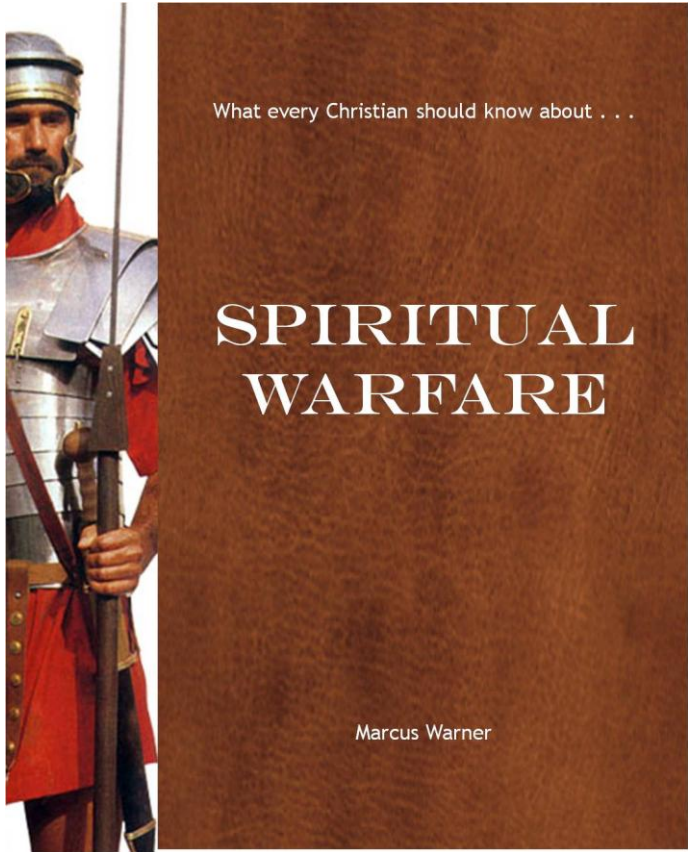


What every believer should know



What every believer should know about spiritual warfare

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Introduction

The fact that you have picked up this booklet puts you in a select company of people. Spiritual warfare is a subject that is generally avoided in most Christian circles. But why? Why is this topic neglected? Here are five common reasons people often avoid the subject of spiritual warfare.

Fear – Some people are afraid that if they study spiritual warfare, creepy things will start happening to them. I actually had a theology professor tell us not to study spiritual warfare because weird things always happened around his house when he began preparing to teach on demonology. That's fine for him, but why not prepare people who are going to have to deal with spiritual warfare to know how to do it in a biblically balanced, practically proven way?

Anecdotes – Many people have heard stories of Christians who have gone off the deep end in their fascination with spiritual warfare. I admit, you don't have to look far to find examples of this. Of course, this is the same argument used by many people who won't consider the claims of Christ. The Christians they know aren't much of a testimony for the message they

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embrace. This doesn't mean it is wise to ignore Christianity, nor does it mean it is wise to ignore spiritual warfare.

Controversy - I had an executive pastor tell me that he would welcome my Bible survey and discipleship training at his church but that he would not allow me to do a seminar on spiritual warfare. He was quite open about his reason. It was not that he disagreed with what I would teach, but that the subject was considered controversial and he didn't want to ruffle any feathers.

Theological Systems – There are respected Bible teachers who teach that Christians don't have to worry about the devil. They see the presence of the Holy Spirit within as a sort of vaccination or “force-shield” against demonic activity. Their theological systems lead them to attack those who seek to help Christians who have discovered that they are not immune to the Enemy.

Secularized thinking – Western Christians tend to live with a worldview that makes demons and demonic activity seem remote and unlikely to affect them. They often assume that if they don't go poking around in the snake's pit, the snakes won't bother them. As a leading Christian psychologist said, “I have had hundreds of patients who came to see me because they thought they were demon possessed. . . . I discovered that all of the “demons” I was seeing were allergic to Thorazine and that, in nearly every case, a week or two on Thorazine made the ‘demons’ go away.”¹ The

¹ Korem and Meier, *The Fakers* (Baker, 1980) p. 162

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Thorazine may have helped the symptoms, but in cases of genuine demonization, it is not a lasting solution. I can guarantee you that this psychologist had clients with very real demons. I know of people who helped some of his former clients find freedom from these wicked spirits. The problem was that his secularized thinking kept him from accurately diagnosing what he was experiencing. Lack of training in this area, also kept him from knowing what to do about it.

I would argue that most of the reasons stated above can be turned around to make a good case for the need for good, balanced, practical teaching on spiritual warfare. Christians are afraid of it. This does not make for healthy Christianity. Christians are too secularized in their thinking. This is a real problem. Christians are getting bad advice from Bible teachers, and this is leaving them helpless at a time when Satan's assault on the church is reaching epic proportions. My father, Timothy Warner, put it this way:

Our first priority is to know God, but if we are really at war with a clever, experienced enemy, we need to know as much as we can about him. . . . Not to know how your enemy thinks and how he acts is to give your enemy a strategic advantage over you (*Beginner's Guide to Spiritual Warfare*, 27).

About the Author

Dr. Marcus Warner is the president of Deeper Walk International. A graduate of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (M.Div., Th. M., D. Min.), Dr. Warner taught Old Testament and Theology at Bethel College in Mishawaka, Indiana and later served for seven years as the senior pastor of an evangelical church in Carmel, Indiana. He has over twenty years of experience in spiritual warfare ministry. He lives in the Indianapolis area with his wife— Brenda—and two children – Stephanie and Benjamin.

About Deeper Walk International

Deeper Walk International (formerly ICBC) has been providing biblically-balanced training in spiritual warfare ministry for over twenty years. The organization was founded by Dr. Mark Bubeck, author of the books *The Adversary* and *Overcoming the Adversary* by Moody Press. ICBC quickly hired Dr. Jim Logan, author of *Reclaiming Surrendered Ground*, to be its first biblical counselor and Dr. Dan Rumberger to be its resident psychologist.

As time passed, new counseling centers were started and new alliances were formed. Dr. Timothy Warner, author of the book *Spiritual Warfare* and retired director of the professional doctoral programs at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, joined the ministry team and taught at the institute for biblical counseling. Partnerships were formed with Neil Anderson's Freedom in Christ Ministry as well as other organizations and individuals who were devoted to a biblically-sound approach to spiritual

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warfare. Today Deeper Walk provides training and resources related to three areas of biblical counseling: discipleship foundations, spiritual warfare, and emotional healing. This booklet is intended to serve as a summary of the core elements of the biblically-sound approach to spiritual warfare that has characterized this ministry.





Chapter 1: The Reality of Spiritual Warfare

My experience with spiritual warfare began at the age of seven. I saw a demon in my dining room staring at me. It was a big, black thing with red eyes. As you can imagine it freaked me out, and I started to scream. The others who were with me couldn't see it, but the thing was not just a vague image; it seemed to be physically present in the room. Since then I have met other children who have had night time visitors and lived with paranormal activity in their homes. A friend once called me because his son was afraid to sleep in his room. It seemed he was seeing an old woman in a rocking chair show up from time to time. He wanted to know if I thought it was just the boy's imagination or if it could be a demonic manifestation. I told him that it could definitely be demonic and counseled him to cleanse the boy's room by renouncing any claim the enemy had to the house, commanding that any spirits assigned to the place or to his son leave, and inviting Jesus to fill the house and especially that room with his presence. Several years have since passed and they have never had another issue with strange visitors in their house.

I spoke with a lady who is now in full-time Christian ministry who grew up in a haunted house where everyone in the family knew the ghost by name

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and treated him like part of the family. I read about a five-year-old boy who saw an angel at the end of his bed and told it to leave. The angel asked him why, and he said, "Because in the Bible real angels always told people not to be afraid. Well, I'm scared to death and you never said not to be afraid." Smart boy! If only Joseph Smith had done the same thing! At that the angel turned into a hideous looking creature and said, "Would you rather I came looking like this?" and left.

I could tell you lots of stories like these. My question is, "Why do some kids get attacked and others don't?" How does this work? In my case, my parents had just been involved in their first deliverance session. A woman had sought help from a local Christian counselor because of compulsive behaviors that were negatively impacting her life. The counselor sensed there was something more going on than a battle with the flesh and referred her to my mom and dad.

As they talked with this woman they discovered that she had received the gift of tongues several years before. It was a precious gift to her, but her compulsions began about the time someone had laid hands on her. My parents tested her "gift" by asking the spirit if Jesus Christ was the Lord of all who had come in the flesh. When they did this, a deep voice spoke through the lady that said, "I'm strong. You can't get me." It didn't take much discernment to realize that this wasn't the Holy Spirit! It did, however, take a manifestation that dramatic to convince this woman that her tongue could possibly be false.

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The problem was that she struggled with inferiority and felt insecure in her relationship with Christ. Her “gift” was her anchor that let her know she was accepted and important to God. But the gift of tongues was never meant to be the proof that we were accepted by God. Our complete and unconditional acceptance was purchased for us by the blood of Christ. Our confidence is to be in the person of Christ and His finished work on our behalf. Gaining freedom from the demonic spirit and learning about her true identity in Christ helped this woman gain victory over the problems that had taken her to a counselor in the first place. The adversary, however, was not very happy.

The demon that I saw in my house showed up the week after my parents’ encounter with this wicked spirit. It was an act of intimidation. My dad put it this way. Satan was offering him a deal: “You leave me alone and I’ll leave you alone. And you better leave me alone because if you don’t, look what I can do to your kids!” The devil was trying to get at my parents through me. Thankfully, my parents were wise and courageous enough to realize that you do not make deals with the devil. You resist him. My parents began to teach me how to fight by using Scripture and praying in the name of Jesus. The demon came back one night, but I was prepared and he was quickly evicted. Who knew that resisting the devil would work better than screaming and hiding?

Pastors and Spiritual Warfare - Sadly, too few Christians are trained for war. It is even hard to find pastors who know what to do with the enemy. Our seminaries and Bible colleges rarely deal with this subject

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in a practical way, and many actually teach dangerously untrue paradigms about spiritual warfare that warn people away from involvement with the subject.

Bob Allison is the director of the ICBC of Texas counseling center and a good friend of mine. When he was first in ministry, however, he knew nothing about spiritual warfare. As a young, bi-vocational pastor he was called to the home of a woman in crisis. He asked his mentor, a pastor with over thirty years of ministry experience to accompany him. When they arrived, they found the woman curled up on the floor in a catatonic state. The veteran pastor sized up the situation then took Bob into the next room. “Do you know what that was?” he asked. “No,” Bob replied. “You were looking into the eyes of a demon.” “Well, what do we do?” Good question. Today, Bob teaches people how to deal with such situations, but do you know what his mentor told him? He said, “We leave.” Can you believe it? He thought it was best to get her checked into a psych ward and just walk away from the situation. He had no idea how to help.

I received a phone call from another young pastor who was facing a crisis. It turned out there was a person in his office rolling around on the floor with demonic noises emanating through her. This pastor had been trained at a nationally recognized seminary, but one that promotes the NANC² form of biblical counseling to the exclusion of all others. Nothing in seminary or ministry training had prepared him for this. He told me that he

² NANC stands for National Association of Nouthetic Counselors. They practice a form of biblical counseling that has much to commend it. However, historically they have fought against the idea that Christians can be demonized.

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had commanded the demon to leave in the name of Jesus, but with no effect. He had tried reading Scripture out loud but it was only making the situation worse. I gave him a crash course on spiritual warfare right there on the phone! “Authority alone won’t work,” I told him. “You will just wear yourself out and leave discouraged and defeated. Use your authority to bind the demons in the name of Jesus. Command them to be silent and inactive and to allow you to speak to the woman who came to you for help.”

I listened as the pastor did this and could hear him gaining control of the situation. He was soon able to speak with the woman and would periodically repeat his command to silence the wicked spirit. I then told him that this kind of demonic episode usually only happens if there has been significant occult involvement by the person themselves or their family. I encouraged him to ask if she had ever dabbled in the occult and if so, to renounce each area of participation and to use her authority as a Christian to command the demons who had gained access through her participation to leave. He soon learned that she had been raised in a family where the occult was commonly practiced and that she herself had often participated in tarot card readings, Ouija boards and other forms of witchcraft.

To his credit, the pastor handled the situation beautifully. Once he got the basic concepts in mind of using authority to bind, renouncing the sins that had opened the door to the demons, and assisting the woman to use her own authority in Christ to evict them, they started making headway. He

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called me back a few days later and said that over the course of two sessions they believed the woman was completely free of the demons. They were now working on discipling her in order to build her up in the faith. However, he had two very good questions, “Why was I taught that stuff like this can’t happen to Christians? And, where do I go to learn how to help people in this condition?” I was able to direct him to Mark Bubeck’s book, *The Adversary* and to one co-authored by my father and Neil Anderson, *The Beginner’s Guide to Spiritual Warfare*. A few months later he and his wife came to one of our training courses and told me about the many victories they were beginning to see and how much he was growing as he continued on this journey.

Born into War - Spiritual Warfare is not an optional activity for believers. It is not a program in the church you can sign up for or choose to ignore. You have not been granted immunity or vaccinated against the effects of the devil by an injection of the Holy Spirit. Although, you may never be confronted with a demon in your house or in someone you are discipling, wouldn’t it be a good idea to know what to do if you were? Even if spiritual warfare never visits you in such dramatic ways, you live with it every day in the battles you experience, like the battle for your mind, the battle for your church, the battle for your home, and the battle for your community. It is time for the church to wake up to the reality of the war and prepare its people and its leaders for battle. This booklet is meant to be an introduction to that journey.

John Eldredge put it well:

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Things are not what they seem . . . You were born into a world at war. When Satan lost the battle with Michael and his angels, “He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him” (Rev. 12:9). That means that right now, on this earth, there are hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of fallen angels, foul spirits, bent on our destruction. And what is Satan’s mood? “He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short” (v. 12). . . . You have an Enemy. He is trying to steal your freedom, kill your heart, and destroy your life (*Waking the Dead*, 150-151).

We live in a world at war. We have no choice in the matter. We were born into the middle of a great cosmic conflict that affects every area of life. As Christians, we really have only two options. We can live in fear and ignorance or learn to fight. So, where in the Bible does it say, “Ignore the devil and he will leave you alone?” Nowhere! It warns us repeatedly, “Be alert! Be prepared! Put on your armor! Resist!” These are not passive words. We are called to be intentional and diligent in preparing ourselves for battle.

Here are some good introductory texts on spiritual warfare you will want to read.

- Neil Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness* and *the Bondage Breaker*
- Mark Bubeck, *The Adversary* and *Overcoming the Adversary*
- Jim Logan, *Reclaiming Surrendered Ground*
- Karl Payne, *Spiritual Warfare*
- Timothy Warner, *Spiritual Warfare* and *The Beginner’s Guide to Spiritual Warfare* with Neil Anderson



Chapter Two: Legal Ground

A few years ago, I was hiking on a trail in the Cascade Mountains with my son. I saw a log that had fallen across the path and remembered something I had heard in a sermon years before. The pastor had grown up in Alabama where they have a lot of snakes. He had said he was taught at an early age, “Never step over a log when you are out hiking. Always step on it, because snakes like to sleep in the shade.” With this warning fresh on my mind, I called out to my son, “Step on top of the log and jump across, don’t step over it!” When I got to the log, I did the same thing. When I looked back, I was thankful for the Holy Spirit’s prompting because, sure enough, there was a long, bluish-grey snake stretched out alongside the log. Now my son and I did not go on a walk that day to hunt for snakes. I wasn’t expecting to find one that day, but common sense dictates that if you are going into an area where snakes often live, you might want to learn something about them so that you can avoid them if possible and know what to do if you run into one. It is the same with demons. I don’t live my life fixated on them, but I know they are out there and I know where I am most apt to run into them. They are often found in moments of temptation, in occult activity, in unresolved sin and bitterness, in church

factions, and in the glittering appeal of the both worldly and Christian counterfeits.

Defining Legal Ground

Legal ground is permission to act. Demons need permission to do whatever they do. At the beginning of this age, God decreed that Satan and his demons are free to roam the earth. However, they are not free to do whatever they want to do, or we would all be dead. Satan had to get permission to attack Job (Job 1-2). He had to ask to “sift” Peter (Luke 22:31). In the same way, demons need legal permission from the court of heaven to oppress people or rule territory. In the last days God will give Satan permission to make war with his saints and overcome them (Revelation 13:7). Satan will be given a legal right to do this for a limited amount of time and in a limited way, simply because of God’s decree. But there are also times when we give the devil permission to act in our lives because of the choices we make. When we sin or when we enter into agreements with the devil, we give him a legal right to greater activity in our lives than he would otherwise have.

Whole populations who live in a particular region (such as countries, provinces, or districts) can give permission for greater activity to demons when their leaders enter into covenants with false gods. When Moab chose to make Chemosh its god (Number 21:29), it gave the demons associated with that god permission to a far greater degree of activity in their country than they would have had without the idolatry of the people.

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In the same way, individuals, even Christians, can make choices that give demons a legal right to be active in their lives.

The point is this. If a demon has a legal right to be somewhere, you can't just come along and say, "In the name of Jesus you have to leave." It would be like trying to evict someone from a house who has a contract giving them a legal right to be there. If you want to get rid of them, you have to remove the "legal ground" they claim. People who find themselves in long, shouting matches with demons that drag on for hours have trouble because they are trying to evict a demon that has a legal right to be where it is. No amount of shouting "In the name of Jesus I command you to leave" is going to make it leave. Most of what happens in a biblically-balanced, practical approach to deliverance takes place at the level of removing legal ground. Once that is done, the evicting is generally pretty easy. Removing legal ground is essentially a matter of confessing sins, forgiving debts or renouncing lies and then canceling the demonic claims that were based on those sins, debts, and lies.

Christians and Demons. I once gave a talk on spiritual warfare to a group of high school students titled, "How to make the devil your roommate." In the talk I introduced them to four doors we often open that invite the devil into our lives, often without even realizing what we have done. The four doors can be remembered with the word SOUL. They are sin (S), occult (O), unforgiveness (U), and lineage (L). The biblical principle here is often called legal ground. It is rooted in Paul's statement in Ephesians 4:27 that believers can give the devil a place in their lives. The

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word translated “place” refers to ground or territory that we surrender to the devil by the choices we make. It is called legal ground because the devil needs to gain legal permission to be there from the court of heaven. The Bible clearly teaches that God is sovereign. He sits on his throne and the whole world is subject to him, including the devil. For His own purposes and glory, God has decreed that in this present, evil age Satan is to have a limited amount of freedom to roam this earth and challenge God’s glory here. Just as Satan sought permission to sift Peter (Matthew 26) and attack Job (Job 1,2), he needs legal permission to do whatever he does. We often inadvertently give him the legal right to be more active in our lives than he otherwise would be by our participation in sin, the occult, unforgiveness, and embracing his lies as the truth. When we do these things, we give him legal ground that opens the door for his activity in our lives. This is why legal ground is sometimes referred to as surrendered ground.

The question is often asked, “How can a Christian have a demon?” It is really not that difficult of a question to answer, if you get the right paradigm in place. Our problem is that we have tended to adopt a possession or oppression model for understanding the issue that warps the discussion. For one thing, the word possession never occurs in the Bible. It began when the translators of the King James Version came to the Greek word *daimonizomai* and instead of creating a new English word “demonized” directly from the Greek as they did with the noun form of the same word, they used the word “possessed” in an attempt to translate it. There is nothing in the word *daimonizomai* that implies possession.

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Possession refers to ownership, and Christians are “owned” by the Lord Jesus Christ who bought us with his blood. Christians cannot be “possessed” in this sense of the word. However, Christians can be demonized. That is, Christians can be owned by Christ and still open a place in their lives for demonic activity. Let me share three word pictures of how this works.

1) The Temple. In Ezekiel 8-10 the Spirit of the Lord gave the prophet a vision of the abominations that were taking place in His temple. He saw the seventy elders of Israel offering incense to pagan gods. He saw the women of Israel performing the ritual mourning for Tammuz (a Babylonian god whose mythological story has him dying in battle only to be raised to life by his consort Ishtar; similar to the mythological stories of Baal and Asherah in Canaan and Osiris and Isis in Egypt). It was believed that performing the mourning rituals would bring blessing and fertility to the land and families of the worshipers. In the inner court, Ezekiel saw 25 men bowing down to the sun in worship. Outside the temple, the city itself was filled with violence and perversion. Yet while all of this was going on the Shekinah glory was still in the Holy of Holies. In chapter ten the prophet describes in great detail the departure of God’s presence and throne from the temple, so that it could be destroyed. Can you see how God’s presence and the unholy presence of demonic entities could be in the same temple at the same time? God was present in the innermost court, while in the outer courts demons were being summoned by the rituals being performed. It is the same with a Christian. God’s Spirit may live in our

hearts, but that does not mean that in our flesh we cannot give a place for demons to reside.

2) Rental Property. Karl Payne is a discipleship pastor and chaplain of the Seattle Seahawks. He offers the following imagery for understanding how demons can gain access to Christians.

Although Jesus is the legal owner of our house, He allows us the privilege and responsibility of being the landlord. He has given us back our house on loan. We have the authority and ability to sublease rooms in our house, even though we do not own the house. The only rooms available for rent are the ones we have refused to turn over to the lordship of Christ. When we turn the lights out through sin, we essentially place a vacancy sign outside that says, "Rooms for Rent." Demonic spirits are more than willing to answer the ad. And once they have permission to rent one room, they will aggressively and simultaneously attempt to take control of other rooms while inviting relatives to move in with them (Payne, *Spiritual Warfare* p. 174-5).

3) A Field. My friend and colleague Daryl Anderson often uses a word picture to explain how we surrender legal ground to the devil. He writes:

Picture your life like a field out in the country. Maybe it is like a section of farm ground which measures one mile by one mile square. Most of the ground is very productive with rich soil that produces plentiful crops. Some of the soil is marginal and some is, in fact, very poor soil and is not fit for much of anything. Maybe it has a creek, running through it which makes it almost impossible to farm.

One day Satan, or one of his emissaries, comes along to initiate some negotiations. He reminds you of the fact that there is a considerable

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amount of “junk ground” in your life which is virtually unproductive. He says he would like to take up “residency” on that ground and show you he can make something really fun out of that area of your life (field). He does not need a whole lot of area, and it certainly would not interfere with the rest of your life anyway. He promises he will stay within the agreed upon limits and devote his attention to making blueprints strictly with the intention of enhancing that part of your unproductive life.

So after a lot of discussion you agree to allow the enemy of your soul to have access to a limited amount of your life. You go ahead and sign the contract he has already cleverly prepared. Unfortunately you do this without consulting your Attorney. Satan agrees to begin working on the blueprints designed specifically for your field. (In truth he already has the blueprints made, he just simply changes the names because his strategy has not changed very much over the last several thousand years.)

After a couple of weeks the enemy comes back and lays out all of the blueprints. He goes over them in fine detail. You have to admit the blueprints look very, very interesting. You have never done any of these things yourself, but you have friends that have and they always seem to have lots of fun, so you give your okay to go with the “construction phase.”

But now the enemy seems to have a problem because the area you agreed to give him is totally landlocked. He says he wants to get out to the construction site to take some site elevation readings in preparation for the actual construction, but every time he starts out there he feels like he is trespassing. He requests you allow him to build a footpath through the main productive ground so he will have access. He indicates he will do this at his own expense. But this is a real sticking point because it means that you will once again have to give in

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to meet his demands. But he is insistent and so finally you give your authorization.

A couple of more weeks go by and this time the enemy wants to widen that foot-path into a road. He says he needs to get some heavy equipment on to the site to begin digging the basement and foundation. You resist, but he says, "You really don't expect me to dig a basement with a shovel do you?" Once again you see his point and relent. His questions always seem to cut right to the heart of the matter, making you feel foolish, and always turning out to his advantage.

And over the course of the next couple of weeks you actually participate in those activities he has designed for you in the blueprints. To your utter amazement the enemy turns around and heaps a whole bunch of guilt and shame upon you. I guess this must be part of the fine print in the contract you forgot to read when you signed it.

Your next meeting with the enemy of your soul is most unnerving! He says, "You know that ground of your life that I now own, I am demanding some more ground. We need to enlarge the perimeter. In addition, I demand we widen the road into a two lane highway which needs to be hard surfaced. We will be having truck traffic going into the site and truck traffic coming out of the site. Give it to me!"

What amazes you the most is the enemy does not seem to be requesting any more but is demanding from a position of strength and intimidation. This is not at all what you had envisioned. You envisioned that you were isolating a part of your life to simply have fun. Now it appears the entire farm is up for grabs.

Oh, how did I ever get myself into this mess? More importantly, how do I get myself out of it? (*Heart to Heart Connections*, pp. 19-21)

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How do we get out of this? I will deal with that question more fully in the final chapters of this booklet. For now, my hope is that these analogies have helped you see how Christians can surrender “ground” in a way that gives the devil a legal right to a place to their lives. John Eldredge puts it this way:

What (Satan) is seeking is a sort of ‘agreement’ on our part. He’s hoping we’ll buy into whatever he’s saying, offering, insinuating. Our first parents bought into it, and look what disaster came of it. But that story is not over. The Evil One is still lying to us, seeking our agreement every single day (152).

He goes on to write,

The whole plan is based on agreements. When we make those agreements with the demonic forces suggesting things to us, we come under their influence. It becomes a kind of permission we give the enemy, sort of like a contract. The bronze gates start clanging shut around us. I’m serious-maybe half the stuff people are trying to ‘work through’ in counseling offices, or pray about in their quiet times, is simply agreements they’ve made with the Enemy (154-155).

Can you see how a basic understanding of the devil’s schemes in this area can help us recognize what is going on in our lives so that we can begin to fight it with the proper weapons and strategies?



Chapter Three: The Authority of the Believer

When I was a child my parents taught me to stand against harassment from wicked spirits by saying, “In the name of Jesus I command you to leave.” At the time, I felt like a sheriff out in the Wild West telling the bad guys, “Stop, in the name of the Law.” My parents explained to me that I was not standing against the demons in my own name or in my own power. I was standing against them in the name and power of Jesus in the same way that David stood against Goliath in the name and power of the Lord. If it was David against Goliath, Goliath would win every time. But it was Goliath against the Most High God. David was simply the representative that God chose to use.

To act in the name of Jesus is to act within the boundaries of the authority he has delegated to us. To do something “in His name” is to do it as His representative in the same way that a sheriff represents the local government. As a child, it was obvious to me that the demons had more power than I did. If the contest was between my power and their power, they would win every time. But when I came against the enemy in the name of Jesus, they had to listen because, if they chose to mess with me, they knew they were picking a fight with Jesus. It would be like me being

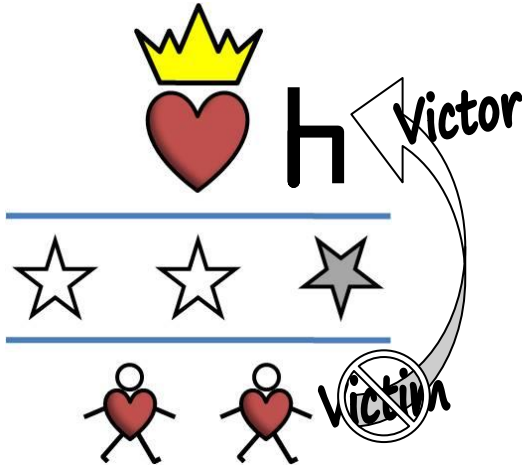
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pulled over by a police officer and saying, “Oh, it’s just Joe. He’s not a very good police officer and he’s an even worse father and husband. I don’t have to listen to him.” His authority in that setting has nothing to do with his competence or his character. It has to do with the government he represents. If he is within the bounds of the law in his dealings with me, he has authority over me. In the same way, Christians are like police officers. Whether we are one day out of the academy or a thirty year veteran, we all have the same authority. Some are just more experienced at using it.

The Christian’s authority over demons is not a spiritual gift. Don’t fall into the trap of thinking that some Christians have this authority and some do not. The authority of the believer is rooted in the fact that we are in Christ, and in Christ we are seated with Him in the heavenly realms far above the angels, whether evil or elect. When Jesus defeated Satan at the cross and rose again, He was given a name above every name (Philippians 2:9). This is why Jesus told His disciples, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given unto me” (Matthew 28:18-19). Our Lord has been given the highest position of authority in the universe. In Christ, a measure of that authority has been delegated to us to wield in harmony with His will and purposes.

The diagram on the next page illustrates our position of authority. Humans were made “a little lower than the angels.” The stars represent the angels and the upside down dark star represents Satan and his demons.

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If I were to take on the Adversary in my own strength, he would be in a position of dominance over me. Unfortunately, many Christians live this way. It keeps us in the position of “victim.” If we believe this to be true, it will rob us of one of our greatest resources and leave us defeated and discouraged. However, Jesus made himself a little lower than the angels and became a human. Not only that, He made Himself our servant. What is more, He laid down His life for us and died for the sins of the whole world. In this way He disarmed the angelic hosts that were at war against Him. He defeated Satan and robbed him of the keys to death and Hades. He then rose to life and ascended to heaven where God seated Him far above all principalities and powers. In Ephesians 2:6 we read that God raised us up together with Christ and seated us together with Him in heavenly places. From this position at the right hand of the father we have

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intimacy with God and authority over the enemy. We no longer struggle as victims, but we wage war as victors.

There are two equal and opposite errors into which Christians sometimes fall with regard to authority. First, there are those who believe that Christians have NO authority. These people often point to a text like Jude in which Michael did not rebuke Lucifer, but said, “The Lord rebuke you.” They argue that if Michael, who is greater than we are, did not have authority over Lucifer, how could we? Now that you have seen the authority diagram of our position in Christ, how would you answer that question? Hopefully, you would recognize that Michael and Lucifer are equals in authority. The angels, even archangels, are not seated with Christ at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. It should also be pointed out that the humans discussed in Jude’s letter are false teachers, who are not Christians at all, and therefore have no claim to authority. This passage should be understood in the context of an apostle who is “contending for the faith” against mockers who have infiltrated the flock like wolves in sheep’s clothing. Jude’s primary purpose is not to address the issue of authority but to point out the arrogance of these false teachers.

Second, there are those who believe that Christians have ALL authority. Our authority as Christians is limited by law. We do not have unlimited authority. If we did, we could just go into any hospital and say, “In the name of Jesus everybody is healed.” Or we could go to a Hindu temple and cast out all of the demonic spirits. If we spoke, it would be as if Jesus were speaking. But we can only use our authority to the limit that the decrees

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and laws of the courtroom of heaven allow us to use it. For example, if a police officer pulls you over and says, “I’m sorry. You were going fifteen miles an hour over the speed limit, I have to give you a ticket,” she has every right to that. But if the same officer pulls you over and says, “I’m sorry, but your breath stinks, I am giving you a ticket,” well, she doesn’t have the authority to do that. Her authority is limited by the law. If the law says there is a speed limit and you violate the limit, a police officer can give you a ticket; and if you resist her authority, you will find yourself fighting, not just the officer, but all the power of the government represented by the officer. In the same way, I can use my authority over a demon if that demon is doing something it has no right to do. But if the demon has “legal ground,” I can’t evict it simply because I feel like it. Before I can tell it to leave, I have to reclaim the surrendered ground. The chapter on Freedom will explain the process of how you do that.

Uses of Authority

There are three primary uses of authority as a believer. (1) binding, (2) loosing, and (3) evicting.

Binding. The Greek word “binding” is *deo* and “loosing” is *luo*. *Deo* is normally used for securing prisoners by tying them with ropes or putting them in irons. It was also used of binding together sheaves of grain. Jesus said that we sometimes must bind the strongman in order to rob his house. In spiritual warfare, we do this by using our authority to bind the enemy so that the person we are trying to help can function enough to express their

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will. Many times I have seen people who were unable to complete their prayers or verbalize their renunciations of the legal ground being claimed by the enemy, until that enemy was bound in the name of Jesus.

A young man once came see me who was struggling in his attempts to disciple a friend. Even though he had years of experience in discipling others through the Campus Ministry he helped to lead, he wasn't having any success with his friend. "I don't get it" he said. "This man is a veterinarian. He's smart, he's successful, but whenever we talk about the Bible, he can't seem to follow the simplest line of thought. I've tried everything." Then he looked at me with a look of understanding and added, "except spiritual warfare." He then asked me what to do. I told him, "The next time you meet with this man, during your opening prayer, bind any demons from interfering with his ability to process what he is learning or any work that God wants to do." He wasn't sure how to do that; so I let him know that it was as simple as saying the words, "In the name of Jesus I bind any demons from interfering." He said he would give it a try. The next Sunday at church, he came up to me with a look of amazement on his face. "You won't believe it," he said. "Not only did my friend interact intelligently with the study this time, we found out that his family has been practicing the occult for generations and that he has secretly practiced homosexuality for over seven years." That made sense. Both of those things would give legal ground to the enemy to harass this man. "So, what do I do now?" my friend asked. I pointed him to Neil Anderson's book *The Bondage Breaker* and told him to take his friend through the Steps to Freedom in Christ. That day, this young man who was

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an expert in discipling others according to the traditional discipling models started a journey of his own that opened up areas in his own life in which he was living in bondage and needed to be free. I was able to take him through the Steps to Freedom as well and help him get grounded in the basics of heart-focused discipleship.

There are many times when I am helping someone work through their baggage that we get interference from the enemy. I routinely stop and bind demons from interfering before we move on. It is amazing how dramatic the change can be. Once, a lady was in the midst of forgiving someone for sexually abusing her when a black box appeared and blocked her memory of the event. We both thought that was odd, so I led her to pray, "In the name of Jesus, if this black box is from the enemy to interfere with what we are doing, I command them to remove it now and to stop interfering." Immediately, the black box disappeared and she completed a time with the Lord that led to great healing in her heart. Another time, a person was having trouble getting the words out when he was renouncing his involvement with the occult. He would start to say, "I renounce S-----," but he couldn't get the rest of it out. (I have actually seen this dozens of times). We simply paused and bound the demons that were interfering, and he was able to finish his prayer. Once you deal with this often enough, you learn to simply open your sessions with prayer binding the enemy to inactivity and to obedience to the commands of Christ. A good and very thorough model for such a prayer can be found in Karl Payne's book *Spiritual Warfare* (see a form of this prayer in the appendices of this booklet.)

Loosing. Binding is something Christians use their authority to do to demons, loosing is something we do for ourselves and others. To loose is to undo bonds. It is removing the cords that demons have used to keep people in bondage. We can do this through forgiveness. Forgiving removes the bonds of bitterness that keep us spiritually connected to someone who has wronged us. We can also do this by canceling “soul ties.” A soul tie is a demonic bond that connects two people together. It is usually formed by the shared experience of sin. It may be that the people sinned together, perhaps by engaging in sex outside of marriage or by committing a crime together. But it may also be that one person sinned against another through abuse or some other unwanted behavior. A friend of mine was explaining soul ties to buddy of his who had engaged in sexual relations with several women during his lifetime. Now that he was married, he was having trouble not thinking about other women when he was with his wife and struggling with lust in general. My friend told him to renounce any soul ties that had been formed with the other women and to command any demons that were keeping him bound to them to leave. The next time he saw him, he said that he had significantly more freedom than before, but that there was one woman with whom it didn’t seem to work. After discussing this briefly, my friend realized that there was a different kind of soul tie with this woman. The young man he was helping had come to worship her as a goddess. She was his fantasy—his dream girl; and he not only had to renounce his sexual activity with her, he had to renounce the idolatry that had placed her on a pedestal above all others. That turned out to be the “legal ground” that needed to be reclaimed; and, as

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soon as he did that, he experienced a tremendous sense of freedom. He had been loosed from bondage.

Evicting. Not only is authority used for binding and loosing. Authority is used to evict wicked spirits. In the New Testament we frequently see Jesus or one of the apostles casting out demons with a simple declaration of authority, and it can create the idea that this is always how it is done. However, as hundreds of people can testify, there are many occasions when a simple command of authority in the name of Jesus does no good, because the demon has legal ground that needs to be removed. The exception to this seems to be what some have called “power encounters.” A power encounter occurs when there is a contest between the power of Satan and the power of Christ. Elijah had a power encounter with the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel. Many missionaries have power encounters with witchdoctors or pagan priests in the areas where they serve. If missionaries are not equipped for such encounters, it can be disastrous. In one African village the missionary was called into a hut to pray for a man who had been shot. He came in and looked around but determined that this man needed medicine and surgery, not prayer. He said some sort of standard, Christian prayer for the man, but then left to make medical arrangements. While he was gone, the family called in the witchdoctor. He went through his rituals and incantations and as he was chanting, the bullet levitated from the man’s arm, and he snatched it out of the air with his hand. Now, how much chance do you think that missionary was going to have of convincing those people that Jesus was the true God?

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By way of contrast, there are many stories of missionaries who have overcome the power of witchcraft through the power of our risen Savior. One witchdoctor converted almost immediately when a power curse he placed on a missionary failed to kill him. The missionary was riding his bike down a path in the jungle when a fireball appeared out of nowhere and destroyed his bike. Undeterred, the brave Christian continued on foot to the village and presented himself to the tribal witchdoctor. The demonstration of Christ's power in protecting the missionary paved the way for many in that village to give their lives to Christ, beginning with the witchdoctor himself.

Evictions as power encounters seem to be primarily seen in contests of power. Within the Christian community; however, evictions most commonly follow the reclaiming of surrendered ground. Many times, when a Christian confesses sin and forgives those who have wronged him, no eviction is necessary. The reclaiming of the ground leads immediately to a release from the enemy's activity. But there are other times, especially if the legal ground is related to the occult, violence, or has been there for a long time, perhaps even for generations, that an eviction will need to follow. One way to test this is to simply pray, using the word "if." "Lord, if the enemy has claimed a right to harass me because of this sin, then in the name of Jesus I command him to leave and go where the Lord Jesus sends him."

Sometimes it is obvious that there is still a demonic presence because the demon is actively interfering or manifesting. Sometimes this can be dealt

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with quickly, but at times there is more legal ground that needs to be removed. At times like this it can be helpful to use a standardized prayer that covers most of the common ways in which demons gain legal ground in a person's life. Dr. Mark Bubeck often uses something called "The Round Up" prayer for this purpose (appendix 2).

It is also a good idea to simply pray, "Lord Jesus will you please show us if we have missed anything?" and let the Holy Spirit guide you to the missing ground. Sometimes the missing ingredient is simply the person's confidence. The demon is waiting to see if the person doing the evicting really believes. I have seen more than one demon flee after a person who had been victimized and reduced to slavery for years finally began to affirm their true identity in Christ and, often for the first time in their lives, stand up to the demons and fight for what is theirs.



Chapter 4: Freedom from Bondage

I remember the first time someone came to see me with the anticipation that I could help them find freedom from the demonic oppression they were under. I was scared to death. I wasn't so much afraid of the demons as I was of disappointing the person. One of the lessons I had to learn early on was that I am no one's savior. As many others have discovered, there is only one Wonderful Counselor, only one Messiah, and it isn't me or you.

In the last two chapters we explored the two core principles at the heart of spiritual warfare ministry: legal ground and authority. In this chapter we will look at how to reclaim surrendered ground and use our delegated authority to find freedom from spiritual bondage. I will use two memory devices to give structure to this chapter. First, CCC: Confess, Cancel, and Command. This is a simple pattern that helps people remember the essential elements of evicting an evil spirit. The second is SOUL: sin, occult, unforgiveness, and lineage. This is a list of the four most common doorways that give legal ground to the enemy. Most of the legal ground

that will have to be reclaimed from the enemy relates to one of these four areas.

C.C.C. Karl Payne uses a simple three-step process for evicting demonic spirits that is easy to remember. It is the three Cs: Confess, Cancel, and Command. First, you confess the sin; then you cancel any claim the demons may have based on that sin; and then you command the demons to leave. When demons know that they have no more legal ground, and when they know that you know they have no more legal ground, it is usually not difficult to make them leave. The problems tend to arise when you don't remove the legal ground.

S.O.U.L. In an earlier chapter I introduced four doorways that give the devil a place in our lives: Sin, the Occult, Unforgiveness, and Lineage. Each of these issues has a remedy. The remedy for sin is repentance. The remedy for the occult is renunciation. The remedy for unforgiveness is forgiveness and the remedy for sins that come to us through our family line is to cut them off.

Neil Anderson's "Steps to Freedom" is a comprehensive inventory of the seven most common areas in which we surrender legal ground to the devil (occult, deception, bitterness, pride, rebellion, habitual sin, and generational sin). It is an excellent tool for walking yourself or someone else through the renunciations and prayers most commonly required to reclaim surrendered ground.

Sin. Ephesians 4:26 says that sin gives the devil a foothold in your life. To reclaim ground surrendered to the enemy through sin, we simply have to confess that sin. If a demon did enter a person on the basis of the legal ground given by that sin, confession cancels the demon's claim. However, that does not mean that the demon automatically leaves. Demons often have to be evicted. It is no different than sending a notice to a renter who refuses to pay their lease that they have been evicted and sending the police to enforce the notice and forcibly evict the squatters. Confession is like going to the courtroom of heaven to get the eviction notice. It cancels their legal claim to a place in your life. But sometimes you have to call in the police. You do this by actively addressing the demons and commanding them to leave in the name of Jesus. Sometimes I have even asked Jesus to send holy angels to escort them out. (I don't command holy angels to do anything. It doesn't seem appropriate. But I often ask Jesus for angelic support!)

A sample prayer for confessing and canceling legal ground:

“In the name of Jesus, I confess my participation in _____. I renounce my participation in this sin and hereby cancel the ground in my life claimed by my enemy. In the name of Jesus, I now command every demon who took advantage of this ground to renounce their claim on me and leave. You must go where the Lord Jesus sends you.”

Occult. If sin opens the door to the devil, then the occult is like opening a garage door. It is sin that puts you directly into contact with the demonic.

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In the next chapter I am going to explain this area more fully, for now I just want to explain how to find freedom from occult involvement.

Ending Satan's claim on your life because of occult activity begins with the three C's. You must confess that you did it, cancel any claim the Enemy may have on you, and command the demons to leave. It is sometimes also necessary to destroy the occult objects you own or that have been used to grant them access to your world. One tribal priest whose family had served a pagan god in Africa for ten generations made a decisive break with his occult background. He gave his life to Christ and got baptized, then went to the ritual site where the idol was located. He announced to the spirit that he would no longer serve him. He destroyed the idol and burned it in a fire, then for good measure he sprayed his own urine all over the "sacred" site. Now, that is what I would call a full renunciation of one's occult involvement!

Unforgiveness. The obvious antidote to unforgiveness is forgiveness. There are a few principles about forgiveness, however, that are worth mentioning. First, forgiveness is a choice not a feeling. When you forgive someone, you are canceling the debt that is owed to you. In this sense it is a business transaction. You might picture yourself in front of a judge who is asking you, "Are you going to cancel the debt or not?" Your emotions don't really enter into it from a legal perspective. However, the Bible tells us to forgive others "from the heart." This does not mean that we have to wait to choose to forgive them until we feel like forgiving them. It means that we need to get in touch with our feelings when we forgive and not

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simply say the words out of obligation. God does not want us to simply go through the motions, nor does he want us to simply pretend everything is okay. He wants us to trust Him to take care of us and leave the debt and the right to vengeance in His hands.

Another important principle about forgiveness is that it is not the same as reconciliation. Reconciliation takes two. Forgiveness only takes one. You can cancel a debt without the other person being in the courtroom. Reconciliation, however, is the reestablishment of a relationship and the rebuilding of trust. Without forgiveness, reconciliation will not be possible, but forgiveness alone does not produce reconciliation. This was driven home to me by the story of a pastor who was called to a home where the wife had just found out that her husband had been cheating on her with a close friend. All sorts of scenarios ran through this pastor's mind of what he would find when he arrived. What he found, however, was nothing like what he had expected. When he arrived, the husband was angry with the wife, rather than the other way around! The husband was angry because his wife would not "forgive" him. The man told the pastor, "Tell my wife she needs to forgive me. Tell her she needs to give me a kiss, put this behind us, and go on like it never happened." This husband actually believed this would be the biblical thing to do! The reality is that he was confusing forgiveness with reconciliation, and in the process was trying to absolve himself of any consequences for what he had done. Forgiveness does not mean there will be no consequences. I can forgive my child for rebellion against me. It doesn't mean there won't be a time out or worse. The discipline is part of the restoration process. There are times when

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mercy will reduce punishment or even remove it, but this is not required by forgiveness.

When it comes to the process of forgiving I encourage people to take the following steps:

1. Ask God to help you think about the person in the way in which they are the most offensive to you. This helps you get your heart engaged, so that you can forgive from your heart.
2. Reflect on the negative emotions and negative consequences you have had to bear because of what the other person has done.
3. Make a declaration: "In the name of Jesus, I choose to forgive ___ for . . ." and list the wrong behavior and negative consequences imposed against you.
4. Ask Jesus to help you think about the person in the way in which He wants you to think about them. Ask him to help you understand why He loves that person, so that you can learn to love them, too.
5. Pray a blessing on the person you forgave, and ask the Lord to bring them what is good (even if that good thing is repentance that leads to life).

Lineage. In our culture, we do not often think about the impact of prior generations on our lives in the present. We are so individualistic that we forget that our lives flow out of a source (like our family tree) that often has impurities in it that affect us.

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Demons from past generations can affect people in the present. Perhaps great-grandpa murdered someone, or grandma practiced witchcraft, or dad developed a porn addiction and committed adultery. Any of these sins would open a door into that person's life. As a consequence those demons will have greater access to the family lineage than if the door had not been opened. If you think of your family as being like a house, imagine what would happen if someone invited a demon into one of the rooms. Is it likely to just stay there or is it going to look for a way to stay in this home and expand its territory? In the same way, once a demon or demons have gained ground in a family, they are going to look for ways to stay and they are going to seek to expand their "territory" and freedom to operate.

One young man who needed freedom from panic attacks prayed that God would show him the first time fear had entered his life. He remembered being alone in a bathroom when he was about seven years old and feeling like something jumped on his back. He was terrified and had his first panic attack. When I asked him if any other family members struggled with fear or high levels of worry, he mentioned that both his mother and grandmother were consumed with worry. We decided it was best to renounce any ancestral sin that may have opened a door to the demonic in his family line. As I led him through the prayer, he got stuck. He began to get interference from a demon. We bound the wicked spirit, finished the prayer and evicted the spirit involved. Afterward, the young man said, "I never would have dreamed that my problems had roots in my family line."

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A couple who adopted a child from a Muslim background had no end of behavioral problems with him. He was a “holy terror” and was regularly in trouble at school. They were at their wits end, when someone suggested to them that they cut off any wicked spirits that may have come with him from his ancestral background. One night, while the boy was sleeping, his parents prayed over him and canceled any claim the enemy had on their adopted son because of the sins of his ancestors, and commanded those spirits to leave in the name of Jesus. The next morning, they could already notice a difference in the level of calmness in the child. By the end of the week his teacher sent home a note saying, “I don’t know what you’ve been doing with your son, but whatever it is, keep it up!” Dealing with the spirits that had come down through the family line did not make the boy perfect, but they did make him “normal.”

Dealing with generational sin follows the same three C pattern as before. Confess the sin that gave the ground. In this case it is the sin of an ancestor. You can confess all sins generally that have given ground whether you know about the sin or not, but it is a good idea to list the ones of which you are specifically aware especially if they were habitual or traumatic. Cancel the ground claimed by the enemy because of that sin. Specifically cancel any claim they may have on future generations. Command the demons to leave.

Cleansing Property. Just as demons can claim a legal right to a person because of unresolved sin, they can claim a legal right to a piece of property, access to an institution (like a school or a church), or ownership

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of an object (especially one created or dedicated for occult purposes like an amulet or an idol). Land that has been polluted by sin must be redeemed before it can be used for God's glory. For example, when Nehemiah returned for his second term as governor and found that one of his officers had allowed a pagan official to move into a room of the temple; Nehemiah not only evicted the pagan official, he discarded all of his things (13:7-8). One can only assume that this man had been practicing his pagan religion in that room of the temple.

Cleansing property is often as simple as renouncing what may have taken place there in the past and inviting Jesus to fill the place with his presence. I know of situations in which someone moved into a home where occult rituals had been held in the basement. They experienced paranormal activity in the house (doors slamming, objects floating, ghosts appearing, etc.) before they discovered that someone had painted over several Satanic symbols on the basement walls and realized that this activity had never been renounced and that the spirits had never been made to leave. They did so, and the paranormal activity stopped.

This same principle implies that any objects that have been devoted to pagan or satanic use need to be destroyed. This can be especially difficult when the object is considered a family heirloom or of great cultural significance. This can also be taken to an extreme and discernment is called for. My basic rule of thumb is that if an object was created for and used for an occult purpose (i.e., a Masonic ritual or pagan worship), then I destroy it. If it is an ordinary object, but I suspect that someone has placed

a curse on it, I simply “cleanse” it and command the spirit attached to it to leave.

Taking Thoughts Captive. In order to live in freedom, it is not enough to get rid of demons, we also have to stay free of demons. One of the most effective ways of doing this is to develop the practice of taking your thoughts captive. The principle here is that not every thought that enters your head is yours. My dad tells the story of a professor in a theological school who came to see him because he was troubled by the perverted sexual thoughts that often came to his mind when he began to pray. He was afraid that he had a demon and needed a “deliverance session.” After a little probing, however, my dad realized that this man had not surrendered any legal ground that would give the demons a right to this type of oppression. The man asked him, “What’s wrong with me?” My dad replied, “There is probably nothing wrong with you. There is probably something right about you, and that is why the enemy is trying to convince you that you shouldn’t be in ministry. If you haven’t put those perverted thoughts in your mind, and you can be sure God isn’t doing that, where do you think they come from?” Instead of casting out a “demon of perversion,” my dad taught him how to take his thoughts captive. About a year later, they saw each other again and the man said, “I just want to thank you for meeting with me last year. When I first came I thought you might pray over me and get rid of a demon, but I’m really glad it didn’t happen like that. Learning how to take my thoughts captive has changed me, changed my family, and I am returning to my ministry in Africa with a

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whole new perspective on it.” Like this ministry leader, most of us have no idea how much junk we let go unchallenged in our thinking because we assume the thoughts are just ours.

Taking thoughts captive is not difficult. It is an intentional choice to reject a message from the enemy and replace it with the truth, or to expose the enemy and command him to leave. Recognizing the need to do this, and choosing to do it can be difficult. Demonic thoughts often challenge God’s truth. For example, God loves you and you are precious to Him. But how many thoughts do you have on a daily basis that attempt to rob you of the joy of that truth—thoughts that you are a disappointment to God or that He is disgusted with you or that He cannot be trusted to have your best interest at heart? Such thoughts do not come from God. They are temptations of the Enemy intended to rob you of intimacy with God. Recognizing, resisting, and replacing these thoughts is the essence of taking them captive.

A good way to practice taking your thoughts captive (and to demonstrate the reality of spiritual warfare) is to try to keep this thought in the forefront of your thinking all day, “I am the apple of God’s eye. His love for me is so vast in cannot be measured.” As you do this, pay attention to the contrary thoughts that try to rob you of the joy of these truths. At some point, command any demons that are telling you those lies to leave. Then ask the Lord to confirm His truth to you in a fresh way!



Chapter 5: Demons and the Occult

Years ago I met with a young lady who had been diagnosed with schizophrenia. She was hearing voices that were telling her to hurt members of her family. Sometimes the radio or the television would deliver secret messages just for her. Now, there is a physical problem that can affect the brain and cause genuine schizophrenia, but that was not this girl's problem. The psychological community simply had no other diagnosis for what she was experiencing. She met with me to go through the "Steps to Freedom." One of the first questions I asked her was whether she had ever participated in the occult. She said no. I was skeptical. Symptoms like hers usually implied some form of occult activity.

When I pulled out the list of occult activities found in the "Steps to Freedom" and began to explain them to her, she circled half the list! She had gone through mind control seminars where you learn to read someone else's thoughts. She had practiced levitation, participated in séances, used Ouija boards, and played with tarot cards. You name it, it seemed like she had done it. She just didn't know there was anything wrong with this stuff. To make matters worse, she had been living with her boyfriend who was

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also into the occult; so she had baggage from sexual sin. And to make matters worse, her boyfriend put a curse on her when she left him!

Over the course of two sessions, I was able to walk her through the prayers of renunciation related to her occult activity and in commanding demons to leave. She renounced her sexual sin and broke soul ties with her boyfriend. She also broke the curse that had been placed on her. Along the way I helped her understand her identity in Christ and her position of victory over the enemy. By the time we were done, she wasn't hearing voices anymore. Stories like this remind us of the dangers of the occult and the freedom that can be found in Christ.

Demons

The Greek word for demon is *daimon*. As you can see, our English versions didn't really translate the word, they just borrowed it. In the ancient world a *daimon* was any malevolent spirit that oppressed you or made life difficult for you. In the New Testament, the word demon is used of all fallen angels. Jesus said, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18). The fall of Satan is also depicted in Revelation 12, where we read that the dragon (Satan), swept a third of the stars from the sky. In this setting, stars are used as a metaphor for angels; hence, the idea was born that one third of the angels followed Lucifer in his rebellion against God. This rebellion was motivated by pride. Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 use the fall of Lucifer as the background for describing the pride of earthly rulers who, like Lucifer, ascended to a great height only to fall to a great depth. In pressing further into the question of why Satan rebelled, it is interesting to

note the connection between false gods and demons. There are millions of gods and lesser supernatural beings in this world, and all of them want some level of power over humans. It may be that Satan enticed the other angels to follow him by promising them that they would be gods. It does not take much imagination to hear him ask the other angels, “Do you want to serve the humans or do you want the humans to serve you?” It would seem that every demon wants power over humans. They accomplish this by seeking to make slaves out of people to the fullest extent possible.

Demons can rule over regions, institutions, and people.

Paul often referred to demons as principalities and powers (Romans 8:38; Ephesians 3:10; 6:12; Colossians 1:16; 2:15; Titus 3:1). The term “principality” implies one who rules over a region. The Greek word is *arche* (pronounced: ar-kay’). It is often used of earthly leaders and can be translated head or ruler. One of the reasons God is so opposed to idolatry is that nations that serve false gods are entering into a pact with a high-ranking demon and all of the demons beneath him in rank who serve him. This pact gives those demons a right to greater power and activity in that region. This is why some countries or territories have much more overt demonic activity than others. The spirits have been invited in and given authority by the earthly rulers of the region. You can see this principle at work in countries like Haiti where, after they had expelled their French overlords, the leaders dedicated their nation to the devil in a well-known voodoo ceremony—a ceremony repeated in 1992. You can also see it in regions where annual rituals renew that territory’s dedication to a false god. George Otis and the Sentinel Group have produced several excellent

videos called “Transformations.” These and Dr. Otis’s book, *Twilight Labyrinth* provide an in-depth look at the idea of territorial spirits. For a good academic study of principalities and powers, see Dr. Clinton Arnold’s book *Three Crucial Questions*.

Demons can exercise power over nature.

Not only did Paul often refer to demons as principalities, he also used the word “powers.” The word is “exousia” (ex-oo-see’-ah) and is probably better translated “authorities.” Many demons have authority in the realm of nature and the power to interact with the natural realm. Most of the gods of paganism were nature gods, who were able to exercise a certain amount of control over the forces of nature. Baal, for example, was believed to have the ability to send rain and cause storms. His priests were probably shocked when Baal was unable to send fire from the sky in their contest with Elijah. If they knew there was no chance he could do it, they never would have agreed to the contest. In a similar way the magi of Egypt were able to turn a staff into a snake and water into blood through their magic arts. The Bible recognizes that demons have the power to do magical things and communicate secret information. All pagan religions are built to pursue the power and knowledge that these spiritual beings offer. The pagans, however, do not realize the demonic nature of the power involved or the consequences of what they are doing.

Deception

If I were going to summarize the enemy’s work in one phrase, it would be this: *demons lay snares*. Demons use deception to lure individuals (and

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often entire communities) into choices that will bring them and their offspring into bondage. Ultimately, he wants to destroy them. This is why the Bible urges us to avoid those activities that will bring us under the enemy's control and to repent in order to break free from enemy snares.

The devil is the father of lies (John 8:44). Consequently, wherever you find deception, you find the work of the devil. The demonic work of deception can be divided into three parts: thoughts, tapes, and voices.

Thoughts. Not every thought that enters your head is yours. Some come from the Holy Spirit. They give you guidance and encouragement. Some come from demons. They tempt you to fear and unbelief. You can think of the demonic attack on your thoughts as the "fiery darts" mentioned in Ephesians 6:16 and Psalm 91:5. Satan shoots his flaming arrows at you in the form of tempting thoughts. The proper response to these is to hold up the shield of faith in order to resist them and then to counter attack with the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. This process is commonly called "taking your thoughts captive" (2 Corinthians 10:5). Martin Luther is famous for saying, "You can't keep a bird from landing on your head, but you can keep him from building a nest there." In a sense, that is what we do when we resist the enemy. We are keeping the devil from building a nest.

Tapes. Sometimes the devil succeeds in planting thoughts in our hearts that develop into "tapes" that play over and over. These are deceptive patterns of thinking that keep us from living in the freedom of who we really are. These tapes are usually lies that target who we are, who God is,

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and how life works. For example, sometimes these tapes take the form of persistent negative thoughts about family members, friends, or even ministry associates. Such thought patterns can be debilitating to our marriage, our parenting, and our other relationships.

Above all, the enemy targets our view of God and our view of ourselves. If Satan is a roaring lion looking to eat a sheep, what is that sheep's best defense? It is to stay close to the shepherd. Sometimes we get the idea that our job is to become "super sheep" so that we can take on the devil in our own strength. But Satan knows that our defense lies in staying close to the shepherd. He knows that if he is going to have a good lunch, he needs to lure us away from the shepherd, and his primary tactic for doing that is deception. If he can get you to believe that you are such a bad sheep that the shepherd is disgusted with you, there is a good chance you are going to avoid the shepherd. Or, if he can convince you that the shepherd is not completely trustworthy; if he can point out reasons to be disappointed with the shepherd, he knows you are less likely to stay close to him. Therefore, Satan's primary objective is to fill your mind with lies about yourself and God that will keep you isolated from Him. The result is that most of us spend our lives trying to perform for God and earn His acceptance, rather than enjoying His presence. Our isolation makes us much easier prey for the enemy.

The most common way that tapes form in our minds is through trauma. When our hearts are broken by suffering, the physical and/or emotional wounds create fertile soil into which Satan is able to plant the seeds of

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deception. If these lies feel true to us, we will enter into an agreement with the devil and accept them as true. When this happens, the lies take root in our hearts and begin to grow. We begin to make decisions about how we will live our lives as if these lies are true. These vows we make are like vines that begin to bear fruit. However, it is not the fruit of the Spirit that is produced but the fruit of deception. These lies in our hearts produce fear, depression, shame, disgust, anger, and hopelessness. Replacing these tapes in our heads requires a renewal of the mind. It may also require a healing of the heart. We will need to go back to the original wounds into which the devil planted his lies in order to pull this vine out by the roots.

Voices. Some people hear voices in their heads. This does not mean that they are crazy. Voices in the head can be demons. This is normally a sign that the person has either been involved in the occult or has been the victim of abuse. Voices in the head can also be other “parts” or “personalities.” People who have experienced extreme trauma often dissociate and form alternate personalities. Usually, one or more parts are protectors, one or more parts keep the pain in secrecy and isolation, and there are sometimes other parts who have other jobs. These parts were formed in the brain as a means of self-preservation. They often function as completely different individuals; though, they are actually different parts of the same core person. Sometimes the different parts of them talk to each other inside, and this can cause the experience of voices in the head.

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If the voices are demonic, they can be removed by using the three C's: confess, cancel, and command. I was recently speaking on spiritual warfare at a church and describing the characteristics of a demonized person. I mentioned that sometimes they hear voices in their heads, and a woman spoke up, "I hear voices in my head. And I see a demon following me around." She went on to say that her psychologist said she was schizophrenic and didn't believe that it was really a demon that was harassing her. After my presentation we prayed together. She renounced the legal ground in her life and commanded the demons to leave. She also prayed and cancelled any claim on her children that the demons might have through her sin or through the generational sin in her family. The next week, when I returned for part two of my series, she asked if she could share her testimony with the class. In the past week she had not heard a single voice in her head and the demon had disappeared. Life in her home had also become much calmer. Best of all, her teenage son had prayed to receive Christ! Needless to say, results aren't always that dramatic, but it is instructive to understand just how life changing it can be to understand and apply the principles of spiritual warfare.

Deceptive Power

Demonic activity is always rooted in deception. This does not mean that demons do not have real power or that this power does not often appear to help people. It means that they use their power to deceive. Many miracles have been done in the name of Jesus that were performed by the power of the occult and had nothing to do with the true Jesus, who was born of a virgin, crucified and raised as Lord of all. I know of a man in full-

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time Christian ministry who had a withered leg. He went to a faith healer who laid hands on him and the leg miraculously straightened. After that experience, however, he began to slip into a depression that was threatening to run him out of ministry and into an institution. At the advice of an experienced pastor, he renounced the healing with a prayer that went something like this, “If (notice this important word, he was seeking to discern the spirit involved in his healing) this healing was of the devil and not from my Lord and Savior, then in the name of Jesus I renounce it now and command the demon involved to leave.” Immediately, his leg returned to the way it had been and his depression left.

Johanna Michaelsen’s book, *The Beautiful Side of Evil*, describes her work as an assistant to a psychic healer and her deep involvement in the New Age Movement. She was a “white witch” and thought she knew the difference between a good spirit and an evil spirit. Her story explains the journey that led her into bondage and the experiences that opened her eyes to the truth that set her free.

The Occult

Demonic activity is most directly experienced in the occult. The word “occult” means “hidden.” The occult offers a path to knowledge and power through secret arts that must be mastered by a specialist. These specialists are usually priests, magi, shamans, or witchdoctors, but anyone who learns the arts can gain access to the supernatural.

One of the symbols of the occult is the pyramid. It represents the stairway to heaven or the levels of progress from darkness to enlightenment. Those

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outside the pyramid live in darkness. In Harry Potter they are called “muggles,” people who do not know and often do not even believe in the magical arts. The first level represents the entrance into the secret knowledge. At this level witches, Mormons, and Masons all have to acknowledge that they are blind, living in darkness, and in need of instruction that will be provided by their master. In these rituals of initiation, they take a blood oath not to reveal the secrets they will learn lest they die a horrible death. From this ominous beginning, the initiates begin their “ascent” (if you can call it that) through the levels of enlightenment and gain an increasing amount of secret knowledge.

The idea of a hidden path to power and secret knowledge has always appealed to those who crave power either because they are ambitious or because they feel powerless. It is very common to find young people interested in the occult who feel overlooked or beaten down by their peers. It gives them a sense of superiority over those who look down on them. Those in the occult often develop a prideful attitude that says, “If you only knew what I could do to you, you would treat me with more respect.”

Occult knowledge

A common adage says that knowledge is power. How much would it be worth to know which decisions would lead to prosperity and which to disaster? How much would it be worth to learn the cure for a deadly illness? How much would you pay to learn the secrets that would give you an advantage in business, love, or war? In pagan societies priests and

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witchdoctors are often paid great sums of money to read the omens that reveal the secrets of the gods. This art is called divination. It is rooted in the idea that the gods (hence the word divine in divination) often reveal their secrets through omens which can be read if one has learned the sacred arts.

Ancient forms of divination included cutting open an animal and “reading” the positions of the organs. If all was normal, it was taken as a good omen from the gods. If something was out of place or diseased; it bode evil.

Modern forms of divination include Tarot cards, Ouija boards, tea leaves, and palm reading.

Occult Power

The occult offers a variety of secret paths to power that have great appeal for those who want to feel like they are in control of their lives. The paths to power can be divided into power symbols/objects, power words, and power rituals.

Power symbols/objects. Occult symbols generally have two or more meanings. They have a surface meaning that is meant to deceive or mislead the uninitiated, and they have a deeper, hidden meaning that is known to those with the secret knowledge. These symbols are often used to summon spirits. For example, an amulet is a power object that is often worn as a necklace. The amulet is normally covered with occult symbols or words that are intended to summon spirits of protection for the one who wears the amulet. This was a very common practice in the Roman Empire and continues to be practiced in the New Age movement today.

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Another example of a power object is an idol or a sacred stone. In tribal cultures and ancient pagan civilizations, it was common for people to have



An amulet is a power object

a shrine in their home where they offered prayers to one or more deities. It was also common to place power objects in strategic places around the house or in the garden in order to summon protective spirits or spirits that granted fertility and blessing.

Power Words. Just as symbols and objects are used as channels for spiritual power, so words can be used this way. Spells, incantations, curses, and the like are used to summon spirits and invite them to unleash their powers. New Testament professor Clinton Arnold has done some excellent work explaining how the pagan ideas of the ancient world form the background for understanding Paul's teaching in the book of Ephesians.³ The first century converts to Christianity would have been steeped in overt paganism. Their lives would have been filled with power objects, power words, and power rituals. Their question was, "Now that we are Christians, how do we distance and protect ourselves from the spirits and where do we turn for blessing on our homes?" Ephesians answers this question. In Christ we have been given every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms (1:3). Christians no longer need to go to this god for one blessing and another god for a different blessing. We

³ See Clinton Arnold's commentaries on Ephesians and Colossians in the Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary Series for more information on the occult worldview and activity of the Roman world.

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no longer need to invoke certain power words or perform certain power rituals in order to find the protection and blessing we need. Jesus has been given a name above every name and a position far above all other principalities and powers.

Power Rituals. Witchcraft, sorcery, and pagan sacrifice all include rituals designed to summon spiritual power. The general idea is that the greater the sacrifice that is offered, the greater the power that is unleashed. This is why the priests and prophets of Baal and Asherah cut themselves with knives and made themselves bleed in their contest with Elijah on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:28). They believed the gods would take notice of the sacrifice and answer their prayers as a result. People who practice such rituals need to renounce their involvement with them and cancel the claims of the Enemy on their lives as a result of them. The prayers in “Step One” of Neil Anderson’s “Steps to Freedom in Christ” provide a model to guide you through such a prayer.

I once interviewed a young man in India who had been a witchdoctor there. According to his testimony, his father was killed when an occultist put a curse on him. His mother’s response was to pay his way to receive the training he needed to become an occultist and kill the man who had killed his father. As he deepened in his training, he performed increasingly dark sacrifices and spent a growing amount of time in trances, disconnected from this world and in the company of spirits from the unseen world. Finally, he asked one of the spirits what he had to do to kill his enemy. The spirit told him that an especially dark form of sacrifice was needed. He

performed the ritual and immediately the spirit left the circle for a few hours and returned. The next morning his enemy was found dead in his home. This was the turning point in the young man's story. His devotions to the dark arts had alienated him from all friendships. He was feared and avoided by all. Eventually, he turned to the Christians for help and at first they did not want him. But a pastor took him in and led him to Christ. He went through deliverance of the spirits that laid claim to him; and when I met him, he was in seminary preparing to enter the ministry.

Syncretism. One of the problems Christians face is the danger of syncretism. Syncretism is the unnatural blending of worldviews or cultural practices. In many communities in Europe where people were forced to adopt Christianity, the churches would be filled with Christian symbols inside the buildings, but pagan symbols outside the buildings because the people continued to believe that they needed their traditional protections from evil spirits. In Africa a pastor who was running for the office of bishop in his denomination, went to the tribal witchdoctor to have a curse placed on his opponent in order to improve his chances of winning the election. This pastor could get A's on his theology tests, but when it came to questions of power, nothing had convinced him that the power of Christ could compete with the power of the tribal spirits.

Too much of what passes as Christian spirituality is actually dressed up paganism. You see this when people use their Bibles as power objects, believing they will be protected from evil spirits if they sleep with it or keep it in their pocket. Many Catholic items get used this way from rosaries to

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crucifixes to statues of the saints placed in the garden. These objects are treated the same way that a pagan would treat their power objects. You also see this in the prosperity gospel movement. Faith is often used like magic. If you want something, all you need to do is say the right words or provide the right offering, and God will give you what you want.

Conclusion

A functional knowledge of spiritual warfare is one of the foundational pillars of a Christian worldview. It is as primary to our understanding of the Christian life as the sovereignty of God or our union with Christ. In fact, I would argue that these are the three core pillars on which all Christianity rests. The first is our union with Christ, which deals with our death, resurrection, and ascension with Christ so that we now live our lives in Him and He in us. The second is the sovereignty of God, which teaches us that God is strong enough, wise enough, and good enough to use even the evil that exists and that is done in this world to advance His eternal purposes for His people. Finally, there is spiritual warfare. This doctrine teaches us that when we were adopted spiritually into God's family, we became targets of God's arch-enemy. This enemy is actively working to make sure that we do not live our lives on the foundation of the first two pillars.

This is where the Christian finds balance in the study of spiritual warfare. We need to know our enemy, understand his tactics, and be prepared to stand against him with the weapons of our warfare. But we do not live our lives focused on the enemy. We live our lives in union with Christ and by faith in the sovereignty of God. This is where our focus lies and this is the

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path to a deeper walk. My prayer for you is that you will not be deceived by our adversary the devil, but will learn to enjoy the simplicity, freedom, and beauty of a deeper walk with Christ.

Appendices

1 - Karl Payne's "Ground Rule Box"

Spiritual Warfare: Christians, Demonization and Deliverance, 152-154

The Ground Rule Box is the list of ground rules that Dr. Payne uses to bring demons under complete submission to the authority of Christ in a deliverance session.

- A. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ we bind the strongman. He will not be allowed to interfere in this process in any way. There will be no outside reinforcements of any kind. If there are demons involved with _____, you are on trial and you are going to lose.
- B. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, there will be one-way traffic only, from _____ to the pit. When you leave you will take all of your works and effects and all of your associates and their works and effects with you. You will not be free to re-enter _____ or to enter anyone else in the room.
- C. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ you may speak only that which may be used against you.
- D. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the answers you give must stand as truth before the white throne of God.
- E. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, there will be no profanity.
- F. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, _____ is to have complete and full control of his/her tongue, mind and body. You will not be allowed to control his tongue, mind or body.
- G. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I will give commands stating "We command" because this is _____'s fight. The Holy Spirit of God is going before us, and we stand as a majority, and we stand together against you. _____ does not want anything to do with you. _____ is a child of God who stands against you. You are an unwanted intruder who is going to have to leave upon command.

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- H. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, when I give commands you will give clear, concise, complete answers in _____'s mind to the questions addressed to you. You will not be permitted to confuse the mind of _____ and will be punished severely by the Holy Spirit of God if you attempt to do so.
- I. When I give commands in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ you will clearly give your answers to _____. You do not have the privilege of speaking directly through him in this confrontation.
- J. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, there will be no hiding, duplicating, or changing of authority and rank. We bind you by the authority structure you now have, and that structure will only be altered if we choose to change it.
- K. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, when I give commands for you to answer, you will give your answers to _____, who will share your responses with me. I will not speak directly to you; you are a defeated enemy not a colleague or an equal, and you are not worth speaking to. I will speak to my brother/sister in Christ. The only thing you are going to do is cooperate under the ground rules. Your authority is smashed!
- L. Lastly. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we ask the Holy Spirit of God to enforce all of the ground rules and to punish severely any demons who attempt to step outside of the ground rule box.

Four Declarations (to accompany the Ground Rules)

- I. We declare our **victory** over all the powers of darkness through our head, the Lord Jesus Christ. We declare that the Lord Jesus Christ has smashed the authority of Satan at the cross of Calvary where He made an open spectacle of your master. Colossians 2:13-15 states:
And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all of our transgressions, having cancelled out the certificate of debt

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consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public spectacle of them, having triumphed over them through Him.

- II. We declare our **authority** over the powers of darkness through our Lord Jesus Christ. In Luke 10:18-20 Jesus told those who follow Him: *And He said to them, I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning. Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall injure you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.*
- III. From the same Luke 10 passage we declare our **protection** from the powers of darkness through our head, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said, *“and nothing shall injure you.”* We declare this to be true through our Lord Jesus Christ and stand upon it.
- IV. We declare our position over the powers of darkness in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is our head and we make up His body. Ephesians 1:18-23 says:
- I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 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. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*

2 - Dr. Mark I. Bubeck's "Round Up" Prayer

I worship and honor my heavenly Father, the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit; the true and living God Who promised, "I will never leave you or forsake you." I welcome and honor the unseen presence of my Lord Jesus Christ who promised always to be with us when we meet in His name. I honor and thank You, Lord Jesus Christ, for Your invisible presence in this very place with us. I ask You to be in charge and to effect only Your will and plan in our lives. I yield fully to Your will in the eviction of any and all wicked spirit control from my life. I desire the Holy Spirit to do the sanctifying work within my whole person and being that He is there to do. I ask You, Lord Jesus Christ, to assign Your holy angels to protect us from any strategies of darkness designed to oppose this prayer for freedom. Keep Satan and all his opposing hosts of evil away from us. I also ask You to insure that wicked spirits evicted from my presence will depart quickly and directly to the place where You consign them to go. In the Name of my Lord Jesus Christ and by the power of His blood, I affirm my authority over all wicked spirits assigned to control me and hinder my life and witness for Christ. I now command all lingering wicked spirits assigned to harass, rule and control me to cease their work and be bound in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. I bind in all back-up systems and replacer wicked spirits assigned to rebuild evicted strongholds. They may not do that! I command all those spirits assigned against me to be and remain whole spirits. I forbid any dividing, restructuring or multiplying of wicked spirit activity against me. There is to be one-way traffic of evil spirit activity out of my life and to the place the Lord Jesus Christ consigns them. I pull in from other family members all those wicked spirits working under the chain of authority established by the powers of darkness assigned to rule over me. I command them all to be bound together here in the presence of my Lord Jesus Christ in that spiritual realm where He dwells with me and they know His presence. I bind all of your wicked ears open and it is my will that you must hear and obey Him who is your Creator and Conqueror. I declare the

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Lord Jesus Christ to be my Redeemer and Lord. I affirm that God has seated me with Christ Jesus in the heavenly realms far above all principalities and supernatural powers of darkness and evil. Lord Jesus Christ, I ask You to tell all of these powers of darkness assigned to afflict and rule over me where they must go. I want them out of my life and confined where they can never trouble me again. I yield fully to Your sovereign plan for my life and all of the purposes You have in this battle I have been facing. I ask You, Lord Jesus Christ, to tell them clearly where they must go. *(A brief pause is in order to honor the Lord Jesus Christ's work of addressing His authority and victory against those powers of darkness bound in accountability before Him)* I now ask the Holy Spirit dwelling within my person to effect the will of the Lord Jesus Christ concerning these afflicting powers of darkness. Just as You forced them out of people's lives in response to Jesus' commands when He walked on this earth, I ask You to accomplish that for me now. I ask You, Spirit of the living God, to evict from my conscious, sub-conscious and unconscious mind all control of any wicked powers. Break all of their power and control over my thought processes. They must go where the Lord Jesus Christ sends them. Sweep them away and make my mind clear of any wicked spirit control. I now ask that the Holy Spirit would renew and sanctify my mind. Cleanse and take full control of my conscious, unconscious and sub-conscious mind, precious Holy Spirit. Set it totally apart for the Glory of God and the service of my Lord Jesus Christ. I deliberately yield my mind to the Lordship of Christ, the truth of God's Word and the will of my heavenly Father.

I now ask that the Holy Spirit would look all through my emotions on the conscious, sub-conscious and unconscious level. Evict any controlling Powers of darkness and may the holy angels escort them to the place where the Lord Jesus Christ is commanding them to go. Clean them out and totally away from my person. I ask that the gracious Holy Spirit would take control of my emotions on every level of the function of my feelings. Sanctify my emotions. Fill my emotions with the Spirit's fruit, love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, meekness, faithfulness and self-control. I

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welcome the Holy Spirit's internal control of my feelings. I look to the Spirit of God to sanctify and renew my emotions. I reach out to experience the Lord's plan for my emotional freedom and spiritual well-being. I now ask that the Holy Spirit would look all through my conscious, unconscious and sub-conscious will for any control of wicked powers. Evict them now to where the Lord Jesus Christ is commanding them to go. Sweep my will totally clean from evil control and manipulation. May the Holy Spirit of the true and living God renew and sanctify my will fully for the glory of God. Will within me to do the will of God. May the Lordship of Jesus Christ be obediently lived out in my life by the Holy Spirit's full control of my will. I offer my body in all of its parts and functions as an expression of my spiritual worship to You. I ask that You would have the Holy Spirit to look through my body for any controlling activity of wicked spirits and all through my brain for any fallen spirit's affliction or control. Evict them totally away from this physical control center for the function of my mind and body. I offer my brain and its capacities for the quickening, renewing control of the Holy Spirit. Sanctify and refresh my brain so that it functions in spiritual harmony with Your control of my whole person. Look all through the senses of my body and sever any wicked spirit control of my eyes, ears, smell, touch or taste. Look all through the organs of my body for any defiling work of the kingdom of darkness. Sanctify my body organs and their function by the quickening work of the Holy Spirit. I ask You to look all through the sexual organs and function of my body for any evil spirit activity. Set apart my sexuality for Your glory and for Your Holy plan of moral purity and sexual intimacy only in the bonds of marriage. I ask that the Holy Spirit would search out all my bones, blood circulation, nerve circuitry, muscles, tissues, glands, hair, skin, and every cell for any wicked spirit activity against my physical body. Evict any afflicting, evil powers totally away from my body. Sanctify my body in all of its parts and wholeness. I want my body to be a "holy body" not only in its standing in Your redemptive plan, but also in its function as a part of my spiritual worship to You. I offer my body as a living sacrifice to be used only for all that is acceptable in Your sight. I now yield up my whole person again to

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You, the true and living God, and to Your full control and to the control of Your Son and Holy Spirit. I thank You for the freedom that You have effected within me during this time of prayer. I now look to the love of my heavenly Father, the lordship of Jesus Christ, and by the intercessions of the Holy Spirit to enable me to daily walk in the spiritual freedom promised me in God's holy Word. I reject, resist and refuse anything less. In the name and worthiness of my Lord Jesus Christ and by the intercessions of the Holy Spirit, I place these petitions before You, my Father in Heaven. ...AMEN

3 - Freedom Prayers

Prayer for confessing and cancelling sin:

Lord Jesus Christ, I confess that I have been involved in _____. Please forgive me for this sin and misuse of my body and cancel any ground that the Enemy may claim because of this sin. I choose now to receive your forgiveness and in so doing to forgive myself, so that I will not remain in bondage to this sin any longer. Amen.

Prayer for evicting demons

(Having removed all legal ground the Enemy may claim) In the name of my Lord Jesus Christ and by the power of His blood, I bind together as one every demon assigned to me because of this sin, and command them all to leave. Lord Jesus, I ask you to send them where they will trouble me no more and to do whatever is necessary to enforce this eviction. Amen.

Prayer for binding the enemy during a renunciation

In the name of my Lord Jesus Christ I bind any demon from in anyway interfering with what Christ wants to do here today. I bind you to inactivity and to silence. You will not harm me or anyone in this room. You will not

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act out, but will submit to whatever commands you are given as one who has been defeated by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayer for breaking soul ties:

In the name of my Lord Jesus Christ I renounce any soul tie that has been formed between me and _____ through my _____. I cancel any demonic bond that keeps us connected and command those demons to leave now and go where the Lord Jesus sends you.

Prayer for choosing to forgive:

Lord Jesus Christ, I choose to forgive _____ for. . . (list ways in which you have been hurt or wronged and the consequences it has created for you).

Prayer for cancelling generational ground:

In the name of my Lord Jesus Christ, I cancel the legal ground surrendered by my _____ (list specifics of what you know). Here and now, I renounce any claim that any demons have on me, my children, or any other member of my family because of the sins of my ancestors. In the name of Jesus I command every evil spirit assigned to me or my family as a result of these sins to leave now and go where the Lord Jesus sends you.

Prayer for cleansing a home

In the name of my Lord Jesus Christ, I renounce any claim that any demons may have on this home (or other property). As one with authority over this home and as a child of the king, I renounce the sins that opened a door for any demonic presence in this place. Therefore, in the name of Jesus I command every demon to leave this place now and go where my Lord Jesus Christ sends you. And now, I invite the Holy Spirit to sweep this place clean and fill it with His presence. I ask that the blessing and peace of God will

*rest on this place so that it may be a haven of rest, a home blessed by God.
In Jesus' name, Amen.*

4 - Theological Note: The Role of Experience

In the practice of spiritual warfare ministry a lot is learned and tested by experience. This does not mean that our theology is built on experience. Our theology is built on Scripture. However, at some level all theology is informed by experience. No human can truthfully claim to be entirely free of the effects of their experience. In fact, the functional "worldview" that comprises our true, heart-level beliefs about life is largely formed before we are old enough to know what a worldview is. Not long ago I read that the average child has a fully functioning worldview developed by the age of five. Our worldview is shaped far more by the relational and cultural patterns of our experience than it is by reason, logic and words.

Worldview is more a product of the processes that focus our attention on some things rather than others without drawing any attention to themselves and the values that guide our relationships and awareness. This interpretation of our experiences and observations frames our innate sense of "the way things really are" and "the way things really work."

Our worldview with its presuppositions and assumptions about life forms a filter through which we read the Bible and interpret experience. Most pastors and theologians who have been raised and trained in Western cultures don't realize how thoroughly the scientific worldview has impacted them. Their worldview lenses often keep them from recognizing the spiritual warfare around them for what it is, because it gets explained as something else.

In the first century there was one group who had their theological system established and no experience was allowed to challenge it. They were the Pharisees. There was no room in their theological framework for their

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experience of Jesus and the kind of things He was doing. However, their experience of Jesus was meant to challenge their theology and drive them back to the Scriptures to re-examine their old model and develop a new model.

At the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15), Peter appealed to his experience with Cornelius as confirmation of his interpretation of Scripture which said that the church needed to include Gentiles. Several times in Acts Paul appealed to his experience on the Damascus Road to validate his ministry. In his letter to the Galatians he appealed to his own experience of divine revelation as the foundation of his authority. He also appealed to the church's experience of receiving the Holy Spirit in response to faith rather than works as confirmation of his message of justification by grace alone.

When it comes to the question of whether or not a Christian can have a demon, there is no Scripture that says it cannot happen, and there are biblical models that describe how it can occur (such as the temple model described in Ezekiel and Nehemiah). The New Testament authors describe the possibility of Christians giving "ground" to the devil (Ephesians 4:27), of needing to take thoughts captive and tear down strongholds (2 Corinthians 10:5), and of falling into the "snare of the devil" (2 Timothy 2:25). We are warned to "be alert," "stand firm," resist," "watch and pray," and to "put on the whole armor of God." Such Scriptures suggest that Christians are in a very real war with an enemy that wants to destroy them. We are warned to be on guard and to be prepared for conflict with the devil. We are warned that it is possible to give him ground and fall into his snares. We are told to resist him.

The idea that Christians have immunity from demonic oppression is never taught in Scripture. Rather, we are taught the basis of our victory over the devil and encouraged to use the weapons of our warfare to fight against him. With this Scriptural background, we have a foundation for dealing with those situations in which Christians have indeed found themselves losing their battle with the enemy. Add to this the experiences of a

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growing number of evangelicals who have found freedom from spiritual bondage through the application of spiritual warfare principles such as those taught in this book, and the evidence becomes overwhelming.

Most people who reject the idea that Christians can be demonized have either had negative experiences with people misapplying warfare principles or they have had no experience at all. Unfortunately, I know of many cases of people who have given spiritual warfare ministry a bad name by the silly and sometimes damaging things they have done while attempting to do “deliverance.” Too often, these people do not have a biblically-balanced approach to warfare and they do not learn how to test the spirits. Therefore, they get caught up in all sorts of practices that are themselves occult in nature or simply foolish.

On the other hand, I know of many pastors who began their ministries by denying that Christians could be demonized and arguing strenuously against people like Mark Bubeck, Fred Dickason, Tim Warner, and Neil Anderson. Yet many of these same pastors now embrace the teachings of such Bible teachers, because they have had first hand experiences of seeing family members and close personal friends set free. It is easier to reject this teaching when you are not faced with a demonized colleague or family member who desperately needs your help.

One of the reasons that some people have so few experiences with demonic encounters is that they lack the worldview lenses to recognize what they are seeing. Their approach to the Bible and to Christianity is more Western than they realize. They have been trained to see natural explanations first, and to consider supernatural explanations only as a last resort.

It would seem reasonable to say that the best theological system is the one that is rooted in Scripture and confirmed by experience. This is what we have tried to do at Deeper Walk. Our study and our experience have led us to the conclusion that Christians can be demonized and may need

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to go through “deliverance” from these demons. There have been many who have opposed this teaching, but after thousands of cases of Christians experiencing deliverance from the demonic and a solid biblical explanation for what is happening, perhaps it is time to turn the page on this debate and get focused on equipping ministry leaders to help people in a biblically-balanced way.

Throughout history medical breakthroughs capable of helping millions often met with resistance from the establishment. Louis Pasteur’s theory of bacteria and germ based disease was widely condemned as “junk science” by his peers. He was condemned as a fraud and a menace to “true” science. But within a generation his new, “heretical” ideas had become standard practice. It is time for seminaries and Bible colleges around the country to realize what a wonderful resource this type of ministry has to offer and get on the leading edge of preparing its pastors and leaders to engage in spiritual warfare ministry with solid, biblically-anchored training that will enable them to approach this area of ministry with competence and understanding.