

# Spiritual Warfare Theology and Ministry

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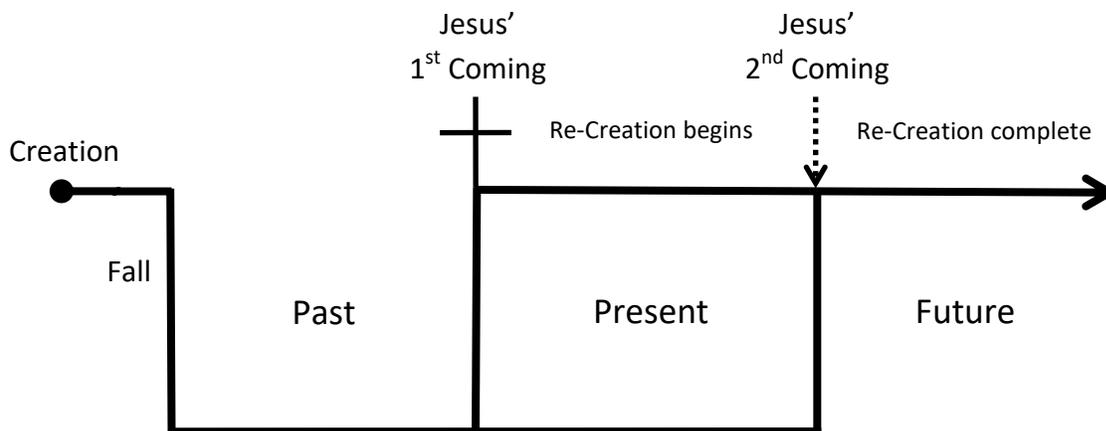
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The purpose of this paper is to provide the starting point for a shared understanding of spiritual warfare among ministry leaders at OTC. It includes a theological perspective that synthesizes key insights God gives us through Scripture and guidelines for practical ministry.

Sources: Bible, Equipping for Spiritual Warfare class Western Seminary (Gerry Breshears with guest Karl Payne); C. Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*; G. MacDermott, *God's Rivals*; K. Payne, *Spiritual Warfare*; Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*; C. Kraft & D. DeBord, *The Rules of Engagement*; J. Eldredge, *Waking the Dead*

## Spiritual Warfare - Theology

1. Spiritual warfare definition: The battle between the Kingdom of God and the dominion of Satan in the spiritual and earthly realms which began after Creation and continues until Jesus' 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming. The spiritual and physical realms overlap and interact. We are surrounded by the unseen spiritual realm and are part of it. We ourselves are physical and spiritual, i.e. physically embodied spirits.

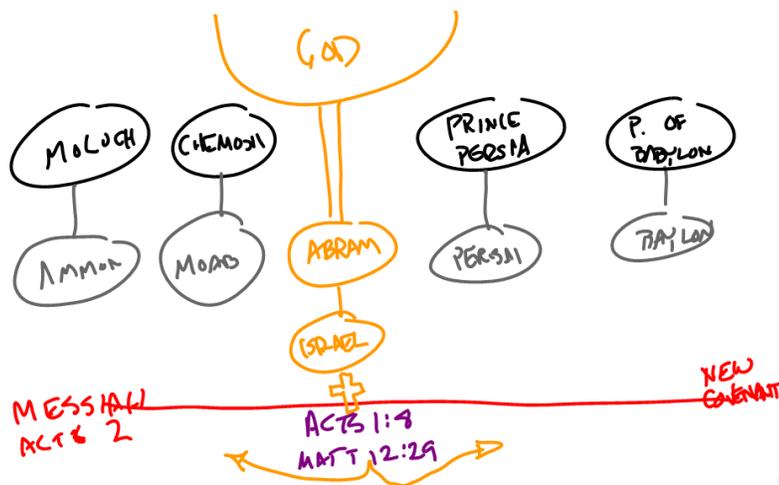


2. History of the spiritual war
  - a. Satan, a spiritual power, perhaps high ranking angel rebelled against God at some time before Genesis 3:1. In that scene we learn that Satan is a liar who seeks to destroy humanity. Humanity's great error was to believe the lies of Satan over the words of God. Satan's influence and opposition to humanity continues throughout history until Jesus' 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming when he is cast out into the lake of fire (Rev 20:10).

- b. At the Tower of Babel God handed the nations over to the worship of “gods” (spiritual powers hostile to God, fallen angels/demons; Gen 11; Dt 32:8-9, 12, 17 where “demon” = *shed* שֵׁד which is the only Hebrew word in the O.T. translated demon(s) – 3x in O.T.). These demon “gods” seek followers who will worship them (Rev 13). NOTE: Any religion that has an object of worship that is in the place of the true God likely has a god/demon/fallen angel that is being worshiped (e.g. Islam-Allah, Buddha-Buddhism, Moroni-Mormonism). When other religions or occult practices demonstrate power, we can assume the source is demonic.
- c. Why did God do this? Because the people wanted it. They wanted to make a name for themselves rather than being made in the image of God. Genesis 11 was a decisive refusal of God, so God confused their language and scattered them. God gave nations over to these fallen angels (“gods” in OT) to rule them as punishment for their rebellion at Babel (Ge 11).
- d. During the Old Covenant era God commanded the Israelites to not mix with the gods of the people in Canaan because they are demons (Dt 12:1-5 cf. 32:15-18; “demons” 32:17). NOTE: Idols are not the same as the gods but represent the invisible, spiritual gods who are demons. OT rarely uses the word for “demons” but usually uses “gods” (*elohim*). Acts 7:42-43 refers to these demon gods as the “host of heaven”.
  - i. Satan and his angels are associated with God’s enemies or pagan gods
  - ii. Use of Beelzebul (Mk 3:22) is a combination of Ba’al (‘lord’) used mostly to refer to local manifestations of the Canaanite fertility and storm god, the chief adversary of the Israelite religion (1 Ki 18; 2 Ki 1:2-16; Hos 2:8) and z’bul (‘exalted house’, ‘temple’ or ‘heaven’) meaning ‘lord of heaven’ (cf. Mt 10:25), was understood as denoting Satan.
  - iii. cf. Ps 96:4 where the LXX substitutes ‘demons’ for ‘idols’
- e. God, who created everything and is higher than any other power, revealed personal name—YHWH (“Yahweh”)—to Moses. YHWH is commonly translated to English as Lord throughout the OT (*kurios* in the LXX). YHWH has power and authority that surpasses all other gods or spiritual powers (YHWH used the exodus to demonstrate this Ex 12:12; Ps 82:1, 89:7, 97:9).
- f. Named deities are assigned to cities, regions, and/or people groups (e.g. Ashtoreth to Sidon in 1 Ki 11:1-7; Prince of Persia in Dan 10; King of Tyre in Ezek 28:11ff). Present day example: China has many gods and is many nations (people groups), and in China they know the name of these gods (source: Breshears).
- g. Daniel 10 demonstrates that these demon gods actively oppose YHWH and his agents. It’s likely these demon gods also fight each other (note OT link between nations and gods and their gods are called into service in these battles). It’s possible that these spiritual battles manifest in our earthly realm on the individual and social-political levels (conflicts and wars).
- h. In Genesis 12, God chose Abraham to make him into a nation that would be faithful to YHWH and receive His blessings (contrast with Genesis 11 Tower of Babel

- rebellion). In Genesis 18:18, 22:18, and 26:4, God promised to bless all families/nations of the earth through Abraham's offspring (Israel → Jesus). God would graft the nations into His nation/people/Israel/Church (Ex 19:5-6; 1 Cor 8:5-7).
- i. In Exodus, YHWH revealed himself as the God of Abraham to his numerous descendants in Egypt (approx. 2 million). YHWH then rescued this nation and made them his own through the Old Covenant. YHWH is the god (*elohim*) of Israel (Dt 32:9).
  - j. When Jesus the Messiah came (1<sup>st</sup> Coming), God's salvation of the nations began. From Luke 4, in fulfillment of the Messianic promises, Jesus began to break strongholds and set people free (vs. Satan's work – bind, deceive, etc.). With authority He directly commanded demons to release people, and they submitted to his authority (Mark 1:27). See also Galatians 5:1 (it is for freedom that Christ has set you free), Acts 10:38 (he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.), and 1 John 3:8 (the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work). See also NT Wright's JVG p.452f comments on incident where Jesus is accused of casting demons out by the power of Satan.
  - k. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus broke the power of the demon gods, bound Satan ("the strong man"), and is now plundering the people and nations under Satan's dominion (Satan's "possessions"; cf. Mark 3:27 "plunder", Mt 12:29; Lk 10:17-19; Jn 12:31; Heb 2:14; Acts 1:8).
    - i. Transferring people into Jesus' kingdom: **Colossians 1:13-14** <sup>13</sup> For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
    - ii. Freeing people from the debt of sin: **Colossians 2:13-15** <sup>13</sup> When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, <sup>14</sup> having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. <sup>15</sup> When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.
    - iii. Freeing people from the dominion of sin: **Romans 6:13-14** <sup>13</sup> Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. <sup>14</sup> For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.
    - iv. Freeing people from the fear of death: **Hebrews 2:14-15** <sup>14</sup> Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup> and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.
    - v. Freeing people from the dominion of spiritual authorities:

1. **Ephesians 2:4-7** 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. [Cf. **Colossians 3:1** Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.]
  2. **Colossians 2:15** <sup>15</sup> He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.
  3. **Acts 26:18** <sup>18</sup> to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion [*exousia* = power/authority/dominion] of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.<sup>1</sup>
- I. Now, in the Church Age, his people, the Church, have spiritual authority over the demon “gods” and are going out and plundering the nations under those gods.
- DIAGRAM:



<sup>17</sup>(Breshears)

- m. God is rescuing people (nations) out of the dominion of darkness and transferring them into the kingdom of his Son (Col 1:13) by the power of the Spirit and through the proclamation of the gospel through the Church.
- i. To become a member of God’s kingdom Gentiles/nations do not have to become Jewish first (Acts 15).
  - ii. In the Messianic Age people from all nations are becoming God’s people (1 Pet 2:9-10)
  - iii. NOTE: The Jews in the OT were never commanded to go out to the nations and proselytize them. In the OT, physical Israel is to be God’s special possession, but in the NT, after Jesus provided sacrifice for sins once for all

(Heb 9:26, 10:10), spiritual Israel (the Church made of Jew and Gentile believers) goes out to the nations. After Jesus' resurrection, all authority (including the authority over sin and death; Col 2:13-15) belong to him.

- iv. Jesus then makes the command to his disciples to go out to the nations (Mt 28:19; Acts 1:8).
  - n. At Pentecost, God poured out his Spirit and they spoke in the tongues/language of other nations. This indicates a reversal of God's separation of the nations at Babel (Gen 11) and provided a foretaste of God bringing all nations to Himself by the power of the Spirit through his Church. This is a fulfillment of Isaiah 49.
  - o. We are currently in the Church Age and called to reach ("plunder") the nations for God through the proclamation of the gospel and loving witness of the church (Mark 1:15, 13:10; John 13:25; Acts; Rom 1:16; Phil 1:27; Mt 28:19). God is rescuing, gathering and remaking his people. The dominion of darkness was defeated at the cross but continues to oppose God and His work until the Final Judgment at Jesus' 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming.
  - p. Spiritual warfare in the Church Age:
    - i. **Luke 10:17-19** <sup>17</sup> The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." <sup>18</sup> And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning. <sup>19</sup> "Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you.
    - ii. **Ephesians 6:12** <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.
    - iii. **Colossians 1:13-14** <sup>13</sup> For He rescued us from the domain [*exousia*] of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
    - iv. **Acts 26:18** <sup>18</sup> to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion [*exousia*] of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'
  - q. At the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming, God's people from all tongues and tribes and nations will judge the demon gods (1 Cor 6:3), including those already held for judgment (2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6).
3. The 2 kingdoms in conflict and their authority
- a. The dominion of darkness
    - i. Anti-God powers and structures hostile to God
    - ii. This dominion was defeated at the cross but not yet eliminated. It is being plundered by the kingdom of God which continues to advance. At Jesus' 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming this dominion will be judged, separated and cast out from the presence of the Kingdom of God forever.
    - iii. Satan, devil

1. Satan = שָׂטָן = adversary
2. devil = διάβολος *diabolos* = false accuser, slanderer
3. The spiritual head of the dominion of darkness
4. Deceives the whole “world” (Rev 12:9) by denying, contradicting or snatching away God’s word (Ge 3:1-13; Mk 4:15)
5. The father of lies and a murderer from the beginning (Jn 8:44)
6. Tempts people to
  - a. disobey God and thereby destroy their relationship with God and others (Ge 3:1-13)
  - b. to turn away from God (Job 1:9)
  - c. to disobey God, put God to the test, and worship Satan for a reward (Mt 4:3-10)
7. Seeks to harm/devour Christians (1 Pet 5:8)
8. Inspires people to sin (1 Ch 21:1; Jn 13:2; Acts 5:3)
9. Accuses and tries to condemn (Rev 12:10; Job 1-2; Zechariah 3)
10. Binds people in sickness (Lk 13:16)
11. Enters people to do evil, betray, and lie (Lk 22:3-4; Acts 5:3)
12. Tests the faith of believers (Lk 22:31)
13. Inspires others to be violent toward or imprison believers (Rev 2:13)
14. Can be used as a tool by God to destroy the sin nature (1 Cor 5:4-5, 1 Tim 1:20)
15. Tempts to sexual sin (1 Cor 7:5)
16. Seeks to destroy, destabilized and de-unify the church (2 Cor 2:11, 11:13-15)
17. Torments people in various ways (Paul’s messenger 2 Cor 12:7)
18. Can hinder God’s workers (1 Th 2:18)
19. Inspires false teachers and uses them to undermine the church and lead believers away from Christ (1 Tim 1:14-15; 1 Jn 4:2-6; Rev 13)
20. Exerts leadership over demons in some capacity (Lk 11:18; Rev 12:7-9)
21. Opposes God’s redemptive work (Mk 4:15; 2 Cor 4:4)
22. Uses his power to oppress humans (Acts 10:38 all who were oppressed [*katadunasteuo* = use one’s power against] by the devil)
23. Disguises himself as an angel of light (2 Cor 11:14 where the context is false teachers)
24. Controls the “world”—human/earthly anti-God structures (1 Jn 5:19)
25. Is the god of this age (2 Cor 4:4)
26. Has the power of death over the unredeemed (Heb 2:14) which was canceled over the redeemed through the cross (Col 2:13-15)
27. Satan’s power over a person is limited to the level authorized by God (Job 1:12, Zech 3:2)

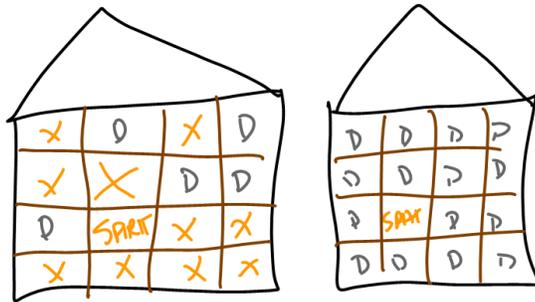
iv. Demons

1. = *daimon* **Origin:** perh. from *daio* (*to distribute destinies*)
    - a. = evil spirits
    - b. = unclean spirits
    - c. = fallen angels **Matthew 25:41** "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;  
**Revelation 12:7-9** Satan and his angels
  2. Are the "gods" of the OT hostile to God and Israel.
  3. Are spiritual powers hostile to God and the Church (Eph, Col)
  4. Are fallen angels who have rebelled against God and aligned with Satan (Mt 25:41; Rev 12:7-9)
  5. Work together to harm humans (Lk 11:26)
  6. Are persons, spiritual, hate Jesus
  7. Can gain power through sacrifices made by people (2 Kings 3:26-27; cf. occult, Hinduism)
  8. Are able to exploit (Eph 4:27; 2 Cor 2:11), energize and empower the sinful desires of a believer (Lk 22:3; fActs 5:3).
- v. Unredeemed humanity
1. The human head of darkness = Adam (Rom 5:14-21)
  2. Are under the dominion of darkness (Col 1:13)
  3. Knowingly or unknowingly walk according to Satan (Eph 2:2), follow Satan (1 Tim 5:15), are held captive to do his will (2 Tim 2:26)
  4. Are deceived by Satan (Rev 12:9)
  5. Are blinded so they cannot see the light of the gospel, the glory of Christ who is the image of God (2 Cor 4:4; cf. all the blind people Jesus healed)
  6. Are under the wrath of God (Jn 3:36, Eph 2:3)
  7. Are spiritually dead in their sins (Eph 2:5)
- b. The Kingdom of Light/God/Heaven
- i. Jesus
    1. The divine-human King of the Kingdom of Light
    2. Has sovereign authority over all powers
      - a. **Matthew 28:18** <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
      - b. **Ephesians 1:20-21** <sup>20</sup> which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.
    3. At the cross He defeated hostile spiritual powers (Col 2:15; 1 Pet 3:22)

4. Significance: Christ-followers need only to fear/reverence Jesus. He, along with the Father and Holy Spirit alone are worthy of worship (Rev 5:12).
- ii. Angels
1. Ministering spirits sent to render service for the sake of God's people (Heb 1:14)
  2. God uses them to communicate with humans ("messengers"; cRev 1:1, 22:6, 8, 16; Acts 5:19-20)
  3. Lower than God/Jesus (Heb 1:4)
  4. Created by God (Ps 148:5)
  5. Worship God, Jesus (Heb 1:6-7; Rev 5:11-12)
  6. Have names (Gabriel, Michael) although most appearances do not mention a name
  7. Appear in visions (Acts 10:3)
  8. Appear and interact with material world (Acts 12:9)
  9. Are engaged in a struggle against hostile powers in the heavenly realm (Dan 10)
- iii. The Redeemed in Christ
1. Have delegated spiritual authority in Christ.
    - a. **Ephesians 2:4-6**<sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup> and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,
    - b. Empowering presence of the Holy Spirit
    - c. United and seated with Jesus who is above all other powers (Eph 2:6)
    - d. Manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit
    - e. Ability to break from the bondage of sin, take off sin (implied by every command to not sin in the NT)
    - f. Authority over evil spirits (Lk 10:17; Acts 16:18) who are disarmed and defeated (Col 2:15) although still active.
  2. Cannot be separated from God by others (Rom 8:38-39; Jn 10:28-29)
  3. Are in a spiritual fight against hostile spiritual powers (Eph 6:12)
  4. Are sealed with the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13)
  5. Are brought into the family of God by the Spirit, now children of God (Rom 8:16-17)
  6. Are a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19-20)
  7. Have a new core identity, new heart, and are a new creation.
  8. Still have some of the structures of the present evil age: a decaying and dying body, old self/nature (Eph 4:20-24).

- c. NOTE: The obtaining and exercising of spiritual power and authority by humans flows from allegiance, relationship, and obedience to either God or Satan (Kraft & DeBord p.27).
4. Can a true Christ-follower be demon-possessed?
- a. First, it is important to define “demon-possessed”.
    - i. In the NT there are two ways to convey this idea:
      - 1. The demon or evil spirit takes or has hold on a person (*GK: echo* = to hold, grip); examples: Mk 9:17; Lk 8:27
      - 2. The person is demonized (*GK: daimonizomai* = to be under the power of a demon) examples: Mt 8:16; Mk 5:15; Jn 10:21
      - 3. These words do not denote “ownership”. Other valid interpretations of *daimonizomai*:
        - a. demonized
        - b. to have a demon
        - c. to be influenced by a demon
        - d. to be oppressed by demons (ESV)
    - b. Conclusion:
      - i. Christians (redeemed, indwelt by the Spirit) cannot be “owned” by a demon. Christians have been transferred from the dominion/authority of Satan to the kingdom/authority of Christ (Col 1:13-14). Satan or demons cannot separate a Christian from Christ (Jn 10:28-29; 1 Jn 4:4; Rom 8:38).
      - ii. Christians can, however, be oppressed, harassed, and harmed by demons or Satan (1 Pet 5:8; Eph 6:11-12; Rev 2:10).
      - iii. Christians have a new nature/heart and are united for eternity to Christ through the indwelling Holy Spirit. Yet, in the Church Age, believers still have a sin nature and the freedom and ability to sin. Demonic spirits cannot penetrate to the core of the Christian’s new being and snatch away what belongs to God, but a believer may yield to the evil impulse or to a demonic spirit, allowing it to assert a dominating influence over mind, will, emotions, and even the body. The person’s new identity as a child of God cannot be erased or stolen nor do demonic spirits have the ability to evict the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, because of the presence of the Spirit, the believer is no longer under the compelling sway of sin and the powers. He or she is energized by the dynamic and empowering presence of God to defeat these unholy influences at every turn. Nor is this struggle a battle of equals. God’s power is incomparably greater than the power of sin or the power of Satan (Arnold p.85).
5. Can a demon dwell in a Christian?
- a. View 1: No. A demonic spirit cannot dwell in the same space as the Holy Spirit. Problem: Personal experience and examples by Karl Payne, Clinton Arnold, Charles Kraft and David DeBord indicate Christians are oppressed by demons from the inside and can be sent out or away from the person.

- b. View 2: Yes. The Christian still has an old sin nature that they are called to take off through the process of sanctification. A demon may be able attach itself to this sin nature. A Christian can yield control of their bodies to sin (Rom 6:12-13), so it is likely they can yield control of their bodies to a demonic spirit. Illustration: a Christian is like a house with many rooms. The Holy Spirit indwells the Christian forever and this “place” is also described as their new heart or new nature. Yet, before glorification, a demon or demons can inhabit the Christian as well:



- c. Conclusion: Whether or not a believer is harassed from a demon dwelling inside the Christian or from outside is not clear from Scripture. The way demons were cast out of people in the NT indicates demons were on the inside, however, these people were not Christians at the time. Practically, it makes little difference. The demon is to be sent away. Scripture is clear that believers can be influenced by demons (Mt 16:22-23; Acts 5:3).
6. Does sin in the life of a Christian give demons the right to harass, oppress, or harm a believer?
- a. View 1: No. Christians have been forgiven all sins (Col 2:13). Problem: This passage refers to a Christian’s standing before God for eternity. It does not address the question of how sinful behavior impacts the life of the Christian. Repeatedly Christians are told to take off sin and the sin nature (Eph 4:22ff; Col 3:5ff) which lead to death (Rom 6:16).
- b. View 2: Yes. Sin gives Satan/demons an opportunity or foothold in the life of the believer and/or church body (Eph 4:27). A demon has the right to oppress a Christian as long as they remain in sin. Problem: Eph 4:27 is not saying unconfessed sin gives the devil a legal right to invade and inhabit. It does say the devil will exploit our sin to his destructive advantage. When we sin we are aligning ourselves with Satan (1 Jn 3:8).
- c. Conclusion: Sin does not give a demon the legal right to oppress a Christian. Christians belong to Jesus and have been transferred into His kingdom. Ongoing sin does however lead to death for the Christian—i.e. it destroys relationship with others, it hinders a person from fulfilling their mission/calling (Heb 12:1), and it creates distance from God (relational distance not separation Rom 8:38-39). 1 John refers to those who persist in sin as sons of the devil (1 Jn 3:7-10). Christians are commanded to take off sin, repent (Rev 2:5, 16), and confess (Ja 5:16). Satan and

demons do inspire sin in contrast to the Holy Spirit who inspires obedience (2 Cor 2:11, Eph 6:11). Arnold, Kraft, DeBord, Payne and others believe that sin gives demons authority to continue to oppress a Christian and that some demons do not go away until those sins are confessed and stopped. It seems sufficient to say that sin opens the believer up to greater oppression from demons and Satan, and that confession and repentance are part of the process of getting rid of any related demonic harassment.

d. Other:

- i. Demonic harassment is not always due to sin (Ge 3; Eph 6:11ff; Rev 2:10; Jesus' conflict in the wilderness).
- ii. God can use Satan's affliction to refine believers (e.g. Jesus Lk 4:1-2, Peter 22:31; Paul's messenger from Satan 2 Cor 12:7), to judge or punish them (e.g. Saul, Ananias and Sapphira; 1 Tim 1:20; 1 Cor 5:5).
- iii. Demonic harassment can include illness: <sup>NAU</sup> **Luke 13:16** "And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?"

- 7. Incorrect theology: "We don't need to fight the Enemy. Jesus has won." Yes, Jesus has won the victory over Satan and his kingdom. *However*, the battle is not over.
  - a. **1 Corinthians 15:24-25** <sup>24</sup> Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.
  - b. **Ephesians 6:12** <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

## Spiritual Warfare - Ministry

1. Levels of warfare:

### Range of Demonic Influence

Christians			Non-Christians	
<b>Daily Battle:</b> Tempted to sin, Hit by lies or accusations	<b>Oppression:</b> Persistent harassment including dreams, visions, sickness	<b>Demonization:</b> Persistent harassment with some loss of control and manifestations	Dead in sin, in the domain of darkness, unknowingly aligned with Satan. Can experience the full range of demonic influence that Christians do including more	Knowingly and intentionally aligned with Satan, engaged in occult activity

	intensified demonization (Gospel examples: Gerasene demoniac, demonized little boy, etc.)	
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2. How are Christians oppressed or demonized:
  - a. Habitual sin past or present
  - b. Occult activity past or present
  - c. Generational sin which is noted in the OT (Ex 20:4-5; 34:6-7; Nu 14:18; Dt 5:9-10; Jer 14:20, 16:10-13, 32:18). It may not work the same post-cross but many confirm its validity today (Breshears, Payne, Arnold, Kraft & Debord).
3. Apart from Jesus, people seek to appease or avoid demons (e.g. India). They live under fear and have no other recourse. Christians however, are united to Christ who has supreme authority over all powers.
4. Spiritual warfare is largely a truth battle
  - a. <sup>ESV</sup> **2 Corinthians 10:3-6** <sup>3</sup> For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. <sup>4</sup> For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. <sup>5</sup> We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, <sup>6</sup> being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.
  - b. Strongholds = lies, agreements; what I believe has a lot of impact on what I do
  - c. Definition of spiritual warfare (Breshears): Bringing the power, perspective and passion of the truth and life of the gospel against everything which is set against the knowledge of God.
  - d. Spiritual warfare is much more than casting out demons.
  - e. Lies are defeater beliefs (e.g. "Jesus was just a good teacher." "If I sin Jesus cannot use me anymore."). They can come in the form of arrogance (inflated beliefs about self) or shame (negative beliefs).
  - f. Satan has no legal (authority) claims over believers. We are legally acquitted by God from our guilt due to sin (Rom 5:1) and have been transferred from the domain [*exousia* = authority, dominion, jurisdiction] of Satan into kingdom of God (Col 1:13).
  - g. **Key strategy**: Remind people who they are in Christ, that they are in Christ, and help them receive the truth.
5. We are to oppose Satan/demons, not merely resist them: **Ephesians 6:13** <sup>13</sup> Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist [*anthistemi* = oppose] in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.
6. Involves three enemies: world, flesh, devil. Do not overemphasize any above the others.
  - h. World (Eph 2:1-3; 1 Jn 2:15-17; Ja 4:4):

- i. = the domain of Satan, a category of people in an authority structure with Satan as the head; contrast with the Kingdom of God whose king is Jesus
- ii. How to discern its message/lies? It is external solicitation which triggers:
  1. The “lust of the flesh” (a physiological response, e.g. advertisements, use of sex)
  2. The “lust of the eyes” (envy, coveting)
  3. The pride of life (ambition out of control)
  4. How to fight? Eternal perspective:
    - a. **2 Corinthians 4:17-18** <sup>17</sup> For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, <sup>18</sup> while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.
    - b. **2 Corinthians 5:7-9** <sup>7</sup> for we walk by faith, not by sight-- <sup>8</sup> we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. <sup>9</sup> Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him.
- i. Flesh (Rom 7:15-25; Gal 5:17)
  - i. How to discern? It is an internal stirring.
  - ii. Contrast with the fruits of the Spirit and new nature traits we are to put on.
  - iii. How to fight? Flee (2 Tim 2:22), focus on what is good and right (Phil 4:8), take off the old and put on the new (Eph 4, Col 3), walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:16-26)
  - iv. NOTE: If you do not intentionally walk by the Spirit, you will default to walking in the flesh. “Take off”, “put on”, and “walk” are active words (Eph 4, Col 3).
- j. Devil (6:10f; Eph Ja 4:7-10; 1 Pet 5:8-9)
  - i. Satan’s strategies: deception, accusation, temptation
    1. Satan is “the father of lies” (Jn 8:44). He lied to Adam and Eve about God, where life can be found, and the consequences of sin.
    2. His deceptions and accusations inspire arrogance/pride or shame (Ge 3; 2 Cor 10:3-6; Col 2:8). His temptations inspire sin.
    3. Agreements (p.152-156 Waking the Dead)
      - a. He suggests some sort of idea, inclination, or impression seeking a sort of “agreement” on our part (cf. Adam and Eve). Often we think these impressions are from ourselves, not Satan.
      - b. Tries to move us from *I did a bad thing* to *I am bad* (p.153)
      - c. When we make those agreements we come under demonic influence (p.154).

- d. Sometimes these agreements are made in the past when we were harmed, sinned against, or betrayed by others. Those wounds and subsequent agreements can shut us down.
  - 4. Opposes any movement we make toward God, and movement toward freedom and life (p.154 Waking the Dead).
  - 5. Satan seeks to oppress and bind people. Jesus has come to release the oppressed (Luke 4).
- ii. How to discern? "Fiery arrows" = accusations, lies, condemning statements
  - 1. Ask, "Does this sound like something God would say?" Compare with what you know from Scripture.
  - 2. Be aware of general vague statements (e.g. "you are bad", "you're not good enough").
  - 3. Be aware of feelings of despair, discouragement, or confusion.
  - 4. Messages that undermine your relationship with God:
    - a. *God is not really interested in your heart.*
    - b. *You can't trust God.*
    - c. *God doesn't follow through.*
    - d. *God has abandoned you. You're on your own.*
    - e. *There is no war.*
  - 5. NOTE: Some people have an arrow shot at them occasionally which is easy to resist and fight. Some have a barrage constantly and are paralyzed. Some people's battles are more intense than yours which means they are not necessarily just being weak.
- iii. How to fight?
  - 1. **James 4:7-10** <sup>7</sup> Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup> Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. <sup>9</sup> Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. <sup>10</sup> Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.
  - 2. Steps:
    - a. Be aware you are in a spiritual battle.
    - b. When you feel discouraged, angry, fuzzy, ask if there is a message attached to that feeling.
    - c. Ask God if that message is from Him. This is where it is important to know God's words.
    - d. Reject any message that is not from God and replace it with the truth from God.
    - e. Exercise your authority in Christ (see Waking the Dead p.168-169)
  - 3. Know and speak Scripture, truth.
  - 4. Pray offensively (e.g. Ps 35:1-8).

5. Remember, we are in training. God is using this battle to shape our souls and get us ready to rule and reign with him (Rev 22:5).
7. How to keep yourself from being oppressed or demonized? **1 Peter 5:6-9** <sup>6</sup> Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, <sup>7</sup> casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you. <sup>8</sup> Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. <sup>9</sup> But resist him, firm in *your* faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.
  - a. Humble yourselves (vs. arrogance, arrogant pride)
  - b. Cast all your anxiety on him (vs. hang onto your anxiety, deny your anxiety)
  - c. Note: Jesus was troubled (we are not to never be troubled) Jn 11:33, 13:21; note the context of the passages that say do not worry, do not be troubled and when you are troubled the question is what you do with it. Cf. Phil 4:6
  - d. Be self-controlled (vs. impulsive)
  - e. Be alert and aware that the enemy seeks to devour you, and that your struggle in this world includes a spiritual fight (1 Pet 5:8; Eph 6:12)
  - f. Resist him (better translation “oppose”) – Oppose him. How?
    - i. Scripture, offensive prayer, get away from him (vs. give in).
    - ii. Oppose him and his lies by standing firm in the truth, in righteousness, mindful of the gospel of peace, strong in faith, and confident in your salvation. All of these require a knowledge of God’s word and ability to respond to accusations, deceit, and temptation with the truth of Scripture (Eph 6:11-20; Mt 4:4, 7, 10).
  - g. Daily weapons: prayer, fellowship, truth accepted and proclaimed, righteousness/obedience
8. Lessons from Jesus:
  - a. Jesus’ wilderness temptation
    - i. Respond to lies with truth/Scripture
    - ii. Does not debate, speaks directly to the demon, “get away from me Satan”
  - b. **Mark 1:23-27** <sup>23</sup> Just then there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, <sup>24</sup> saying, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are-- the Holy One of God!" <sup>25</sup> And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" <sup>26</sup> Throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him. <sup>27</sup> They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."
    - i. We do not need names or details. [Payne agreed and said he did this to help the client recognize what was oppressing them.]
    - ii. We should not go looking for demons but when they manifest deal with them.
    - iii. Jesus asked the demon who he is only once (Legion), but that is the exception. He does not seek that information any other time so we do not

need to either. You don't need to know demonic structures or ranks because they are all below Jesus.

- c. Jesus always spoke directly to the demons.
  - d. Typically, Jesus does not tell them where to go, just "get out" or "get away" (Exception: Legion and pigs which indicates that Jesus normally sent them to the Abyss, Luke 8:31)
  - e. Paul says "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" (Acts 16:18).
9. Prayer, fasting, rituals:
- a. Avoid "Christian magic" — for example: I must say the right words and do the right things (e.g. anoint with oil, use holy water, prayer all day beforehand, etc.), or I need to work up some power through worship, fasting, etc. In the occult and demonic realm there are levels of authority, rituals that enhance power, but we do not work with the rules of that realm. Instead, stand on your delegated authority. We are with Jesus who has all authority and is setting free the oppressed and plundering the dominion of darkness.
  - b. Tangible, concrete expressions can help solidify truth (oil, holy water, cross, etc.) but must be used wisely and are not mandatory. Worship music, prayer, Scripture, etc. are helpful in that they help the participants remember the truth and act with faith. They are not power sources.
  - c. Scripture does not tell us fasting is required to have power over demons (Mk 9:29, Mt 17:20 – earliest manuscripts do not have "prayer and fasting"). Our authority over demons is delegated authority (e.g. Lk 10:19).
10. General Steps
- a. If not a believer, first step is to help them become one. Summary of Acts 2:22-47:
    - i. What God did for us
      - 1. Jesus came (Emmanuel)
      - 2. Jesus died
      - 3. Jesus rose
      - 4. Jesus exalted
      - 5. Jesus pours out Holy Spirit
    - ii. What we do
      - 1. Repent: change my mind about who is God (in America, most think and act as though they are god)
      - 2. Believe: take God at His word
      - 3. Baptized: God ordained way to say I am a Jesus follower and member of His kingdom
    - iii. What we get
      - 1. Forgiveness of all sin
      - 2. Gift of the Holy Spirit
      - 3. New community
      - 4. New mission
      - 5. New life

- b. Background, assessment to identify contributing biological, psychological, or social factors.
- c. Who is God in their life? Any allegiances to demons (whether a demon is inside them or outside them doesn't matter)?
- d. Requirements of the person seeking help:
  - i. Be 100% honest
  - ii. Commit to fight (vs. being passive and just waiting for God to do it)
    - 1. The will of the individual is more important than the will of the person working with them. Avoid pride (I can do it myself) or fear (I can't win).
    - 2. The person has to want to be rid of the demons, some may not.
    - 3. Demons cannot make you do anything you don't want to do. If the person is screaming, writhing, etc. tell them (the person, not the demon) to stop. Help them to exert their will and not be passive in the process.
- e. Ask when it began. If it is linked to a particular sin including occult activity, lead them through confession and repentance.
- f. Be aware of any feelings you have as you meet with the person. The Enemy will may try to get you to do to others what he is doing to that person (details and examples p.170 *Waking the Dead*).
- g. Have the person personalize and internalize for themselves key Scripture truths (e.g. Col 1:9-23, Eph 1:3-2:22)
  - i. Have the person read the passage slowly and aloud and stop them to clarify the truth along the way. Ask them questions along the way to ensure they understand.
  - ii. If they misread or answer incorrectly, have them read the Scripture again to figure it out rather than relying on you for answers. In this way build their practice of seeking what Scripture says and turning to God's Word as their authority.
  - iii. If the person gets confused, has difficulty focusing this could be demonic. Have the person say "If there are any demons present I command you in the name and authority of Jesus to go away." If they can't, you do it.
- h. Help the person see, understand and claim the truth that they are in Christ and He is in them, for eternity.
- i. As much as possible have the person do their own work. Equip them to do their own work, help them recognize and stand on their foundation, authority and identity in Christ.
- j. Help the person stand against the demon but at times you will need to command the demon to leave for them. A Christian always has the delegated authority to expel a demonic presence; however they may need the assistance to exert their authority (Lk 10:17-20; Acts 8:7, 16:18).

- k. Tell the person to stay alert between sessions and not be surprised if Satan tries to discourage them from coming again by making threats against the person or loved ones, intimidation, or general bullying (cf. fiery arrows of Eph 6:10ff).
- l. Symptoms of demonic oppression: stuck in a sin—unable to break out despite pastoral counseling, etc.
- m. Confess, cancel, command, fill
  - i. Confess:
    1. **1 John 1:5-10** 5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.
    2. **James 5:16** Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.
    3. List and name the sin (include generational sins)
    4. Help the confessor acknowledge that Jesus paid for those sins and help them receive that forgiveness.
  - ii. Cancel all ground given to demons through that particular sin. Before you have the person command the demon to leave, have them cancel the ground given to the enemy (e.g. “In Jesus’ name you no longer have any part of me”). This is comparable to sweeping the room clean.
  - iii. Command the demon(s) to go away: “Get away from me in the name and authority of Jesus Christ, and stay away.”
  - iv. Proclaim forgiveness of sin and ask the Holy Spirit to fill the person.

11. Other notes:

- a. Some cults knowingly worship gods other than YHWH/Jesus (e.g. Masons worship “the mystery gods of Babylon”), some cult members may not (e.g. average Mormons).
- b. For further consideration from Karl Payne: A key repeated theme and lesson Karl Payne learned, set ground rules (Chapter 8). Demons know whether or not you know that you have delegated authority that is greater than their delegated authority. If they don’t think they know that they will not do what you want, they will spit, curse, scream, throw the person around, etc. Your attitude should be I don’t have to put up with their antics, you are not equals, they are below your delegated authority—they are on the side that lost. You don’t have to out stamina

- them, just stand in your superior authority. They will try to scare/intimidate you and the person you are helping. If the demons know that you know they will obey.
- c. Scripture does not tell us how much demons know.
  - d. Idols (from Resolving Everyday Conflict Session 4; see also Counterfeit Gods-Keller)
    - i. How an idol works:
      - 1. Legitimate desire (“I would like...”) turns to demand (“I must have...”). Demand turns to disappointment in the other for not fulfilling the demand or for obstructing its fulfillment (“you did not...”). Disappointment turns to judging/condemning the other (“you are...”). Judgment turns to punishment, blame, or withdrawal (“because you did not...I will...”).
      - 2. We all have legitimate, God given desires that we bring to God for fulfillment. God shows us the path He has for us for the satisfaction of those desires. When we are not satisfied with what God offers/provides, or with God himself, we seek to fulfill those desires in sinful ways. We lie, we hide, we sin, and we fight those who frustrate our efforts to get those desires met.
    - ii. How to identify your idols:
      - 1. Note fears, craving, and sins committed (or temptations to sin) to fill that craving.
      - 2. Ask people who know you well what they think your idols may be.
    - iii. How to turn away from them:
      - 1. Repent and confess.
      - 2. Replace the attention you give to those idols with worship of the true God. Replace the idol (lower love) with worship of the true God. Cf. Real Intimacy (replacement for sexual addiction = real relationships). “The expulsive power of a new affection...” Thomas Chalmers
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Resources used or cited:

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