is consistent with the nature and purpose of Jesus.”¹⁴⁰ He proposes that “Our prayers will always be effective if our petitions and intercessions are in agreement with the Word of God.”¹⁴¹ Anderson necessarily connects spiritual warfare and prayer, writing “We cannot engage in spiritual warfare without praying. . . . If we realize our dependence upon God, we will pray often and be ready all the time.”¹⁴² Anderson refers to authoritative prayer, “Prayer is joining God in His service. Praying with authority is not expressing to God our will; it is discerning God’s will and claiming with confidence the answer.”¹⁴³

Outside of *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*, Anderson most clearly accentuates the importance of prayer through *Liberating Prayer*. He also writes and encourages a daily habit of starting and finishing each day with prayer.¹⁴⁴ Anderson connects the origins of *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* with prayer in counseling. He found that his prayers for people were not “setting them free” so he asked himself how to “help *them*

prayer. We don’t try to convince Him of our will. . . . ‘Give us this day our daily bread’ is a petition for real needs, not selfish wants.” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 349.

¹³⁸Ibid., 350-51.

¹³⁹Ibid., 354.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., 353.

¹⁴¹Ibid., 354.

¹⁴²Ibid., 494.

¹⁴³Ibid.

¹⁴⁴“You should begin and end each daily lesson with prayer. Start with praise by acknowledging the attributes of God. Your loving heavenly Father is the one and only omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent God. Thank Him for sending Jesus to die in your place in order that your sins might be forgiven and for giving you new life in Him. Then ask the Lord to guard your heart and your mind from any distracting thoughts. Personally interact with the truth revealed in God’s Word.” Ibid., 16. Based on this statement, one would expect praise to be a bigger component of the *Steps to Freedom in Christ*.

pray in such a way that God would answer them.”¹⁴⁵ In 1984, Anderson wrote out seven specific prayers (petitions) for people to pray, which “still serve as the basis for the Steps” today. He explains that as people “go through the Steps, what they are actually doing is petitioning God to reveal to their minds whatever is keeping them from having an intimate relationship with Him.”¹⁴⁶

FICM has a special session on the importance of prayer in their CFM leader training, explaining that “Prayer is to be a primary focus of our lives and the primary means by which those involved with a CFM demonstrate their absolute dependence upon God.”¹⁴⁷ FICM’s training utilizes the acronym ACTS to guide their participants in praying as an act of worship, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication.¹⁴⁸ In one session on prayer, FICM’s Miller articulates that “Prayer becomes the primary avenue through which He reveals His will.”¹⁴⁹ Although their level of emphasis on prayer is encouraging, we need to be reminded that God primarily reveals Himself and His will through the Scriptures (2 Tim 3:16).

Bonhoeffer emphasizes the use of Scripture to guide one’s prayers, explaining that “the most promising method of prayer is to allow oneself to be guided by the word of the Scriptures, to pray on the basis of a word of Scripture.”¹⁵⁰ He further supports that

¹⁴⁵Anderson, *Liberating Prayer*, 37.

¹⁴⁶Ibid.

¹⁴⁷“Prayer is to be a primary focus of our lives and the primary means by which those involved with a CFM demonstrate their absolute dependence upon God. Without a heartfelt commitment to prayer, a Community Freedom Ministry is dead in the water. It may limp along for a while, but without a Spirit-led, Spirit-empowered strategy of prayer it will never have the life-giving, liberating impact that the Lord Jesus wants it to have.” “Role of Prayer in a CFM,” CFM University in Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed November 18, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>.

¹⁴⁸“The acronym we are going to use is A.C.T.S. The A stands for Adoration (worship). . . . C stands for Confession. . . . T is for Thanksgiving. . . . S is for Supplication.” “Role of Prayer in a CFM,” CFM University in Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed November 18, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>.

¹⁴⁹“CFM 101: Session 2,” CFM University in Freedom in Christ Ministries, accessed November 18, 2013, <http://www.ficm.org>.

¹⁵⁰Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, 84.

“all prayers that we pray conforming to this Word are certainly heard and answered in Jesus Christ.”¹⁵¹ Bonhoeffer helpfully communicates that “intercession means no more than to bring our brother into the presence of God, to see him under the Cross of Jesus as a poor human being and sinner in need of grace.”¹⁵² Anderson’s use of Scripture and prayer is evident in all of his works on discipleship, but is especially important in his counseling approach and discipleship method found in *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*.

The Steps to Freedom in Christ (2004)

Anderson explains that the origins of the Steps were found in prayerfully helping people resolve issues that were “affecting their relationship with God.” He argues that there is nothing special about the number of Steps, and that if he found something that did not fit into one of those categories, he would add an eighth Step.¹⁵³ Anderson further explains that his book *Restored* “is an expansion and further explanation of the repentance process.”¹⁵⁴

When asked regarding the necessity of the commands and binding declarations within his prayers, Anderson replies,

That is a little bit like saying, “All we have to do is submit to God. We don’t have to resist the devil.” Jesus prepared His disciples to carry on His ministry, and us as well. He didn’t prepare them (and us) to call upon Him to do what He told us to do.

¹⁵¹“Prayer means nothing else but the readiness and willingness to receive and appropriate the Word, and, what is more, to accept it in one’s personal situation, particular tasks, decisions, sin, and temptations.” Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, 84-85.

¹⁵²*Ibid.*, 86.

¹⁵³When asked, “How did you come up with the specific steps comprising *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*? The order of the Steps? What would you add/subtract/combine today?” Anderson answered “I tried to categorize the issues that are affecting our relationship with God. If I found something that didn’t fit into one of those categories I would add an eighth Step. I dealt with the occult first, because that is the one issue that will most likely be contested if there is a demonic problem.” When asked, “Would the Ten Commandments be a better guide for The Steps (Bonhoeffer’s suggestion)?” Anderson replied, “Possibly, if we were just dealing with moral behavior. Living under the grace of God is so different than living under the law. The Pharisees and modern day legalists would probably prefer that I used the Ten Commandments, but pride, rebellion, and forgiveness may get overlooked!!” Anderson, interview, January 4, 2014.

¹⁵⁴*Ibid.*

Too much emphasis is placed on commanding and binding, and not enough on assuming our responsibility. I don't go around commanding and binding Satan. I help people assume their responsibility. I have found it critically important that individuals tell (command) Satan to leave their presence.¹⁵⁵

Anderson summarizes the Steps as “a repentance process that helps people resolve their personal and spiritual conflicts. The theology and application of the Steps is explained in the text of my book, *Discipleship Counseling*.”¹⁵⁶ *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* are a helpful model that is mostly biblical and extremely practical.

Ritualistic Repentance?

Those who accuse Anderson of ritualism in his process of repentance tend to overlook early church history's use of formulaic prayer and catechism as a tool of instruction. Similarly, Anderson asserts that his books and *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* are only tools and do not set a person free, that “what sets you free is your response to Christ in repentance and faith.”¹⁵⁷

Martin Luther explains confession in a catechism, writing,

Confession has two parts: First, a person admits his sin. Second, a person receives absolution or forgiveness from the confessor, as if from God Himself, without doubting it, but believing firmly that his sins are forgiven by God in Heaven through it. . . . When speaking to God, we should plead guilty to all sins, even those we don't know about, just as we do in the “Our Father,” but when speaking to the confessor, only the sins we know about, which we know about and feel in our hearts. . . . Consider here your place in life according to the Ten Commandments. Are you a father? A mother? A son? A daughter? A husband? A wife? A servant?

¹⁵⁵Anderson, interview, January 4, 2014.

¹⁵⁶Anderson, *Daily Discipled*, 16.

¹⁵⁷Each step includes an emphasis on renouncing (verbally rejecting) Satan and praying aloud because “Satan is under no obligation to obey your thoughts.” . . . He summarizes the steps as “just a comprehensive process of submitting to God and resisting the devil (James 4:7).” Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 199-200, 267. Anderson uses other books such as *Restored* to expand and illustrate the Steps and provide “inquirers an opportunity to reinforce the decisions they have made.” He explains that *Discipleship Counseling* serves as a tool for instructing encouragers how to guide someone “through the process and help them to maintain their objectivity.” Anderson, *Winning the Battle Within* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2008), 212. He communicates some of his foundational principles as with an emphasis on Scripture as “the only reliable source for faith and practice (see 2 Timothy 3:16-17).” Anderson, *Discipleship Counseling*, 16.

Are you disobedient, unfaithful or lazy? Have you hurt anyone with your words or actions? Have you stolen, neglected your duty, let things go or injured someone?¹⁵⁸

Bonhoeffer also emphasizes confession, boldly asserting that “confession is conversion . . . confession is discipleship . . . confession is the renewal of the joy of baptism.”¹⁵⁹ Just as Anderson uses the phrase “set free” to describe the post-confession renewed relationship with God, Bonhoeffer uses the phrases “in fellowship” and “beneath the cross.”¹⁶⁰ Bonhoeffer’s phrasing may be preferred over Anderson’s since it is not as likely to be misconstrued as advocating a “second blessing” sort of experience.

It is hard to overstate the importance Bonhoeffer gives towards the process of confession, for he sees that

in confession the light of the Gospel breaks into the darkness and seclusion of the heart. The sin must be brought into light. The unexpressed must be openly spoken and acknowledge. All that is secret and hidden is made manifest. It is a hard struggle until the sin is openly admitted.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸Martin Luther, *Luther’s Little Instruction Book: The Small Catechism of Martin Luther*, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/luther/smallcat.html>.

¹⁵⁹“In confession the break-through to new life occurs. Where sin is hated, admitted, and forgiven, there the break with the past is made. . . . Confession is conversion. . . . Confession is discipleship. . . . In confession the Christian begins to forsake his sins. Their dominion is broken. From now on the Christian wins victory after victory. . . . What happened to us in baptism is bestowed upon as anew in confession. We are delivered out of darkness into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. That is joyful news. Confession is the renewal of the joy of baptism.” Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, 115.

¹⁶⁰“It [confessed sin] can no longer tear the fellowship asunder. Now the fellowship bears the sin of the brother. He is no longer alone with his evil for he has cast off his sin in confession and handed it over to God. It has been taken away from him. Now he stands in the fellowship of sinners who live by the grace of God in the Cross of Jesus Christ. He can confess his sins and in this very act find fellowship for the first time. The sin concealed separated him from the fellowship, made all his apparent fellowship a sham; the sin confessed has helped him to find true fellowship a sham; the sin confessed has helped him to find true fellowship with the brethren in Jesus Christ. . . . A confession of sin in the presence of all the members of the congregation is not required to restore one to fellowship with the whole congregation. . . . Who can hear our confession? He who lives beneath the Cross.” *Ibid.*, 113, 119.

¹⁶¹“Confession should deal with concrete sins. People are generally satisfied when they make a general confession. . . . Self-examination on the basis of all Ten Commandments will therefore be the right preparation for confession. . . . Since the confession of sin is made in the presence of a Christian brother, the last stronghold of self-justification is abandoned. The sinner surrenders; he gives up all his evil. He gives his heart to God, and he finds the forgiveness of all his sin in the fellowship of Jesus Christ and his brother. The expressed, acknowledged sin has lost all its power. It has been revealed and judged as sin. . . . In confession occurs the break-through to the Cross. The root of all sin is pride, *superbia*. I want to be my own law. I have a right to myself, my hatred, and my desires, my life and my death.” Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, 112-14, 117.

Anderson's use of *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* may strike a modern day Protestant as unusual and legalistic, but over the scope of church history similar methodological approaches to discipleship have been consistently seen and used greatly as tools that God uses in bringing His people closer to Himself.

Self-Deliverance Model?

Anderson is also criticized for the use of a “self-deliverance” model. Anderson calls his approach the “truth encounter” but emphasizes the process as “discipleship counseling.” Anderson does hold that many believers can process through *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* on their own “because Jesus is the Wonderful Counselor” but that some may need to request the help of a pastor, counselor, or a trained lay person.¹⁶² Anderson and FICM consistently emphasize the importance of believers praying for and helping guide and encourage one another into God's truths. Anderson asserts that “having the right message and method is not enough. You have to have the right people who are dependent on God.”¹⁶³ He believes that “discipleship counseling is the process of building the life of Christ into one another” and that “2 Timothy 2:22-26 is the pastoral model for helping others experience their freedom in Christ.”¹⁶⁴

Summary of Anderson's Understanding of Communication with God in Evangelism and Discipleship

Anderson does an excellent job in utilizing Scripture and prayer in discipleship. His approach to evangelism is yet to be fully developed, but a heavy dependency on Scripture and prayer would be a helpful extension out of his discipleship model. His methodological use of Scripture and prayer in *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*

¹⁶²Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 199-200.

¹⁶³Anderson, *Discipleship Counseling*, 12.

¹⁶⁴“This passage does not teach us to confront demons in some sort of power encounter; it teaches a kind and gentle encounter with truth.” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 412-14.

is not to be feared as formulaic or legalistic, but should rather be seen as an instructive tool to guide believers into knowing, believing, and praying God's truths.

Spiritual Warfare: Anderson's Understanding of the Truth Encounter Approach

Anderson's understanding of spiritual warfare through the truth encounter approach is orthodox in its approach to the discipleship of believers. His approach is not consistent however with the approach to the demonic in the lives of unbelievers as seen in Scripture and early church history.

Anderson correctly asserts that "every believer is involved in spiritual warfare."¹⁶⁵ He also helpfully emphasizes the personal responsibility of the believer.¹⁶⁶ Anderson is also discerning when he rebukes most modern "classic power encounter" approaches that are directed towards believers.¹⁶⁷ The main question that Anderson fails to address is whether a non-believer can be possessed today, and if so, what sort of encounter is biblically and historically prescribed and exemplified?¹⁶⁸ Apart from this question there are several other issues that need to be resolved concerning Anderson's understanding of spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship.

¹⁶⁵Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 16.

¹⁶⁶"We can't put on the armor of God for other people. We can't repent and believe for them, but we can help them. The apostle Paul explains how to do that in 2 Timothy 2:24-26. . . . The passage reads like a truth encounter, rather than a power encounter. Truth sets people free and Jesus is the truth." Anderson, *Rough Road*, 142.

¹⁶⁷"How does one resolve spiritual encounters? All I knew at the time was the classic power encounter. The pastor or missionary calls up the demon. Some will try to get the demon's name and spiritual rank, and try to cast it out. I tried that a few times, and there was an ugly confrontation that left one wondering who was more powerful. Even worse, it didn't last." Ibid., 136-37.

¹⁶⁸Anderson explains that believers cannot be possessed, but fails to address the spiritual condition of non-believers relative to possession accounts in the Scriptures.

Over Emphasis on the Role of Satan and Demons?

Anderson is labeled by CRI's Miller as overemphasizing the role of Satan and his demons in a way that creates fear. Anderson warns against such a fear because of the concern of worship and understanding of God's power.¹⁶⁹ Anderson's descriptions and understanding of Satan and his demons seems to be biblically and historically balanced and mostly accurate.

Satan. Anderson describes Satan as "defeated and disarmed (see Col. 2:15), and the only way he continues to rule is through deception."¹⁷⁰ He argues that now the "only power that Satan has is the power we give him through fear and unbelief."¹⁷¹ Anderson holds a high view of God's control over Satan, explaining that "God limits what Satan can do."¹⁷² He describes Satan's attacks as primarily as a tempter and an accuser.¹⁷³ Anderson warns that Satan attacks both believers and non-believers through their minds.¹⁷⁴ Anderson's description of Satan represents a biblically balanced view.

¹⁶⁹"'Fear not' is the most repeated commandment in Scripture, occurring 400 times. Anxiety disorders are the number one mental health problem in the world. Most Christians have a greater fear of Satan than they do of God. If we elevate Satan as a greater object of fear, we elevate him as a greater object of worship." Anderson, *Rough Road*, 145.

¹⁷⁰"Before the Cross, Satan had not been defeated and God's people had not been redeemed. . . . The crucifixion and resurrection of Christ was the decisive defeat of Satan. . . . The finished work of Christ accomplished three immediate benefits to us. First we were made alive; second, we were forgiven; and, third, the powers and authorities were disarmed (see Col. 2:13-15)." Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 410, 438.

¹⁷¹"As a dethroned monarch, he is still allowed to rule those who accept his authority." Ibid., 410, 438.

¹⁷²"God reigns supreme, and He can use Satan and his emissaries as a means to discipline His people, as He did with Saul. . . . God is not above using Satan to discipline us if that is what it takes to bring about repentance. Satan is tethered by the permissive will of God and can only do that which is permitted by Him." Ibid., 434, 504, 548.

¹⁷³"His purpose is to get the children of God to live independently of God. When we sin, he changes his attack and acts as our accuser." Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 435.

¹⁷⁴"This world is still dominated by the kingdom of darkness. Satan will rule all those who he manages to deceive until Jesus comes again. . . . Emphasizing the use of the Greek word *noema* or 'mind' or 'thought' by Paul in 2 Corinthians, Anderson articulates Satan's 'schemes' (2 Cor 2:10-11) such as that he 'has blinded the [noema] of unbelievers' (2 Cor 4:4), 'we take captive every [noema] to make it obedient

Demons. Anderson warns against dialogues with demons and warns of their deceptive attacks.¹⁷⁵ He argues that demons may attempt to disguise themselves as angels or work through cults and false religions.¹⁷⁶ Anderson also biblically informs his readers that “demons can exist outside or inside of humans.”¹⁷⁷ Anderson does speculate on some of the limitations or abilities of the demonic, at times distinguishing their powers as lesser than those of their unfallen angelic brethren.¹⁷⁸ Although some of these observations and deductions may be accurate, as the descriptions of Scripture do reveal some demonic abilities and limitations, Scripture does not fully reveal or explain all of their powers or restrictions.¹⁷⁹ One must be careful not to speculate beyond Scripture, else one may over or under attribute characteristics of demons. Believers must be wise and prepared to what is revealed, but not go beyond those details.¹⁸⁰

to Christ’ (2 Cor 10:5), ‘I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your [noema] may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ’ (2 Cor 11:3).” Ibid., 437, 462-63.

¹⁷⁵“If we dialogue with demons in another person, we are bypassing the victim, who needs to repent and choose the truth. If we dialogue with demons and believe what they say, we will be deceived, because they all speak from their own nature and they are all liars (see John 8:44). . . . Demons can inflict physical illnesses on people who passively allow them. . . . If we are deceived and believe a lie, it will affect our mental and emotional health, which often shows up physically as a psychosomatic illness.” Ibid., 408-9, 448-49.

¹⁷⁶“Satan masquerades as an angel of light, so we should not be surprised to find Satan’s servants masquerading as servants of righteousness (see 2 Cor 11:14-15). . . . demons are behind cults.” Ibid., 464.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., 446.

¹⁷⁸Ibid.

¹⁷⁹“Demons have no physical means of expressing themselves except through human or animal agents. They seem to find a measure of rest in organic beings, preferring swine to nothingness (see Mark 5:12). Evil spirits may assert territorial rights and be associated with certain geographical locations. . . . They are able to travel at will. Being spiritual entities, demons are not subject to the physical barriers of the natural world. The walls of church buildings do not provide a sanctuary, not does our skin serve as a spiritual barrier. That is why we put on the armor of God and find our sanctuary in our position in Christ. . . . They vary in degrees of wickedness. . . . They can speak to humans through a human subject.” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 446. Such overarching normative claims are speculative and must be avoided since Scripture does not prescriptively explain all demonic limitations or abilities.

¹⁸⁰Speaking of the Gadarene demoniac, Anderson asserts that “somehow these demons were able to control the man’s central nervous system, enabling them to speak through the man and direct the

Demonic manifestations. Anderson acknowledges but avoids demonic manifestations, but does not clarify how such manifestations work exactly.¹⁸¹ He denies demonic possession of Christians, yet affirms that Christians can be controlled and influenced so severely that they appear to be possessed.¹⁸² Anderson speaks of the practice of consulting mediums, warning that their “powers” are “nothing more than a demonic spirit or the fraudulent work of a con artist.”¹⁸³ Anderson warns of unhealthy interests and pursuits of the paranormal, affirming that “there is no question that Satan and his demons can perform signs and wonders, and there is no question that the occult works. Whether or not the supernatural acts lead people toward or away from the one true God is the real question.”¹⁸⁴ He believes that the “level of deception will intensify before the Lord returns” but that when manifestations occur, Christians can take control with their authority in Christ.¹⁸⁵

Demonically planted thoughts and voices. Anderson believes that Satan’s primary attack is through deceiving our minds with implanted thoughts.¹⁸⁶ He holds that

will of the pigs. When the evil spirits left, the man’s rational capacities were restored.” Ibid. 448.

¹⁸¹“You don’t want a demon to manifest, because that brings glory to Satan. You want the presence of God to manifest. . . . Everything Satan does is a counterfeit of Christianity. Clairvoyance . . . Precognition . . . Telepathy . . . Psychokinesis . . . Spirit guides.” Ibid., 192, 500.

¹⁸²This topic will be dealt with in an upcoming section.

¹⁸³“The craving for esoteric, ‘extra’ knowledge has led many people to seek our mediums and spiritists. God strictly forbids this practice.” Ibid., 502-4.

¹⁸⁴“Every country has opened its doors to paranormal and psychic research. What the rulers of the countries of the world don’t know is that they have embraced the religion of the Antichrist—which is masquerading under the guise of science. . . . The evil one also counterfeits many of the spiritual gifts that God has endowed the Church with. This is especially true for the gifts of tongues and prophecy.” Ibid., 506-7, 509, 534.

¹⁸⁵Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 534. When manifestations happen, Anderson takes control by saying “‘I’m a child of God, you cannot touch me,’ which is a paraphrase of 1 John 5:18. . . . The authority we have in Christ does not increase with the volume of our voice.” Anderson, *Rough Road*, 140.

¹⁸⁶“The mind is the focal point for spiritual warfare. The fact that Satan is capable of putting thoughts in our minds is clearly taught by Scripture.” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 460. E.g. incited, put into the heart, filled your heart, David incited by Satan (1 Chr 21:1), Judas (John 13:2), Ananias and Sapphira

“these deceptive thoughts come to us in ‘first person singular’ in such a way that we think they are our thoughts.”¹⁸⁷ He argues that what people “are seeing and hearing is very real. Only it isn’t ‘out there’—the battle is in their minds.”¹⁸⁸ Anderson believes to overcome these deceptive thoughts and voices, believers must renew their minds.¹⁸⁹

Familiar spirits and ancestral sin. Most of Anderson’s works make reference to ancestral sin and familiar spirits. It was not until his third edition of *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* when the references became more oriented towards the influence of ancestral sin rather than the actual passing on of sin and spirits.¹⁹⁰ In my research of early church history, the only family passed spirit reference was in terms of

(Acts 5:1-10).

¹⁸⁷“Psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors, social workers and pastors routinely work with people who are struggling with their thoughts, having difficulty concentrating or hearing voices. . . . If the condemning, lying and blasphemous thoughts leave after submitting to God and resisting the devil (see Jas. 4:7), then the origin of the thoughts is not natural or neurological. . . . In Daniel 4, ‘The spiritual nature of Nebuchadnezzar’s mental illness cannot be denied.’” Ibid., 460, 466.

¹⁸⁸“A spiritual attack that is seen or heard by one person will probably not be seen or heard by another person in the same setting. . . . Our brains can only function the way they have been programmed by our minds. . . . If the nightmares include grotesque images, figures and scenes never physically seen before, then the dreams are actually a spiritual assault on the mind and are coming from an external source (in other words, they are not coming from stored memory). Such spiritual attacks at night can be stopped by submitting to God and resisting the devil (see Jas. 4:7). This usually requires resolution of all known personal and spiritual conflicts (see the ‘Steps to Freedom in Christ’).” Ibid., 468-69. This is a speculative statement that ignores the real physical and visible attacks of the demonic in Scripture.

¹⁸⁹“There is a fundamental difference between our brains and our minds. Our brains are physical matter and part of our bodies, but our minds are part of our souls. . . . It sounds simple, but if Christians want to grow (be transformed) they need to reprogram their computers (minds), but they’d better check for viruses. . . . The enemies of our sanctification are the world, the flesh, and the devil. Computer viruses are not accidental. They have been maliciously introduced to destroy the system, and that is precisely what Satan wants to do.” Anderson, *Rough Road*, 152.

¹⁹⁰When asked, “Why did you remove the term of ‘familiar spirit’ in the third edition of *The Steps*? Has your theology/thinking changed towards the concept of ancestral spirits?” Anderson replied, “It is not an accurate translation. It is more of an interpretation. The early church believed that demons had personal information (verified in the gospels) about people and assumed they must be ‘familiar’ with them and their family.” Anderson, interview, January 4, 2014.

condemnation of a cult who held such a belief.¹⁹¹ Anderson's more recent departure from such references is consistent with the Bible and early church history.¹⁹²

Balanced emphasis on the demonic. Overall, Anderson seems to maintain a mostly biblical and historical balance on the demonic. His description of Satan and his demons are mostly biblical with only a few speculative assertions. He argues that when encountering manifestations or voices, "whether the demonic part is 0 percent, 5 percent, 10 percent or 50 percent does not make any difference." He believes that "the critical part is submitting to God. Resisting the devil is simple if there are no unresolved issues between us and our heavenly Father."¹⁹³ He asserts that although "the world, the flesh, and the devil are continually at war against the life of the Spirit within us" believers do not need to fear.¹⁹⁴

Demonic Possession

Anderson uses the word demonized (possessed) to mean "to be under the control of one or more demons."¹⁹⁵ He states that "Possession implies ownership, and we do know that Satan and his demons cannot have or own a Christian who belongs to God.

¹⁹¹*The Canons of the Two Hundred Holy and Blessed Fathers Who Met at Ephesus (AD 431)* describe and condemn a Messalian sect that believed "that everyone inherited from his ancestors a demon." *Note on the Messalians or Massalians (NPNF² 14:241)*, accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.x.xvi.xvi.html>. Also Justin Martyr and Irenæus speak against Simon Menander whose sect used of familiars (*paredri*) and dream-senders (*onirpompi*) practiced by mystic priests, warning not to "be entangled in man's doctrines." Irenæus, *Irenæus Against Heresies (ANF 1:348)*, accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.ix.ii.xxiv.html>.

¹⁹²"We are never guilty of our parents' sins, but because all parents have sinned, we have picked up some of their attitudes and actions that are not consistent with our Christianity." Anderson, *Liberating Prayer*, 42.

¹⁹³Anderson, *Discipleship Counseling*, 148.

¹⁹⁴Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 546. In God's Word we discover that our enemy is not merely our own flesh and the world, but our enemy is primarily Satan, "the one who runs the world: it is the puppet master." Neil Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

¹⁹⁵Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 542.

In that regard, as Christians we are Holy Spirit-possessed.”¹⁹⁶ Anderson argues that spatially, the Holy Spirit and an evil spirit can coexist because “spatial arguments don’t apply in the spiritual realm.”¹⁹⁷ In countering spatial arguments, Anderson then uses spatial arguments to attempt to clarify what demons can and cannot do to believers.¹⁹⁸ Several of his arguments towards believers make references to passages that are concerning non-believers, which further adds to the confusion.¹⁹⁹ In order to clarify his position on possession, Anderson needs to eliminate his use of interior-spatial control language towards believers, and instead only use exterior-spatial influence language in regards to believers. When speaking of non-believers, Anderson can use both interior-spatial and exterior-spatial language as well both control and influence language. Such care and caution in language usage will allow a more consistent and clear presentation of a biblical understanding of spiritual warfare.

Exorcisms of Non-Christians

When asked concerning possession and exorcisms of nonbelievers, Anderson does not discount the possibility, but continues to emphasize the truth encounter approach.²⁰⁰ Scripture in the Gospel and Acts, as well as in early church history,

¹⁹⁶“But that does not mean that we are not vulnerable. If we open the door to his influence, Satan will invade and claim squatter’s rights. He will resist eviction until the ground beneath him is removed through repentance and faith in God.” Ibid.

¹⁹⁷Ibid., 542-43.

¹⁹⁸“People’s lives are like a house where the garbage hasn’t been taken out in months. It is going to attract a lot of flies. Initially I was trying to get rid of the flies instead of getting rid of the garbage. One could study the flight pattern of the flies, get their names and spiritual rank, but little would be accomplished if the garbage was still there. You may be able to chase them off, but they would just find seven others and tell them where the garbage is (see Luke 11:26).” Anderson, *Rough Road*, 142. A passage from one of Anderson’s works that uses both a non-believer oriented Scripture and interior-spatial language when referring to a believer’s influence by the demonic.

¹⁹⁹“If we as Christians fail to use our armor, Satan will not stop short of invading our citadel. He will take us captive to do his will (see 2 Tim. 2:26). . . . If we fail to forgive from our hearts, Jesus Himself will turn us over to the tormentors (see Matt. 18:34-35).” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 546. These passages are references towards non-believers, not believers.

²⁰⁰When asked, “Is it possible for an unbeliever to be demonized from the standpoint of being

continue to portray occasions when the power encounter is permitted and necessary for the gospel to be presented and received by its non-believing hearers. When those power encounters are portrayed, they are always in relation to a non-believer with short and simple rebuking of the demonic.²⁰¹ When non-Christians are exorcised, they must be filled with God's Spirit in order to secure any lasting protection from the demonic.²⁰² Christians must not fear their own possession by the demonic, but cannot ignore or "doubt the reality of demons" or deny the possibility of the "demon possession" of unbelievers.²⁰³

Authoritative Language

Anderson refers to and uses renunciation, rebuking, and command language in his works. Such language is seen only on a few occasions in Scripture, but usually as a

indwelt and controlled? If so, should ekballistic ministry similar to the Gospels and Acts still be practiced today? If not, why did the early church have such an organized and public exorcism ministry?" Anderson writes that "Old habits are slow to die! I have no problem with ministries trying to cast demons out of others. I just think there is a better way that is more holistic and God honoring. I want the Holy Spirit to manifest Himself, not demons. Powlison's sticking point seems to be the terms 'in' and 'out,' which reflects a natural worldview, rather than a spiritual worldview. What are the natural barriers in the spiritual world? He wants to preserve the truth that our bodies are temples of God, indwelt by the Holy Spirit. So do I, but I don't see our skin as a barrier to the spiritual world. It seems like the armor of God imagery is being over looked. What does armor do? It stops penetration. If people are paying attention to an evil spirit, is that inside or outside? Powlison also believes that there is no need for the inquirer to repent in order to get rid of the demons, which Clinton Arnold refuted. The three of us were on a panel discussion when Arnold pointed out that Powlison's position has never been held in Church history." Anderson, interview, January 4, 2014.

²⁰¹"Numerous reports of other Jewish and Greco-Roman healers or exorcists have been preserved from the ancient world. But Jesus distinguishes himself from all of them by the directness of his approach. He invokes no lengthy list of deities, recites no formulaic incantations, and uses no magical paraphernalia to cast his spells. A simple word of rebuke is all it takes." Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1997), 234. "In Scripture, demon possession is regularly reserved for incidents involving several of the following phenomena observed in Mark 5:1-20 and parallels: (1) a disregard for personal dignity; (2) social isolation; (3) retreat to the simplest of structure; (4) recognition of Jesus' deity; (5) demonic control of speech; (6) shouting; and (7) extraordinary strength." Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 270.

²⁰²"It is not enough to expel evil; one must replace it with a positive good. Otherwise a greater number of demons may return (Matt 12:43-45/Luke 11:24-26)." Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels*, 242.

²⁰³"Many people today doubt the reality of demons or demon possession. But Christians who have worked with those caught up in the occult can testify to too many strikingly similar incidents that still take place for such skepticism to prove convincing." Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels*, 270.

short phrase such as “the Lord rebuke you” (Zech 3:2, Jude 1:9) or as a verbal exorcism such as Paul’s command of exorcism against the spirit in the young Philippian fortune-telling girl (Acts 16:18).

In the early church such rebuking or command language is found typically at the point of conversion or baptism.²⁰⁴ Renunciation itself was connected with confession, profession, and as a preparation for future battles, but was not seen in an ongoing fashion after conversion.²⁰⁵ Given this understanding, Anderson’s *Steps to Freedom in Christ* would be more biblically and historically faithful by removing the rebuking and commanding language directed at Satan and his demons. If such language is to be retained, a more accurate alternative would emphasize the Lord as the author of the rebuke.²⁰⁶ If renunciation language is to be retained, it is most appropriate at the point of conversion and public baptism. Ongoing renunciation by a believer is best seen as a process of repentance and confession of sin.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴“The members of the Early Church would literally face the West and say, ‘I renounce you, Satan, and all your works and all your ways.’ Then they would face the East and make a public profession of faith. Saving faith and genuine repentance resulted in the believers changing the way they lived. If you really believe in God, it will affect your walk and your talk.” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 64. “The purpose of renunciation was primarily the rejection of the practices of idolatry, and it reflected the notion that the pagan deities were none other than the fallen angels and demons of Christian teaching.” Kelly, *The Devil at Baptism*, 273.

²⁰⁵“If we understand repentance rightly, we’ll see that the idea that you can accept Jesus as Savior but not Lord is nonsense. . . . To put one’s faith in King Jesus is to renounce his enemies.” Gilbert, *What is the Gospel?*, 80. “Another aspect of demonology that has been prominent in Christianity from the beginning is the continual warfare of the evil spirits against those who have been baptized as Christians. A number of liturgical uses reflecting this doctrine were developed at an early date, particularly in connection with the anointing ceremonies performed before and after baptism. By such means the new Christians were strengthened in their future battles with the devil. . . . Taken together, the rituals of expulsion, repudiation, and prophylaxis or apotropaism formed a series of ceremonies that dramatized in a striking way the very real struggle that every Christian waged with the devil.” Kelly, *The Devil at Baptism*, 273. Prophylaxis is to prevent disease and apotropaism is to prevent evil.

²⁰⁶“When we find ourselves thinking negative or immoral thoughts, we should just confess them to God. We should not try to rebuke every negative thought.” Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 240.

²⁰⁷“Renunciation involves giving up a claim or a right. . . . We have not truly repented (changed our minds) if we make a decision for Christ, and then continue to hold onto the past and believe what we have always believed. That would make salvation an experience of addition rather than transformation. . . . To decisively let go of the past is the first step of repentance. . . . As new believers we can repent, because it is God who grants repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth.” *Ibid.*, 400.

Underlying the authoritative language is the concept of power and authority.²⁰⁸ Although Anderson previously emphasized the Epistles over Acts and the Gospels, he uses Jesus' example and words to emphasize the conveyance of power and authority over the demonic. Anderson writes, "The same power that raised Jesus from the dead and defeated Satan is available to us as believers. . . . We share this authority because we are seated with Christ in the heavenly realms."²⁰⁹ Anderson references Jesus giving his disciples "power and authority over demons" in Luke 9 as an example for how believers of all ages have "authority and power over demons" today.²¹⁰ He urges believers to vocally proclaim their identity as a child of God, realizing that "the authority we have in Christ does not increase with volume."²¹¹ Grudem also affirms the transference of authority, explaining,

Authority over demonic spirits was not limited to Jesus himself, for he gave similar authority first to the twelve (Matt. 10:8; Mark 3:15), and then to seventy disciples. . . authority over unclean spirits later extended beyond the seventy disciples to those

²⁰⁸Ibid., 470.

²⁰⁹"'Subjection' is a military term that means 'to rank under.' Authority is the right to rule. Power is the ability to rule. As believers, we have the right to rule over the kingdom of darkness because of our position in Christ. We also have the ability to rule, because of the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we should, 'be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power' (Eph. 6:10). It is critically important that we understand that the authority and power we possess in Christ is not our human or political authority or power, but His; and neither can be exercised apart from Him. We have the power and authority to do God's will, but nothing more." Ibid., 474.

²¹⁰"Jesus gave the 12 disciples power and authority over demons and sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God (see Luke 9:1), but they could not free a father's son from demonic control (see vv. 37-45). Jesus had to reveal to them several kingdom-killing attitudes . . . self-sufficiency . . . being ashamed of Him and His words . . . unbelief . . . pride . . . possessiveness . . . wrong spirit . . . false confidence . . . lame excuses. . . . All believers, young and old, have the same authority and power over demons, although mature saints may know better how to exercise it." Ibid., 476-78.

²¹¹"When we are confronted by evil forces, we can say with confidence, 'I am a child of God, and the evil one cannot harm me' (see 1 John 5:18). . . . Satan wants us to respond to his attacks in fear, because then he is in control. If we respond in fear, we are operating in the flesh, which is on his level. The fear of anything other than God is not compatible with genuine faith in God. We have lost control if we start shouting and screaming." Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 472. "Should you come under a direct attack from Satan you will need to exercise your authority in Christ by speaking out loud, since the evil one does not have the power to completely know your thoughts. . . . The moment you call upon the name of the Lord, you will be free to resist the devil." Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, 101-2.

in the early church who ministered in Jesus' name (Acts 8:7; 16:18; Jam. 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8-9).²¹²

Ultimately believers are reminded not to focus on their power and authority over the demonic, but to delight in their relationship with Christ as His children.²¹³

Spiritual Vulnerability

Christians are cautioned concerning Satan's attacks, not to give them a spirit of fear, but to encourage them to stand firm and resist the devil so that he might flee. In explaining this concept, Anderson communicates the concept of a Christian yielding "some degree of control over our lives," a description which clouds the claim that Christians cannot be possessed.²¹⁴ Anderson never implies that Christians can lose their salvation, but his descriptions of such Christians sound extremely similar to biblical examples of possession. Replacing such "control" verbiage with "influence" language concerning the demonic attacks on Christians would better explain and reinforce a proper response instead of suggesting the need for deliverance of an already-Christian.

Anderson also describes how attitudes and beliefs can become "habitual, mental patterns of thought" or "strongholds."²¹⁵ He argues that believers are called to "resist the

²¹²Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 418-19.

²¹³"We, too, can easily lose our perspective and adopt a wrong focus. Jesus wants us to know that demons are subject to us, but our joy comes from knowing Him. We are to rejoice that we are children of God. We are to rejoice in the cause and not in the effect." Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 470-71.

²¹⁴"To what degree then are we vulnerable to Satan's attacks? First, we must recognize that the possibility of being tempted, accused and deceived is a continuous reality (see Gal. 6:1). Second, the fact that we can be influenced by the devil is highly probable. . . . Third, it is possible that we could surrender some degree of control over our lives if we were to yield to his temptations, or believe his accusations and lies. . . . Finally, we can never be owned by anyone other than the Lord Jesus Christ." Ibid., 540-41. Galatians 5:1, "do not submit again to a yoke of slavery" might seem to suggest the aspect of control, but it must be seen in the context of it serving as a warning of judgment towards those turning from the Gospel.

²¹⁵"Attitudes and beliefs are formed very early in our childhood. . . . we absorb these mental attitudes in two primary ways from the environment in which we were raised. . . . First, they are assimilated into our minds through prevailing experiences Second, mental strongholds are developed through traumatic experiences. . . . Strongholds are habitual, mental patterns of thought. Some call them flesh patterns." Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 236.

tempting thoughts and choose to clean up your mind.”²¹⁶ Anderson also speaks to the issue of sexual bonding, arguing for its spiritual consequences because “People are deceived if they think they can sin sexually and suffer no eternal consequences.”²¹⁷ For those who have been violated sexually, Anderson reminds them that they do not have to remain victims indefinitely, but can seek God’s healing and restoration.²¹⁸

Objects and Destruction

Anderson’s *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* contains a small section regarding a house cleansing/disposal of objects of false worship, prayer for cleansing of a home or rooms, and prayer for living in a non-Christian environment. Is Anderson justified in recommending the destruction of objects of false worship? Is Anderson justified in prescribing prayer examples for home cleansing and non-Christian environments?

One of the primary texts used to justify such actions is Acts 19:18-20 where converted believers empty their homes of their magic arts books, burning them, and confessing their practices to one another. Several other object and proximity examples may be seen in the transfer of Jesus’ power through his clothing (Mark 5:13), healing from proximity to Peter’s shadow (Acts 5:15-16), and exorcisms conveyed through

²¹⁶“We win the spiritual battle when we ‘take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ’ (2 Cor. 10:5). . . . The battle begins the moment you decide to resist the tempting thoughts and choose to clean up your mind.” Ibid., 238-39.

²¹⁷“Secret sin on Earth is open scandal in heaven. Establishing the concept of *adults only* in America has implied that there is a different moral standard for adults than there is for children, which is not true. If something is morally wrong for children, it is morally wrong for adults.” Ibid., 305. It is interesting to see Anderson reference “eternal consequences” with this sin, but not towards other areas of sin. Scripture does emphasize the seriousness of sexual sin (1 Cor 6:12-20), but it is not the only sin with eternal consequences and the believer must also be reminded that all sin is forgivable by Christ.

²¹⁸“First, promiscuous sex before marriage leads to a lack of sexual fulfillment after marriage. Second, a believer who is sexually united with an unbeliever becomes bonded in such a way that the Christian can’t break away without genuine and complete repentance. Third, when a believer has been violated sexually before marriage against her will (rape or incest), it undermines her ability to perform freely in marriage. . . . But the gospel ensures you that no one has to remain a victim forever. . . . You can renounce that sexual use of your body with the other person, ask God to break that bond and then commit your body to God as a living sacrifice. And for the sake of your own freedom and relationship with God you need to forgive that person who violated you.” Ibid., 304-5.

handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched Paul (Acts 19:11-12). Demonic power and object association is commonly referenced in regard to idols and idol sacrifices throughout Scripture, but the main concern in such passages is participation, or the appearance of participation, in the worship of such false gods. In such situations, repentance and the destruction of the false places of worship, idols, or abstention from such food is the recommended solution to its offense to God.²¹⁹ Church history reveals a continued concern towards objects of false worship and their destruction, as seen in Justin Martyr, Minucius Felix, and Origen's writings.²²⁰ Paul also cautions concerning pagan sacrifices as being towards demons (1 Cor 10:20). Anderson's understanding of such demonic influences and associations may partially derive from experience, and may at times be slightly speculative, but in general his concerns and practices are rooted in several scriptural and early church history examples. Perhaps a better approach towards objects of false worship would be not to simply communicate an imperative to destroy these objects, but also question why a believer would have a desire to retain any of these objects that were used to dishonor their Christ.

²¹⁹Wright, *The Mission of God*, 179-183.

²²⁰Justin asks for the destruction of Simon's statue as well as a reminder not to "be entangled by that man's doctrines" but rather to "learn the truth, and so be able to escape error." Justin clearly emphasizes a truth encounter approach to spiritual warfare but also upholds the importance of destroying objects of false, demonic worship. Justin Martyr, *The First Apology of Justin* (ANF 1:163), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.viii.ii.html>. Minucius Felix was a contemporary of Tertullian who penned *Octavius* (c.AD 210) He also describes in detail how the demons are connected with idols, statues, mediums, oracles, and predictive signs. Minucius Felix, *Octavius* (ANF 4:169), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf04.iv.ii.html>. "Hence we are determined to avoid the worship of demons even as we would avoid death; and we hold that the worship, which is supposed among the Greeks to be rendered to gods at the altars, and images, and temples, is in reality offered to demons." Origen, *Contra Celsus* (ANF 4:395), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf04.vi.ix.i.i.html>. Origen also directly connects false religions and their worship in idols, altars, and temples to direct demonic worship. Clergy are also prohibited from making "what are called amulets, which are chains for their own souls." *The Canons of the Synod Held in the City of Laodicea, in Phrygia Pacatiana, in which Many Blessed Fathers from Divers Provinces of Asia Were Gathered Together*, (NPNF² 14:151), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.viii.vii.iii.xli.html>.

Conclusions

Anderson's ministry and works are of great advantage to the church, particularly in enhancing its understanding of spiritual warfare and applying such an understanding in the realm of discipleship.²²¹ In terms of evangelistic approach, Anderson's works are almost entirely unhelpful, which is perhaps the greatest shortcoming of his ministry. Although the argument may be made that his ministry is discipleship focused, there must be increased recognition that salvation is the primary area of victory in spiritual warfare. Nonbelievers have no hope without Christ. Such an oversight also prevents any significant emphasis on multiplication by evangelism and missions which is the heart of Jesus' command for disciple-making. Although Anderson's understanding of spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship is generally orthodox, his approach to spiritual warfare in evangelism is invalid and his approach to spiritual warfare in discipleship demonstrates significant points of theological and practical concern.²²²

²²¹Chapter 6 will conclude the paper, including much from this chapter and will share more details than is possible in this chapter's summary.

²²²Specific recommendations for changes are noted in chap. 6.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This chapter serves to conclude the book. It begins with a summary of the highlights and affirmations of Anderson's ministry and its significance. Second, the implications and corrections for Anderson's understanding and practice of evangelism are shared. Third, a summary of the recommendations towards improving Anderson's approach to discipleship are presented. Finally, encouragement is made towards areas of further research for developing a better understanding of a biblical, historical, and theological approach to spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship. This chapter is complimented by appendix 5 which lists areas of affirmation and areas of concern with documented page locations of reference within the book.

Summary

Anderson's ministry is significant in its impact, scope, and contribution to understanding "the battle of the followers of Christ against the unseen spiritual forces of evil" in discipleship. His writings and truth encounter approach offer a biblically based alternative to many of the experientially based works available. In this book I argued that while Anderson's understanding of spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship is generally orthodox, his approach to spiritual warfare in evangelism is invalid and his approach to spiritual warfare in discipleship demonstrates significant points of theological and practical concern. These conclusions have been evidenced through Scripture, early church history, the Lausanne Movement, and in modern theological understandings.

It is important to recognize and affirm the changes seen in Anderson's writings since 1997, beginning with *The Common Made Holy*. As Anderson's panel of theologians affirmed in their response to CRI's critique, "Critics should recognize the development in Dr. Anderson's thinking, which by his own admission, is currently taking place."¹ Such progression and development of Anderson's theology is seen to continue in each new work and edition. Anderson argues that his overall message has "changed very little, but I have learned to share it better so as not to be misunderstood."² Although Anderson's foundational message may have changed very little, there have been very many significant and needed changes as noted and seen in chapters 4 and 5.

Anderson does a great job in utilizing and encouraging the use of both Scripture and prayer as the primary means of communication with God. His writings are popular, with over five million books in print, in part due to his style of writing that is easy to read and practical. Anderson is an excellent communicator who motivates and inspires Christians towards growth and life change. He avoids becoming too academic in his writings, yet successfully covers a broad scope of life issues. Anderson's emphasis on personal responsibility for believers to seek and encounter God in confession, prayer, and truth is biblically essential for spiritual growth. Although Anderson does leave room for continued improvement in particular areas of his ministry, his writings are largely

¹"In our judgment, Anderson stands well within the bound of Christian orthodoxy, and in no respect do we consider his teachings heretical. . . . We believe that the treatment of sanctification and growth in holiness presented in Dr. Anderson's and Dr. Saucy's recent book, *The Common Made Holy* (1997), represents a more biblically nuanced and balanced treatment on the subject versus earlier works, such as *Victory over the Darkness* (1990) and *The Bondage Breaker* (1990)." Neil T. Anderson, *Rough Road to Freedom: A Memoir* (Grand Rapids: Monarch, 2012), 243. In his acknowledgements on the second edition of *The Bondage Breaker*, Anderson thanks Dr. Robert Saucy, for helping "crystalize my thinking on sanctification" and for helping remain accountable for the "credibility of the message and the integrity of the ministry." He further remarks of his thanks to theologians Dr. Bruce Ware, Dr. Millard Erickson, and Dr. Bruce Demarest for offering "important suggestions to refine the message of freedom in Christ." Neil T. Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2000), 4.

²Neil T. Anderson, interview by author, Franklin, TN, October 3, 2011. Anderson concedes that "over the last thirty years of ministry, my theology has changed. The truth hasn't changed, but my understanding of the truth has changed and it will continue to change if I am growing." Anderson, *Rough Road*, 243.

consistent and generally represent a biblical, historical, and theological understanding of spiritual warfare.

Implications for Evangelism

Anderson's greatest area for improvement is his approach to spiritual warfare in evangelism. In my first meeting with him, he explained that his agreement to meet with me was based on his own recognition of his lack of attention towards evangelism.³ The greatest flaw in his approach is the assumption that his reader is a believer. This is complicated by his views on "carnal Christianity." Anderson needs to begin his writings with an explanation of what it means to be a Christian, so that readers can test and ensure their position in Christ. Non-believers need to understand that without trusting in Christ's sacrifice on the cross and resurrection from the grave and without proclaiming Christ as their Lord and Savior, there is no hope in their battles against the demonic.

Anderson's truth encounter approach could be an excellent approach towards engaging the lost with the saving truths of Christ. One evangelistic avenue to continue and develop might be for Anderson to offer a descriptive list of "Identity in Satan" that compares and contrasts his lists of characteristics of an "Identity in Christ." The book of First John would serve as an excellent tool for distinguishing between the children of God and the children of the devil (1 John 3:10) as a test to determine if someone is in the faith (2 Cor 13:5). Such a list-based approach would be an encounter with truth in line with Anderson's current methodology and would encourage readers to see what fruit is in their lives as evidence pointing towards or against their salvation in faith.⁴

³Anderson, interview, October 3, 2011.

⁴Anderson shares the "Test of Salvation" from 2 Corinthians 13:5 by sharing the "Identity in Christ" list. He writes, "If you died tonight, where would you spend eternity? Would you be with God in heaven? The apostle Paul admonishes you to 'examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves.'" Neil T. Anderson, *The Daily Discipler* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2005), 141. Rich Miller responds to this book's conclusions, writing "I really appreciate your exhortations for us as a ministry to use our influence and widespread impact for evangelism as well as for discipleship and for a reminder that this world is not all there is . . . that there is a literal heaven and hell and that all of us will one day face one

Anderson should recognize the scriptural and historical continuation of occasional demonic possession in non-believers. Should a truth encounter approach to evangelism meet resistance at the level of demonic manifestation in a possessed non-believer, such possession should be distinguished clearly from the oppression and influence of Satan upon believers. Biblically, historically, and theologically it is justifiable to maintain the possibility of using a power encounter for the exorcism of non-believers so that they may then hear, receive, and believe the gospel message of Christ through a truth encounter. Such a method of power encounter should be biblically based and distinguished from the multitude of experientially-based approaches in existence today. Such an evangelistic power encounter should be reserved for only those rare situations when a truth encounter approach to evangelism is met with intense demonic manifestation from a possessed individual.

Anderson's writings also lack substantial attention towards heaven and hell.⁵ Further inclusion and emphasis on the eternal consequences of sin and eternal offer of salvation are important in establishing the biblical necessity of evangelism and missions. If Anderson desires to retain renunciation, rebuking, or commanding language, an appropriate place to articulate such emphasis would be in the context of conversion and public baptism. A final emphasis that is lacking is seen in little encouragement towards believers to evangelize and engage in missions. When such evangelistic encouragement does occur, instructions and modeling are absent.⁶

or the other. I am actually trying to incorporate the gospel into all my conferences and . . . in one of my books . . . I actually put a 'Who We Were Apart from Christ' list. I firmly believe that just as the deepest appreciation of grace comes after a deep understanding of God's judgment against sin, so the greatest appreciation of who we are in Christ comes out of a clear understanding of we were without Him!" Rich Miller, interview with author, February 16, 2014.

⁵"The Narrow Way" is presented based off of Matthew 7:13-23 as is "The Unpardonable Sin" (Mark 3:22-30) with no discussion of Hell. The closest reference is found in saying "If you reject that witness, then you will never come to Christ and experience salvation." Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 524-27.

⁶"We are not all called to be full-time missionaries or evangelists, but we are all called to share our faith and pray. . . . There are two principles that we need to know in order to effectively pray for the lost . . . we should ask God to send them a messenger . . . petition God to give them eternal life. Our

Implications for Discipleship

Anderson succeeds in sharing a generally orthodox understanding of spiritual warfare in discipleship, but his approach to spiritual warfare in discipleship demonstrates significant points of theological and practical concern. Anderson wrongly places such a primacy on discipleship that he almost entirely neglects evangelism and missions as essential components of discipleship. When Anderson refers to demonic attacks on believers, he would be helped to eliminate the use of interior-spatial control language, and instead use influence and oppression language. Such a change in verbiage would more clearly communicate his belief that Christians cannot be possessed. When Anderson chooses to use authoritative language, it would be more biblical to be connected to an exorcism or conversion event, rather than an ongoing component of discipleship growth. Such commands should be rarely seen, concise, and focused on the Lord's rebuking power rather than our own authoritative pronouncements.⁷

In addition to utilizing vast amounts of scripture and prayers, Anderson could further his emphasis on communication with God by offering a work that explores how to personally study the Bible and how to pray scripturally guided prayers. Greater attention should be given towards sin nature and sin's offense to God's holiness as a motivation for repentance, rather than a self-focused desire to be "set free." Terminology such as "set free" also implies a "second blessing" type mentality that might be averted through a

prayers do not save them. They are saved by their own personal faith in the finished work of Christ. However, in His sovereignty, God has chosen to work out His plan of salvation through the Church. We choose to believe, but God saves us." Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 356-57.

⁷Rich Miller responds, "Perhaps we could be a bit tighter in our phraseology in expressing resistance of Satan's attacks in our writings, but I would disagree that any verbal resistance of the enemy should be relegated simply to baptism and conversion. Not all verbal resistance should be seen as 'rebuking.' The sword of the Spirit is the spoken word of God and Jesus modeled addressing the devil with the word of God for us in the wilderness during His temptation. He was not standing against the powers of darkness in the way that God does but in the way that man should (and Adam failed to do). But I do agree that expressing this as 'I resist you, Satan, in your efforts to tempt, accuse or deceive me for it is written . . .' would be a better way to go I think than some of the instances of standing against the enemy currently in the Steps to FIC. Perhaps a fourth edition is warranted . . ." Miller, interview, February 16, 2014.

different phrasing such as is found in Bonhoeffer's "beneath the cross" or "in fellowship."

Anderson's *Discipleship Counseling* model and FICM-USA's approach to CFMU limit the scope of their impact because of their requisite dependence on a high level of literacy. Anderson's writings on spiritual warfare are extremely popular internationally, but their impact could be extended through an alternative, simplified, oral approach, such as a simple catechism or bible storying of areas of confession and belief. Likewise, more attention could be given towards cultural contextualization and application of spiritual warfare truths tailored towards specific cultural issues.

Future Research and Writing Needed

Anderson's later writings are excellent tools for discipleship and counseling. His emphasis on confession and repentance is a helpful corrective to many modern approaches to discipleship. Greater attention and research should be devoted to evaluating historical approaches to repentance, such as Luther and Bonhoeffer, to develop a simple, biblical, and reproducible model of repentance.

One of the limitations of this paper was in its lack of attention towards Anderson's approach to counseling and psychology. Since Anderson's *Discipleship Counseling* is a lay-based ministry, its evaluation and analysis would be helpful and instructive towards churches seeking to spiritually grow their people from within instead of exclusively relying on pastoral or professional counselors.

Kelly's *The Devil at Baptism* offers an interesting intersection between some of Anderson's claims, the power encounter approach to spiritual warfare, and the church's methodology of evangelism and practice of baptism. Greater attention is needed in considering the historical inclusion of renunciation at the point of baptism.

CRI should be reengaged on its position concerning Anderson, and urged to reconsider their continuing claims in light of the majority of his writings and updated

editions. Greater attention on Anderson's approach to spiritual warfare should be given in the academic arena so that a biblical approach in evangelism and discipleship is more pervasive at levels such as the Lausanne Movement and in the seminaries, thus preparing pastors and missionaries for the battles they will encounter. Finally, those who hold to a cessationist position on tongues and miraculous gifts need to be challenged to speak more clearly on their understanding of the demonic and the believer's response and engagement in apparent situations of possession and oppression.

As one may have seen by the scope and length of my research and writing, I greatly enjoyed the opportunity to write on Anderson's approach to spiritual warfare in evangelism and discipleship. I apologize for the inadequacies and shortcomings of this work, but hope and pray that God's truths have been clearly presented and affirmed in a way that is helpful to the reader's call to submit to God and resist the devil (Jas 4:7).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Jonathan Carl



Jonathan Carl grew up in the great state of Texas as the oldest of six kids. He graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point and served in the U.S. Army as a tanker with a combat tour in Iraq in the early 2000s. He had the joy of journeying to Kentucky where he met and married his wonderful wife Brittney. Several years later he became the lead pastor at South Fork Baptist Church where he has served for over a decade. He enjoyed the opportunities to study and earn his Master of Divinity and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Evangelism & Missions from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Jonathan & Brittney have four daughters (Sophia, Lydia, Alia & Mia) with whom they enjoy spending every spare minute they can.



APPENDIX 1

SCRIPTURAL SURVEY OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Genesis 3:1,4 “Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’ . . . ‘You will not surely die,’ the serpent said to the woman.”¹

Genesis 50:20 “As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.”

Leviticus 17:7 “So they shall no more sacrifice their sacrifices to goat demons, after whom they whore. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations.”

Leviticus 19:26 “You shall not interpret omens or tell fortunes.”

Leviticus 19:31 “Do not turn to mediums or necromancers; do not seek them out, and so make yourselves unclean by them: I am the Lord your God.”

Deuteronomy 7:25-26 “The carved images of their gods you shall burn with fire. You shall not covet the silver or the gold that is on them or take it for yourselves, lest you be ensnared by it, for it is an abomination to the LORD your God. And you shall not bring an abominable thing into your house and become devoted to destruction like it. You shall utterly detest and abhor it, for it is devoted to destruction.”

Deuteronomy 18:10-12 “There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord. And because of these abominations the Lord your God is driving them out before you.”

Deuteronomy 32:16-18 “They stirred him to jealousy with strange gods; with abominations they provoked him to anger. They sacrificed to demons that were no gods, to gods they had never known, to new gods that had come recently, whom your fathers had never dreaded. You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you, and you forgot the God who gave you birth”

1 Samuel 16:14-16 “Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and a harmful spirit from the Lord tormented him. And Saul's servants said to him, ‘Behold now, a harmful spirit from God is tormenting you. Let our lord now command your servants who are before you to seek out a man who is skillful in playing the lyre, and when the harmful spirit from God is upon you, he will play it, and you will be well.’”

¹All Scriptures listed are in the English Standard Version.

1 Samuel 16:23 “And whenever the harmful spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand. So Saul was refreshed and was well, and the harmful spirit departed from him.”

2 Samuel 24:1 “Again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, ‘Go, number Israel and Judah.’” [see also 2 Samuel 24:10, 15; 1 Chronicles 21:1]

2 Samuel 24:10 “But David's heart struck him after he had numbered the people. And David said to the Lord, ‘I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O Lord, please take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have done very foolishly.’” [see also 2 Samuel 24:1, 15; 1 Chronicles 21:1]

2 Samuel 24:15 “So the Lord sent a pestilence on Israel from the morning until the appointed time. And there died of the people from Dan to Beersheba 70,000 men.” [see also 2 Samuel 24:1, 10; 1 Chronicles 21:1]

1 Kings 22:19-23 “And Micaiah said, ‘Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing beside him on his right hand and on his left; and the Lord said, ‘Who will entice Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ And one said one thing, and another said another. Then a spirit came forward and stood before the Lord, saying, ‘I will entice him.’ And the Lord said to him, ‘By what means?’ And he said, ‘I will go out, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ And he said, ‘You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do so.’ Now therefore behold, the Lord has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; the Lord has declared disaster for you.”

1 Chronicles 21:1 “Then Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number Israel.” [see also 2 Samuel 24:1, 10, 15]

2 Chronicles 7:14 “if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

2 Chronicles 18:19-27 “And Micaiah said, ‘Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, ‘Who will entice Ahab the king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ And one said one thing, and another said another. Then a spirit came forward and stood before the Lord, saying, ‘I will entice him.’ And the Lord said to him, ‘By what means?’ And he said, ‘I will go out, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ And he said, ‘You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do so.’ Now therefore behold, the Lord has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these your prophets. The Lord has declared disaster concerning you.’ Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came near and struck Micaiah on the cheek and said, ‘Which way did the Spirit of the Lord go from me to speak to you?’ And Micaiah said, ‘Behold, you shall see on that day when you go into an inner chamber to hide yourself.’ And the king of Israel said, ‘Seize Micaiah and take him back to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king's son, and say, ‘Thus says the king, Put this fellow in prison and feed him with meager rations of bread and water until I return in peace.’” And Micaiah said, ‘If you return in peace, the Lord has not spoken by me.’ And he said, ‘Hear, all you peoples!’”

Job 1 and 2—*Satan's Access to God and Attack of Job*

Job 1:7-12 “The LORD said to Satan, ‘From where have you come?’ Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.’ And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?’ Then Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘Does Job fear God for no reason? Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face.’ And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand.’ So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.”

Job 1:20-22 “Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. And he said, ‘Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.’ In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.”

Job 2:2-6 “And the LORD said to Satan, ‘From where have you come?’ Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.’ And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil? He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason’ Then Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face.’ And the LORD said to Satan, ‘Behold, he is in your hand; only spare his life.’

Job 2:9,10 “Then his wife said to him, ‘Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die.’ But he said to her, ‘You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?’ In all this Job did not sin with his lips.”

Job 33:29-30 “Behold, God does all these things, twice, three times, with a man, to bring back his soul from the pit, that he may be lighted with the light of life.”

Job 35:9 “Because of the multitude of oppressions people cry out; they call for help because of the arm of the mighty.”

Job 37:14 “Hear this, O Job; stop and consider the wondrous works of God.”

Job 42:1-3,6 “Then Job answered the LORD and said: ‘I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted. ‘Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?’ Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. . . . therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes.’”

Job 42:12 “And the LORD blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning.”

Psalm 106:36-38 “They served their idols, which became a snare to them. They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons; they poured out innocent

blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan, and the land was polluted with blood.”

Isaiah 9:6 “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

Isaiah 14:12-19 “How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit. Those who see you will stare at you and ponder over you: ‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world like a desert and overthrew its cities, who did not let his prisoners go home?’ All the kings of the nations lie in glory, each in his own tomb; but you are cast out, away from your grave, like a loathed branch, clothed with the slain, those pierced by the sword, who go down to the stones of the pit, like a dead body trampled underfoot.”

Ezekiel 13:17-23 “And you, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people, who prophesy out of their own hearts. Prophesy against them and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Woe to the women who sew magic bands upon all wrists, and make veils for the heads of persons of every stature, in the hunt for souls! Will you hunt down souls belonging to my people and keep your own souls alive? You have profaned me among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, putting to death souls who should not die and keeping alive souls who should not live, by your lying to my people, who listen to lies. Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Behold, I am against your magic bands with which you hunt the souls like birds, and I will tear them from your arms, and I will let the souls whom you hunt go free, the souls like birds. Your veils also I will tear off and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand as prey, and you shall know that I am the LORD. Because you have disheartened the righteous falsely, although I have not grieved him, and you have encouraged the wicked, that he should not turn from his evil way to save his life, therefore you shall no more see false visions nor practice divination. I will deliver my people out of your hand. And you shall know that I am the LORD.’”

Ezekiel 28:11-19 “Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me: ‘Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord God: “You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you. In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you. By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought fire out from your midst; it

consumed you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you. All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever.”

Daniel 4:34 “At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation.”

Zechariah 3:1-7 “Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. And the Lord said to Satan, ‘The Lord rebuke you, O Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?’ Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments. And the angel said to those who were standing before him, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” And to him he said, “Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments.” And I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord was standing by. And the angel of the Lord solemnly assured Joshua, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts: If you will walk in my ways and keep my charge, then you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you the right of access among those who are standing here.’”

Matthew 4—*Satan’s Temptation of Jesus*

Matthew 4:10-11 “Jesus said to him, ‘Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’ Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.”

Matthew 10:1 “He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.”

Matthew 12:28-30 “But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man’s house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house. ‘He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.’”

Matthew 16:23 “But he turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.’”

Matthew 17:14-20 “Jesus Heals a Boy with a Demon And when they came to the crowd, a man came up to him and, kneeling before him, said, ‘Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly. For often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to your disciples, and they could not heal him.’ And Jesus answered, ‘O faithless and twisted generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me.’ And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him, and the boy was healed instantly. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, ‘Why could we not cast it out?’ He said to them, ‘Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.’”

Matthew 24:35 “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”

Matthew 26:53 “Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?”

Mark 1:23-28 “And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, ‘What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God.’ But Jesus rebuked him, saying, ‘Be silent, and come out of him!’ And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, ‘What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.’ And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.”

Mark 1:32-34 “That evening at sundown they brought to him all who were sick or oppressed by demons. And the whole city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons. And he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.”

Mark 5:19-20 “Jesus did not let him, but said, ‘Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.’ So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.”

Mark 9:28-29 “After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, ‘Why couldn’t we drive it out?’ He replied, ‘This kind can come out only by prayer.’”

Luke 8:1-2 “Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out.”

Luke 10:17-20 “The seventy-two returned with joy and said, ‘Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.’ He replied, ‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.’”

Luke 11:24-26 “When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, ‘I will return to the house I left.’ When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first.”

John 13:2 “During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him”

Acts 5:3-5 “But Peter said, ‘Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at

your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God.’ When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all who heard of it.”

Acts 5:12-16 “Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.”

Acts 8:4-8 “Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word. Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ. And the crowds with one accord paid attention to what was being said by Philip when they heard him and saw the signs that he did. For unclean spirits, crying out with a loud voice, came out of many who had them, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. So there was much joy in that city.”

Acts 8:9-13 “But there was a man named Simon, who had previously practiced magic in the city and amazed the people of Samaria, saying that he himself was somebody great. They all paid attention to him, from the least to the greatest, saying, ‘This man is the power of God that is called Great.’ And they paid attention to him because for a long time he had amazed them with his magic. But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Even Simon himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great miracles performed, he was amazed.”

Acts 10:38 “how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.” (part of comprehensive gospel presentation by Peter in Acts 10:34-43)

Acts 13:8-11 “But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, ‘You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time.’ Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand.”

Acts 16:16-18 “As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. She followed Paul and us, crying out, ‘These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.’ And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, ‘I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.’ And it came out that very hour.”

Acts 19:11-12 “And God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them.”

Acts 19:14-16 “Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. But the evil spirit answered them, ‘Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?’¹⁶ And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.”

Acts 19:18-20 “Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver.²⁰ So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.”

Romans 3:23 “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 8:1-2 “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.”

Romans 8:15 “For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’”

Romans 8:26-27 “In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.”

Romans 8:31-39 “What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: ‘For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.’ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 10:9-10 “because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”

Romans 12:1-2 “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act

of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Romans 12:9, 11-12 “Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good . . . Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”

Romans 12:19-21 “Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord. On the contrary: ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

Romans 13:1-2 “Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.”

Romans 13:11-14 “And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.”

1 Corinthians 5:4-5 “When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.”

1 Corinthians 7:5 “Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.”

1 Corinthians 10:20-22 “No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?”

1 Corinthians 12:7-11 “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.”

1 Corinthians 12:27-31 “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.”

1 Corinthians 15:24-26 “Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.”

2 Corinthians 2:10-11 “Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.”

2 Corinthians 4:3-6 “And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

2 Corinthians 11:14-15 “And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.”

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 “So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”
NOTE: Paul’s use of “messenger” is the Greek word *angelos*, which in his 33 other uses of it in the Scriptures it is translated “angel.”

Galatians 5:1 “For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.”

Galatians 6:1-2 “Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

Galatians 6:7-8 “Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.”

Ephesians 2:1-7 “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. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 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 2:12-13 “remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.”

Ephesians 4:26-27 “‘In your anger do not sin’: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.”

Ephesians 6:10-20 “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 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. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.”

Colossians 2:6-8 “Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.”

Colossians 2:15 “He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.”

1 Thessalonians 2:17-18 “But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face, because we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, again and again—but Satan hindered us.”

2 Thessalonians 2:9-11 “The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order

that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

1 Timothy 1:18-20 “This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith, among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.”

1 Timothy 4:1-2 “Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons,² through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared.”

2 Timothy 2:24-26 “And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.”

2 Timothy 3:16-17 “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

Hebrews 2:14-15 “Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.”

Hebrews 13:5-6 “Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’ So we say with confidence, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?’”

James 1:12-15 “Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”

James 1:22-25 “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.”

James 2:10 “For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.”

James 2:18-19 “But someone will say, ‘You have faith; I have deeds.’ Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.”

James 3:15-16 “But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.”

James 4:1 “What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?”

James 4:3-9 “When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely? But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.”

James 5:13-16 “Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”

James 5:19-20 “My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.”

1 Peter 5:8-9 “Be self-controlled and alert. 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 your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.”

2 Peter 2:10-13 “and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones, whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord. But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction, suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you.”

1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

1 John 3:8-10 “Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born

of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.”

1 John 4:1-6 “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.”

1 John 4:10-15 “This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God.”

1 John 4:18-19 “There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us.”

1 John 5:14-15 “And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.”

1 John 5:18 “We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.”

2 John 9 and 10 “Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.”

Jude 1:8-10 “Yet in like manner these people also, relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones. But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you.’ But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively.”

Revelation 2:9 “I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.”

Revelation 2:13 “I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.”

Revelation 2:24 “But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden.”

Revelation 3:9 “Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you.”

Revelation 9:20-21 “The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk, nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.”

Revelation 12:7-12 “Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: ‘Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short.’”

Revelation 16:13-14 “And I saw, coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs. For they are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty.”

Revelation 18:2 “And he called out with a mighty voice, ‘Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast.’”

Revelation 20:1-10 “And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time. I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the

first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years. When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

APPENDIX 2

LAUSANNE III: CAPE TOWN, 2010

Due to the spatial limitations of this book, and the lack of spiritual warfare references within Lausanne III, the treatment of Lausanne III in chapter 3 is a summary and excludes much of the details given to other congresses. This appendix is included to incorporate a similar level of attention given to the other Lausanne congresses.

Lausanne III: Third International Congress on World Evangelization, Cape Town, 2010

Lausanne III took place October 16-25, 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa. The goal of Lausanne III was “to re-stimulate the spirit of Lausanne, as represented in The Lausanne Covenant, and so to promote unity, humility in service, and a call to active global evangelization.”¹ Over 4,200 participants from 198 countries joined together in Cape Town. Although this was numerically smaller than the number of participants in Lausanne II, they also involved “hundreds of thousands more” through nearly 700 GlobalLink sites in more than 95 countries around the world.”²

Significance of the Lausanne III Congress

The events of Lausanne III are still so recent that their long-term impact is difficult to foresee. The centennial commemoration of the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910, combined with the worldwide impact through media technology,

¹“About the Lausanne Movement,” The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.lausanne.org/about.html>.

²“China Missing from Global Table as Cape Town 2010 Congress Opened Sunday in South Africa,” The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.lausanne.org/news-releases/china-missing-from-global-table-as-cape-town-2010-congress-opened-sunday-in-south-africa.html>.

makes its significance more likely among the current generation of evangelical evangelists, missionaries, and pastors. Leading up to the congress, one participant who had been to all three previous congresses expressed hope for the “creation of a mega-strategy that can incorporate all the various groupings of the church today” as well as “a clarification of the theological foundation for evangelism and mission.”³ Unfortunately, it does not seem that there will emerge any mega-strategy, but there is a renewed doctrinal emphasis through its thirty-three page long doctrinal statement, the Cape Town Commitment.

Spiritual Warfare at Lausanne III

Cape Town’s engagement with spiritual warfare is seen primarily through The Cape Town Commitment as their theological statement.⁴ In the Cape Town Commitment, there are several mentions of spiritual warfare. Spiritual warfare references are made in speaking of Christ’s ministry and miracles as demonstrating “the victory of the kingdom of God over evil and evil powers.”⁵ His crucifixion is described as defeating “the powers of evil” and in his return he will “destroy Satan, evil and death.”⁶ The Holy Spirit is also referenced in how he enables us to “prevail over the forces of darkness.”⁷ Caution is emphasized in evaluating phenomena that may not be of the Holy Spirit, but rather counterfeited by “other spirits.”⁸ The Cape Town

³Bill Wagner, “A Hopeful Report from Lausanne,” *Baptist Press*, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?id=33938>.

⁴“Cape Town Commitment—a Declaration of Belief and a Call to Action,” in *Lausanne 3: The International Congress on World Evangelization* (Cape Town, South Africa: The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 2010), accessed November 30, 2013, <http://www.lausanne.org/en/documents/ctcommitment.html>.

⁵The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, “Cape Town Commitment.”

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

⁸The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, “Cape Town Commitment.”

Commitment also affirms its commitment to previous Lausanne statements.⁹ The Cape Town Commitment is then explained to serve as “roadmap for The Lausanne Movement over the next ten years” by explaining biblical convictions and a call to action.¹⁰

Absence of spiritual warfare language. It is quickly apparent that there are relatively few spiritual warfare references in the Cape Town Commitment. There are only two uses of the term “spiritual warfare” in the entire thirty-plus page document, in reference to theological education and social injustice.¹¹ Throughout the document there are only four mentions of Satan, referencing God’s victory, Satan’s rebellion, and mankind’s responsibility.¹² Throughout the Commitment there are only two references towards the demonic, referencing the Christian mission through evangelism and discipleship by “overcoming evil powers, casting out demonic spirits” and a Christian’s “authority to confront the demonic powers of evil that aggravate human conflict.”¹³ The

⁹“And second, we remain committed to the primary documents of the Movement—The Lausanne Covenant (1974), and The Manila Manifesto (1989). These documents clearly express core truths of the biblical gospel and apply them to our practical mission in ways that are still relevant and challenging. We confess that we have not been faithful to commitments made in those documents. But we commend them and stand by them, as we seek to discern how we must express and apply the eternal truth of the gospel in the ever- changing world of our own generation.” Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹“We give ourselves afresh to the promotion of justice, including solidarity and advocacy on behalf of the marginalized and oppressed. We recognize such struggle against evil as a dimension of spiritual warfare that can only be waged through the victory of the cross and resurrection in the power of the Holy Spirit, and with constant prayer. . . . Theological education engages in spiritual warfare, as ‘we demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.’” Ibid.

¹²“God won the decisive victory over Satan, death and all evil powers, liberated us from their power and fear, and ensured their eventual destruction. . . . The world of God's good creation has become the world of human and satanic rebellion against God. . . . Godly love, however, also includes critical discernment, for all cultures show not only positive evidence of the image of God in human lives, but also the negative fingerprints of Satan and sin. . . .At his return, Jesus will execute God's judgment, destroy Satan, evil and death, and establish the universal reign of God.” Ibid.

¹³“This is true of mission in all its dimensions: evangelism, bearing witness to the truth, discipling, peacemaking, social engagement, ethical transformation, caring for creation, overcoming evil powers, casting out demonic spirits, healing the sick, suffering and enduring under persecution. . . . We bear witness to God who was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. It is solely in the name of Christ, and in the victory of his cross and resurrection, that we have authority to confront the demonic powers of

committee also uses the term “evil powers” on three occasions and the phrase “forces of darkness” once to explain the ongoing conflict between Satan’s followers and the followers of Christ.¹⁴

While these uses are helpful, other spiritual warfare terms and references, such as “exorcism,” “possession,” “deliverance,” “angels,” “demonization,” “spiritual conflict,” “authorities,” and “principalities” are noticeably absent. In addition to these absences and infrequent references, the term evil is used frequently (seventeen times) but in ways that are not referencing Satan or his demonic forces. Despite the little use of spiritual warfare language, there is a recognition of the need for a spiritual warfare understanding, observing that “the single strongest difference between the early church and the modern church is the lack of supernatural power in the modern church, and there is such an attendant lack of prayer, spiritual discernment, and capacity for healing, deliverance, and supernatural warfare.”¹⁵

Discipleship focus. The Cape Town Commitment, with a worldwide focus on evangelism, seeks a greater commitment to worldwide discipleship, lamenting “the scandal of our shallowness and lack of discipleship.”¹⁶ One of their great avenues towards an increased discipleship focus is through theological education, stating that “Theological education engages in spiritual warfare, as ‘we demolish arguments and

evil that aggravate human conflict, and have power to minister his reconciling love and peace.” The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, “Cape Town Commitment.”

¹⁴“In his ministry and miracles, Jesus announced and demonstrated the victory of the kingdom of God over evil and evil powers. . . .The Spirit enables us to proclaim and demonstrate the gospel, to discern the truth, to pray effectively and to prevail over the forces of darkness.” Ibid.

¹⁵Os Guinness and David Wells, “Global Gospel, Global Era: Christian Discipleship and Mission in the Age of Globalization,” The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, accessed December 24, 2013, <http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/resources/detail/10566>.

¹⁶The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, “Cape Town Commitment.”

every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”¹⁷

Holy Spirit focus. The Cape Town Commitment offers areas of corrective focus in both belief and action towards a better biblical understanding and application of spiritual warfare. They emphasize a greater focus on the Holy Spirit, noting He is essential for “mission in all its dimensions: evangelism, bearing witness to the truth, discipling, peace-making, social engagement, ethical transformation, caring for creation, overcoming evil powers, casting out demonic spirits, healing the sick, suffering and enduring under persecution.”¹⁸ The Cape Town congress highlights a greater need for repentance and holiness and reliance on the Holy Spirit, asserting that

we need to be people of humility who realize that the power to see lives changed does not come from better methods but cleaner vessels. World evangelization is an empty enterprise without the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Dr. Bill Bright often said that if he had only one message to give, he would talk to Christians about the power of the Holy Spirit and the necessity of being filled with the Holy Spirit every moment of every day.¹⁹

They encourage a “greater awakening to this biblical truth” but warn that there are “many abuses that masquerade under the name of the Holy Spirit, the many ways in which all kinds of phenomena are practiced and praised which are not the gifts of the

¹⁷“Theological education serves first to train those who lead the Church as pastor- teachers, equipping them to teach the truth of God's Word with faithfulness, relevance and clarity; and second, to equip all God's people for the missional task of understanding and relevantly communicating God's truth in every cultural context.” The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, “Cape Town Commitment.”

¹⁸“Our engagement in mission, then, is pointless and fruitless without the presence, guidance and power of the Holy Spirit. This is true of mission in all its dimensions: evangelism, bearing witness to the truth, discipling, peace-making, social engagement, ethical transformation, caring for creation, overcoming evil powers, casting out demonic spirits, healing the sick, suffering and enduring under persecution. All we do in the name of Christ must be led and empowered by the Holy Spirit. The New Testament makes this clear in the life of the early Church and the teaching of the apostles. It is being demonstrated today in the fruitfulness and growth of Churches where Jesus' followers act confidently in the power of the Holy Spirit, with dependence and expectation.” Ibid.

¹⁹Paul Eshleman, “World Evangelization in the 21st Century: Prioritizing the Essential Elements of the Great Commission,” The Lausanne Committee on World Evangelization, accessed December 24, 2013, <http://conversation.lausanne.org/uploads/resources/files/10522/Eshleman.pdf>.

Holy Spirit as clearly taught in the New Testament.”²⁰ The Commitment encourages and reminds believers that “Spirit enables us to proclaim and demonstrate the gospel, to discern the truth, to pray effectively and to prevail over the forces of darkness.”²¹

Jesus over evil. In addition to emphasizing the Spirit’s role in spiritual warfare, there is a great emphasis on Jesus’ victories over evil. The Cape Town Commitment holds that the one of the purposes of Jesus’ ministry and miracles was to announce and demonstrate “the victory of the kingdom of God over evil and evil powers.”²² In its statements, the Cape Town Covenant reinforces an assertion of the Deliver Us from Evil Consultation, that “in relation to dealing with demonic powers, the *Christus Victor* model, which stresses Christ’s victory over sin, Satan, and death, is crucial.”²³ The Cape Town Commitment connects personal obedience and responsibility in its empowerment for evangelism and discipleship by the Holy Spirit to “bear witness to Jesus Christ and all his teaching, in all the world.”²⁴

²⁰“There is no true or whole gospel, and no authentic biblical mission, without the Person, work and power of the Holy Spirit. We pray for a greater awakening to this biblical truth, and for its experience to be reality in all parts of the worldwide body of Christ. However, we are aware of the many abuses that masquerade under the name of the Holy Spirit, the many ways in which all kinds of phenomena are practised and praised which are not the gifts of the Holy Spirit as clearly taught in the New Testament. There is great need for more profound discernment, for clear warnings against delusion, for the exposure of fraudulent and self-serving manipulators who abuse spiritual power for their own ungodly enrichment. Above all there is a great need for sustained biblical teaching and preaching, soaked in humble prayer, that will equip ordinary believers to understand and rejoice in the true gospel and to recognize and reject false gospels.” Eshleman, “World Evangelization.”

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid.

²³“In his death on the cross, Jesus took our sin upon himself in our place, bearing its full cost, penalty and shame, defeated death and the powers of evil, and accomplished the reconciliation and redemption of all creation. . . . In his bodily resurrection, Jesus was vindicated and exalted by God, completed and demonstrated the full victory of the cross, and became the forerunner of redeemed humanity and restored creation. . . . Since his ascension, Jesus is reigning as Lord over all history and creation. . . . At his return, Jesus will execute God’s judgment, destroy Satan, evil and death, and establish the universal reign of God.” Eshleman, “World Evangelization.”; A. Scott Moreau, ed., *Deliver Us from Evil: An Uneasy Frontier in Christian Mission* (Monrovia, CA: World Vision International, 2002), 17.

²⁴The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, “Cape Town Commitment.”

Unity in the church. The Cape Town Commitment also places great emphasis on church unity, recognizing Satan’s “temptation to split the body of Christ.”²⁵ They explain, “A divided Church has no message for a divided world. Our failure to live in reconciled unity is a major obstacle to authenticity and effectiveness in mission.”²⁶ In emphasizing church unity, they highlight their God’s desire for the Gospel to penetrate souls across the world, while reminding believers of Satan’s thwarting efforts against the Gospel work.

Gospel focus. The Gospel is one of the greatest focuses of the Cape Town Commitment, highlighting it as the “core of our identity.”²⁷ Their emphasis on the good news of Christ is highlighted in contrast to living in a “world of bad news.”²⁸ They further explain that although the “effects of sin and the power of evil have corrupted every dimension of human personhood (spiritual, physical, intellectual and relational),” Christ’s resurrection was “the decisive victory over Satan, death and all evil powers” that “liberated us from their power and fear, and ensured their eventual destruction.”²⁹ The

²⁵“While we recognize that our deepest unity is spiritual, we long for greater recognition of the missional power of visible, practical, earthly unity. So we urge Christian sisters and brothers worldwide, for the sake of our common witness and mission, to resist the temptation to split the body of Christ, and to seek the paths of reconciliation and restored unity wherever possible.” Ibid.

²⁶“We lament the dividedness and divisiveness of our churches and organizations. We deeply and urgently long for Christians to cultivate a spirit of grace and to be obedient to Paul’s command to ‘make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.’” Ibid.

²⁷“As disciples of Jesus, we are gospel people. The core of our identity is our passion for the biblical good news of the saving work of God through Jesus Christ. We are united by our experience of the grace of God in the gospel and by our motivation to make that gospel of grace known to the ends of the earth by every possible means.” Ibid.

²⁸“We love the good news in a world of bad news. The gospel addresses the dire effects of human sin, failure and need. Human beings rebelled against God, rejected God’s authority and disobeyed God’s Word. In this sinful state, we are alienated from God, from one another and from the created order. Sin deserves God’s condemnation. Those who refuse to repent and ‘do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ will be punished with eternal destruction and shut out from the presence of God.’” Ibid.

²⁹“God accomplished the reconciliation of believers with himself and with one another across all boundaries and enmities.” The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, “Cape Town Commitment.”

Commitment affirms a biblical understanding that the Gospel is God’s eternal and secure work of salvation, not a human-centered, temporary, conditional, works-based salvation.³⁰ They necessarily connect salvation with transformation, emphasizing that “Paul's missional goal was to bring about 'the obedience of faith' among all nations” and that true believers will see life transformation in repentance, faith, and increasing obedience as the “living proof of saving faith.”³¹

³⁰“Being justified by faith we have peace with God and no longer face condemnation. We receive the forgiveness of our sins. We are born again into a living hope by sharing Christ's risen life. We are adopted as fellow heirs with Christ. We become citizens of God's covenant people, members of God's family and the place of God's dwelling. So by trusting in Christ, we have full assurance of salvation and eternal life, for our salvation ultimately depends, not on ourselves, but on the work of Christ and the promise of God. 'Nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' How we love the gospel's promise!” Ibid.

³¹“We love the transformation the gospel produces. The gospel is God's life- transforming power at work in the world. ‘It is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.’ Faith alone is the means by which the blessings and assurance of the gospel are received. Saving faith however never remains alone, but necessarily shows itself in obedience. Christian obedience is ‘faith expressing itself through love.’ We are not saved by good works, but having been saved by grace alone we are ‘created in Christ Jesus to do good works.’ . . . Repentance and faith in Jesus Christ are the first acts of obedience the gospel calls for; ongoing obedience to God's commands is the way of life that gospel faith enables, through the sanctifying Holy Spirit. Obedience is thus the living proof of saving faith and the living fruit of it. Obedience is also the test of our love for Jesus. ‘Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me.’ ‘We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands.’ How we love the gospel's power!” Ibid.

APPENDIX 3

DEMAREST, ERICKSON, AND WARE'S EVALUATION OF ANDERSON

The below letter was an evaluation of Anderson's ministry and writings done at Anderson's request in 1999 by Bruce Demarest, Millard Erickson, and Bruce Ware.

Formatting is original to how it was received.

November 15, 1999

Freedom in Christ Ministries
c/o Lyn Burgess
491 E. Lambert Road
La Habra, CA 90631

Dear Members of Freedom in Christ Ministries:

We were invited by Freedom in Christ Ministries to meet with Dr. Neil Anderson to examine the biblical and theological correctness and adequacy of his teachings. The occasion for this interaction centers on criticisms and charges brought against some of his teachings by the Christian Research Institute. In preparation for this meeting, we read (1) the "Bondage Maker" series of articles by Elliot Miller in the *Christian Research Journal*, (2) transcripts of four radio programs devoted to a critique of Neil Anderson's teachings conducted by Hank Hanegraaff and Elliot Miller, and (3) all the books by Neil Anderson sent by Freedom In Christ for our review (i.e., *Victory Over the Darkness*, *The Bondage Breaker*, *Helping Others Find Freedom in Christ*, *Finding Hope Again*, and *The Common Made Holy*). We also interviewed independently (1) some persons who have used Anderson's materials in counseling and/or church ministry, and (2) some published and respected authors who are conversant with Anderson's books, methods, and conference ministry. We met personally with Dr. Neil Anderson on Friday, October 29, 1999, from 1:00 to 9:00 p.m. and again on Saturday, October 30, 1999, from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. to share with him the preliminary contents of our report.

We come to this assignment as evangelical systematic theologians. Yet all of us have served in pastoral ministry positions. We share in common a deep concern for, and experience in, facilitating spiritual growth and counseling within the church. We understand that Dr. Neil Anderson is primarily a practitioner and spiritual counselor; yet as he has testified to us, he too seeks to write and teach from a biblical and theological foundation. And it is apparent to us that Dr. Anderson and members of his Board and staff called for this meeting because he and they care about the theological integrity of Freedom in Christ

Ministries.

We commend Neil Anderson for the strong character and integrity of his person. He manifests no apparent arrogance or self-glorifying pride, although he is very confident in his convictions. He told us clearly that where he is shown error, he is willing to change his views and rewrite his materials to make any needed corrections. It is apparent that he is a believer with a strong confidence in the power of the gospel to bring people into a life changing relationship with God through faith in Christ. Beyond this, he believes deeply in the power of God to transform believers' lives. Dr. Anderson is concerned that too few believers understand the rich and wondrous truths of their identity as new persons in Christ, and he longs to see the message of this liberating truth spread throughout the church. We find in Dr. Anderson evidences of the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, etc.). While it is clear that he is weary of the criticisms brought against him and that he has felt wrongly criticized and under attack, he gave no indication of having a vengeful or retaliatory spirit. We believe him to be a sincere and committed servant of God. He seems to have successfully resisted the temptations (particularly to pride and self-aggrandizement) that come to the director of a ministry with high visibility. He has had, from human measurements, a successful ministry with many individuals and churches expressing great appreciation for the spiritual benefits of his conferences and writings.

We wish to commend Neil Anderson for his deep longing for and emphasis on Christians coming to understand their identity in Christ. In conversation with him and in his writings, he returns to this theme again and again. We affirm with Dr. Anderson that to know our position in Christ is extremely important (e.g., Rom. 6:3: "Or do you not know. . ."). Also, he rightly seeks to help Christians see the spiritual nature of the battle they face (e.g., Eph. 6:12: "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of his darkness. . ."). He rightly stresses the power of Christ that affords Christians, by their union and identity with Him, the resources needed to stand against the devil and his schemes. We believe fully that Dr. Anderson affirms the gospel of Jesus Christ, the necessity of faith in Christ for salvation, and that believers are justified and positionally set apart unto Christ at the moment of exercising saving faith. In our judgment, Anderson stands well within the bounds of Christian orthodoxy, and in no respect do we consider his teachings heretical. He evidences no affinity with New Age thought, although some of his statements could be misunderstood as being similar to New Age beliefs. He also avoids the extremes of certain spiritual warfare and deliverance movements that have developed within and without evangelicalism. In short, there is much for which to commend Dr. Anderson, both in his character as a Christian and in many of the core teachings of his writings and ministry.

We questioned Dr. Anderson specifically relating to two charges of a non-theological nature that have been brought against him by the Christian Research Institute. First, concerning the charge that Mr. Hanegraaff has written letters asking Anderson to meet but that Anderson has refused such invitations, Anderson's clear and unequivocal response is that he has never received such a letter or invitation. He claims that the only proposed meetings between himself and Mr. Hanegraaff have been by the invitation of Freedom in Christ Ministries, but that schedule conflicts precluded their meeting. Second, concerning the charge that Anderson is concealing the names of conspirators guilty of criminal involvement in Satanic Ritual Abuse, Anderson denied this charge and told us that he does not know names of doctors, pastors, or lawyers who are responsible for conspiratorial involvement in

Satanic Ritual Abuse. We are unable to adjudicate these charges and Anderson's responses, but we believed that Anderson should tell us plainly his position on the matter, and he did so without hesitation.

Our report now turns to areas of concern regarding aspects of the theological foundation of Anderson's teaching and ministry. In our judgment, several issues need reassessment and clarification.

1. Whether Christians retain the old sin nature.

Anderson denies that a Christian has a sin nature; yet he does affirm that the Christian's new nature is affected by the "flesh" and so is capable of sinning. We recognize that other respected evangelical theologians and biblical scholars hold this view. Nevertheless, Anderson's view has the potential of failing to do justice to the ongoing residual effects of the sin nature inherited from Adam and so to sin's continued power in the life of the believer. In his desire for Christians to understand their new identity in Christ, and by saying that Christians are not sinners but saints, we believe that his position may lead to a minimizing of the real and ongoing presence and power of sin. If the Christian follows Anderson's advice and thinks of himself or herself as a saint and *not* a sinner, he or she might be tempted to attribute sinful inclinations and deep struggles with sinful desires to some external cause, such as demon oppression. The believer then might be led to discount the depth and corruption of the sin in his or her own life.

We encourage Dr. Anderson to rethink this view in light of Romans 13:11-14, Galatians 5:13-17, and 1 Peter 2:11. The apostles Peter and Paul clearly affirm that believers are united with Christ, that we are new creatures in Christ, and that we possess a new citizenship and identity. But they also realistically acknowledge the ongoing power that sin exerts in believing lives. While no longer *slaves* to sin (Rom. 6:6-7, 8:9-14), Christians still possess ingrained sinful passions, inclinations, and urges. Sin as a lively principle and power yet operates within the Christian's heart. As such, it is best not to reduce ongoing sin to the weaker notion of a *pattern* of thinking and behavior carried over from one's pre-Christian life. We believe that Dr. Anderson's "computer" illustration may be misleading. He says that the hard drive is new and properly functioning, but that the software that comes over from one's unbelieving life needs to be re-programmed. We suggest that if he uses this illustration he indicate that there remain fundamental problems with the new hard drive as well as with the programming. Yes, believers are new creatures in Christ, but sin still infests that new nature and must be resisted and defeated throughout the course of the Christian's life on earth. Said differently, we believe that the basic problem of Christians as it relates to sin is fundamentally ontological and only secondarily functional. That is, the core of our being (ontology) is affected by and infected with sin. Consequently, root human dysfunction is not corrected merely by choosing what to believe or obey (functional). Our choices do matter, and perception of who we are in Christ is critical. But understanding ourselves as deeply affected by ongoing propensities and inclinations to sin also reflects the realistic teaching of the Word of God. The biblical picture of residual sin in believers impels us to even greater dependence on God, by whose power we may overcome sinful thoughts, passions, and behavior.

2. Whether the residual effects of sin are explainable in terms of demon activity.

As indicated above, because Dr. Anderson instructs Christians to think of themselves as saints and not sinners, and because less emphasis is placed on the ongoing power of sin in believing lives, there appears a tendency to attribute to Satan or demonic activity what more correctly should be attributed to pervasive human sinfulness. Even though Anderson admits that Christians possess the “flesh,” he stresses that Satan uses these patterns and wounds which remain in programmed form from our pre-conversion life. It is almost as if the flesh itself is not sufficient to cause the believer problems, but only the flesh as used by the devil. In addition, Anderson holds that Christians may not only be influenced and harassed by demons but, in extreme cases, controlled by demons. He suggests that demonic influences at whatever level must be resisted by the truth of who we are in Christ. Anderson also holds that it is possible that demons have had, and may still have, sexual relations with humans (e.g., he believes Genesis 6:1-2 speaks of this). He also affirms the reality of ancestral demons and the need for Christians to renounce ancestral spirits.

We encourage Dr. Anderson to affirm with Luther that believers are *simul justus et peccator*, simultaneously righteous and sinful, saints and sinners. We believe it is more in keeping with biblical teaching to affirm both sides of the complex reality that is the new creature in Christ. Seeing ourselves as sinners can function positively in the Christian life. If, in fact, believers have ongoing and pervasive sinful inclinations, knowing this may result in even greater dependence on Christ for victory. The view of residual sinfulness need not lead to defeatism, as alleged. Furthermore, we note an absence of guidance in the New Testament epistles as to how or when believers might rebuke demons. In contrast, the epistles place the regular responsibility on Christians themselves to resist the lusts of the flesh and to discipline themselves unto godliness. We believe that the Christian’s main hindrance to holiness is his or her own ingrained sinfulness. Without question, the devil schemes against Christians. But we fall when volitionally we yield to temptation and obey the urges of the flesh. While appropriate to pray for protection from satanic influences, we may overestimate how much control Satan actually exercises over believers in Christ. Furthermore, we note that there is no biblical warrant for Anderson’s suggestion that ancestral spirits may oppress Christians in the present. Yes, sins of the fathers are passed on to the third and fourth generations (Exod. 20:5). But evidence is wanting that the transmission of sins’ consequences may descend on believers in the form of some ancestral demon. In addition, we judge that the practice of addressing Satan directly is not encouraged biblically and may prove dangerous. Finally, we do not concur with the view that proclaiming “the full counsel of God” means that parents should teach children that they may experience frightening encounters with demons. Such discussions about demonic appearances in the night may unduly traumatize children and lead to psychological problems later on.

3. Whether the root cause of spiritual problems is chiefly cognitive.

If we have read and heard Dr. Anderson correctly, we understand him to say that a right perception of who we are as children of God is the key to freedom. Furthermore, Anderson conveys a certain promise and expectation of an immediate experience of freedom through coming to understand and embrace our new identity in Christ (on average, a three hour counseling session). In this regard, perception is central. Anderson avers that we live outwardly what we perceive ourselves to be. Thus, when we understand our identity differently, we change our way of life.

While there is important truth in this line of reasoning, we respond that it can be misconstrued to mean that perception shapes reality. We know that Anderson's desire is that believers should clearly comprehend their new identity in Christ. But the message linking perception with Christian living raises the question of whether the perception is based on reality. Anderson might be interpreted as saying that correct thinking and perception will solve all the Christian's problems. That is, whatever people believe about themselves, they will live out. We urge great care when explaining this concept. Correct self-perception is critical. But, in fact, only *the truth and reality* that founds the self-perception will enable the Christian, now understanding his or her new identity in Christ, to live in Christ's liberating power. Furthermore, whereas we affirm with Anderson that exposing the lies of Satan and knowing what Christ has done for the Christian is absolutely necessary, this is only the first step. The unfolding experience of freedom and true growth in wholeness and holiness involves much more than a change in one's cognitive awareness. Holistically, the Christian's mind, will, affections, relational capacity, and behavior must all be transformed for true freedom to be realized. Each of these capacities and actions must be reshaped after the pattern of Jesus Christ. This occurs through the consistent and usually lengthy process involving heart engagement with Christ, disciplined training, worship, prayer, and spiritual mentoring. There are few "quick fixes." Growth into true spiritual freedom is a life-long, progressive process. We sense Dr. Anderson's burden to help Christians understand their freedom from sin's mastery through faith union with Christ. Whereas we affirm with him this wonderful truth and encourage its continued advocacy, we also encourage Dr. Anderson to place greater emphasis on the regular training in righteousness that must follow one's renunciation of sin and embracing one's identity in Christ. We believe that the treatment of sanctification and growth in holiness presented in Dr. Anderson's and Dr. Robert Saucy's recent book, *The Common Made Holy* (1997), represents a more biblically nuanced and balanced treatment of the subject versus earlier works, such as *Victory over the Darkness* (1990) and *The Bondage Breaker* (1990). Critics should recognize the development in Dr. Anderson's thinking which, by his own admission, is currently taking place.

4. Whether life experiences form our theology of deliverance, or vice versa.

George Barna makes the following observation of contemporary American culture. "If it works, christen it. If it feels right, find biblical passages to support it." While it would be wrong to suggest that Dr. Anderson embodies this error, we observe that he tends to rely heavily on experiences he has had or heard of, rather than careful biblical interpretation, for the shaping of his ministry of deliverance and freedom. The main exception to this is Dr. Anderson's excellent exposition of the Christian's new identity in Christ. On this matter he develops his theology from indisputable biblical texts. But particularly in the area of demonic activity in believers' lives and what might be called the cognitive therapy aspect of his teaching, Anderson relies heavily on personal experiences. He appears to interpret Scripture in the light of experience, rather than personal experiences being informed by Scripture rightly interpreted. In other words, Dr. Anderson tends to develop his theology from the practical experience of ministry. His own personal testimony reveals the central place that experience has had in shaping his theological understanding.

We encourage Dr. Anderson to reconsider this methodology. In the New Testament Paul confronted Peter with truth that caused him to challenge his experience (Gal. 2:11-14). Priscilla and Aquilla corrected Apollos by presenting him with the truth (Acts 18:24-28). We encourage Dr. Anderson to develop a more accurate theology of ministry from the

authoritative biblical materials. In addition, we encourage him to evaluate carefully reports of what appear to be bizarre experiences of demonic activity (e.g., women who claim to have had sexual relations with demons), and not to generalize from such experiences in regard to the Christian public at large. We believe that Dr. Anderson is sincere in his intentions, but we caution the way in which experiences appear to form the basis of his theology and practice of ministry.

5. Whether Christians achieve instantaneous victory, or “freedom in Christ.”

We agree with Dr. Anderson that some steps to Christian living are foundational. All persons need to repent, acknowledge their dependence on God, and trust Christ alone for salvation. And all need to know who they are in Christ. But beyond these common truths, we wonder whether Anderson’s methodology communicates a ‘one size fits all’ programmatic approach to Christian wholeness and holiness. Unless it is made clear to Christians that repenting of sin and embracing their identity in Christ are just the first steps in a lifelong process, they may gain false and unrealistic expectations of immediate spiritual victory. In cases where freedom and victory are not immediately realized, individuals may feel misled and experience more discouragement and despair. Indeed, Christians need to understand their new identity, but they also need to know that *every day* is a battle for their souls. Every day, sin needs to be resisted and Christ’s power must be embraced afresh. We encourage Dr. Anderson to teach the residual effects of sin in believers and the need for progressive transformation of the whole person. We are also concerned that Anderson’s methodology can be misused in the hands of lay counselors who may deal with serious problems such as Satanic Ritual Abuse, dissociative disorders, alleged demonic control, and the like. There may be a lack of supervision as to how others might use these principles in counseling contexts. For example, the Seven Steps to Freedom in Christ may be employed in formulaic ways, giving the impression that merely going through these steps will bring spiritual deliverance. We urge that great care be taken as to how these materials may be put to use in ministry situations, especially by lay people.

Summation

We repeat our judgment that Dr. Anderson’s views do not transgress the boundaries of Christian orthodoxy. But we believe that his views concerning the absence of a sin nature in Christians, the widespread “demonization” of believers indwelt by Christ, the notion that the Christian’s major problem is failure to understand his or her position in Christ, theology of ministry guided by experience, and program of instantaneous victory and freedom, require more precise articulation. For the good of those to whom Freedom in Christ ministers, we covet that teachings that appear partial or one-sided be revisited to include complementary scriptural truths. In this way, the wholeness of biblical teaching will be presented to Christians in search of growth.

We firmly believe Dr. Neil Anderson to be a true brother in Christ whose ministry, overall, is of great benefit to the church. We urge that criticisms of his teaching be offered in a spirit of gentleness and compassion, not in sharpness of rebuke. Christians should always display grace and charity toward brothers and sisters in the Lord. The apostle Paul in Galatians 6:10 instructs us to “do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (cf. 1 Pet. 3:9 and Eph. 4:29, 32). Our opinion is that problems in Dr. Anderson’s teachings or writings do not constitute such major theological or practical

difficulties as to warrant sustained public refutation and denunciation. While we recommend the theological refinements cited above, we trust that God will give Dr. Anderson grace and strength to continue his ministry of assisting people to know true and lasting freedom in Christ.

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APPENDIX 4

ANDERSON'S STATEMENTS ON SIN AND SIN NATURE

The below statements are shared by Anderson and Freedom in Christ Ministry as a response to concerns towards their theological understanding of sin and sin nature. Formatting is original to how it was retrieved.

Do Christians Still Have a Sin Nature? By Dr. Neil T. Anderson

Adapted From: *God's Power at Work in You*, co-authored by Dr. Robert Saucy and Dr. Neil T. Anderson, Harvest House.

Are Christians sinners or are they saints? Or both? Whether a Christian has two natures is not an easy question to answer, which is evidenced by the fact that conservative theologians don't perfectly agree. They do agree that Christians sin, but how or why is explained differently. Part of the problem is semantic and can be cleared up by defining terms. Reconciling divergent theological positions and perspectives on reality (i.e., worldview) is the more difficult problem to resolve.

Old Man, Nature and Flesh

The biblical terms old man (or old self), nature and flesh can carelessly be used interchangeably when they need to be clearly distinguished. The Bible says we were dead in our trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1) and ". . . were by nature children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3). In other words, we were born physically alive, but spiritually dead. We had neither the presence of God in our lives nor the knowledge of His ways. Consequently, we all lived independent of God. This independence is one of the chief characteristics of the flesh. According to Paul, "The flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another" (Gal. 5:17). They are in opposition

because the Holy Spirit, like Jesus, will not operate independent of our heavenly Father, while that is the chief characteristic of the flesh.

Such is the state of fallen humanity—sinful by nature and spiritually dead (i.e., separated from God). Fallen humanity had no other choice than to find their identity in their natural existence and determine their purpose and meaning in life independent of God. In addition, the heart, which is the center of our being, "is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick" (Jer. 17:9). Paul says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Fallen humanity lives "in the flesh" and "those who are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:8). We were depraved. Every aspect of our being was corrupted.

The Whole Gospel

The good news is that Christ came to change all that. However, the gospel we most hear sounds like this: "Jesus is the Messiah who came to die for our sins, and if we will put our trust in Him, we will be forgiven of our sins and when we die, we will get to go to Heaven." What is wrong with that?

At best it is only a third of the gospel; and it gives the impression that eternal life is something we get when we physically die! If you were going to save a dead man, what would you do? Give him life? If that is all you did, he would only die again. To save the dead person, you would have to do two things. First, you would have to cure the disease that caused him to die. The Bible says, "The wages of sin is death . . ." (Rom. 6:23a). So Jesus went to the cross and died for our sins. Is that the whole gospel? Absolutely not! Thank God for Good Friday, but it was Christ's resurrection that gave us life. We need to finish the previous verse: ". . . but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23b). Eternal life is not something we get when we die. In fact, if you don't have eternal (spiritual) life before you physically die, you will have nothing but hell to look forward to. John says, "He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life" (1 Jn. 5:12).

Sin has separated us from God, so we use the cross as a bridge diagram to present the gospel. But when we cross the bridge, are we the same person we were before? We will likely perceive ourselves to be nothing more than forgiven sinners instead of redeemed saints if we leave the resurrection out of our gospel presentations. What Adam and Eve lost in the fall was life (i.e. spiritual life) and Jesus said, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (Jn. 10:10).

As a result of the fall, Satan became the rebel holder of authority on planet earth. Even Jesus referred to Satan as the ruler of this world (Jn. 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). The defeat of Satan is the third part of the gospel and the one most overlooked by the western church. "The Son of God appeared for this purpose to destroy the works of the devil" (1 Jn. 3:8). This part of the gospel is just as critical since "the whole world lies in the power of the evil one" (1 Jn. 5:19). Believers need to know that they are now children of God (Jn. 1:12) who are forgiven and spiritually alive in Christ (Col. 2:13), and they also need to know that they have authority over the kingdom of darkness because they are seated with Christ in the heavenlies (Eph. 2:6).

Freedom in Christ ministries has been helping Christians find their freedom in Christ by guiding them through a repentance process that helps them resolve their personal and spiritual conflicts. It has been our observation that every struggling and defeated Christian had one thing in common—none of them knew who they were in Christ and they didn't understand what it meant to be a child of God. Why not? Paul writes, "Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba Father'" (Gal. 4:6). But they had no awareness of that. If the Holy Spirit is bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God (Romans 8:16), why weren't they sensing His presence? Many question their salvation since they don't sense any spiritual confirmation. They did sense His presence, however, if they successfully resolved their personal and spiritual conflicts through genuine repentance and faith in God.

Alive and Free in Christ

Being spiritually alive in Christ is the major theme of Paul's theology, which is reflected in the following verse: "For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every city" (1 Cor. 4:17, *emphasis added*).

According to Paul, every believer is identified with Christ:

In His death	Rom. 6:3; Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:1-3
In His burial	Rom. 6:4
In His resurrection	Rom. 6:5, 8, 11
In His life	Rom. 5:10,11
In His power	Eph. 1:19,20
In His inheritance	Rom. 8:16,17; Eph. 1:11-18

Positionally, several things changed at salvation. First, God transferred us from the domain of darkness to the kingdom of His beloved Son (Col. 1:13). Second, we are no longer in the flesh; we are in the Spirit and in Christ. "However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him" (Rom. 8:9). Paul equates the idea of being "in the flesh" with being "in Adam." "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:22, *emphasis added*). This positional change can be shown as follows:

<u>In Adam</u>		<u>In Christ</u>
Old Man (Self)	By Ancestry	New Man (Self)
Sin Nature	By Nature	Partaker of Divine Nature
Eph. 2:1-3		2 Pet. 1:4
In the Flesh	By Birth	In the Spirit
Rom. 8:8		Rom. 8:9
Live according to the Flesh	By Choice	Live according to the Spirit or the Flesh
		Gal. 5:16-18

The Bible also says we are a new creature in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17), which has effected our nature, the very core of our inner being. Paul says, "You were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light" (Eph. 5:8). So then why do Christians still sin and what has been retained of our old and sinful nature? Perhaps an illustration will help. In Arizona, city parks and boulevards are decorated with ornamental orange trees, which are a much hardier stock than the trees which produce the sweet oranges we eat. Because they can survive colder temperatures, they are used for rootstock.

The ornamental orange is allowed to grow to a certain height, then it is cut off, and a new life (such as a navel orange) is grafted in. Everything that grows above the graft takes on the new nature of the sweet orange. Everything below the graft retains the physical characteristics of the ornamental orange. There is only one tree when it is fully-grown. The physical growth of the tree is still dependent upon the roots that go deep into the soil for water and nutrition. What grows above the graft takes on the nature of that which was grafted in to the root stock.

Nobody looks at a grove of navel oranges and says, "Actually that is just a grove of root stock!" They would call them navel orange trees because they would identify the trees by their fruit. Jesus said, "So then, you will know them by their fruits" (Matt. 7:20). That is how we should identify one another. Paul says, "Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh" (2 Cor. 5:16). In other words, we are not supposed to recognize Christians for who they were in Adam, but for who they now are in Christ. That is why the Bible does not identify believers as sinners, but instead they are identified as saints.

In the *King James* version of the Bible, believers are called "saints," "holy ones," or "righteous ones" more than 240 times. In contrast, unbelievers are called "sinners" over 330 times. Clearly, the term "saint" is used in Scripture to refer to the believer and "sinner" is used in reference to the unbeliever. Although the New Testament gives ample evidence that a believer is capable of sinning, it never clearly identifies the believer as a "sinner." It is a mystery to me why we insist on calling Christians sinners, but then

discipline them if they don't act like saints. People cannot consistently behave in a way that is inconsistent with what they believe about themselves. We live according to who we really are and born-again believers are children of God. Understanding this is a critical part of our sanctification according to John: "See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. . . . Beloved, now we are children of God . . . And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure" (1 Jn. 3:1-3).

Two Natures or One?

Let me draw another observation from the tree illustration. How would you define the nature of the tree? Would it have two natures? It depends upon whether you are talking about the whole tree—which does have two natures (rootstock and navel)—or just the part of the tree that grows above the graft (the new creation) that has just one nature (navel). This is somewhat of a semantic problem. When Paul talks about the new "I," is he talking about who he was before in combination with who he is now, or is he referring to the new creation in Christ?

Spiritual growth in the Christian life requires a relationship with God who is the fountain of spiritual life, a relationship that brings a new seed or root of life. As in nature, unless there is some seed or root of life within an organism, no growth can take place. Unless there is a seed of life within the believer, i.e., some core spiritual life, growth is impossible. There is nothing to grow. That is why Paul's theology is all based on our position in Christ. "Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him . . ." (Col. 2:6,7a). That is why the Christian message must be based on who we are in Christ. In order to grow, believers must first be firmly rooted in Christ. In order to grow and bear fruit, Christians, their marriages, and their ministries must all be spiritually centered in Christ.

The New Birth

Recall that Adam and Eve were born both physically and spiritually alive. Because of sin, they died spiritually. They were separated from God. From that time on,

everybody is born physically alive, but spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1). Paul says that everyone in that state is a natural man who cannot discern the things of God (1 Cor. 2:14). Like an ornamental orange, he may look good, but they cannot bear any fruit that isn't bitter. The fruit will only drop to the ground and bring forth more natural stock that will only appear to look good for a season.

According to Scripture, the center of the person is the heart, which has the capacities to think, feel and choose. In our natural state "the heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure" (Jer. 17:9). It is deceitful because it was born that way and has been conditioned from the time of birth by the deceitfulness of a fallen world, rather than by the truth of God's Word. According to Proverbs 4:23, the heart is the "wellspring of life" in which wickedness must not be allowed to take root. For instance, that is why we are to forgive from the heart and not allow a root of bitterness to spring up by which many will be defiled.

A New Heart and a New Spirit

One of the greatest prophecies concerning our salvation is given in Ezekiel 36:26: "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove from you a heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh." The new covenant under which every Christian lives says, "I will put My laws in their hearts" (Heb. 10:16). Jesus came that we might have life, and the believer receives that spiritual life at the moment of salvation. "Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God" (Jn. 1:12). In other words, "To all the ornamental oranges that will choose to put their trust in God and believe His Word, they shall be navel oranges." The moment you were grafted into the vine, you were sanctified or set apart as a child of God. "You are already clean" (Jn. 15:3), and you shall continue to be sanctified as He prunes you so that you may grow and bear fruit. You are now alive in Christ, which is the foundation and source for the spiritual growth. In fact, the believer is described as a new creation with a new life that has new desires and a new direction.

The same thought is captured in Paul's testimony: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). Paul says I died, but I live, obviously a new and different person (cf. also Col. 3:1-3). In other words, my old ornamental tree has been cut off; I no longer live as an ornamental orange, but I now live as a new navel orange. We as Christians have a new identity and it comes from who we are in Christ, not who we were in Adam.

A New Man

"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Cor. 5:17). It is also possible to translate "he is a new creation" as "there is a new creation." What Paul is teaching in this statement is that through His death and resurrection, Christ has effected a new creation in which finally all things—including all of creation, the earth and the heavens—will be made new (Rev. 21:1; cf. Is. 65:17; 66:22; 2 Pet. 3:13). The believer who has died and now lives "in Christ" (cf. vv. 14-15) is part of this new creation.

Parallel to the concept of being a new creation is the teaching that the believer has put on the "new self" (Col. 3:9), or more literally the "new man." The new man at times refers both to the new individual (i.e., "self") in Christ, as well as the new humanity or the humanity of the new creation united in Christ as its Head. F. F. Bruce says, "The new man who is created is the new personality that each believer becomes when he is reborn as a member of the new creation whose source of life is Christ."

What does it mean to be a "new man?" Does it mean that every aspect of the believer is new in reality? We still look the same physically, and we still have many of the same thoughts, feelings and experiences. Picture, for instance, the ornamental orange tree that has just had a tiny new stem grafted into it. Because so much appears to be the same, we are sometimes taught that our "newness" refers only to our position in Christ. They would say that the newness is only what we have seen in relation to our position of righteousness and holiness in justification and positional sanctification. There is no real

change in us until we are finally transformed in glorification. That would be like teaching justification without regeneration (we are forgiven, but there is no new life). If we are still ornamental orange trees, how can we be expected to bear naval oranges? We have to believe that our new identity is in the life of Christ and commit ourselves to grow accordingly.

New Things Have Come

Despite the fact that every believer at times lives according to the old self, like Paul, they still are new persons—new in relationship to God and new in themselves. The change that takes place in us when we come to Christ involves two dimensions. First, we have a new Master. As mortals, we have no choice but to live under a spiritual power, either our heavenly Father or the god of this world. At salvation, the believer in Christ experiences a change in the power that dominates life. Second, there is an actual change in the "nature" of believers, so that the propensities of his life or the deepest desires of their hearts is now oriented toward God, rather than toward self and sin.

A New Master

Since we are identified with Christ in His death and resurrection, we have become a new person and part of the new humanity. In this change, we have come under a new power of dominion in our life. Nowhere is this expressed more clearly than in Romans 6:5-7: "If we have been united with Him . . . in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin." "Old self" in this passage is literally "old man." The "old man" in relation to the believer has been crucified in Christ and he has put on the "new man" (Col. 3:10).

The biblical teaching of the "new man" also has a corporate sense, meaning a collective mankind, i.e., the "old humanity" related to Adam, and the new humanity is related to Christ. The latter is the "new man" created in Christ (Eph. 2:15). This corporate sense is evident when Paul speaks of the "new man" as a place or sphere "in which there

is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised . . ." (Col. 3:10). The individual person or "self," however, is not excluded from this corporate sense. For all people exist and have their identity in one of these two "men." They either belong to the "old humanity" and are dominated by its characteristics or they are regenerate and belong to the "new humanity" and are under its domination.

Saved and Sanctified by Faith

Again, we need to understand that this is a reality that has already taken place. Paul says, "our old self was crucified" (past tense). We try and try to put the old man to death and we can't do it. Why not? Because he is already dead! You cannot do for yourself what Christ has already done for you. Because many Christians are not living the abundant life, they incorrectly reason "what experience has to happen in order for this to be true?" The only thing that had to happen in order for that to be true, happened nearly two thousand years ago, and the only way you can enter into that experience is by faith.

A dear pastor who heard of our ministry asked for an appointment. He said, "I have struggled for twenty-two years in ministry, and I finally think I know what the answer is. In my devotion time I read, 'For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God' (Col. 3:3). That's it, isn't it?" I assured him it was. Then he asked, "How do I do that?" I suggested that he read the passage just a little bit slower. For twenty-two years he has been desperately trying to become somebody he already is, and so do many other believers. It is not what we do that determines who we are; it is who we are that determines what we do. We don't labor in the vineyard hoping that God may someday love us. God loves us and that is why we labor in the vineyard. We don't serve God with the hope that God may someday accept us. We are already accepted in the Beloved; that is why we serve Him.

We must learn to accept what God says is true and live accordingly by faith. When we do it works out in our experience. If we try to make what God says is true by our experience, we will never get there. Paul points out the futility of that thinking in Galatians 3:2: "I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit

by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?" We are saved by faith, and we walk or live by faith. We have been sanctified by faith, and we are being sanctified by faith and by faith alone. We are neither saved nor sanctified by how we behave, but by how we believe.

The Three Tenses of Salvation and Sanctification

Salvation for the believer is past (Eph. 2:8; 2 Tim. 1:8,9), present (1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 2:5), and future tense (Rom. 5:9,10; Heb. 9:28). In other words, we have been saved, we are being saved, and someday we shall fully be saved from the wrath that is to come. I believe that Scripture teaches that we have the assurance of that salvation now. John writes, "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 Jn. 5:13). And Paul says, "Having believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory" (Eph. 1:13,14).

Sanctification also occurs in Scripture in past (1 Cor. 1:2; 6:19; Acts 20:32), present (Rom. 6:22; 2 Cor. 7:1), and future tense (Eph. 5:25-27; 1 Thess. 3:12,13). In other words, we have been sanctified, we are being sanctified, and some day we shall fully be sanctified. The sanctifying process begins at new birth and continues on to our final glorification. Past-tense sanctification has commonly been called positional sanctification. Present-tense sanctification has been commonly called progressive or experiential sanctification. The tendency by some is to understand past-tense sanctification as just positional truth, and then proceed to live as though it really isn't true. The consequences are tragic. These people will spend the rest of their lives trying to become somebody they already are. Positional sanctification is real truth. We are not trying to become children of God; we are children of God who are becoming like Christ. Progressive sanctification is the process of working out our salvation by faith, that which God has already worked in. It is the process of conforming to His image.

Focusing on past-tense sanctification at the expense of progressive sanctification can also lead to serious errors, such as the concept of sinless perfection. This is nothing more than a denial of sin. "If we say we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us" (1 Jn. 1:8). It is important to realize that "having sin" and "being sin" are two totally different concepts. The other extreme, that of focusing on progressive sanctification at the expense of positional sanctification, leads to a denial of who we really are.

In Summary

Has the sinful nature been eradicated at the time of the new birth? One cannot answer yes or no without defining terms. If someone asked, "Do you believe that the old man is dead?" the answer is yes. We are no longer in Adam; we are spiritually alive in Christ. If someone asked, "Do you believe that Christians no longer sin and cannot walk or live according to the flesh?" The answer is no. The Christian retains the flesh, which the editors of the *New International Version* (NIV) of the Bible have chosen to interpret as "old nature," and even at times, "sin nature." This has created some semantic problems when discussing the nature or natures of a Christian.

If someone asked, "Do we believe that we have a new nature?" I would answer yes, because God has given me a new heart and my inner man is oriented toward God. I have become a partaker of the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4), and "I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man" (Rom. 7:22). If they asked, "Are we a sinner or a saint?" I would joyfully respond, "I believe we are saints by the grace of God, and we intend to live our lives as His children in the way He intended us to live by faith in the power of the Holy Spirit."

Don't forget that our entire being was morally corrupt before we came to Christ. Our minds were oriented to live independently of God and the desires of our flesh are in opposition to the Spirit of God. The flesh (old nature, NIV) has to be crucified by the believer and this is something we have to do on a daily basis. There is no such thing as instant maturity. It will take us the rest of our lives to renew our minds and conform to

the image of God. The seed that was sown in us by God is only a beginning. Being a child of God and being free in Christ is positional truth. But how many are living like children of God, and how many are living free in Christ? Nobody can fix our past, but I believe that by the grace of God we can all be free from it.

Balancing the Indicative and the Imperative

The greatest tension in the New Testament is between the indicative (what God has already done and what is already true about us) and the imperative (what remains to be done as we respond to God by faith and obedience in the power of the Holy Spirit). That tension can be seen in verses like Romans 6:6: "Knowing this that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin." You have to know and believe positional truth in order to successfully progress in your sanctification. Positional sanctification is the basis for our progressive sanctification.

The balance between the indicative and the imperative is about equal in Scripture, but I have not observed that balance being taught in our churches. We seem to focus more on the imperatives, i.e. instructing believers what they must do instead of balancing that with what God has already done. Many people attend evangelical churches for years and never hear enough positional truth to understand that they are children of God who are alive and free in Christ. Many have never repented of their old ways or resolved their personal and spiritual conflicts. Consequently, they are not maturing and the best messages from the pulpit are going right over their heads. Paul wrote, "I gave you milk to drink and not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not walking like mere men?" (1 Cor. 3:2,3).

We need to help Christians realize the incredible identity and position they have in Christ, and then help them repent of their own ways so that they can live a liberated life "in Christ."

APPENDIX 5

AREAS OF AFFIRMATION AND AREAS OF CONCERN

The below lists are shared to assist the reader in summarily understanding and locating the main points of affirmation and points of concern within the book. This is not a comprehensive listing of points and page references, but is designed to be a helpful tool in summarizing the main take away points of the book.

Areas of Affirmation

1. Orthodox understanding of the Gospel (275, 278-79)
2. Orthodox understanding of and emphasis on repentance (275-77)
3. Presentation of the enemies of the flesh, world, and Satan (207, 230)
4. Emphasis on prayer, obedience and personal responsibility (287-88, 301-5)
5. Ongoing, progressive nature of sanctification (283-85)
6. Identity in Christ and union with Christ (296-97)
7. Avoids demonic manifestations and dialoguing (312)
8. Helpful perspectives and presentation of demonic abilities and approach (310-14)
9. Significant and thorough use of Scripture (300-1)
10. While areas of significant concern continue to exist, Anderson's approach to and understanding of the truth encounter approach to spiritual warfare is a helpful corrective to the power encounter approach (186-88, 222-23, 309-14, 322)
11. Significant progress and corrections have been made since 1997 (324)
12. Easy to read, practical, and largely consistent (325)

Areas of Concern

1. No focus on evangelism or missions because discipleship is self-improvement focused without evangelistic motivation (270-74)
2. Assumption that the reader is a Christian (286)
3. Little focus on Heaven or Hell (272-73)
4. An inadequate and misleading understanding of the seriousness, prevalence, and offense of sin and sin nature (239-46, 261, 290-95)
5. Needs increased emphasis on ongoing and volitional resistance to sin (239-46, 261, 290-95)
6. Authoritative (renunciation, rebuking, commanding, binding) language towards Satan and demons needs to be extremely limited and primarily conversion focused (227, 251-53, 317-19)
7. Although ancestral spirits emphasis has been reduced, it needs to be removed (225-26, 263-64, 313-14)
8. Carnal Christianity confuses both evangelism and discipleship approaches and understanding of sin and sin nature (280-83)
9. Confusion as to possession of believers and use of spatial and control language (246-47, 254, 315)
10. No contrasting of a non-believers identity versus a believer's identity. No addressing of a differing approach to spiritual warfare for non-believers (286)
11. Change of approach at Pentecost (256, 298-300)
12. Some speculation as to abilities and actions of demons (310, 319-20)
13. Discipleship model needs to be more easily reproducible (328-29)

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Jonathan Carl grew up in the great state of Texas as the oldest of six kids. He graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point and served in the U.S. Army as a tanker with a combat tour in Iraq in the early 2000s. He had the joy of journeying to Kentucky where he met and married his wonderful wife Brittney. Several years later he became the lead pastor at South Fork Baptist Church where he has served for over a decade. He enjoyed the opportunities to study and earn his Master of Divinity and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Evangelism & Missions from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Jonathan & Brittney have four daughters (Sophia, Lydia, Alia & Mia) with whom they enjoy spending every spare minute they can.

