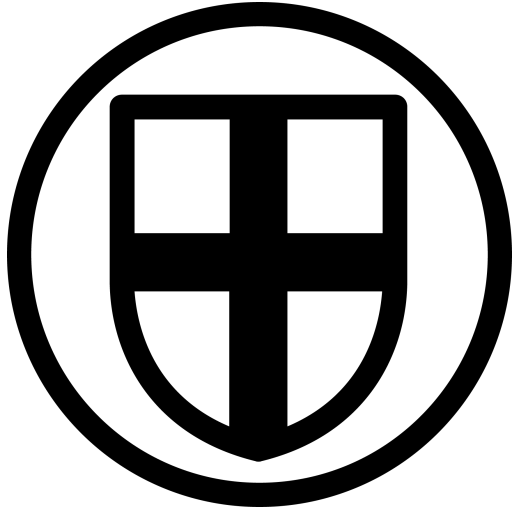


# **SPIRITUAL WARFARE**



**South Fork  
Baptist Church**

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# Frequently Asked Questions in Spiritual Warfare

*Here are common questions in ministry, evangelism, and missions that you should be prepared to give biblical answers for:*

1. Are ghosts real? Can a place be haunted?
2. Are Ouija boards and voodoo dolls just for fun?
3. What's the matter with watching paranormal movies and TV shows?
4. Can a Christian be possessed?
5. Can a Christian be harassed by a demon?
6. Can a demon hurt me?
7. Can someone be a Christian and their life not demonstrate real change?
8. Can a non-believer be possessed?
9. Can ancestral spirits be passed down from generation to generation?
10. Should I clean out my house? What should I get rid of and how?
11. Should I pray over and anoint my house or room? Why? How?
12. Are their demons assigned to specific geographic regions and cities?
13. Can demons be "prayed down"?
14. Are there demons of particular sins and temptations?
15. Do demons have names? Do I get extra power over them with the knowledge of their specific name?
16. Can I interrogate demons to get knowledge from them?
17. How does exorcism work?
18. Can and should I renounce, rebuke, command, or bind demons?
19. How is my resistance to sin tied to demonic attack?
20. Should I try to manifest a demon in order to determine if someone is possessed?
21. Can I see a demon? Can I see an angel?
22. Is someone who hears voices or sees ghosts/angels/demons crazy?
23. Can items of idol worship carry demonic power?
24. Am I more vulnerable to Satan's attacks because of past sin?
25. Do I need to pray out loud?
26. How should I pray?
27. What should I say and do if I wake up in the middle of the night with a nightmare or a demonic presence in my room?
28. What about horoscopes? Palm reading? Yoga? Séances? New age medicine? Tarot cards? Psychics? Witchcraft? Eastern religious practices (therapies/massages)? Trances?

# Hypothetical Scenarios

*Here are some hypothetical scenarios we will discuss.*

*It is important to consider such situations from the beginning so that you are thinking about how to process the scenarios in light of the biblical truths.*

**1) Never presume the Gospel, always be prepared to witness clearly.**

**2) Assuming the person/s in these scenarios are already genuine Christian believers, how would you respond?**

- a. What Bible truths would you share?**
- b. What Bible passages might guide you?**
- c. What biblical actions might you take?**
- d. What questions would you ask?**

1. Bob comes into your office and shares that in his job of home appraisals he regularly runs into “ghostly” appearances. How do you respond?
2. Jan’s teenage children have been regularly watching “paranormal” TV shows and movies. How do you counsel them?
3. Steve recently took his kids and their friends to a “haunted” building for Halloween. How do you advise him?
4. Samantha participated in voodoo dolls and curses as a child and feels that this guilt is now part of her current struggles. What do you say?
5. John occasionally sees the “ghost” of his deceased wife and communicates with her. How might you disciple John?
6. Naomi hears loud noises, voices, and has things moved around in her house at night. She shares that this is ongoing reality and frightens her, her husband, and her children. What do you do?
7. Fred is having problems with addictive substances and claims that a demon is continuing to harass and tempt him, even to the point of making pills, cigarettes, and beer appear out of nowhere. How might you respond?
8. Fran shares that a demonic voice predicted the traumatic and unexpected death of someone a few days before the man died. What should you say?
9. A family relates their experiences with multiple traumatic “manifestations” of a demonic presence: the appearance of addictive substances out of nowhere, disappearance of Christian literature, loud accusing voices, writings, text messages, phone calls, flying objects, unknown scripts, audible threats, audible bargaining, and more. What should they do?
10. April relates seeing reptiles speak and threaten her with a “demonic voice.” Her husband relates seeing and experiencing the same. How should you advise them to process this experience?
11. A missionary explains that when moving to a new country their young child becomes sick and describes seeing and hearing things in their house. Upon investigation idols are found in the attic of their house and all indications point to sacrifices being made within the house. What should this family do?

12. Amy keeps waking up with recurring nightmares at 3am. Her dreams are so real that she is fearful and intimidated. She wants the nightmares to stop. How should you counsel her?
13. Caroline wakes up in the middle of the night with a felt, cold presence in the room. She feels as if it has sexually violated her. She is convinced that she was wide-awake. She doesn't know what to do now or how to prevent it from happening again. What do you say?
14. Mike is being counseled by a pastor at his home. During the visit, Mike's pet kitten goes crazy with unusual and constant meowing and clawing. Later in the week this same kitten begins to defecate throughout their house and bleed through its paws. A demonic type voice claims to be the source. Mike wants help, what should you say and do?
15. Jill returns home from a mission trip with several masks and cultural items to add to her already large collection of Indian "dreamcatchers" and other relics. Soon thereafter she begins to hear steps and strange noises in her house at night and observes doors being opened that were previously closed. What should she do?
16. Tom used to be a Mormon and is now convicted to a new depth as to his past sinful practices in this cult. He still has the book of Mormon, Pearl of Great Price, and Doctrines and Covenants. What should he do with these books?
17. Stephanie is on a mission trip and feels something cold touching her toes in the middle of the night. When she wakes up to the feeling, she feels paralyzed, held down, and unable to move, seemingly overshadowed by a dark and oppressive force. She tells you the next morning and wants advice. What might you say?
18. Thomas has been involved in multiple affairs over the past six years. Everyone he knows thinks highly of him as a strong Christian man and role model. He has been hearing demonic voices screaming at him and mocking him. No one else seems to hear the voices. His name was written/scratched on the wall when a minister came over to help. He wants your advice and help now. What would you say?
19. Kameron formerly lived with a Serbian orthodox man and remembers him cooking and chanting things. She thinks he put a curse on her and wants to know what to do about it?
20. George is a missionary and observes a man seemingly possessed by a demon. He is so violent that the villagers have tied him up and now the local believers in the village are asking George for guidance and direction. George has called you up and is asking for advice, how do you answer?
21. Yolanda had a son with Aaron six years ago. Yolanda thinks Aaron may have been demonically possessed and remembers him talking to, worshipping, and singing to a "multitude" of demons. Yolanda is concerned that her son may have inherited these demons. How do you counsel her?
22. Hank has several tattoos with demons, gravestones, and skulls on them. He says a demon scratched him on the tattoos, claims to live in the tattoos,

- and keeps verbally referencing the tattoos, including a drawing on a dry erase board in his kitchen. What should Hank do?
23. Francisca has been regularly harassed by a demon and wants it to stop. She has tried being “exorcised” personally and has had ministers attempt to cleanse and anoint her house. The activity has increased and she is asking for help. What will you say?
  24. Danny keeps receiving text messages from “666” and can’t seem to stop the messages. He has also had heard demonic sounding voices over the phone and those he is talking with have heard it too. What should he do?
  25. Steve and Samantha find a list of all of their personal sins written on a piece of paper in their kitchen. Neither one of them knows the source, but both think a demon did it due to prior “activity.” Steve tore up the list and flushed it down the toilet, but wants to know what to do now. A voice reportedly said to Samantha that “these are my attachments to you.” How do you respond?
  26. Cindy walks into a pet store and all of the animals start going crazy. Cindy hears a demonic voice say “they sense me.” A lady in the store remarks that “I’ve never seen it like this, it is like something is in here.” Cindy thinks a demon is following her around. How do you counsel Cindy?
  27. Paul claims to hear God telling him what to do and what to tell others. He regularly tells his family these “revelations” from God. Paul is walking in adultery and sin and his “revelations” are not always in line with Scripture. You have the opportunity to speak to Paul and his family, what do you say?
  28. Megan is pregnant but has been regularly tormented by what she feels is a demon. She has a miscarriage and a voice tells her that he ate the baby and laughs. Megan is devastated by the baby’s lost and doesn’t know what to think. What Scripture might you counsel her with?
  29. Larry had a traumatic brain injury in Iraq but has been able to function quite well. Lately he has been hearing voices from what he claims is both God and Satan. He is extremely confused and doesn’t know how to process his experiences. What questions might you ask? What advice might you give?
  30. Susan has been regularly harassed and finds her Bible opened, with a candle on top. The Bible was opened to Revelation 13 with lots of the passage circled, a drawing, and the number “666” written across the page. She is trying to process this and asks your advice. How do you respond?
  31. Pete is a member of a tribal society and is a new believer. His village has an annual animal sacrifice in preparation for the farming season. How do you advise him?
  32. Kim is a member of an ancestor worship culture. As soon as you enter her house you see the altar dedicated to her family’s ancestors. She is not allowed to remove the altar because it falls under the authority of her husband. She comes to you looking for guidance, what do you say?
  33. Sam is a member of a worldview that believes in shamans for curses. He thinks the local shaman put a curse on him once he became a believer. He is concerned that the curse is real and powerful and affecting his family. How do you respond?

34. Tammy is a believer in a worldview that strongly seeks to repel demons through sacrifices and hanging items above the entryway to houses. Her friend seems demonically possessed and the local shaman nor modern medicine seem to help. She comes to you and asks you to help. What might you do?
35. Jim is a new believer in an animistic worldview. He still has his family's wooden idols and feels burdened by them and wants advice. What do you say?
36. Kate is a new believer in an animistic worldview. Her village has a particular tree under which they gather regularly and lay sacrifices. She wants to know what is her responsibility when they gather next. How do you answer?
37. Dave is a new believer in an animistic worldview. Every funeral and wedding in his village involves some sort of sacrifice and ceremony. He wants to know if he can attend the funerals and weddings anymore. What do you say?
38. Sally is a new believer in a tribal worldview setting. She commonly gets her meat at the neighboring village where she knows it has been sacrificed to idols. She asks you if she can buy and eat it, or will the demons attack her through the meat sacrifice. How do you guide her?
39. Lane is a new believer in a village with a shaman. Whenever someone becomes sick they have particular potions, chants, and common practices not tied to modern medicine. He does not have access to modern medicine. His young son is sick and Lane is desperate for healing. How do you encourage him?
40. A relative is on a family vacation and contacts you about "spooky" things happening to her daughter and her teenage girls friends while they sleep at night at a condo. They are all scared and want help. How do you help?

# Videos for Discussion

*The views of these videos are not necessarily endorsed, but are helpful for creating discussions on contemporary issues in spiritual warfare in evangelism and missions.*

## **Missions – Animism**

- Spirit of the Rainforest
- Behind The Enemy God: A Film About a Yanomamo Shaman - YouTube
  - <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=FZNg217vBSg>
  - An Anthropologist's View of "The Enemy God" - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7jco8Na1Wws>

## **David Platt - Secret Church: Angels, Demons and Spiritual Warfare: 4 parts**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3TsNK9zwdTQ>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tdHyfJ2G2RE>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=te2BY3OL2Ik>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4BAoD7cr3ZU>

## **Ray Comfort - Evangelism**

- Exorcism Question (start at 4min-6:30min when witnessing, 17:20-19:30 in counseling, amulet destroyed)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LqQT4DrJLEO&index=57&list=PLIMAX6WHtnhA-BpmaqZJledgkQSdXfBrM>
- Woman on Subway (3min-10min)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJpUdaJacfU&index=9&list=PLIMAX6WHtnhCOhBLLl8kLRM5znhjgfjPE>

## **John Piper – Pastoral Ministry**

- Do You Believe We Should Cast Out Demons Today?  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwXKuWfKyT8>
- Have You Exorcised a Demon?  
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oSKo7TY1uho>

## **MacArthur – Cessationism/“Classic” Perspective**

- The Armor of God - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7nbeH6s3Ag>
- Strange Fire Conference -  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jRqD89ZBWyg&list=PLcpTMSL-FR-duxHk-xYVLOGCQRLnYBNxU>

## **Neil T. Anderson - Interview –**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FBC4G1hU9o>

## **Charles Kraft - Exorcism/Possession/Demonization – Power Encounter Perspective (this video and approach is clearly not endorsed)**

- Rats & Garbage - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rg5IuLfS4U>

# Spiritual Warfare Definitions

Why study Spiritual Warfare? Over the past few decades, spiritual warfare reemerged as a topic of interest among Christians through numerous writings and conferences.

## Spiritual Warfare

- Some, like Clinton Arnold, use broad, comprehensive descriptions by saying that SW is “a way of characterizing our common struggle as Christians.”<sup>1</sup>
- Others, like Chuck Lawless, use their definitions to respond to and counter opposing viewpoints of SW. Lawless states that “spiritual warfare isn’t about naming demons; it’s about so living a righteous life that our very life threatens the Enemy.”<sup>2</sup>
- Still others, like Neil Anderson, show their view of SW as focused on a “battle for their minds” with an emphasis on renewal of the mind and freedom through God’s Word.<sup>3</sup>
- All of these definitions carry theological connotations and practical implications. Scripture clearly describes spiritual warfare in view of our pre-conversion nature: And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience - among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. (Eph 2:1-3)
- SW also continues in the Christian life against “the schemes of the devil,” understanding that believers “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” (Eph 6:11-12).
- The SW battle not only affects unbelievers and believers here on earth, but SW is ultimately seen as “a cosmic battle between God and Satan” whose outcome is never in doubt.<sup>4</sup>
- A more concise definition is utilized in this course by looking at the Apostle Paul’s description of spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6:10-20: **“the battle of the followers of Christ against the unseen spiritual forces of evil.”**

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<sup>1</sup>Clinton E. Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions About Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1997), 27.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Lawless, *Disciplined Warriors: Growing Healthy Churches That Are Equipped for Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids MI: Kregel Publications, 2002), 214.

<sup>3</sup>Neil T. Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness: Realizing the Power of Your Identity in Christ* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), 17.

<sup>4</sup>Hiebert, 5.



**God** – “There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.” Baptist Faith and Message, 2000 (<http://www.sbc.net/bfm2000/bfm2000.asp>)

**Angels** - “Angels are created, spiritual beings with moral judgment and high intelligence, but without physical bodies” Wayne Grudem

**Satan** – leader of the angelic rebellion against God, has names and descriptions such as: Head of Demons, Devil, Serpent, Beelzebul, Serpent, Ruler of this world, Prince of power of the air, evil one, father of lies, murder, deceiver, lion, cunning, tempter, blinding people to the light of the gospel

**Demons** – fallen angels who have rebelled against God and followed Satan

**Evangelism** - 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.”<sup>5</sup>

- The proclamation of Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection must be the central focus of all evangelistic activity. Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross has significance in the salvation, progressive sanctification, and future glorification of believers. There are many “ministries” in the local church, parachurch organizations, and missions groups. These ministries often focus on serving and meeting a practical human need or discipleship of believer rather than the evangelism of the lost.

**Chuck Lawless further argues that “anything less than the telling of this good news is not evangelism.”<sup>6</sup>** Evangelism is a task which Christ prioritizes for His followers and thus necessarily overflows into the Christian mission of local churches, parachurch organizations, and missions groups.

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<sup>5</sup>Alan 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.”

<sup>6</sup>Charles Lawless, *Putting on the Armor* (Nashville: Lifeway, 2007), 95.

**Discipleship** - The Lausanne Covenant necessarily connects discipleship with evangelism since “in issuing the Gospel invitation we have no liberty to conceal the cost of discipleship.”<sup>7</sup>

- Discipleship is “the idea of becoming a disciple rather than having been made a disciple” and “a way of life for all of life.”<sup>8</sup>
- Disciples learn from and follow Jesus while discovering that “it is the job of every believer to make disciples.”<sup>9</sup>
- 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.”<sup>10</sup>
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer boldly affirms that “Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ.”<sup>11</sup>
- John Calvin sees discipleship as a process of “imitating Christ” such that “we are drawn into union with him.”<sup>12</sup>
- 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.”<sup>13</sup>
- The process of discipleship is serious, which Bonhoeffer connects to an understanding of “costly grace.”<sup>14</sup> 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.”<sup>15</sup>

**Missions** – cross cultural evangelism and discipleship

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<sup>7</sup> Stott, “Lausanne Occasional Paper 3.”

<sup>8</sup> Bill Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2006), 36.

<sup>9</sup> Jim Putman, *Real Life Discipleship: Building Churches that Make Disciples* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2010), 20.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>11</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Touchstone, 1995), 64.

<sup>12</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 350-51.

<sup>13</sup> Robert Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism and Discipleship* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 1998), 98.

<sup>14</sup> Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, 45.

<sup>15</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1954), 115.

**Spiritual Warfare in Evangelism and Missions** - 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.”<sup>16</sup>

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.<sup>17</sup>

### **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.<sup>18</sup> 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.”<sup>19</sup> 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).”<sup>20</sup> 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:

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<sup>16</sup>Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, xvii.

<sup>17</sup>Paul G. Hiebert and Frances F. Hiebert, eds., *Case Studies in Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987), 25.

<sup>18</sup>“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.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Jesus’ 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.

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).”<sup>21</sup>

When evangelism occurs across cultural barriers or boundaries, missiological considerations of how to describe and engage non-Christian religions are important; understanding what practices are cultural and what are demonic.<sup>22</sup> In evangelistic encounters with non-Christian religious belief, one must understand that “Idolatry is wasted effort and dashed hopes.”<sup>23</sup> 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.”<sup>24</sup> 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.”<sup>25</sup>

**Non-Believer** – a follower of Satan, the world, and the flesh

- “*How Can I Be Sure I am a Christian?*”

**Believer** – a follower of Christ

- “*How Can I Become a Christian?*”

**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

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>“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.

<sup>23</sup>“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.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 177-79.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 179.

missions through their four global congresses and a multitude of other gatherings.

**Power-Encounter** – “clashing of the kingdom of God with the kingdom of Satan in a demonstrable way” – Chuck Lawless

**Truth-Encounter** – “application of Biblical truth to a given situation rather than direct demonic confrontation” – Chuck Lawless

**Territorial Spirits** – “demonic powers that have been given controlling influence over specific sites, peoples, and areas” – Chuck Lawless

**Identificational repentance** - “a two stage intercessory action that involves 1) an acknowledgment that one’s affinity group has been guilty of specific corporate sin before God and man and 2) a prayerful petition that God will use personal repudiation of this sin as a redemptive beachhead from which to move into the larger community” – Chuck Lawless

**Armor of God** – “live like you know you are supposed to in obedience, truth, and righteousness, and you will defeat the enemy” – Chuck Lawless

**Critical Cultural Contextualization** – “Appropriate or critical contextualization means that the Word of God is our controlling authority and that:

-we do not accept another’s culture uncritically-the Word is our touchstone.  
-we do not accept our own culture uncritically-the Word is our touchstone.”  
(Ed Roberts, <https://9marks.org/article/critical-contextualization-and-culturally-prevalent-and-deep-rooted-sins/>)

**Worldview**– “the norm whereby we understand and critique all realities”  
Paul Hiebert (*Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues*, 10) – “The Excluded Middle”, “a set of beliefs about the most important issues in life” – Ronald Nash

**Tribal/Animistic worldview (animism, spiritism, tribal and folk religion)** - “the belief that personal spiritual beings and impersonal spiritual forces have power over human affairs, and consequently, that human beings must discover what beings and forces are influencing them in order to determine future action and, frequently, to manipulate their power” Gailyn Van Rheenen, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts*, 20

- Moreau – “the Expanded Middle” – overemphasis on the intersection of the natural and supernatural realms

**Western worldview** – “naturalistic, materialistic, humanistic, rationalistic, and individualistic” – Chuck Lawless

- Hiebert – “the Excluded Middle” – no intersection of natural & supernatural realms

# Spiritual Warfare Foundations

## *Why Study Spiritual Warfare in Evangelism and Missions?*

1. Spiritual Warfare Is a Past, Present and Future Reality
2. The Bible is not about Spiritual Warfare – It is about God
3. God has told us much about it - “The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.” (Deuteronomy 29:29 ESV)
4. Area of Theology Full of Heretical Teachings
5. Area of Ministry Full of Heretical Practices
6. Personal Warning
7. Personal Encouragement
8. Those engaging in Evangelism and Missions Must Prepare

Evangelistic ministry intensifies spiritual warfare as “all evangelism involves spiritual warfare with the principalities and powers of evil.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Nichols and Graham, *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World*, 116.

# God, Angels, Satan, & Demons

God – “What is God like?”

- [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-god-is-like/](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-god-is-like/)

## The Characteristics of God

Outline Based on Wayne Grudem’s *Christian Beliefs*

- **Knowable** - but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me (Jeremiah 9:24)
- **Independent** - The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. (Acts 17:24-25)
- **Unchangeable** - “For I the Lord do not change” (Malachi 3:6)
- **Eternal** – Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. (Psalm 90:2)
- **Omnipresent** – Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? (Psalm 139:7)
- **Spirit** – “God is spirit” (John 4:24)
- **Invisible** – “No one has ever [fully] seen God” (John 1:18)
- **Omniscient** – “He knows everything” (1 John 3:20)
- **Wise** – “the only wise God” (Romans 16:27)
- **Truthful** – “The Lord is the true God” (Jeremiah 10:10)
- **Good** – “No one is good except God alone” (Luke 18:19)
- **Love** – “God is love” (1 John 4:8)
- **Holy** – “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts.” (Isaiah 6:3)
- **Righteous and Just** – “All his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he.” (Deuteronomy 32:4)
- **Jealous** – “I the Lord your God am a jealous God” (Exodus 20:5)
- **Wrathful Towards Sin** – “Whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.” (John 3:36)
- **Freedom** – “Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.” (Psalm 115:3)
- **Omnipotent** – “with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26)
- **Perfect** – “your heavenly Father is perfect.” (Matthew 5:48)
- **Blessed** – “God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.” (Genesis 1:31)
- **Beautiful** - “to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord” (Psalm 27:4)
- **A Unity** - “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. (Deut 6:4)
- **Wills** – “if the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.” (James 4:15)
- **Exists** - In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Gen 1:1)

## God Is a Warrior

“And if you faithfully obey the voice of the LORD your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. . . . [7] The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you. They shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways.”(Deuteronomy 28:7 ESV)

“But if you will not obey the voice of the LORD your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you. . . . [25] “The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. You shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them. And you shall be a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. [26] And your dead body shall be food for all birds of the air and for the beasts of the earth, and there shall be no one to frighten them away.” (Deuteronomy 28:15, 25-26 ESV)

“Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God. [8] They collapse and fall, but we rise and stand upright. [9] O LORD, save the king! May he answer us when we call.” (Psalm 20:7-9 ESV)

“When Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing before him with his drawn sword in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, ‘Are you for us, or for our adversaries?’ [14] And he said, ‘No; but I am the commander of the army of the LORD. Now I have come.’ And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, ‘What does my lord say to his servant?’ [15] And the commander of the LORD’s army said to Joshua, ‘Take off your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.’ And Joshua did so.”(Joshua 5:13-15 ESV)

“ And the LORD said to Gideon, “With the 300 men who lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hand, and let all the others go every man to his home.” [8] So the people took provisions in their hands, and their trumpets. And he sent all the rest of Israel every man to his tent, but retained the 300 men. And the camp of Midian was below him in the valley. [9] That same night the LORD said to him, “Arise, go down against the camp, for I have given it into your hand.” (Judges 7:7-9 ESV)

“Your servant has struck down both lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, for he has defied the armies of the living God.’ [37] And David said, ‘The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.’ And Saul said to David, ‘Go, and the LORD be with you!’” (1 Samuel 17:36-37 ESV)

“And he said, ‘Listen, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: Thus says the LORD to you, ‘Do not be afraid and do not be



dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God's. ... [17] You will not need to fight in this battle. Stand firm, hold your position, and see the salvation of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed. Tomorrow go out against them, and the LORD will be with you." (2 Chronicles 20:15, 17 ESV)

[Hezekiah] "And that night the angel of the LORD went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians. And when people arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies." (2 Kings 19:35 ESV)

"But the LORD is with me as a dread warrior; therefore my persecutors will stumble; they will not overcome me. They will be greatly shamed, for they will not succeed. Their eternal dishonor will never be forgotten." (Jeremiah 20:11 ESV)

"And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, [14] by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. [15] He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him." (Colossians 2:13-15 ESV)

"But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. [24] Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. [25] For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. [26] The last enemy to be destroyed is death. [27] For "God has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when it says, "all things are put in subjection," it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him." (1 Corinthians 15:23-27 ESV)

## God Is with His People

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:9 ESV)

“Why should you be like a man confused, like a mighty warrior who cannot save? Yet you, O LORD, are in the midst of us, and we are called by your name; do not leave us.” (Jeremiah 14:9 ESV)

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20 ESV)

“Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” [6] So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?” (Hebrews 13:5-6 ESV)

“For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. [4] For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. [5] We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:3-5 ESV)

“And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. [4] He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.’” (Revelation 21:3-4 ESV)

“The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.” (Revelation 21:7 ESV)

# Theodicy

## **Does God do evil? Is God responsible for evil? Why does God allow evil to exist? (Theodicy)**

(Cold is the absence of Heat, Dark is the absence of Light, Evil is the absence of Good)

(James 1:13-14) Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.

(Job 1:21-22) "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." [22] In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

## **Joseph: The Story of Human Evil and God's Good Plans**

(Genesis 50:15-21, ESV)

[www.trustworthyword.com/joseph](http://www.trustworthyword.com/joseph)

v.20 "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."

### **What is Evil?**

- **Absence of Good, rebellion against God**
- Darkness is the Absence of Light
- Hell is the Absence of God
- People, Environment, Spirit, Event
- Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil
- FALL – God says "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil." (Genesis 3:22)

### **What is Good?**

- **Presence & Imprint of God**
- **Genesis 1** – Creation – light, land, sea, plants, stars, sun, moon, creatures, people in His image – very good
- Know, Experience, Hear, Talk, Walk – God
- Sought An Experience Apart from God - Evil

**"Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People?": Wrong Question**

**"Why Do Good Things Happen to Bad People?": Correct Perspective**

## **SUFFERING**

### **What Are the Sources of Suffering?**

- **Satan/Demons – Evil Spirits**
- **Fallen World – Evil Place**
- **Fallen Humanity – Evil People**

- **Fallen Me – Evil Actions** - For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. (Romans 7:18-19)
- **God** - “God sent me here” – Joseph understands the source his suffering (Genesis 45:5,8)

**When Is Suffering Good?** 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 Corinthians 12:10)

**What Are God’s Purposes in Suffering? Trust.** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28)

**What Is Our Responsibility? Don’t Compare. Learn. Hope.** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. (Romans 8:18)

- I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. (Philippians 4:11)

**What is the Ultimate Evil?** But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities (Isaiah 53:5a)

- Jesus - Proclaimed the truth of who He Is - Jealousy
- His Jewish brothers conspired
- Meant for evil – betrayed, sold for silver, Judas
- Imprisoned, Tortured, Ultimately killed
- Paid the price for our rebellion
- Ultimate Evil? Our transgressions. Our iniquities. Our sinful rebellion. Our seeking the absence of God. Our evil.
- Look at the brothers. We are the brothers who sold Jesus. We loved ourselves more than Him.
- Look at Joseph. Don’t hold onto bitterness. Don’t drink that poison. Recognize God’s good plan in the midst of your suffering. Let Him turn the evil that has happened to you into good.

**What is the Ultimate Good?** upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5b)

- By this many have been saved, - LIFE
- His war with Satan brings and makes lasting PEACE with us.
- His voluntary wounds from sin bring eternal HEALING to us.
- Accept Jesus. Accept His mercy and grace. You don’t deserve it. It is a gift. Receive it. He is not bitter against those who love Him. He is not angry with His children. He restores those who love Him more than they love themselves. Sometimes it takes a famine and suffering to turn to Him.
- Be a Joseph. Forgive. Don’t hold onto bitterness. Bless instead of curse. Trust Jesus to take care of vengeance in His own perfect way and timing. Let Jesus change evil to good.

# God's Sovereignty

## What does God's "sovereignty" mean? How does it matter?

(Romans 11:33-36) Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! [34 ] "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" [35 ] "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" [36 ] For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY?

<http://www.trustworthyword.com/gods-sovereignty>

*"Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers." 1 Timothy 4:16*

Creation and the Bible are full of examples of God's sovereignty. Wayne Grudem defines sovereignty as "God's exercise of power over all of His creation." God is described as existing eternally (Ephesians 1:4), the Creator (Genesis 1:1), knowable (Jeremiah 9:24), independent (Acts 17:24-25), unchangeable (Malachi 3:6), omnipresent (Psalm 139:7-10), omniscient (1 John 3:20), all-wise (Romans 16:27), all-good (Luke 18:19), all-loving (1 John 4:8), omnipotent (Genesis 18:14, Matthew 19:26) and sovereign (Ephesians 1:11).

- Check out "What is God like?" - [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-god-is-like](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-god-is-like)

It is particularly helpful to see how God works in salvation to see His saving power over His creation.

Have you read "[What Does the Bible Say about Salvation?](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-salvation)" yet? If not, it's a great place to start!

- Check it out at: [www.trustworthyword.com/salvation](http://www.trustworthyword.com/salvation)

## Top Bible Verses on God's Sovereignty

(Romans 11:33-36) Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! [34 ] “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?” [35 ] “Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?” [36 ] For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Job 38-39

(Romans 4:17) God “who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.”

(Job 40:1-5) And the LORD said to Job: [2 ] “Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty? He who argues with God, let him answer it.” [3 ] Then Job answered the LORD and said: [4 ] “Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer you? I lay my hand on my mouth. [5 ] I have spoken once, and I will not answer; twice, but I will proceed no further.”

(Romans 11:36) For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever.

(1 Corinthians 8:6) yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

(1 Corinthians 15:10) But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

(Ephesians 1:11) In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will

(Acts 4:27-28) for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, [28] to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.

(Matthew 6:10) Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

(James 4:15) Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.”

## Top Books on Divine Sovereignty and Human Will

- *Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility* by D.A. Carson
- *The Doctrine of God* by John Frame
- *Systematic Theology* by Wayne Grudem
- *Suffering and the Sovereignty of God* by John Piper and Justin Taylor. Available free at: [www.desiringgod.org/books/suffering-and-the-sovereignty-of-god](http://www.desiringgod.org/books/suffering-and-the-sovereignty-of-god).
- *Whomever He Wills: A Surprising Display of Sovereign Mercy* edited by Matthew M. Barrett and Thomas J. Nettles
- *Five Points by John Piper*. Available free at: [www.desiringgod.org/books/five-points](http://www.desiringgod.org/books/five-points).

## Helpful Terms and Quotes on God's Sovereignty

- "*Sovereignty*: God's exercise of power over all of His creation." Wayne Grudem
- "Salvation is from our side a choice; from the divine side it is a seizing upon, an apprehending, a conquest by the Most High God. Our accepting and willing are reactions rather than actions." - A.W. Tozer
- "Is it not wonderful news to believe that salvation lies outside ourselves?" – Martin Luther
- "God has promised forgiveness to your repentance, but He has not promised tomorrow to your procrastination." – Augustine
- "I am myself persuaded that the points of the Calvinist alone is right upon some points, and the Arminian alone is right upon others. There is a great deal of truth in the positive side of both systems, and a great deal of error in the negative side of both systems. If I were asked, 'Why is a man damned?' I should answer as an Arminian answers, 'He destroys himself'. I should not dare to lay man's ruin at the door of divine sovereignty. On the other hand, if I were asked, 'Why is a man saved?' I could only give the Calvinist answer, 'He is saved through the sovereign grace of God, and not at all of himself.'" – Charles Spurgeon

# Human Responsibility

## What is God's will? How can I know God's will?

(Eph 1:11) according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will

(Jeremiah 9:24) but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD."

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY?

[www.trustworthyword.com/human-responsibility](http://www.trustworthyword.com/human-responsibility)

We have responsibility to respond to God's goodness, glory, and law.

### Bible Verses Concerning Human Responsibility in Responding to God's Salvation

- (Romans 10:9-15) 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. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. 11 For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. 13 For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." 14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"
- (Luke 9:23-24) And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.
- (Mark 1:14-15) Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."
- (Acts 2:37-38) Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" 38 And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the



name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

- (James 2:26) For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.
- (James 1:22,25) But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ... [25] But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.
- (Hebrews 3:12-14) Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. [13] But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. [14] For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.
- (2 Peter 1:5-8) For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, [6] and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, [7] and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. [8] For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- (2 Peter 1:10) Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.
- (2 Timothy 2:10) Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

### **Helpful Quote**

"Since no man is excluded from calling upon God the gate of salvation is open to all. There is nothing else to hinder us from entering, but our own unbelief." – John Calvin

# What Does the Bible Say about Christian Identity?

[www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-christian-identity](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-christian-identity)

## The Gift: New Identity

The greatest gift of Christianity is not merely a future existence in Heaven, but is the present and eternal reality of a relationship and unity with Christ (John 15:1-11, 1 Corinthians 6:17). As Christians we must realize that we are not products of our past or present decisions, failures, or successes. Our identity, value, & worth are rooted in our new name and identity in Christ. We focus on knowing God first and foremost and simultaneously discover our amazing nature as God's forever adopted children.

### In Christ, I am...

- **Truly Alive. Alive Forever.** (Romans 6:23, John 11:25-26, Romans 6:8, Philippians 1:21)
- **Washed. Cleaned. Declared Innocent. Atoned. Not Condemned.** (Isaiah 6:7, 1 Corinthians 6:11, Romans 8:1-2)
- **Victorious.** (Romans 8:37)
- **Loved.** (Romans 8:31, Jeremiah 31:3, John 3:16)
- **Secure.** (Romans 8:38-39, Ephesians 2:4-7)
- **Known.** (John 10:14, Jeremiah 1:5)
- **Heard.** (1 John 5:14-15)
- **New Creation.** (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- **Empowered Representatives.** (2 Corinthians 5:20, Acts 1:8)
- **Justified and Made Righteous.** (Romans 5:17-19, 2 Corinthians 5:21)
- **Filled with God's Holy Spirit.** (John 7:38-39)
- **Never Alone.** (Matthew 28:20)
- **Blessed.** (Ephesians 1:3)
- **Chosen and Adopted.** (Ephesians 1:4-5)
- **Forgiven.** (Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:13-14, Colossians 2:13-14)
- **Friend.** (John 15:15)
- **Part of the Body of Christ.** (Romans 12:4-5, 2 Corinthians 5:20)
- **United with God.** (1 Corinthians 6:17, Colossians 3:3-4)
- **The Temple of God and of Priceless Worth.** (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
- **Inconceivably Rich.** (2 Corinthians 8:9)
- **Children and Heirs of God.** (Romans 8:16-17, Galatians 4:6-7, 2 Cor 6:18)
- **Saints.** (Ephesians 5:3, Philippians 4:21, 1 Peter 2:9-10)
- **Salt of the Earth.** (Matthew 5:13)
- **Light of the World.** (Matthew 5:14-16)
- **Purposed.** (Ephesians 2:10, 2 Corinthians 5:18-19)
- **Strengthened.** (2 Corinthians 12:10, 1 John 4:4, Philippians 4:13)
- **Aroma of Christ.** (2 Corinthians 2:14-17)
- **Called to Not Fear or Worry.** (John 14:1, Isaiah 41:10, Joshua 1:8-9, Philippians 4:6-7, Hebrews 13:6)
- **Comforted and Comforters.** (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)
- **Citizens of Heaven.** (Philippians 3:20-21, Hebrews 13:14)
- **Crucified, Buried, Risen, and Free with Christ.** (Romans 6:4-8)

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.”<sup>27</sup> 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.”<sup>28</sup> Anderson emphasizes that for Christians, “to be spiritually alive is to be in union with God” or “in Christ.”<sup>29</sup> 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.”<sup>30</sup> 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.”<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>“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.

<sup>28</sup>Tatian, *Address of Tatian to the Greeks* (ANF 2:65), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf02.iii.ii.html>.

<sup>29</sup>Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness*, 30-31.

<sup>30</sup>“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.

<sup>31</sup>“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.

# ANGELS, DEMONS, & SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Outline Based on Wayne Grudem's

*Christian Beliefs and Systematic Theology*

## ANGELS

“Angels are created, spiritual beings with moral judgment and high intelligence, but without physical bodies” Wayne Grudem

- **Created:** “You are the LORD, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host . . . and the host of heaven worships you.(Nehemiah 9:6)
  - o “For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.” (Colossians 1:16)
- **Names:** sons of God, holy ones, spirits, watchers, thrones, dominions, principalities, authorities, powers
- **Three Other Kinds:**
  - o Cherubim: Genesis 3:24 (Garden of Eden), Ark, Chariot
  - o Seraphim: Isaiah 6:2-7
  - o Living Creatures: Ezekiel 1, Revelation 4
- **Spiritual, Ministering, Serving:** Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? (Hebrews 1:14 ESV)
- **Usually Without Physical Bodies:** For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have. (Luke 24:39)
  - o Angels with Lot, Angels with Abraham, Angel on Tomb
- **Not Ordinarily Seen, Armed, Intimidating:** “Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand. And he bowed down and fell on his face.” (Numbers 22:31 ESV)
- **Messengers:** “But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.” (Matthew 28:5 ESV) (Luke 1:19 ESV)
- **Guides and Guards:** “Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared.” (Exodus 23:20 ESV)
  - o “For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.”(Psalm 91:11)
- **Wingless Walkers** “And he (Jacob) dreamed, and behold, there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it!”(Genesis28:12)
- **Winged Worshipers:** “Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.”(Isaiah 6:2-3)

- **Innumerable, Worshipping:** “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering (Heb12:22)
- **Powerful, Obedient:** “Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word!” (Psalm 103:20 ESV)
  - “whereas angels, though greater in might and power...”(2 Peter 2:11)
- **Sometimes Anonymous:** “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” (Hebrews 13:2 ESV)
- **Not to be Worshipped:** “Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.” For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”(Revelation 19:10 ESV)
- **Some Named, Some Roles, Command Demons in Christ:** “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.”(Jude 1:9)

## SATAN & DEMONS

- **Satan** – Head of Demons, Devil, Serpent, Beelzebul, Ruler of this world, Prince of power of the air, evil one, father of lies, murderer, deceiver, lion, cunning, tempter, blinding people to the light of the gospel
- **Satan** – “the personal name of the head of the demons” ~ Wayne Grudem
- **Demons** – “evil angels who sinned against God and who now continually work evil in the world.” ~ Wayne Grudem
- **Deceptive in Appearance, Punishment Assured:** “And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. [15] So it is no surprise if his Servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.” (2 Corinthians 11:14-15)
- **Sinned, Forgiveness Not Available, Destined for Eternal Punishment:** “For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment” (2 Peter 2:4)
  - o “And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day” (Jude 1:6)
- **Special Knowledge, Possession:** 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.(Acts 16:16)
- 
- **Ghosts**
  - o Medium of En-dor: “Then Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?” (1 Samuel 28:15)
  - o Transfiguration: “And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.” (Matthew 17:3)
  - o Rich Man & Lazarus: ““If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.” (Luke 16:30-31)
- **Strategies: Stand Firm, Resist, Full Armor of God, Sword of the Spirit (Word of God), Flee Temptation, Sober-Minded, Watchful, Give No Opportunity**
  - o Draw Near to God, Repent of Sin: “Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.” (James 4:8)
    - “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)

- o God is Greater: “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.”(1 John 4:4)
- o Rejoice in Your Identity in Christ: “Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” (Luke 10:20)
- o God’s In Control: “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.”(Romans 16:20)
- o Victory is Assured: “and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” (Revelation 20:10)
  - “And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.”(2 Thessalonians 2:8)
- o “I am a child of God, the evil one cannot touch me” – variant of 1 John 5:18
- o Bondage Breaker & Victory Over the Darkness by Dr. Neil T. Anderson

## **Spiritual Warfare in the Old Testament**

- Scriptural accuracy is the primary concern of this and any critique of a work on spiritual warfare.
- We must evaluate 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, we must examine their usage of particular biblical passages to understand if the author accurately communicates the biblical meaning.

Genesis 3:1, 4 – Satan the Serpent

Genesis 50:20 – Relationship between Evil and Good

Leviticus 16:6-10 – God’s Atoning Sacrifices

Leviticus 17:7 – Demonic Sacrifices

Leviticus 19:26 – Omens and Fortunes

Leviticus 19:31; 20:6,27 – Mediums and Necromancers

Deuteronomy 7:25-26 – Idols

Deuteronomy 18:10-12 – Human Sacrifices, Divination, Fortunes, Omens, Sorcerer, Charmer, Medium, Necromancer, Inquires of the Dead

Deuteronomy 32:16-18 – Sacrifices to Demons

1 Samuel 16:14-16, 23 – Harmful spirit from the Lord

1 Samuel 28 & 1 Chronicles 10:13-14 – Saul and the Medium of En-Dor

2 Samuel 24:1; 2 Samuel 24:10, 15; 1 Chronicles 21:1 – Numbering of Israel

1 Kings 22:19-23; 2 Chronicles 18:19-27 ; Jeremiah 14:14 – Micaiah’s Vision and the Lying Spirit, Lying Vision, Worthless Divination, and the Deceit of their Own Minds

2 Kings 6:11-23 – Elisha and his servant – horses and chariots of fire

2 Chronicles 7:14 – Repentance

2 Chronicles 33:1-13 – Manasseh’s evil but eventual repentance

Job 1 and 2 – Satan’s Access to God and Attack of Job



Job 4:12-21 – Eliphaz’s Nighttime encounter

Job 33:29-30; Job 35:9; Job 37:14; Job 42:1-3,6; Job 42:12 – Job’s Progression

Psalms 106:36-38 – Idol and Demonic worship connected together and with human sacrifice

Psalms 115:4-8 – Idols and their futility

Isaiah 8:19-22 – Futility of Mediums and Necromancers

Isaiah 9:6 – Names of God

Isaiah 14:3-23 – Fallen from Heaven

Isaiah 26:13-15 – Dead described as “shades”

Isaiah 29:4 - “Like the voice of a ghost”

Ezekiel 13:17-23 – Magic Bands, Veils, Hunting for Souls

Ezekiel 28:11-19 – King of Tyre

Daniel 2:10-11, 17-19, 27-30, 45 – Inability of Demons and Humans to Read Minds and Dreams

Daniel 4:34 – Nebuchadnezzar and reason

Zechariah 3:1-7 – The Lord’s Rebuke of Satan

## **Spiritual Warfare in the New Testament**

Matthew 4:1-11—Satan’s Temptation of Jesus

Matthew 10:1 – Disciples’ Authority to Drive Out Demons, Heal

Matthew 12:28-30 – Driving Out Demons & “Strong Man”

Matthew 12:43-45 (also Luke 11:24-26) – Must be filled with God

Matthew 16:23 – Jesus’ Rebuke of Peter

Matthew 17:14-20 – Jesus’ Healing of a Boy with a Demon

Matthew 24:35 – Eternal Nature of God’s Words

Matthew 26:53 – Jesus’ Access to Angels

Mark 1:23-28 – Casting Out of a Demon in a Galilean Synagogue

Mark 1:32-34 – Many Demons Cast Out

Mark 5:19-20 – God’s Mercy Seen in Casting Out Demons

Mark 9:28-29 – Demon driven out by Jesus through prayer

Luke 8:1-2 – Mary Magdalene had seven demons, women with Jesus healed of evil spirits and physically as well

Luke 10:17-20 – 72 return

Luke 11:24-26 (also Matthew 12:43-45) – Empty House

Luke 22:31-32 – Jesus’ Prayer for Peter

John 13:2 – Devil and Judas

Acts 5:3-5 – Satan and Ananias

Acts 5:12-16 – Healed of unclean spirits

Acts 8:4-8 – Unclean spirits coming out

Acts 8:9-13 – Simon the magician

Acts 10:38 - Jesus “healing all who were under the power of the devil” (part of comprehensive gospel presentation by Peter in Acts 10:34-43)

Acts 13:8-11 - Elymas the magician

Acts 16:16-18 – Girl harassing Paul and others

Acts 19:11-12 – God’s power through Paul and handkerchiefs and aprons

Acts 19:14-16 – Seven sons of Sceva

Acts 19:18-20 – Repentance, Confession, Burning of Magic Books

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 – Security of the Believer

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 – Bodies offered as living sacrifices

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 be overcome by evil

Romans 13:1-2 – submission to government

Romans 13:11-14 – put on the armor of light

1 Corinthians 5:4-5 – “deliver this man to Satan”

1 Corinthians 7:5 – sexual intimacy in marriage and Satan’s temptation

1 Corinthians 10:20-22 – pagan sacrifices to demons

1 Corinthians 12:7-11 – manifestation of the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 12:27-31 – roles and gifts within the church

1 Corinthians 14:20 – infants in evil, mature in thinking

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 – forgiveness and Satan’s designs

2 Corinthians 4:3-6 – god of this world

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 4:3 “enslaved to the elementary principles of the world.”

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 – restore and keep watch

Galatians 6:7-8 – sowing and reaping

Ephesians 2:1-7 - former followers of Satan

Ephesians 2:12-13 – once without God

Ephesians 4:26-27 – anger and Satan’s foothold

Ephesians 6:10-20 - the armor of God

Colossians 2:6-8 – captive to philosophy, deceit, tradition, elemental spirits

Colossians 2:15 – disarmed and shamed

1 Thessalonians 2:17-18 – Satan’s hindering

1 Thessalonians 3:5 - tempter  
2 Thessalonians 2:9-11 – the lawless one and Satan’s activity  
1 Timothy 1:18-20 – wage the good warfare, handed over to Satan  
1 Timothy 3:6-7 – conceit and the condemnation of the devil  
1 Timothy 4:1-2 – deceitful spirits and teaching of demons  
1 Timothy 5:11-15 – young widows and Satan’s tactic  
2 Timothy 2:24-26 – escaping the snare of the devil  
2 Timothy 3:16-17 – Scripture’s profitability  
Hebrews 2:14-15 –destroying the devil and delivering the slaves  
Hebrews 13:5-6 – God’s protective presence  
James 1:12-15 – source of temptation  
James 1:22-25 – hearing and doing the Word of God  
James 2:10 – guilt under the law  
James 2:18-19 – demonic belief in God  
James 3:15-16 – earthly, unspiritual, demonic wisdom  
James 4:1 – passions at war  
James 4:3-9 – resist the devil  
James 5:13-16 – confession, prayer, and healing  
James 5:19-20 – turning a sinner  
1 Peter 5:8-9 – devil is prowling like a lion  
2 Peter 2:10-13 – blaspheming the glorious ones  
1 John 1:9 – confession and forgiveness  
1 John 3:8-10 – children of the devil  
1 John 4:1-6 – test the spirits  
1 John 4:10-15 – love and acknowledgment of Jesus as the Son of God  
1 John 4:18-19 – no fear in love  
1 John 5:14-15 – ask according to His will

1 John 5:18 – born of God, evil one does not touch

2 John 9 and 10 – abide in the teaching of Christ

Jude 1:8-10 – Michael, the devil, blaspheming the glorious ones, and rebuking language

Revelation 2:9-10 – Smyrna, synagogue of Satan

Revelation 2:13 – Pergamum, Satan's throne

Revelation 2:24 – Thyatira, deep things of Satan

Revelation 3:9 – Philadelphia, synagogue of Satan

Revelation 9:20-21 – worship of demons and idols

Revelation 12:7-12 – war in Heaven

Revelation 16:13-14 – demonic spirits

Revelation 18:2 – fallen is Babylon

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.”

"Truth is so obscure in these times, and falsehood so established, that, unless we love the truth, we cannot know it." Blaise Pascal

## **Towards a Biblical Understanding of Spiritual Warfare**

- **God's Role Vs. Satan's Role Vs. Our Role**
- **Wage the Good Warfare**
- **Take Up the Full Armor of God**
- **Pray Continually**
- **Keep Them from the Evil One**
- **Conquerors through Christ**
- **Worldly and Fleshly Attacks**
- **Sin: Self-Centered Action or Inaction**
- **Soul Temptations: Pride**
- **Heart Temptations: Anxiety, Suffering, and Finances**
- **Mind Temptations**
  - **Physical Temptations - Addictions**
- **Private Temptations: Marriage and Family**
- **Public Temptations: Church Ministry**

## Spiritual Warfare in the Early Church

Historical consistency is another important test of Christian teaching and orthodoxy. Many contemporary spiritual warfare advocates make claims that their teachings are in line with early church history.<sup>32</sup> 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.”<sup>33</sup> Clinton Arnold asserts that a “thorough treatment of this topic from the vantage point of church history would be very helpful and illuminating.”<sup>34</sup> History shows a serious concern for the demonic affliction of believers.<sup>35</sup>

The historical focus of this course 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.

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<sup>32</sup>“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>.

<sup>33</sup>Clinton E. Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 112.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.



# 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.”<sup>36</sup> 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.”<sup>37</sup> 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.<sup>38</sup>

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.”<sup>39</sup> Clinton Arnold asserts that a “thorough treatment of this topic from the vantage point of church history would be very helpful and illuminating.”<sup>40</sup> History shows a serious concern for the demonic possession of unbelievers and for the affliction of believers.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Clinton E. Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 25.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Oscar 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>.

<sup>39</sup>Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions*, 112.

<sup>40</sup>Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions*, 112.

<sup>41</sup>“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

## **Ante-Nicene Church Fathers**

**Clement of Rome**

**Mathetes**

**Polycarp**

**Ignatius**

**Barnabas**

**Justin Martyr**

*Justin, The First Apology.*

*Justin, The Second Apology.*

*Justin, The Dialogue with Trypho.*

**Irenæus**

**Hermas**

**Tatian**

**Tertullian**

**Minucius Felix**

**Origen**

**Cyprian**

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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.

## **Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers**

### **Eusebius**

**Novatian's exorcism and baptism.**

**The office of exorcist.**

**Matrydom of exorcists.**

**Demonic sacrifices.**

**Demonic immorality and Constantine's fidelity.**

### **Athanasius and Cyril**

### **Ambrose**

### **Augustine**

### **John Chrysostom**

### **The Seven Ecumenical Councils**

## **The Protestant Reformation Forward**

## 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."<sup>42</sup> 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."<sup>43</sup> Demonic manifestations and apparitions are referenced, but caution is given in regard to since deceptions can occur in spiritual warfare. Repentance, renunciation and "confession of all their previous sins" were also seen as an important connection with baptism either as an exorcistic or apotropaic practice.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions*, 25.

<sup>43</sup>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.

<sup>44</sup>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 (*apotassesthai*) 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.

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.<sup>45</sup> 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.<sup>46</sup> 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 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.

**Much more available here:**

[www.trustworthyword.com/sw-church-history](http://www.trustworthyword.com/sw-church-history)

**and here (chapter 3, pages 110-150):**

“An Analysis and Critique of Neil T. Anderson’s Approach to Spiritual Warfare in Evangelism and Discipleship” by Jonathan Carl  
(<http://digital.library.sbts.edu/handle/10392/4605>)

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<sup>45</sup>Oscar 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>.

<sup>46</sup>Tormod 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>.

## Spiritual Warfare in Non-Believers & Believers

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.<sup>47</sup> 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.<sup>48</sup>

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.”<sup>49</sup> Many Christians have tried to devise methods to engage these demons. These 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.

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<sup>47</sup>Moreau, *Deliver Us from Evil*, xxvi.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>49</sup>Billy Graham, “Why the Berlin Congress?,” in *The World Congress on Evangelism* (Berlin: Wheaton College, 1966).

# How Can I Be Sure that I am a Christian?

[www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian)

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 Corinthians 13:5, ESV)

**1. Did a work start in you?** 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. (Romans 10:9)

- And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:6)

**2. Have you experienced God's Spirit in you?** In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:13-14)

**3. Is there fruit of God's Spirit growing in you?** (*Read the book of 1 John*)

1. Do you enjoy having fellowship w/Christ & Christians? (1 John 1:3)

2. Would people say you walk in the light or darkness? (1 John 1:6-7)

3. Do you admit and confess your sin? (1 John 1:8)

4. Are you obedient to God's Word? (1 John 2:3-5)

5. Does your life indicate you love God or the world? (1 John 2:15)

6. Is your life characterized by "doing what is right"? (1 John 2:29)

7. Do you seek to maintain a pure life? (1 John 3:3)

8. Do you see a decreasing pattern of sin in your life? (1 John 3:5-6)

• [i.e. not continuing in sin as a way of life, not a total absence of sin.]

9. Do you demonstrate love for other Christians? (1 John 3:14)

10. Do you "walk the walk," vs just "talking the talk"? (1Jn 3:18-19)

11. Do you maintain a clear conscience? (1 John 3:21)

12. Do you experience victory in your Christian walk? (1 John 5:4)

**4. Do you endure in the faith?** They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us. (1 John 2:19)

**Works of the Flesh vs. Fruits of the Spirit:  
What best describes you?**

*The “works of the flesh” are evidence for unbelief and an eternity in Hell.  
The “fruit of the Spirit” evidences God’s saving work and eternity with Christ.  
(Galatians 5:16-24)*

[19] Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, [20] idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, [21] envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

[22] But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23] gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. [24] And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

**Parable of the Sower:  
What category of “soil” best describes your response to the good news about Jesus?**

*(Matthew 13:19-23 ESV)*

- [19] When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path.
- [20] As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, [21] yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.
- [22] As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

*Only the fourth (“good”) soil below describes a genuine Christian.*

- [23] As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.



***Do You See These Three Characteristics in Your Life?***  
*The Book of 1 John Helps Us to See Characteristics of Truly Converted and Saved Souls.*

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God  
that you may know that you have eternal life. (1 John 5:13)

**1. Obedience to God's Commands?**

- If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. (1 John 1:6)
- Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked. (1 John 2:4-6)
- If one turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination. (Proverbs 28:9)
- No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. (1 John 3:6)
- 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 3:10)
- For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. (1 John 5:3)

**2. Forgiveness?**

- Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. (1 John 2:9)
- For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matt 6:14-15)

**3. Love?**

- If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (1 John 2:15)
- No one who denies the Son has the Father. (1 John 2:23)
- But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. (1 Timothy 5:8)
- Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. (1 John 4:8)

# How Can I Become a Christian?

[www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian)

## 1. Understand and believe that God is the Creator of the Universe

*God created us and has authority over us.*

- Colossians 1:16-17 "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together."
- Hebrews 11:3 "By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible."

*We will give an answer for our lives.*

- Hebrews 9:27 "And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment"
- Hebrews 4:13 "And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account."

## 2. Acknowledge and confess your sinfulness

*God's Commandments are His perfect standard of Holiness.*

- Romans 3:19-20 "Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. 20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin."
- Romans 3:23 "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"
- James 2:10 "For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it."

*Admit that you are not good. Turn away from you sin and turn towards Christ.*

- Psalm 32:5 "I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,' and you forgave the iniquity of my sin."

- Romans 3:10-12 “None is righteous, no, not one; [11] no one understands; no one seeks for God. [12] All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”
- 1 John 1:9-10 “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. [10] If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”

### **3. Believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose from the grave**

*Realize that Salvation is by Faith (trusting in Jesus, loving and valuing Him more than anyone or anything) and not by works.*

- Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
- Ephesians 2:8-9 "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast."
- Mark 12:28-31 “And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, ‘Which commandment is the most important of all?’ [29] Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. [30] 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.’ [31] The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

*Affirm that Jesus is God and is the Only Way of Salvation. Salvation is not possible by obedience in Judaism, not through Mohammed's revelation of Allah (Islam), not through Buddhism or Hinduism, not by good works, and not through Jehovah's Witnesses or Mormonism. Salvation is only available through Jesus.*

- John 14:6 "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"
- Acts 4:12 "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."
- 1 John 2:23 "No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also."

## 4. Call out to Jesus in prayer to be in charge of your life

*Publicly place your trust and faith in Him.*

- Acts 16:30-31 Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” [31] And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”
- Romans 10:9-10 “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. [10] For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”
- Romans 10:13 “For ‘everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’”

*Submit and yield to His Lordship. Let Him be in control of your life.*

- Acts 2:37-38 “Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ [38] And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- Matthew 16:24-26 “Then Jesus told his disciples, ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. [25] For whoever would save his life(1) will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. [26] For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?’”

**Now what?** If you have chosen to believe that Jesus Christ is God, died on the cross, and rose from the grave and have truly yielded control of your life to Him, you are a Christian and follower of Jesus. *Here is what to do next...*

### **Walk with Jesus in Fellowship with Other Believers**

*Proclaim Christ's Lordship over your life through Baptism*

- Acts 2:38 "And Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'"

See “What does the Bible say about Baptism?” on

TrustworthyWord.com

- [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-baptism](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-baptism)

*Read your Bible to grow in your knowledge and love of Christ*

See “How to Study the Bible?” on TrustworthyWord.com

- [www.trustworthyword.com/how-to-study-the-bible](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-to-study-the-bible)

*Pray consistently and daily to relate more with Jesus*

See “What Does the Bible Say God is Like?” and “What Does the Bible Say about Christian Identity?” on TrustworthyWord.com

- <http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-god-is-like>
- <http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-christian-identity>

*Connect with a biblically faithful church family*

- Hebrews 10:25-26 "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."
- See “What Does the Bible Say about Church Membership?” on TrustworthyWord.com
- <http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-church-membership>

*Speak and Demonstrate God's Love*

- Ephesians 2:10 "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

See “What Does the Bible Say about Love?” on TrustworthyWord.com

- <http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-love>

*Listen to and Obey God's Commands*

- Hebrews 10:26-27 "For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries."
- 1 Peter 1:15-16 "but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'"

See “What Does the Bible Say about Sin?” and “What Does the Bible Say about Sanctification?” on TrustworthyWord.com

- <http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-sin>
- <http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-sanctification>

# Common Objections to the Gospel

## **1. What about people who've never heard about Jesus? Will they go to Hell?**

What about other religions: Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and tribal religions? A person doesn't go to Hell for failing to hear the Gospel, they go to hell for failing to obey God's law. Consider if a man jumped out of a plane without a parachute. He doesn't die primarily because he doesn't have a parachute. The reason he dies is because he violates the law of gravity...which brings him to his death. If a person dies without Christ, it is because he has transgressed the law of God...ignorance is not excuse. If we really care about those who have not heard about Jesus, we need to first come to Christ, and take His name, the only name which offers hope of salvation....to the ends of the earth.

## **2. My god is a god of love and forgiveness who doesn't send someone to hell.**

This is an example of idolatry...a violation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> commandment. Crafting a god of our own imagination, in our own image, or a god we are comfortable with. We cannot separate God's justice from God's love. He does judge the wicked and the immoral by their transgression of the law, and their sentence is eternal death and suffering in a very real Hell. This same God, we learn from Romans 5:8, loved us so much, that while we were still rebels and enemies, sent His son to die for us.

## **3. Why is there so much suffering?**

We all go through suffering. All of us have been hurt by the sinfulness of others, the consequences of living in a fallen world, and by our own sinfulness. We need to have faith in God, knowing and trusting that He is in control, and that His good plan includes an eternal rescue from sin, suffering, and death. It is good to ask these deep questions, I would recommend [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org) to dig deeply into this and similar tough questions. Ultimately God sent this message here today to help save you from eternal suffering. This is God's love.

#### **4. I'm already saved.**

God tells us to test ourselves to see if we are in the faith. Have our lives changed? Do we desire to hear God's voice through the Bible? Are we obedient to God's commands? Do we see the fruits of God's Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control) in our lives? (Galatians 5:22-24) Or do we see the works of the flesh in our lives (sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these)? (Galatians 5:19-21) Do we desperately seek Him in prayer? Do we see righteousness being produced by God in our lives? Are we quick to forgive? Do we love others?

SEE "How Can I Be Sure I Am a Christian?" on [TrustworthyWord.com](http://TrustworthyWord.com)

- <http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian>

When you see a doctor and you are sick, what does he do? He assess the symptoms, shoots straight with you, and tells you about your disease and any possible cures. The Bible clearly speaks to any symptoms of ongoing, unrepentant sin in our lives. Matthew 7:21 "I never knew you." Test yourselves.

#### **5. I don't believe in God.**

Just because we don't believe something doesn't make it disappear. Put on a blindfold and stand in front of a large truck on a highway, saying I don't believe the truck exists. I know there is no such thing as an atheist. No such thing as an atheist at 25,000 ft in crazy turbulence. Look at a painting, do you say, look what coincidentally formed by chance over a ridiculously long period of time? No. You see a painting. You know there is a painter. You see a building, you know there is a builder. You see the Creation and you know there is a Creator.

#### **6. I don't believe the Bible is God's Word.**

You are right the Bible was written by men. When you write a letter, do you write, or does the pen? Men are God's instruments to write the Bible. The Bible is the most accurate piece of literature in all of history...scientifically, historically, prophetically, archaeologically, and documentary or manuscript evidence. Find an error. We've searched. We can't find any.

#### **7. I confess my sins and say I'm sorry all the time.**

Consider civil law. If someone is guilty of a serious crime, when they come to trial, if they just say "I'm sorry" to the judge, do you think he'll just let her go? That's not fair. Only a corrupt or unrighteous judge would let a guilty person free without a penalty. The law has been broken. Justice demands a punishment. We can't just say we are sorry. We can't be "good enough" to overcome our crimes. We need Jesus to pay for the penalty for our sin.

## **8. I've lied, but that doesn't make me a bad person.**

On moral issues...it only takes one commission of a crime to be labeled a criminal. One murder = a murderer. One lie = liar. One theft = a thief. One lust = adulterer. It is human nature to trivialize sin, but sin is serious. God tells us in James 2:10 that anyone who is guilty of one sin is guilty of all sin.

## **9. Christianity is narrow-minded.**

The Bible is clear that there is only one way. Jesus says in John 14:6, "I am the way and the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me." In Acts 4:12 we learn that there is only one "name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." If you don't have the Son, don't have the Father. You're right, without Jesus, no hope for your transgression of the law. Jesus has the power to forgive sins...He openly offers that exclusive path to salvation to all who hear...would you reject Him? Put your faith in Him?

## **10. I don't agree with you.**

No one knows when they will face death. Did you know that 150,000 people die every 24 hours? That is not a scare tactic, that is reality. And after death there is guaranteed judgment. Jesus speaks of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man who is in Hell becomes desperate to tell his family about Jesus. Read Romans 2:4 – We plead with you to realize you are storing up wrath for yourself for the day of judgment...don't presume upon God's patience and kindness. Get right with the Lord. Consider our motives...we just want you to know and love Jesus and find eternal life. Paul in Romans 9 explains that he wishes he could sacrifice his own salvation for the salvation of someone else...but it doesn't work that way. You must decide.

THE BOTTOM LINE? There is no good objection for failing to follow Christ as your Lord. Do you have a good reason for putting Him off any longer?

*Check out these resources for more answers!*

- [needgod.com](http://needgod.com)
- [gotquestions.org](http://gotquestions.org)
- "Evidence for Jesus" on TrustworthyWord.com  
[www.trustworthyword.com/evidence-for-jesus](http://www.trustworthyword.com/evidence-for-jesus)



# **Spiritual Warfare “Levels”**

[www.trustworthyword.com/sw-levels-tactics](http://www.trustworthyword.com/sw-levels-tactics)

**Therapeutic Level Warfare**

**Occult Level Warfare**

**Ground Level Warfare**

# **Spiritual Warfare “Ground Level” Tactics**

**Exorcism and deliverance.**

[www.trustworthyword.com/exorcism](http://www.trustworthyword.com/exorcism)

**Ancestor spirits and ghosts.**

[www.trustworthyword.com/ghosts](http://www.trustworthyword.com/ghosts)

**Binding and loosing.**

[www.trustworthyword.com/binding](http://www.trustworthyword.com/binding)

**Rebuking.**

[www.trustworthyword.com/rebuking](http://www.trustworthyword.com/rebuking)

**Naming.**

[www.trustworthyword.com/naming](http://www.trustworthyword.com/naming)

**Repentance issues.**

[www.trustworthyword.com/repentance](http://www.trustworthyword.com/repentance)

**Vulnerability.**

[www.trustworthyword.com/vulnerability](http://www.trustworthyword.com/vulnerability)

## Genealogical connections.

[www.trustworthyword.com/genealogical](http://www.trustworthyword.com/genealogical)

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."<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>“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.

## Strategic Level (Territorial Spirits)

“Gaining Perspective on Territorial Spirits” Response by A. Scott Moreau (and long quote of Clinton Arnold)

<https://www.lausanne.org/content/territorial-spirits>

- “The first suggestion for refinement in this area is that we must be more cautious in the use of exaggerated claims and anecdotes as the means by which SLSW is established.”
- “A second suggestion is that advocates of SLSW emphasize spiritual diagnosis over spiritual mapping, and be more cautious in their pronouncements. We must enable Christians to develop a world view that acknowledges the powers without capitulating to them or being captivated by an unhealthy interest in them.”
- “Finally, our goal must be to integrate the spiritual, the personal, the cultural, and the social and to stop placing all the blame on the spirits and start recognizing the human side of choice to rebel against God’s established order.”

### ***(long quote of Clinton Arnold shared by Scott Moreau)***

“I close with an excellent eight-point summary given by Clinton Arnold which I would consider an appropriate starting point for a Lausanne statement on engaging territorial spirits in spiritual warfare:

1. There is a hierarchy among the demons and angels in the evil spiritual domain. Some evil angels have assignments over empires, people groups, countries, regions, territories, or cities.
2. There is struggle and warfare between the angels of God and the angels of Satan in the supernatural realm that has an impact on the unfolding of events on earth.
3. Through biblical revelation, God has heightened our awareness of the angelic realm. The knowledge he has given us is for the purpose of prompting our dependence on him through prayer.
4. Although God has given us the responsibility of exercising our authority in Christ over unclean spirits that afflict individuals, there is no biblical evidence that God has given us responsibility to bind, expel, or thwart the territorial rulers.
5. Although we do not have the authority to directly engage territorial spirits, we certainly have the right to appeal to God to hinder and obstruct the grip of a demonic ruler over an area so that the gospel can be proclaimed and the darkness may be lifted from the eyes of the unbelieving.
6. “Spiritual mapping,” or, as I would prefer to call it, creating a “spiritual profile” of people in a city or country, is a useful way to help the people of God pray more specifically. It is also beneficial for informing the teaching and discipling of new believers.
7. “Identificational repentance” is an appropriate way of leading the people of God in dealing with issues of corporate sin. It does not, however, enable Christians to “remit” the sins of the nonbelieving population of a city, remove the curse of God’s judgment on them, or result in the weakening of the grip of the territorial spirits over the unbelieving population.
8. Christians do not need to feel a responsibility or a call to engage in a direct confrontation with the principalities and powers over a city, region, or a country. We appeal directly to God, who will direct his angels to fight the battles against the high-ranking powers.”

# Roles & Responsibilities in Spiritual Warfare

## 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.”<sup>51</sup> MacArthur points out Satan’s sifting of Peter being instructive for in Peter’s realization that “he could not stand on his own.”<sup>52</sup> 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).

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.”<sup>53</sup> 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.”<sup>54</sup> 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.”<sup>55</sup> 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).<sup>56</sup>

- Sharer
- Hearer
- Oppressed
- Possessed
- Counselor

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<sup>51</sup>MacArthur, *Standing Strong*, 31.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 34.

<sup>53</sup>Graham, “Why the Berlin Congress?”

<sup>54</sup>MacArthur, *Standing Strong*, 33.

<sup>55</sup>Wagner and Pennoyer, *Wrestling with Dark Angels*, 86.

<sup>56</sup>Lawless, *Disciplined Warriors*, 214.

# Modern Methods in Spiritual Warfare (focus on Power Encounters)

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.”<sup>57</sup> 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.

## Powlison and Anderson

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.<sup>58</sup>

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.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>The 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.

<sup>58</sup>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* (Nairobi, Kenya: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 2000), accessed December 30, 2013, <http://www.lausanne.org/all-documents/historical-overview-3.html>.

<sup>59</sup>Moreau, *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),

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.”<sup>60</sup>

Powlison explains power encounters as ekbballistic mode of ministries (EMM), where practitioners “seek to identify and cast demons out of believers.”<sup>61</sup>

EMM leaders “assert that Christians cannot be ‘possessed’ by the devil 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.”<sup>62</sup> 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.”<sup>63</sup>

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.<sup>64</sup> 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.”<sup>65</sup> 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.”<sup>66</sup> 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.”<sup>67</sup>

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soul (truth-encounter), mind (mind-encounter), and strength (power-encounter).

<sup>60</sup>David Powlison, *Power Encounters: Reclaiming Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995).19-24.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 27.

<sup>62</sup>Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 28.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., 29.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 32-33.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

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.”<sup>68</sup> 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.<sup>69</sup>

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.”<sup>70</sup>

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.”<sup>71</sup>

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.”<sup>72</sup> He argues that Scripture “never says a word about the cause of demonization” but that “Christians fight spiritual warfare by repentance, faith, and obedience.”<sup>73</sup> 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.”<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>“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.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 37.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 34.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 41.

<sup>72</sup>Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 114.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., 37, 41.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., 35. It is interesting to note that this example includes Jesus’ verbal rebuke/command towards Satan.



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.

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.'"<sup>75</sup> 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."<sup>76</sup> 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.<sup>77</sup>

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.<sup>78</sup> Anderson himself is familiar with Powlison's work, referencing Powlison's understanding of how "Satan can put thoughts into a person's mind."<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>75</sup>Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 76.

<sup>76</sup>EMM 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.

<sup>77</sup>"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.

<sup>78</sup>Powlison 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.

<sup>79</sup>"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, 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.

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 his own understanding of how Satan speaks and how Christians are to respond and be counseled concerning the voices they hear.<sup>80</sup>

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.<sup>81</sup>

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.”<sup>82</sup> 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.

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 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,

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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.

<sup>80</sup>Powlison, *Power Encounters*, 102.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., 108. This quote represents a very helpful development from Powlison’s statements in 1995.

<sup>82</sup>“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.

paths toward true knowledge of the divine.<sup>83</sup>

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?”<sup>84</sup>

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, 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.

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<sup>83</sup>Beilby 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.

<sup>84</sup>Beilby and Eddy, *Understanding Spiritual Warfare*, 125.

# Modern Methods in Spiritual Warfare (focus on Truth Encounters)

## Neil Anderson and Spiritual Warfare

In the North American context, many spiritual warfare approaches have focused on pragmatism, action, expedience, rituals, externalization, power, and heroisms.<sup>85</sup> 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.”<sup>86</sup> 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.”<sup>87</sup>

Anderson believes “that the ministries of counseling and discipling are the same in the Bible.”<sup>88</sup> 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.”<sup>89</sup> 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 counselors (encouragers). Anderson accentuates the individual responsibility of the believer in discipleship while maintaining that discipleship occurs best in community within the local church.<sup>90</sup>

- **Life**
- **Ministry**
- **Writings**
  - **Victory Over Darkness**
  - **The Bondage Breaker**
  - **Discipleship Counseling**
  - **Steps to Freedom in Christ**

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<sup>85</sup>A. 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.

<sup>86</sup>Neil T. Anderson and Dave Park, *Stomping Out the Darkness* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1993), 197.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., 78.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., 13.

<sup>89</sup>Neil T. Anderson, *Discipleship Counseling* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2003), 14.

<sup>90</sup>Neil 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.

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."<sup>91</sup> In order to justify this absence of evangelism, one could attempt to argue that Anderson's works are discipleship focused, 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.<sup>92</sup> Anderson's helpful focus on Christian identity that transforms one's ethical and moral behavior through right belief is to be encouraged.<sup>93</sup> 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."<sup>94</sup> 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.<sup>95</sup> 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.

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<sup>91</sup>Chuck 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.

<sup>92</sup>"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.

<sup>93</sup>"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.

<sup>94</sup>"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.

<sup>95</sup>"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.

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 to resist the enemy Satan.<sup>96</sup> 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."<sup>97</sup> Other contemporary works on discipleship affirm, like Anderson, the importance of progressive sanctification while understanding and remaining aware of active spiritual opposition.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup>"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.

<sup>97</sup>"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.

<sup>98</sup>"A disciple, *mathetes*, is a learner 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 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.

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.<sup>99</sup>

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.

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 emphasis on the power encounter today.<sup>100</sup> 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.

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<sup>99</sup>Anderson, *Rough Road*, 141-42.

<sup>100</sup>When 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.

The below lists are shared to assist the reader in summarily understanding and locating the main points of affirmation and points of concern within “An Analysis and Critique of Neil T. Anderson’s Approach to Spiritual Warfare in Evangelism and Discipleship” by Jonathan Carl (<http://digital.library.sbts.edu/handle/10392/4605>). This is not a comprehensive listing of points and page references within the dissertation, but is designed to be a helpful tool in summarizing the main take away points of Dr. Carl’s dissertation.

## **Areas of Affirmation in Anderson’s Writings**

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 in Anderson's Writings**

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)

# **Towards a Modern Understanding and Application of Spiritual Warfare in Evangelism and Missions**

Reference “A Survey of North American Spiritual Warfare Thinking” by A. Scott Moreau in *Deliver Us from Evil*

- Short version <https://www.lausanne.org/content/north-america>
- More in book version of *Deliver Us from Evil*

**An Avoidance Strategy**

**A Relational Strategy**

**A Mind Strategy**

**A Power Strategy**

**A Truth Strategy**

# **What Do I Do If \_\_\_\_\_?**

## **Basic Principles to Guide You In A Moment of Conflict**

- 1. TWO WARNINGS:**
  - a. Avoid Casual Dismissal**
  - b. Avoid Unhealthy Curiosity and Rabbit Trails**
- 2. Daily Draw Near to God – Every Day is a Battle**
- 3. Anticipate Attack – Satan Is Persistent**
- 4. Trust In & Depend Upon God, Not Yourself**
- 5. Seek God’s Truth, Not Experiential Wisdom**
- 6. Use the Sword of the Spirit – Not Your Words**
- 7. Pray, Pray, Pray – Talk to God, Not to Demons**
- 8. Walk in Holiness and Obedience**
- 9. Do Not Be Afraid – God Is Greater** (1 John 4:4)
- 10. Be Courageous – Satan Is On A Leash** (1 John 5:18, Job 1-2)
- 11. Recruit & Train Faithful Partners In Ministry**

## **When and Where of Spiritual Warfare**

### **When & How?**

Acts 2:42-47

- **I**ndividual Responsibility
- **F**ellowship
  
- **S**ervice/Love
- **W**orship
- **E**vangelism/Missions
- **P**rayer
- **T**eaching

### **Where?**

Mark 12:30-31

- Individual Soul
- Mental
- Physical
- Emotional
- Financial
- Relational

Ephesians 4-6

- Church Unity
- Individual Witness
- Marriage
- Family
- Professional/Work
- Ministerial
- Evangelism
- Missions

# Prayer and Spiritual Warfare

- **What does the Bible say about Prayer?**

[www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-prayer](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-prayer)

- **Prayer in the Psalms and Proverbs**

[www.trustworthyword.com/prayer-in-psalms-and-proverbs](http://www.trustworthyword.com/prayer-in-psalms-and-proverbs)

- **Ways to Pray**

[www.trustworthyword.com/30-ways-to-pray](http://www.trustworthyword.com/30-ways-to-pray)

- **Bible Verses on Prayer**

[www.trustworthyword.com/bible-verses-on-prayer](http://www.trustworthyword.com/bible-verses-on-prayer)

- **Quotes on Prayer**

[www.trustworthyword.com/100-best-prayer-quotes](http://www.trustworthyword.com/100-best-prayer-quotes)

- **What does the Bible say about Fasting?**

[www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-fasting](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-fasting)

- **Bible Verses on Fasting**

[www.trustworthyword.com/bible-verses-on-fasting](http://www.trustworthyword.com/bible-verses-on-fasting)

- **Quotes on Fasting**

[www.trustworthyword.com/quotes-on-fasting](http://www.trustworthyword.com/quotes-on-fasting)

# Discipleship: Defensive Preparation Strategies and Tactics

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."<sup>101</sup> He further supports that "all prayers that we pray conforming to this Word are certainly heard and answered in Jesus Christ."<sup>102</sup> 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."<sup>103</sup>

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? 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?<sup>104</sup>

Bonhoeffer also emphasizes confession, boldly asserting that "confession is conversion . . . confession is discipleship . . . confession is the renewal of the joy of baptism."<sup>105</sup> 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

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<sup>101</sup>Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, 84.

<sup>102</sup>"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.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., 86.

<sup>104</sup>Martin Luther, *Luther's Little Instruction Book: The Small Catechism of Martin Luther*, accessed January 4, 2014, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/luther/smallcat.html>.

<sup>105</sup>"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.

the cross.”<sup>106</sup> 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.<sup>107</sup>

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.

Anderson correctly asserts that “every believer is involved in spiritual warfare.”<sup>108</sup>

He also helpfully emphasizes the personal responsibility of the believer.<sup>109</sup>

Anderson is also discerning when he rebukes most modern “classic power encounter” approaches that are directed towards believers.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>106</sup>“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.

<sup>107</sup>“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.

<sup>108</sup>Anderson, *Daily Discipler*, 16.

<sup>109</sup>“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.

<sup>110</sup>“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

**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.”<sup>111</sup> 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.<sup>112</sup>

## Anderson’s Steps to Freedom in Christ

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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.

<sup>111</sup>Anderson, *Discipleship Counseling*, 148.

<sup>112</sup>Anderson, *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.



# Worldview, Cultural Contextualization and Spiritual Warfare

(Hiebert and Lawless)

## DEFINITIONS OF A WORLDVIEW (Chuck Lawless)

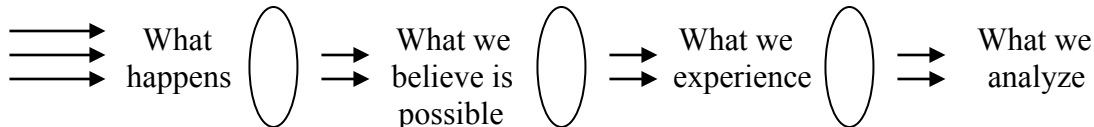
1. James Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, 17:  
“a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true, or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic make-up of our world”
2. Timothy Warner, *Spiritual Warfare*, 25:  
“the thought system we develop for explaining the world around us and our experiences in it”
3. Norman Geisler and William Watkins, *Worlds Apart: A Handbook on Worldviews*, 11:  
“interpretive framework through which or by which one makes sense of the data of life and the world”
4. Paul Hiebert, *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues*, 10:  
“the norm whereby we understand and critique all realities”
5. Charles Kraft, *Christianity with Power*, 19:  
“certain socially acceptable patterns concerning what to focus on and how to interpret things”
6. Ronald Nash, *Worldviews in Conflict*, 16:  
“a set of beliefs about the most important issues in life”

## WHY WORLDVIEWS MATTER (Chuck Lawless)

1. Worldviews are an attempt to make sense of the world; thus, evangelizers need to know where the gospel intersects with people.
2. Understanding a worldview helps us to recognize syncretism among new believers.
3. Understanding worldviews helps us to contextualize the approach to missions:

- the wv of the pagan/nonbeliever
- the wv of the evangelist/believer
- the wv of the denomination/influence
- the biblical wv

### WORLDVIEW DEVELOPMENT (Chuck Lawless)



- **Our worldview is challenged and stretched**
  - New info (biblical understanding)
  - New experiences (experiences should drive us back into the Word)
- **Problem**
  - when experience trumps the Bible
  - by overemphasis on experience
  - by biblical ignorance

### Critical Cultural Contextualization

- Media/TV
- Animism
- Occult
- Western Rationalism
- Missions Settings

**Critical Cultural Contextualization** – “Appropriate or critical contextualization means that the Word of God is our controlling authority and that:

- we do not accept another’s culture uncritically-the Word is our touchstone.
  - we do not accept our own culture uncritically-the Word is our touchstone.”
- (Ed Roberts, <https://9marks.org/article/critical-contextualization-and-culturally-prevalent-and-deep-rooted-sins/>)

### OUR CHALLENGE... (Chuck Lawless)

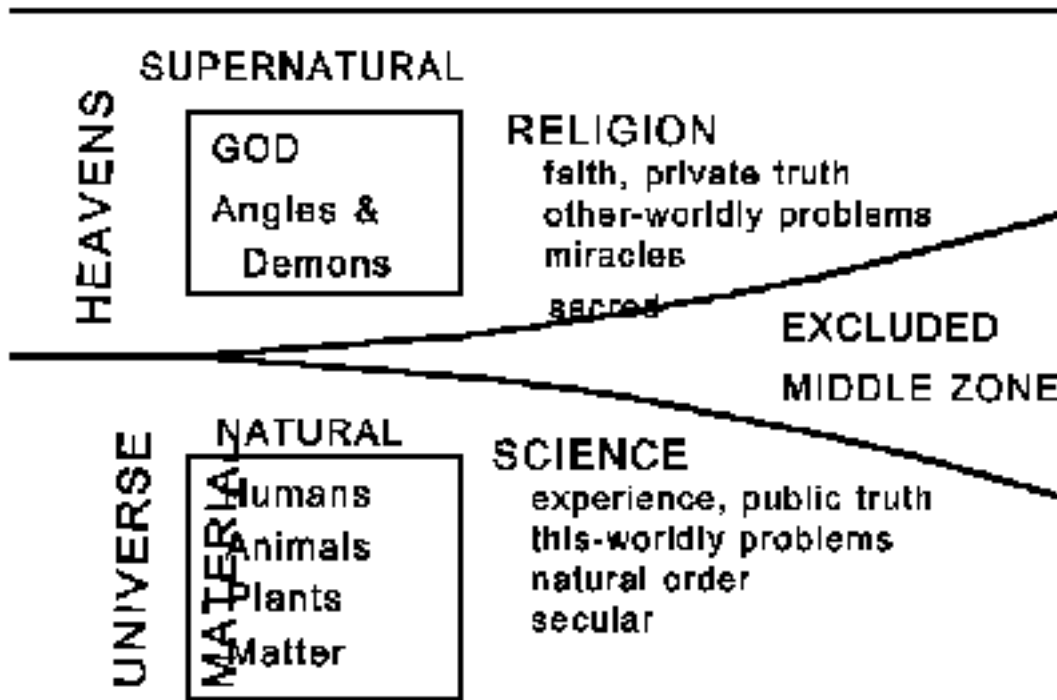
- *Our challenge is to present a biblical worldview that recognizes God’s sovereignty as well as the spiritual battle in a culturally relevant manner*
- *Our challenge is to avoid the extremes of (1) rationalistically ignoring the demonic and (2) animistically becoming fascinated with the demonic.*

“Spiritual Warfare and Worldview” by Paul G. Hiebert

- <https://www.lausanne.org/content/spiritual-warfare-and-worldview>
- “The Excluded Middle”
- *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues* by Paul G. Hiebert
  - Ch.12 – The Flaw of the Excluded Middle
  - Ch. 13 – Biblical Perspectives on Spiritual Warfare

**Figure 2**

**The Modern Worldview**



- Different Worldviews and Spiritual Warfare
- Modern Supernatural/Natural Worldview

**THE NATURE OF THE WESTERN WORLDVIEW**

(Kraft, *Christianity with Power*, 23ff)

1. naturalistic— we focus on natural causes and assume there are natural causes behind every event
2. materialistic— we define our wealth with “stuff” rather than relationships
3. humanistic— we focus on human achievement/abilities
4. rationalistic— we understand knowledge by our senses, data gathering
5. individualistic— we are often focused on individuals, not groups

- oftentimes, our western worldview prevents a biblical understanding of spiritual warfare

**Tribal/Animistic worldview (animism, spiritism, tribal and folk religion)** - “the belief that personal spiritual beings and impersonal spiritual forces have power over human affairs, and consequently, that human beings must discover what beings and forces are influencing them in order to determine future action and, frequently, to manipulate their power” Gailyn Van Rhee, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts*, 20

- the seen world is clearly and definitively related to the unseen world, animists are often constantly in fear of the powers behind events
- BEINGS (gods, ancestors, ghosts, angels, nature spirits, spirit guides) and FORCES (magic, astrology, witchcraft, the evil eye, etc.) influence the seen world
- POWER – is the essence of animism, especially power to bring about evil
- DISCOVERING, DETERMINING, and WARDING OFF the powers is critical

• Tribal Worldview

Figure 3  
Tribal View of Spiritual Encounters



• Indo-European Worldview

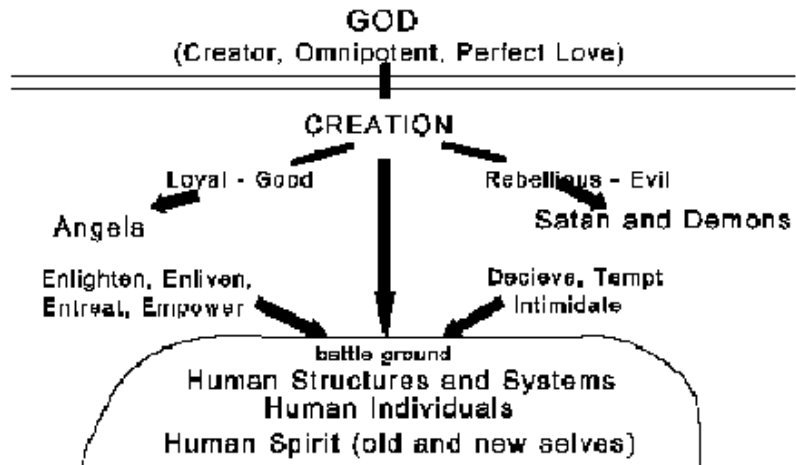
Figure 4  
The Myth of Cosmic Dualism

	GOOD		EVIL
Heavens	Good gods	← central battle of power →	Evil gods
	(fall out)		
Humans	Good people	← battle of power →	Evil people
Nature	Good nature	← battle of power →	Evil nature

# Biblical Views of Spiritual Warfare

Figure 5

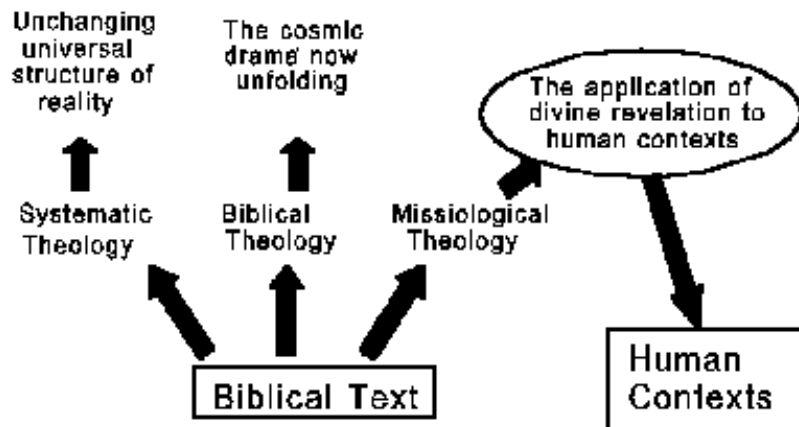
## Biblical Worldview



- Doing Theology

Figure 1

## Types of Theology

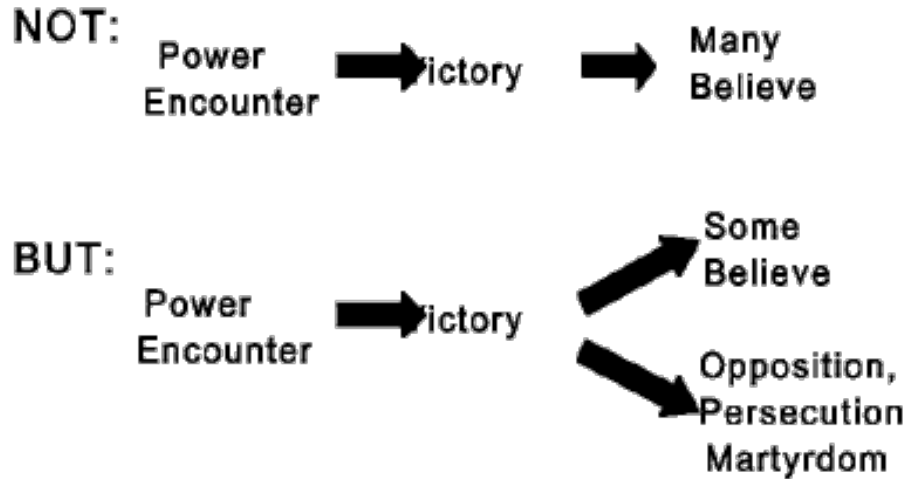


## Power Encounters

Figure 6

### Power Encounter in Scripture

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### *Moreau's Caution – "The Expanded Middle"*

#### HOW DO WE EVALUATE? (Chuck Lawless)

Step one: Understand the experience.

- What physical factors are involved?
- What psychological factors are involved?
- What social and cultural factors are involved?

Step two: Evaluate the experience.

- What is likely the underlying reality?
- Be careful not to ignore or to overemphasize the demonic.

Step three: Apply out of the experience a biblical worldview.

# Evangelism and Missions

## Evangelism: How to Share the Gospel Like Jesus

### **Be Bold**

“unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.” Luke 13:3

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment.” Matthew 22:37-38

### **Be Truthful**

“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.” John 3:36

“All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.” John 6:37

### **Be Loving**

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

### **Be Hope-Filled**

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” John 10:10

### **Be Prepared**

“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.” Matthew 4:19

### **Be On the Move**

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” Luke 19:10

“you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8

## Discussion Questions

- How did you come to faith in Christ?
- Have you ever had someone share the Gospel with you in an offensive or unhelpful manner?
- Why do you think we struggle with sharing our faith?
- Do we ever “soft-peddle” the Gospel? Why or why not?
- What truths are essential to sharing the Gospel?

## Do You Agree or Disagree with the Below Statements?

- “Preach the Gospel always, and if necessary, use words.”
- “We shouldn’t initiate evangelism, we should wait for them to ask questions. That way we won’t be too aggressive or offensive.”
- “Success in evangelism is when you lead someone to Christ.”
- “If someone will just hear all of the answers, and if I know what to say, then people can be reasoned into faith.”
- “I don’t have the gift of evangelism, so I don’t need to evangelize.”
- “Family is the hardest to share the Gospel with”

## How would you respond if someone said...

“but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15 ESV)

- “I don’t believe in God.”
- “I don’t believe in Hell.”
- “My beliefs are private. Don’t talk to me about Jesus.”
- “I’m a member of another religion.”
- “There are too many hypocrites in the church.”
- “I’ve done too many bad things.”
- “I’m not ready.”
- “There are many paths to heaven.”
- “I’m a good person.”
- The argument never stops...
- What is another objection you’ve encountered?



# **Missions:**

## **Why We Must Share the Gospel Everywhere**

### **The World Is Under God's Wrath**

“For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.” (Romans 1:20)

“all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23)

### **Jesus Is Their Only Hope**

“And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.” (Romans 10:17)

### **True Christians Desire the Salvation of Everyone**

“Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.” (Romans 10:1)

### **Christians Are the Ones Who Must Send and Go**

“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?

And how are they to hear without someone preaching?

And how are they to preach unless they are sent?

As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” (Romans 10:14-15)

### **Who Are God's Hands?**

“All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.” (Romans 10:21)

### **Hear Jesus' Last Command on Earth**

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

## Discussion Questions

- Can you be a Christian & not be stirred by the desire for missions?
- Read the below quote. What do you think or feel about it?

"Could a mariner sit idle if he heard the drowning cry? Could a doctor sit in comfort and just let his patients die? Could a fireman sit idle, let men burn and give no hand? Can you sit at ease in Zion with the world around you damned?"  
Leonard Ravenhill

- What are America's biggest legacies in the world? What are Kentucky's biggest legacies in the world?
- Which are the most Christian nations in the world? Which is one of the most Christian states in the US? What should our legacies be?

### Do You Agree or Disagree with the Below Statements?

- "We should focus on America first, & other countries second"
- "Each country should be responsible for its own evangelism."
- "Short term mission trips are too expensive."
- "We spend too much money on missions"
- "I'm not called to missions."
- "I can pray and not give or go."

### Look over and discuss these numbers...

- In 2011 Americans spent over \$61 billion on their pets
- In 2010 Americans spent \$19.66 billion on video games
- In 2010 Americans paid \$86.4 billion in credit card fees
- In 2007 Americans spent \$29 bn on candy & \$72bn on soda
- In 2006 Americans spent \$22 billion on toys
- In 2003 Americans spent \$53.6 billion on watches and jewelry
- 2005 American Overseas Missions Giving was \$5.2 billion
- If church members in the US had tithed (given 10%) in 2007, there would have been an additional \$161 billion available for the mission of the church
- It would cost only \$5 billion more a year to prevent 67% of the annual 10 million childhood deaths of children under 5
- <http://www.emptytomb.org/lifestylestat.html#Notes>

# Spiritual Warfare In Ephesians

“Satan wants you to mess up, give up, and puff up.” Chuck Lawless

## **Know Who You Belong To** (Ephesians 1)

- God - Father, Son, Spirit
- Blessed, Blessing, Beloved
- Sovereign, Omniscient, Omnipresent, Eternal
- Immeasurable Greatness of His Power
- Far Above All Rule, Authority, Power, and Dominion
- Above Every Name that is Named - Forever
- All Things Under His Feet
- Head Over All Things to the Church

## **Know Who You Are** (Ephesians 1:1-14)

- Part of God's Will
- Saints - To the saints who are in Ephesus
- Faithful
- Given Grace and Peace
- Blessed
- Chosen for Holiness
- Lovingly, Purposefully Adopted
- Freed and Forgiven
- Infinitely Rich
- Secured

## **Understand the Battle**

- Remember Your Past (Ephesians 2:1-3)
- Rejoice at God's Intervention (Ephesians 2:4-9)
- Remain in Your Purpose (Ephesians 2:10)
- Rest In Union with Christ & His Peace (Ephesians 2:11-22)

## **Be Purposed and Prepared**

- As Gospel Light (Eph 3:1-13)
- Strengthened and Empowered in Christ's Love (Eph 3:14-21)

## **Engage the Enemy**

- In and Through Your Church (Ephesians 4:1-16)
- In Your Changed and Maturing Life (Ephesians 4:17-5:10)
- In Your Marriage (Ephesians 5:21-33)
- In Your Family (Ephesians 6:1-4)
- In Your Workplace (Ephesians 6:5-9)
- Against the Enemy (Ephesians 6:11-12)
- Armored for Battle (Ephesians 6:10-20) – GOD IS YOUR ARMOR
- Personally Invested In Disciple-Making (Ephesians 6:21-24)

## Book Recommendations

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