

# **SPIRITUAL WARFARE** **BLOGS I**

Blogs from Spiritual Warfare Handbook and Spiritual Warfare in the Bible

BLOGS 1-138



**CtO Rev. Dr. JERRY SCHMOYER**

**Christian Training Organization**

[jerry@ChristianTrainingOrganization.org](mailto:jerry@ChristianTrainingOrganization.org)

[ChristianTrainingOnline.org](http://ChristianTrainingOnline.org)

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# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

## **BOOK I**

- Spiritual Warfare Handbook Blogs (44) (Book I)
- Spiritual Warfare Bible Blogs – Old Testament (18)
- Spiritual Warfare Bible Blogs – Life of Jesus (33)
- Spiritual Warfare Bible Blogs – New Testament (38)

## **BOOK II**

- Spiritual Warfare in India Blogs (14)
- Armor of God Blogs (12)
- Caleb – Standing on the Promises Blogs (5)
- Fasting Blogs (5)
- Fruit of the Spirit Blogs (12)
- Joshua, The Battle Belongs to the Lord Blogs (8)
- Joshua, Winning Your Battles Blogs (12)
- Spiritual Warfare Lessons Blogs (6)
- Listening to God Blogs (26)
- Lord's Prayer Blogs (37)

## **BOOK III**

- Names of God Blogs (18)
- Names of Jesus Blogs (11)
- Principles of Spiritual Warfare Praying (3)
- Samson and Male Sexuality Blogs (20)
- Spiritual Growth Blogs (6)
- Spiritual Warfare in Church History (20)
- Steps to Deliverance (15)
- Spiritual Warfare Blogs 2018 (

## **INDEX of all subjects at end of book**

- Subject Index**
- Scripture Index**
- Prayer Index**

# **SPIRITUAL WARFARE HANDBOOK BLOGS**

## **BLOG 1: SO YOU'RE IN A WAR!**

One day a young man was out for a walk. As he went along the street he saw a sign that invited him to sign up to see the world for free. Food, lodging, everything would be provided. In fact, he would be paid a salary, too. It sounded fine, too fine to pass up. So he went in and signed his name. To his surprise he was handed a rifle and military equipment. He soon found out there was a whole army of soldiers who now were his enemy and whose sworn purpose was to destroy him. It wasn't what he expected.

There are many Christians today who, when they accepted Jesus as Savior, were surprised to find they, too had an enemy. Perhaps they expected life to be perfect and fine, all settled with no more problems. Salvation, though, doesn't end the battle. In many ways it is just the start of it!

You see, when you accept Jesus as your Savior you also accept Satan as your enemy! You deserted Satan's army to join his enemy's army, God's army. He opposes God, but can only get at God by attacking His people -- you and me!

So now you find yourself in the middle of a war you didn't want, don't like, can't understand, and seem unable to win. What do you do? Where can you find a quick training program for spiritual warfare? Read on, this information is for YOU...

Actually, this idea of war following salvation is nothing new. We see the same thing happening to the Jews in the Old Testament. Satan has been opposing God from the beginning, but getting nowhere. When he started attacking God through His creatures he made much more progress. First there was Adam and Eve in Eden, then Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. God's people ended up in Egyptian slavery for 400 years until God delivered them. He did it all: provided the innocent blood and the power to protect them from the angel of death as well as deliver them unharmed through the Red Sea. They did nothing but accept His salvation. Then the battles started for them: the Amalekites attacked, then the Canaanites, and on it went. The Jews had to learn to fight. When they learned to fight behind their leader Joshua ("Jesus" in Greek) they conquered and settled the land God had meant all along for them to have. When we learn to fight behind our general, Jesus, we, too, can have victory in life.

First of all, what are the weapons this enemy uses against you? The Bible says they are three-fold, "the world the flesh and the devil." The world refers to the organized system of ideas, people, activities, purposes, goals, motives, priorities and values that are based on Satan's system (I John 2:15; John 15:19). The "world" does not refer to nature, but to Satan's substitute for God's way. Peer pressure, rejection, persecution, problems getting along with people, pride, desire for popularity and success, etc., all these things are ways Satan attacks us through the world (Matthew 4:8-10; 12:26).

While these attacks are from without, we also have an enemy within -- our own flesh. By 'flesh' we mean our old sin nature, that tendency in us to be naturally self-centered, sinful, prideful, willful and immature (Romans 7:15-25; Galatians 5:19-20). Even the 'good' we do in the flesh is like filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). This results in our sinning. Sin is thinking or doing wrong things, doing good things for the wrong reason/motive, or not doing good things that should be done. Temptations to worry, fear, get angry, be greedy, fulfill our lusts, think only of ourselves, feel self-sufficient or self-righteous, be jealous, gossip or criticize, etc. come from or through the flesh (Ephesians 4:22-27)

Christians, though, often ignore the third direction the attacks come from, today. Satan himself attacks us. We need to know how to counter these attacks as well. Paul tells us to make sure we

aren't ignorant of Satan's devices (2 Corinthians 2:5-11). We are to understand and use these resources which He has provided.

The Bible commands us to use spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:10-12; 2 Corinthians 2:11; Luke 14:31). Jesus Himself is our example. Jesus talked about Satan & demons more than anyone in Bible. He cast out demons. He taught and commanded His disciples to fight Satan and cast out demons (Matthew 10:8; Luke 10:1, 17-20). He was disappointed when they were unable to deliver a demonized boy without Him (Mark 9:14-29). The religious rulers accused Jesus (Mark 3:22) and John the Baptizer (Luke 7:33) of being demonized.

The good news, no, make that GREAT news, is that we have victory through Jesus. The next blogs will help show how to attain it.

***Ephesians 6:10-12 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.***

***2 Corinthians 2:11 in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.***

*Are you aware of how the world, the flesh and Satan attack you? If you aren't sensitive to where you are vulnerable you will be an easier target.*

*How can you better minister when you see your ministry as under attack by the world, the flesh and Satan?*

*How aware are you of spiritual warfare? What causes most of the battles in your life? Have you been winning or losing them? Pray and ask God to help you learn how to fight and win your spiritual battles.*

## **BLOG 2: IS SPIRITUAL WARFARE REALLY NECESSARY?**

There are those today who say Christians aren't to get involved in spiritual warfare, but instead we are to just trust God and think only of Him. While God is always to be our only focus, He has given us tools to use to bring victory in this area. He has provided medical knowledge for us to use in the physical realm. He has also provided spiritual knowledge to help us in the spiritual realm. Paul tells us to make sure we aren't ignorant of Satan's devices (2 Corinthians 2:5-11). We are to understand and use these resources which He has provided. I believe God commands us to be involved in spiritual warfare (1 Timothy 6:12). Here are some reasons:

### **1. THE BIBLE COMMANDS US TO USE SPIRITUAL WARFARE**

*"Our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against principalities, etc." Ephesians 6:10-12*

*"We are not ignorant of Satan's devices" 2 Corinthians 2:11*

*We are to understand our enemy before battling him (count the cost) Luke 14:31*

*Armor in Ephesians 5 - why would we be given armor if there wasn't a spiritual battle going on?*

**IF GOD IS SOVEREIGN, WHY DO WE NEED TO FIGHT SATAN?** If God is sovereign, why do we need to witness, pray, believe, work for our money, drive carefully, go to a doctor, or any of those things? If we trust in God, why lock doors at night? There are some things God expects us to do, in His strength. By doing these we learn to trust Him more. The Jews were given the land of Canaan but had to learn to fight to live in it. We praise Him more when we see His provision, might and deliverance. We are better able to pray for and give guidance to others. Also, we see the awfulness

of sin and its consequences so we can better turn from it. We see His glory as He uses us for victory. Others see it and He is glorified in their sight.

**2. JESUS USED SPIRITUAL WARFARE** Jesus talked about Satan & demons more than anyone in Bible. He cast out demons. He taught and commanded His disciples to fight Satan and cast out demons (Matthew 10:8; Luke 10:1, 17-20). He was disappointed when they were unable to deliver a demonized boy without Him (Mark 9:14-29). The religious rulers accused Jesus (Mark 3:22) and John the Baptizer (Luke 7:33) of being demonized.

### **3. EXAMPLES OF OTHERS WHO USED SPIRITUAL WARFARE**

DANIEL prayed spiritual warfare prayer for three weeks (Daniel 10:2-6,12-14).

JEREMIAH's whole ministry was one of spiritual warfare.

PAUL was twice involved in casting out demons (Acts 13:6-12; 16:16-18) and writes much about spiritual warfare (Ephesians 4:26-27; 6:10-13; Galatians 2:10, 13; etc.)

MOSES was challenged by Satanic forces (Jannes & Jambres, Exodus 7:1-11, etc.).

Many examples in church history show the involvement of God's people in spiritual warfare.

**4. PERSONAL EXPERIENCE SUPPORTS SPIRITUAL WARFARE** The testimony of many who have been involved in spiritual warfare support and validate its importance as an important tool for Christians today. It is not our only tool, for different tools are needed for different jobs. Spiritual warfare is one tool among many (prayer, witnessing, counseling, praising, etc.) that God gives us to use at the proper time.

**5. LAST DAYS EMPHASIS OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE** The closer the rapture comes the more spiritual warfare will increase. There will be MUCH of it in the tribulation as Satan's forces are released. As the days until Jesus' return grows fewer and fewer it is all the more important we learn how to wage spiritual warfare and win.

We Are in a battle if we want to be or not. Having deserted Satan's army to join God's army means we must fight. D.L. Moody put it this way: "When I was converted, I made this mistake: I thought the battle was already mine, the victory already won, the crown already in my grasp. I thought the old things had passed away, that all things had become new, and that my old corrupt nature, the old life, was gone. But I found out, after serving Christ for a few months, that conversion was only like enlisting in the army--that there was a battle on hand."

The good news is that we don't fight alone. We have God's angels fighting for us and God Himself on our side. We'll talk about that in the next blog.

### **BLOG 3: SPIRITUAL WARFARE: THE GOOD GUYS**

We have been talking about spiritual warfare. We fight on the side of God. **GOD IS OUR COMMANDER.** Everything starts with God. Everything came from Him. God is our commander in spiritual warfare as well as in every area of life.

While God is our commander, **ANGELS ARE OUR HELPERS.** God created the angels before the world was created (Job 38:6-7), the same time He planned to create each one of us (and already knew us in His mind). He created an "innumerable" number of angels (Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 5:11). No angels have been created or destroyed since then. The number is exactly the same. People who die do NOT become angels; in eternity we have a position greater than the angels will have (1 Corinthians 6:3).

God created angels and humans in His image in that we all have a mind to rationally think and reason (1 Peter 1:12), emotions to feel and experience (Luke 2:13), and a free will to choose our

destiny (Jude 6). This is **personality**. Soon after creation, the top angel (Lucifer, now called Satan Ezekiel 28:12-15) used his free will to rebel against God (2 Thessalonians 2:4) and as a result was kicked out of heaven (Isaiah 14:12-15, Ezekiel 28:15-17; Luke 10:18). The angels then had a one-time choice to follow Satan or God. About one third (Revelation 12:4) followed Satan in his rebellion and also lost their first position, now being called demons. This was the only time angels ever had an opportunity to exercise their free will. They are now 'locked in' and cannot change their state (angels cannot fall to becoming demons, demons cannot move up to being angels). Angels do not know what it is to experience God's grace in their lives. That is why they are so interested in watching us as we talk and live (1 Peter 1:12) for our lives show God's grace and love in operation in a way they don't personally experience. They are impressed with God and His undeserved mercy on us. They are amazed at His special love for us, unworthy as we are.

As to their **nature**, angels are spirit beings. They are not like God in that they do not know everything. They are limited to being at one place at a time. They are not all powerful or all knowing (Psalms 103:20; 2 Thessalonians 1:7). They have no physical body, but sometimes do appear in the form of a person (Hebrews 13:1). This is to help God's people in need. Some have wings to show power and glory, but not all have wings. While possessing all the traits we would call 'masculine' and 'feminine,' angels are always referred to as masculine. Male pronouns are always used. Angels are different, just like people are different: different abilities and functions in God's service, different traits and skills. Angels can't and don't reproduce (Mt 22:30; Mk 12:25), although it does seem that demons somehow impregnated women before the flood in Noah's day (Genesis 6:1-4). Angels never die (Luke 20:36).

Angels (and also demons) are **organized** in a military-like fashion with generals, colonels, lieutenants, sergeants, privates, etc. They are called archangels, princes, rulers, seraphim, etc. (Romans 8:38; Ephesians 3:10; 6:12; Colossians 1:16; 2:5). Some have leadership over geographical areas, others over groups of people (as Michael the archangel cares for Israel).

Apparently, there are different kinds of angels with different characteristics and roles: cherubim, seraphim, and archangels. Seraphim (Isaiah 6:2-3; Ezekiel 1:27) have a fiery appearance because they are usually associated with the Presence of God. Cherubim (Genesis 3:24; Exodus 25:18-22; Hebrews 9:5) are represented with wings, feet, hands and often more than one face (Ezekiel 41:18; 10:21). They guard sacred things (the tree of life in Genesis 3:24; the Ark of the Covenant in 1 Samuel 4:4). Archangels are the highest created beings, angels of the greatest power and majesty. Lucifer (Isaiah 14:12) was an archangel. Michael (1 Thessalonians 4:16; Jude 9) and Gabriel (Daniel 8:15-26; 9:21-27; Luke 1:11-38). Michael and Gabriel are warrior angels (Revelation 12:7) who do battle (Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1). Gabriel seems to be in charge of the care of the Jews. Other angels exist in various levels of authority and function under these (Ephesians 6:12). God has angels organized in a military-like manner with a chain-of-command from 'generals' to 'privates.'

The Greek word for 'angel' ('angelos') means, "messenger." Actually the word is just transliterated in our Bibles (English letters replace Greek letters but the word is the same). Were it translated into English we would have the word "messenger" every time 'angel' appears. That is basically their **function** -- messengers (servants) of God. They are God's servants who help God's people (Hebrews 1:14). Individual angels seem assigned to children and believers (Acts 12:12) to help them in special ways. God could use His sovereign power to do things such as prevent an automobile accident or have a child fall safely and not be hurt, or similar actions, but usually He has His angels do that work. They protect God's people (Psalm 34:7; 91:12; Matthew 18:10). They bring answers to prayers (Acts 12:7), although sometimes demons oppose them and the answers are delayed (Dan. 10:10-21). They minister to our physical, spiritual and emotional needs (Hebrews 1:14). Angels watch and learn from believers (I Cor. 4:9; I Tim 5:2). They encourage us in danger (Acts 27:23-24). They even help in evangelism (Luke 15:10; Acts 8:26). They care for God's people

when they die (Luke 16:22; Jude 9). They fight against demons (Revelation 12). They watch God's children to learn about God's grace (I Peter 1:12).

**If angels are our helpers, what is our relationship to them?** Angels are not to be communicated with, ordered around, or in any way contacted by us. They do not steal any of God's glory. We aren't in any way to focus on them or worship them (Revelation 19:10). All the credit and glory all go to Him (Revelation 4:11; 5:9-11). All the attention is His. In the Bible when someone tried to give them credit they passed it on to God. We aren't to communicate with them, but we can ask God to send them to do various things that need doing. And yes, they do manifest at times. There are many cases in the Bible. Sometimes they manifest as spiritual beings. I think young children can see or sense them quite more readily than adults. They also manifest as people and help us without us knowing they are angels. Hebrews 13:2 talks about this. Angels are always present around us, especially when we gather with other believers in Jesus' name. However we never can see them unless God opens our eyes in a special way (II Kings 6:17). It's quite likely you have seen angels, but in appearance as people (Hebrews 13:2) and therefore not recognized as an angel. That stranger who just happens to show up at the right time to provide help or assistance, whom we called an 'angel,' might well have been one!

*How does it make you feel to think that there are always angels around you, protecting and guiding you? Has there ever been a time when you suspected an angel helped you in some way? Don't worship angels; they are God's servants just as we are. But thank God for them and all the unknown things they do for us.*

#### **BLOG 4: SPIRITUAL WARFARE: THE BAD GUYS - SATAN**

The truth about Satan is that he was created as an angel. He was the top ranking of all God's angels, the highest created being God ever made (Ezekiel 28:12-15). Known as Lucifer, he was the highest angelic creation, the closest to the throne of God. However he didn't want to serve God but wanted to be worshipped in place of God (II Thessalonians 2:4). His sin was self-centeredness: pride (Isaiah 14:12-15) therefore God threw him out of heaven (Isaiah 14:12; Ezekiel 28:15-17; Luke 10:18). He lost all his position and privilege. With that rebellion of his sin entered the universe.

Satan has great power (Ephesians 6:12; 1:21; Revelation 9:3,10; Acts 26:18; 1 Corinthians 15:24; Colossians 1:16; 2:10,15). He has the power of death (Hebrews 2:14; Luke 11:21-22) but can only use it as God permits (Job 1 and 2). He uses traps and schemes (Ephesians 6:11-12) and lies and deceives (John 8:44). He devours like a lion (1 Peter 5:8).

His power is inferior to Jesus' power, though (Colossians 1:16; 2:10,15). He can only be one place at a time (Daniel 9:21; 10:12-14, 20; Luke 8:33). He is not sovereign [total and absolute authority over everything and everyone] (2 Corinthians 12:7), not omnipotent [all powerful] (1 John 4:4), not omniscient [all knowing] (2 Peter 1:11-12) and not omnipresent [everywhere at once] (Daniel 9:21). He cannot act against us without God's permission and God limits what he can do (Job 1:12).

We must always remember that Satan is a defeat foe. He was cast out of his original position in heaven because of pride (Ezekiel 28:16; Luke 10:18; Isaiah 14:12). His judgment was pronounced in Eden (Genesis 3:14-15). He was defeated by the cross (John 12:31). He will be cast to the earth in the tribulation (Revelation 9:1; 12:7-12), bound during the Millennium (Revelation 20:1-3) and then cast into the lake of burning sulfur forever (Revelation 20:7-10; Isaiah 27:1; 40:23-24; 2 Thessalonians 2:8)

Satan's **purpose** or goal is to rule the whole world instead of God. He was given authority over this world system by Adam when he sinned (2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2) and controls our world system (1 John 5:19). He rules over it (Matthew 4:8-9; John 12:31; Luke 4:5-7; John 14:30;

16:11). He is behind its values and world view (James 3:15). Presently he works to deceive the nations (Daniel 10:13,20; Matthew 4:8; Ephesians 6:12; Revelation 20:3,7-8; 16:14; I Kings 22:6-7). He leads mankind into idolatry (Psalm 96:5; 106:36-38; Leviticus 17:7; Deuteronomy 32:17). He especially wants to destroy God's special people: Israel (Revelation 12:13-17; 20:10; 2 Thessalonians 2:9) and the Church.

He **works against** the gospel, hardening hearts to God's truth (Matthew 13:19-22). He blinds their minds (2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-10; Luke 8:12; Colossians 2:18). When they hear the truth Satan tries to snatch it from their minds (Mark 4:15; Matthew 13:19).

He denies the truth (Genesis 3:1; 2 Timothy 4:3-4) and promotes false teaching (1 Timothy 4:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 2:9). As is true of any good counterfeiter, he tries to make his deceptions as close to the truth as possible so as to deceive more. The authority of the Scriptures, the person and work of Jesus and salvation by grace are areas he especially tries to obscure so make sure anything you believe has these at its heart and core.

Satan brings oppression on all he can. He does this through sickness such as dumbness (Mark 9:17-29), blindness (Matthew 12:22), deformity (Luke 13:11-17), epilepsy (Luke 9:37-43) and other ways. He also uses the following to oppress: mental illness (Mark 5:1-20; 9:14-29; Luke 9:39), sin (Genesis 3:13-24; Ephesians 2:2), lawlessness (2 Corinthians 6:15) and death (Revelation 18:2; 9:13-18).

A primary objective of Satan is to **oppose God's work and God's people**. He oppresses and leads the persecution against the Jews (Revelation 12:13-17; 20:10; 2 Thessalonians 2:9). He works especially hard against believers, for we are the light in his darkness, the only threat on this work against his kingdom. Since he can no longer attack Jesus directly he does so indirectly by attacking His children. He accuses us before God (Job 1:6-21; 2 Corinthians 2:11; Revelation 12:9-10; Zechariah 3:1-2) but Jesus is our defense attorney, our Advocate when accused (1 John 2:1).

Satan does all he can to oppose and hinder our service to God (2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:18; 2 Corinthians 11:2-7; Zechariah 3:1; Matthew 13:19). He tries to infiltrate the church through false teaching (1 Timothy 4:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 2:9), false teachers (1 Timothy 4:1-3; 1 John 4:1; 2 Peter 2:1-2) and false 'Christians' (Matthew 13:38-40).

While not all temptation comes from Satan and demons, he certainly does all he can to entice us into sin (2 Corinthians 2:11; 1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Timothy 2:26) as he did when tempting Jesus. He will use our sin nature (James 1:14-15), the world system (1 John 2:15-16) or attack directly through demons (1 Corinthians 7:5). He can cause and use anger (Ephesians 4:27), pride (1 Timothy 3:6; 1 Chronicles 21:1; 1 Timothy 3:6), immorality (1 Corinthians 7:5), lies (Acts 5:1-3), doubting God's Word and goodness (Genesis 3:1-5; Luke 4:9-12), 'miracles' to deceive (Mark 4:8-9; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; 2 Thessalonians 2:3,9-11), hypocrisy (John 8:44; Acts 17:22), self-sufficiency (1 Chronicles 21:2:1-7), worry and fear (1 Peter 5:7-9; Hebrews 2:14; Psalm 23:4), lack of faith (Luke 22:31-32; 1 Peter 5:6-10), physical affliction (Job 1:6-22; 2:1-7; John 8:44; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Timothy 1:20) and sin of any kind (1 Thessalonians 3:5; Matthew 4:3; 1 Corinthians 10:19-21, 2 Corinthians 11:3,13-15; 1 John 3:8).

As powerful as he is, we must always remember that God is far greater than Satan (1 John 4:4).

*What comes to mind when you think of Satan? Do you fear him? There is no reason to, but respecting what he can do is wise. How does it affect you to know he has a plan to bring misery and destruction into your life? What are some of the tricks and lies he uses against you? Which are most successful? Pray and ask God for wisdom to understand Satan's attacks and for victory over them.*

## **BLOG 5: SPIRITUAL WARFARE: THE BAD GUYS - DEMONS**

**CREATION** When Satan rebelled and decided to oppose God instead of serving God; about a third of the angels joined him (Revelation 12:4). They, too, were cast out of heaven and lost their position and privilege. They are now called "demons." They, as all angels, have personality (mind, will, emotions) but no body. They are limited to being one place at a time and do not have all knowledge or power.

**CHARACTER** "Demon" means "destroyer." They are also called evil or unclean spirits, referring to the fact they don't have a physical body. They spread their sin and uncleanness any way they can. They are spiritual terrorists, trying to destroy the work of God's kingdom. As with human terrorists, no one is safe from them, they are deadly serious and have no softness or mercy. They serve Satan, who is their commander, and carry out his orders. They receive the worship given to idols or anything other than God (1 Corinthians 10:20).

**ORGANIZATION** Satan organizes his demons in the same manner God has angels organized - in a military-like structure. These are similar to generals, colonels, majors, lieutenants, sergeants, corporals, privates, etc. (Ephesians 6:12). Usually a "strong man" (or ruler) is assigned to a task, and he has lesser demons under his command to help in the work (Matthew 12:25-29; Daniel 10:2-6, 12-14). The names of these demons usually refer to their work ("Fear," "Anger," "Lust," "Pride," "Deception," etc.).

**POWER** Their power, too, though is limited for they are under Satan and he is under God (Job 1:12). They answer to God, as we see Satan do in the Book of Job. They are powerful but NOT omnipotent like God (John 10:21); they are exceedingly clever but NOT omniscient like God and know their eventual destiny (Matthew 8:29); and they are mobile but NOT omnipresent like God. Like Satan, they can only be one place at a time (Daniel 9:21; 10:12-14,20; Luke 8:33). They share the same fate as Satan. Some are already judged and are in chains awaiting coming judgment (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6; Revelation 9:14-15). Other demons have already been confined to the Abyss (Luke 8:31; Revelation 9:11). All will be sent to the lake of fire with Satan when he is sent there (Matthew 25:41). Satan and his forces are defeated foes, having given their all to destroy Jesus on the cross, but being beaten by Him instead (Hebrews 2:14-15; 1 Peter 3:18-22). When Jesus returns Satan and his demons will be cast into the lake of fire forever (Matthew 25:41; Rev 20:1-15).

**PERSONALITY** Demons are spirit beings (Hebrews 1:14) but can appear visibly as a person (Genesis 18:1-22; 9:1; Hebrews 13:2). They are unclean (Matthew 10:1; 1 Samuel 16:14; Mark 9:25; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; Revelation 16:13-14; 9:17-19), evil (Luke 7:21; Matthew 12:45), immoral (Genesis 6), wicked (Ephesians 6:12) and liars (1 John 4:6; 1 Kings 22:22-23). Their ability comes from Satan, who empowers and orders them to do all he can. They receive their power from Satan (Mark 5:1-18; Revelation 16:13-16).

**DUTIES AGAINST ALL** Demons carry out Satan's commands and wishes. After enticing Adam and Eve to sin and getting authority over the world from them, Satan and his forces have continued trying to keep worship from God and getting it for themselves. They blind the minds of unbelievers (2 Corinthians 4:4) and snatch the Word from their hearts (Luke 8:12). They do all they can to oppose God's work (Revelation 2:13). Since they can't attack God, they take their anger out on those who are God's -- His people (Jews and Christians today). Satan and his forces tempt Christians to lie (Acts 5:3), accuse and slander them before God (Rev 12:10), hinder our work (1 Thessalonians 2:18), do anything possible to defeat us (Ephesians 6:11-12), tempt to immorality (1 Corinthians 7:5) and incite persecution against us (Rev 2:10). They promote human wisdom (1 Corinthians 2:12; 2 Corinthians 11:4; 1 John 4:5-6). They influence and control the nations (Daniel 10:13,20; Ephesians 6:12) and mislead them so they can destroy them (Isaiah 9:14). It must always be kept in mind, however, that God is in sovereign control. They can do nothing without God's permission (Job 1:6-12).

**Physically** they can give superhuman strength (Mark 5:4); physically torment (Revelation 9:5,10), emotionally torment (1 Samuel 16:14-23); do miracles (Revelation 16:13-14; 13:12-15), inflict disease (Matthew 9:33; Luke 3:11,16), indwell people (Matthew 8:28-34) and indwell animals (Matthew 8:31-32).

**Emotionally** they torment (1 Samuel 16:14-23), cause fear (1 Samuel 18:12,15; 2 Corinthians 11:4; 2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 8:15; Job 4:14-15), cause anger (1 Samuel 18:10-11), cause jealousy (1 Samuel 18:10-15) and harden consciences (1 Timothy 4:2).

**Sexually** they cause immorality (Revelation 9:21-22; 2 Timothy 3:1-9; 1 Timothy 4:1-3) and cause all kinds of impurity (Zechariah 13:2).

**Mentally** they cause bondage (2 Corinthians 11:4), influence the mind (Genesis 3:15; Ephesians 6:10-20; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:13), control the mind (1 Corinthians 10:20; 2 Corinthians 4:4), and deceive, mislead and lie to people (1 Timothy 4:1,6; 1 Kings 22:22-23; 2 Chronicles 18:20-23).

**Religiously** they promote false doctrine (1 John 4:1-3; 1 Timothy 4:1; 1 Kings 22:22; Revelation 16:13), counterfeit the truth (2 Corinthians 10:20-21), promote hypocrisy (1 Timothy 4:2), promote legalism (1 Timothy 4:3), use false prophets and false teachers (1 John 4:1; 1 Kings 22:22-23; 2 Chronicles 18:20-23), use fortunetelling and occult practices (Acts 16:16-18) and promote idolatry while receiving the worship of idols (Leviticus 17:7; Deuteronomy 32:17; Psalm 106:37; Revelation 9:20; Hosea 4:10-12; 5:4; Acts 16:16; 1 Corinthians 10:20).

**DUTIES ESPECIALLY AGAINST BELIEVERS** They especially work against believers by frustrating and opposing God's perfect will (Acts 16:16-18), putting obstacles in the path of following God (1 Thessalonians 2:18; Romans 15:22), influencing believers to mislead other believers (Matthew 16:22-23.) and instigating things such as jealousy, pride and disunity (James 3:13-16). They seek to get believers to turn from God and living for Him (1 Timothy 4:1), they can cause physical torment (2 Corinthians 12:7), and they try to get us to operate by our own strength and ability (2 Timothy 3:5). All this work will intensify as the return of Jesus gets closer (1 Timothy 4:1).

Thank God for His great victory over Satan and the demons on the cross where their power was broken and their doom assured. Thank God for providing His angels to protect us and battle Satan's demons for us. Thank God for the power of His Holy Spirit within so we can be victorious over whatever the enemy tries to do to us!

*How does it make you feel to think that there are demons observing you, looking for weak spots, and trying to do anything they can to bring misery and defeat to you? Do not fear them, God is much greater, but respect what they can do to mislead you if you aren't alert. Staying close to Jesus is the only way for victory. If there is anything in your life that shouldn't be remove it, confess it as sin, promise to not return to it – demons can cause these things and use them to bring more defeat into your life.*

## **BLOG 6: SPIRITUAL WARFARE: LIES AND DECEPTION**

The most common avenue to demonic entrance is through a family line. When people open themselves to demonic influence, the demons claim them and all they have, including children. Then the same traits and influences pass on to the children and their children. Occult and Satanic involvement by activities, drugs, acid rock music, Ouija boards, etc. is another opening. Cult involvement in the family, especially Masons, opens one. The Bible says that when 2 people have sex the two become one flesh and that allows demons to claim the other person. Abuse of any kind or any form of trauma, especially when young, opens one to the demonic. Strong soul ties with someone involved can cause an opening. Being unwanted when in the womb or young is a definite

opening. These are some of the main avenues demons use to gain entrance and attack people. It's usually by lies and deception that we are trapped into these things.

Satan is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). Demons do this work for him (I Kings 22:22-23; II Chronicles 18:20-23). He is characterized by any kind of falsehood and deceit (I John 4:16) and is not above mixing in some truth to make the lies more quickly accepted. Like any good counterfeiter, he knows the importance of making his false product appear as much like God's original as possible. He is very good at lying and deception (Revelation 12:9) and even tries to make it seem like he is bringing light instead of darkness (II Corinthians 11:13-15).

In actuality all Satan's forces operate in the realm of darkness (fear, deception, blindness, confusion, hopelessness, depression, self-pity, anger, revenge, suicide, death, etc.) He blinds men to spiritual things (II Corinthians 4:4; I John 2:11). He hardens minds and hearts to spiritual things (II Corinthians 3:14; Ephesians 4:18; Romans 1:21). He does this to individuals as well as nations (i.e.: Israel Romans 11:7-10). His purpose is to keep men from God's light and salvation (II Corinthians 4:4). God's light is greater than Satan's darkness (Genesis 1:14-19; John 1:5-9; 3:19-20; 8:12; 9:5; Matthew 17:2; Ephesians 5:8; I John 1:5-7; Revelation 21:11,23-24; 22:5; Isaiah 60:1). Believers are in the light, not darkness (Acts 26:18; I Thessalonians 5:4-5; Colossians 1:12-13; John 8:12).

The epitome of darkness is death. Satan's plan for man is death, just as God's plan for man is life. Satan is a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44). His name, Abaddon or Apollyon means "Destroyer." He tries to destroy physical (John 8:44; Mark 9:20-22; I John 3:12) or spiritual (II Corinthians 4:4) life. Satan has power to bring death (Job 1:19; Luke 11:21-22; Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 9:14-16), but because the power of death was destroyed at the cross (Hebrews 2:14-15) he cannot use that power without God's permission (Job 2:6; Revelation 9:4). Satan cannot separate us from God, even by death (Romans 8:38).

**OVERCOMING SATAN & HIS FORCES** God is greater than Satan and his forces (I John 4:4), so we need not fear them (Luke 10:17-19). We must humbly depend on God's strength, not our own (James 4:6-7; 5:16). Admit sin and open spots that Satan uses in your life (Psalm 32:5; 139:23-24), and confess any sin (I John 1:9). Accept God's forgiveness and, with His help, turn from the sin (Amos 3:3; Ezekiel 20:43). In prayer claim back any openings Satan is using in your life (Acts 19:18-19; Matt 3:7-8). Cover yourself with the armor of God each day (Ephesians 6:10-18). Stay in the Scriptures (Psalm 1:1-3). The Word is a mirror (James 1:22-25) a lamp (Psalm 119:105) a cleanser (Ephesians 5:25-26) a sword (Hebrews 4:12) and food (I Peter 2:2; Matthew 4:4). Use it for all these. Develop a life of continuous praise & prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Stay in close fellowship with other believers (Hebrews 13:5). Commit yourself to totally follow God (Ephesians 6:16).

*What are some of the most common and successful lies (untruths) that Satan uses against people today? What lies about God or His love for you (or lack of it) are you most apt to believe? How does Satan try to deceive you into sin or disobedience? Pray and ask God to help you recognize the lies and deceptions of the enemy in your life. Be extra alert for them today.*

## **BLOG 7: DEMONIZING DEFINED**

The Greek word δαιμονιζομαι ("demonizing") refers to one who is heavily impacted by demons. It is used 15 times in the New Testament. It does not differentiate between possession (demons within) and influence (demons without). If God doesn't make that clarification or distinction, I don't think it's something we need to make, either. In the spiritual realm there are no clear-cut divisions like we try to make (demons 'within' or 'without', etc.). There are, of course, degrees of demonizing depending on the person, the demons involved, the access, etc., but it isn't always possible or necessary to pinpoint these things. The common denominator is that the person being demonized usually doesn't separate his or her own consciousness from the demonic influence. The

thoughts and feelings the demon feeds them they assume are their own. A person always has a free will to turn to God for help, but when followed these impulses bring one deeper and deeper into bondage.

Perhaps demonizing can be better understood by thinking of it as a kind of spiritual hypnotism from within. Hypnotism of any kind is something for God's people to avoid (Psalm 54:4-5; Joshua 1:8; Philippians 4:8).

We don't need to know the exact extent of demonizing, just that it is taking place. The cause is the same, and so is the cure. We will use the broad term 'demonizing' as the Bible does, referring to the whole spectrum of demonic influence/possession. Other words the Bible uses for the same thing are "entered in" (as when Satan entered into Judas - John 13:27) and "filled" (the same word that is used of believers being filled with the Holy Spirit - Acts 5:5 about Ananias and Saphira).

**CAN A BELIEVER BE DEMONIZED?** While all Christians agree that unbelievers can be demonized, some don't believe that can happen to believers. Demonizing speaks of influence, not ownership. A believer still has a free will to give soul access to demons, as do unbelievers. His spirit belongs only to God, but it is up to us to allow God's spirit to control or not.

The Bible makes no distinction between believers and unbelievers as far as demonizing is concerned. In fact, the Bible refers to many believers who were demonized: Paul's thorn in the flesh was a demon (2 Corinthians 12:7), King Saul was a believer (1 Samuel 11:6) and was obviously demonized (1 Samuel 16:14-23), David was motivated by Satan to take a census of the people (I Chronicles 21:1ff; II Samuel 24:1ff), Ananias and Saphira were believers (Acts 4:32-35) but allowed Satan to "fill" them (Acts 5:3), and Peter was Satan's spokesman in tempting Jesus to not go to the cross (Matthew 16:23). Paul warns believers to not give Satan a "foothold" in their life (Ephesians 4:26-27), showing such a thing is possible. Jesus Himself called deliverance "the children's bread" (Matthew 15:22-28), meaning it was for His children. A Christian can receive another spirit (2 Corinthians 11:2-4) and there are examples of believers being demonized (Luke 13:10-16; 1 Corinthians 5:4, 5). Christians are warned to guard against this (1 Peter 5:8-9; Ephesians 6:10-18).

A believer belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. Satan cannot own him as he did before salvation (I John 4:4), but he can still demonize ('possessed' or 'oppressed'). But can a believer be 'possessed'? To answer that then 'possessed' must be defined. The Bible simply does not define it, not does it even talk about 'possession' – just 'demonizing' which means being influenced by a demon. No one would doubt this happens to believers.

As long as we are in this body we still have a sin nature, a capacity to sin just the same as we did before salvation. Salvation creates a new spiritual nature within us. But the old capacity to sin still remains in us. It is in this area, this sin nature, this capacity to sin, that demons work. Our new nature is greater but doesn't take away our free will choice to still function in our sin nature. Paul's struggle as recorded in Romans 7 describes this well.

A Christian has every right and resource to be free from this demonizing, however. Property which you own can be trespassed on by another person, but you have every right and resource to put him off your property. You just need to learn how to do it. Keep reading these blogs and you will learn how to be free as well as helping others find freedom, too.

*Demonizing is not something to fear for God is greater and much more powerful. He alone brings victory and deliverance. Pray for His wisdom, His protection, and for you to be committed to Him and Him only.*

## **BLOG 8: THE BATTLE FOR OUR MINDS: TRUTH**

The majority of demonizing consists of demons putting thoughts into a person's mind or snatching thoughts out of a person's mind. While they don't have access to our minds and thoughts to the same extent that God does, the Bible makes it clear there is some access. Jesus said this in the sower and the seed: "*Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown.*" (Mark 4:15). David's thought to take a census was demonic (1 Chronicles 21:1ff; 2 Samuel 24:1ff). So was Ananias & Saphira's greed (Acts 5:3) and Saul's jealousy/anger (I Samuel 16:14-23). That's why, when talking about spiritual warfare, Paul says we are to "*bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.*" (2 Corinthians 10:4-5). Not only can Satan's forces put wrong thoughts into our minds, they can snatch right thoughts out of our minds (Mark 4:15) so we forget them.

Feelings and emotions are fine, important and necessary. They are icing on the cake of life. They add color and enjoyment to life. God created them for this purpose. But He didn't create them to be the source of our decision-making. Our feelings should be dependent on our rational thought. When our feelings get ahead of it or away from it then trouble comes. You know in your mind that you are an OK person, yet your emotions fear you will be rejected. When feelings aren't founded on the truth of the mind they go wrong. The truth is that you are a fine person, but your emotions reject that truth and try to do the 'thinking' themselves. I often tell people they need to **let their mind explain reality to their emotions**. When we feel our emotions are correct over our mind we err. One of the greatest needs of our emotions/feelings is security. This is closely related to love so we could say the core of our heart is love/security. Love must bring security but doesn't always do so. Other factors can contribute to our security as well.

**HOW CAN WE BE DECEIVED IF WE KNOW THE TRUTH?** Do you remember the children's story about the emperor's new clothes? Some crooks convinced him they were making fine garments which only the enlightened could see so he pretended to see them. Everyone else did also. Then in a parade a little boy spoke the truth and everyone realized they had been believing a lie and deceiving themselves. Satan deceives us into believing a lie. But how can we be deceived if we know the truth?

1. We can be demonized. Like a drunk is influenced by alcohol so we can be by demons.
2. We can prefer to be deceived because we don't want to face the truth or don't like the truth, so we convince ourselves that a lie is true. We start to really believe it because we want to.
3. We let our emotions run the show instead of our mind. When we let our feelings explain reality to our emotions (reacting out of fear for example) we replace the truth with deception.
4. Our mind can be deceived, too, when we use it as the final determining factor and think absolute truth comes from it. Without the anchor of God's Word to form our mind and correct our errors we can truly believe something based on the facts as we interpret them. But we may not be interpreting them correctly. However only God has all the facts and perfect insight, seeing the future as clearly as the past, so when we reject His truth we are open to any kind of deception.
5. Satan and demons tempt us to deception. Of course they don't 'sell' their product as a black lie, but make it look as appealing and good as possible. We sometimes fall for the bait.
6. Even aside from the enemy, our natural tendency to sin (sin nature) causes us to prefer sin for we are often more interested in what is easiest and most enjoyable now instead of what is best in the long run. Our 'flesh' desires instant gratification and we can 'want' something so much that we leave all reason and balance behind.

**RECOGNIZING TRUTH** How does your heart know truth? How do you know when your mate is telling the truth? It's not something you can explain or put into words. It's not something others who don't know your mate can tell, either. But you know them well enough to be able to read the subtleties and know what they are communicating. That takes time as a relationship grows. The more time one spends listening to God the better he knows what God is saying. The more you listen

to and follow the truth, the better your heart will recognize it. Really it is His Holy Spirit in us that speaks to our thoughts (and emotions as well). He promises to reveal His truth to us (John 16:13-15).

*In what ways is Satan successful in using your feelings and emotions to keep you from trusting and following God? How does He do this with other members of your family? Pray for God's truth to be plain in your mind, and pray for those around you who are deceived into going by their feelings.*

## **BLOG 9: THE BATTLE FOR OUR MINDS: OUR THOUGHTS**

Thoughts we don't have captive (aren't in control of) fall into two categories: **compulsions** and **obsessions**. A compulsion is a force that causes us to act against our inclinations. It comes from within but is not under our control and drives us to unpleasant behavior. These often take the form of a 'ritual' or tradition to be superstitiously followed. It can be an extremely detailed preoccupation with minor, every-day tasks or be a besetting sin we are unable to conquer. It feels like a force greater than self is driving the person.

An obsession is a thought which forces itself into conscious thought against our will (usually something unpleasant and/or sinful) and can't be dismissed by ones our free will.

Demons can and do cause **mental illness**: they can make a person be not in his 'right mind' (Mark 15:15), they can cause screaming and convulsions, foaming at the mouth (Luke 9:39), they can cause self-destructive thoughts and actions (Mark 9:22), they can make a person appear to be 'raving mad' (John 10:20), and they can cause immoral, anti-social behavior that makes the person seem not right mentally (Mark 5:15; Luke 8:35).

It cannot be said that all mental illness is demonic. Other factors are involved such as chemical imbalances, birth defects, damage from injury or drug usage, etc. However demonizing must always be considered until completely ruled out. One way to tell if it is demonic or not is the person's willingness to listen or talk about Jesus. If they fall asleep, change the subject constantly, don't seem to be hearing you, get violent, want to leave in a hurry, etc., you have good reason to suspect demons are involved.

One of the most severe psychological disorders is **schizophrenia**. In general it is characterized by a loss of interest in life, withdrawal and varying degrees of thought disorders. Among the symptoms most frequently observed are: secluding one's self and withdrawal from society, irritability, excessive daydreaming or preoccupation with thoughts and fantasies,

## **BLOG 10: THE BATTLE FOR OUR EMOTIONS: FEAR & ANGER**

Fear is one of Satan's biggest weapons. Demons are often behind and use fear (Romans 8:15). If it takes the form of insecurity, anxiety, worry, preoccupation with problems, or whatever, it is still fear. Demons put fear of David into Saul (I Samuel 18:10-15) and put fear and terror into Eliaphaz by gliding by his face (Job 4:15). Anything not of faith is sin (Romans 14:23). God does not give us fear (II Timothy 1:7; Romans 8:15), so if you experience fear realize it is not from God but from Satan. This doesn't mean it is always through demonizing, for you can be attacked with fear without being demonized.

**Fear** takes root when we choose to focus on circumstances instead of God. Peter walking on water is a good example. When his eyes were on Jesus his faith was strong, but when he looked at the waves they grew in his mind to be greater than Jesus' power and he started sinking. He did the right thing, though, and put his eyes back on Jesus.

Dream with me for a minute. Suppose as a young child you had a father who loved you more

than anything and constantly showed it. He was always there for you, always showing his love, enjoying you and laughing with you. Whatever you needed he was there to help and supply. How would that make you feel? What difference would it have made? There is something down deep inside all of us that would love to have someone we could trust, someone to take care of us, someone to always be there no matter what. Then we wouldn't need to be in control so we wouldn't fear. Control is a poor but often necessary substitute for love and trust. It may have been necessary in your past but isn't necessary anymore!

How can we understand trust, what it means and how it works? I think understanding how a family should work is the best answer. God established a family relationship to answer all those questions. He is the Father, we are the children. Do your children trust you? What do they have to do? What do you expect of them? It's exactly the same. Jesus says we are to be like little children in order to learn faith and trust. Let your children teach you. Put yourself in their position - with a Perfect Father.

#### **PRAYER TO HAVE VICTORY OVER FEAR**

Dear Heavenly Father, I place myself under your loving and protective care. I know that you are the only one I should fear, and that is in awe and respect. I confess that I have been fearful and anxious because of my lack of trust, my unbelief and believing the lies of the enemy. I have not always trusted You. Too often I have lived in fear and relied on my own strength and resources. I confess that as sin and thank You for Your forgiveness.

I know that you have not given me a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7). Therefore I turn from any fear in my life. I ask You to reveal to me all the areas where the sin of fear as affected me. Show me the lies I have believed and help me to believe Your truth instead. I desire to live in faith by the power of Your Holy Spirit. Fill me with Your presence and Your Spirit so I can follow You by faith. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**Anger** comes from mishandling hurt and pain. Instead of feeling it as hurt we turn it into anger. Demons are behind and use anger, too. They made Saul angry at David, so much so that he tried to kill David (I Samuel 18:10-11; 19:9-10). Paul says there is a very close connection between anger and demonizing (Ephesians 4:27).

As I said before, anger comes from pain and hurt that is buried inside. You can't bury something alive and think you are getting rid of it. The hurt must be dead - faced, admitted, healed, removed, forgiven. When a person buries hurt alive it keeps poisoning everything until it is dug out and destroyed.

While there is a legitimate use for anger ('righteous indignation') most of what we face is not right. Anger is a secondary emotion, unlike fear which is a basic emotion. Wrong anger is always the result of mishandling another, deeper emotional like fear or pain. Let's take pain, first of all. When a person hits their finger with a hammer what do they do? Usually they get angry. What they feel is pain, but it comes out as anger because anger is a much easier emotion to handle than pain. When someone says something critical or threatening it hurts, but the natural response in many is to get angry. That way they don't have to face the pain - but it stays and causes more and more anger. That's where fear comes in. It's not just pain that causes anger, but fear of pain. Fear is at the root of anger in other ways as well. To seek to manage our fears we try to control our lives and circumstances (thus the control emphasis part grows). We feel that is necessary to prevent pain and other things we fear. We use anger as a control tool. The adrenaline rush makes us feel in charge instead of a victim. We learn that people can be manipulated and controlled by our anger (or the threat of it) and we use that to control as well. This is another reason why it's important to deal with and get victory over the fears down inside. When they go the anger and control issues will become

much more manageable. A person can't stop their anger as long as what causes it is still inside pushing it out. They must get the root cause out, and that is where dealing with the fear comes in.

*What do you fear most? When you are most open to fear? Since fear is the opposite of faith, confess your fear to God and ask Him to forgive you of it. Ask Him to help you trust in Him and recognize when attacked by fear. Ask God to give you His peace instead.*

*Do you have a problem with anger? Confess that to God and ask Him to show you how Satan uses anger to defeat you. Be aware throughout the day of the very first start of fear in your mind and confess it. Ask God to give you His self-control instead.*

## **BLOG 11: EVIDENCE OF DEMONIZING**

Luke 8:26-39, the account of the Gadarene demoniac, clearly describes various symptoms of demonizing. There is nakedness (immodesty, immorality), self-destructive tendencies (even to suicide and death), supernatural strength, animalistic behavior, schizophrenia, mental illness, preoccupation with darkness and death (living in a graveyard), fits of rage, resistance to spiritual things, etc. The strong man (ruler) was "Legion", meaning he had many demons under his authority that are doing these various works.

Here is a list of some characteristics of demonizing. Other factors can contribute, and our free will allows us to do these sins in our flesh without and of Satan's help, but if you see several of these at work and recognize them as something you haven't been able to have victory over even though you have been doing your best to live for Jesus, then they most likely are symptoms of demonizing.

### **I. COMPULSIVE THOUGHTS**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Extremely low self-image (feel unworthy, unclean, no good, etc.) Luke 8:2
- \_\_\_\_\_ Constant confusion in thinking (especially about spiritual things), restlessness
- \_\_\_\_\_ Inability to believe spiritual truths which they hear or read
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mocking and blasphemous thoughts (esp. when hearing spiritual truths)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Perceptual distortions (thinking others are angry at you when they are not)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Repetitious dreams or nightmares (sexual, horror-filled, fearful, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Violent thoughts (of suicide, rape, murder, self-abuse, cutting, etc.)

### **II. COMPULSIVE FEELINGS**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Hatred and bitterness toward others for no justifiable reason
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tremendous hostility, fear, restlessness when challenged about demonizing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Deep depression and despondence (frequent and long)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Irrational fears, panic, and phobias (Rom. 8:15 Luke 9:39)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Irrational anger or rage (Mt. 8:28)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Irrational guilt and extreme self-condemnation, not forgiving self

### **III. COMPULSIVE BEHAVIOR**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Desire to do right but inability to carry it out
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sudden personality & attitude changes (like, and then hate someone)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Strong aversion to Scripture reading & prayer
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lying compulsively, then often wondering why (Acts 5:3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Stealing compulsively, if you need the thing or not
- \_\_\_\_\_ Drinking or using drugs (prescription or not) compulsively, if you really desire to or not
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eating compulsively (or reverse, bulimia or anorexia nervosa)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sexual sins that are compulsive (especially perversions) Matthew 15:5 Luke 8:27
- \_\_\_\_\_ Irrational, inappropriate laughter
- \_\_\_\_\_ Irrational violence (compulsion to hurt self or someone else) Mt. 17:15; Mk. 5:5; Lk 9:39
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sudden speaking of a language not previously known
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reactions to the name and blood of Jesus (uncomfortable, move away, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uncontrollable cutting and mocking tongue and language
- \_\_\_\_\_ Vulgar language and actions (Luke. 4:33-34)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Uncontrollable greed, which drives you on (Acts 5:3)

#### IV. CONSCIOUSNESS PROBLEMS

- \_\_\_\_\_ Loss of time (little or a lot, not knowing how you got someplace what you did)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Extreme sleepiness around spiritual things (Bible study, prayer, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Demonstration of extraordinary abilities (ESP, telekinesis, out of body, disassociating)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Voices heard in the mind (mock, intimidate, accuse, threaten, bargaining)
- \_\_\_\_\_ A voice speaking from you refers to you in the third person ("he" "she")
- \_\_\_\_\_ Supernatural experiences (haunting, movement or disappearance of objects, etc.)

#### V. ABNORMAL MEDICAL PROBLEMS

- \_\_\_\_\_ Seizures (Mk. 1:26 Mk. 7:24-30 Mk. 17:15) (may or may not be demonic)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pain without justifiable explanation, problem doctors can't cure
- \_\_\_\_\_ Physical ailments alleviated by a spiritual command (epileptic seizure, asthma attack, headache, nausea, etc., which stops when commanded in Jesus' name to be gone)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sudden interference with bodily functions (buzzing in ears, irritability to speak or hear, increased hypersensitivity in hearing or touch, sudden chills, etc.)

*Do you find that many of these describe you? Do you see a pattern in your life that may be caused by demons? Don't fear them, this just shows what they have been doing. Remember God can and will set you free. These blogs will show you how. You can receive my book or contact me for help if you would like (see below).*

#### **BLOG 12: GENERATIONAL ATTACKS THROUGH YOUR FAMILY LINE**

Parents have a great effect on their children. This happens in two ways. One is by example and influence. Children learn sins from their parent's example and that gives opening to demonizing. The second way is when demons who have access to a parent claim access to the child, too. When

a demon has access to a person, he also claims right to all that person has, including their children. The Bible says God "punishes the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation" (Exodus 20:4-5; Deuteronomy 5:8-9; Exodus 34:6-7). The Bible says that children are affected by their parents sins (Ezekiel 18; 2) and this is one of the ways. In fact, this is one of the most common reasons people are demonized.

This is especially true of first born males, for Satan seeks to claim them just as God does (Exodus 34:20). If you notice some of the same problems in your life as in your siblings, parents, aunts, uncles, or grandparents it could very well be ancestral demonizing. The same demons have access to those in the family and do the same work in various members (not all members, that would be too obvious). They claim the blood line and use that as access. If you see some patterns in the symptoms or characteristics of demonizing that were covered previously in others in your family that could show ancestral access. That is why so often a boy who hates his father for beating his mother grows up to beat his own wife, or a child of an alcoholic becomes an alcoholic themselves. Generational bondage is often discerned by the sin patterns that repeat from generation to generation. It is not uncommon to observe generations of abuse, addiction, hatred, superstition and fear, pride, control and manipulation, rejection, sexual sins and perversions, aberrant religious beliefs, witchcraft, and rebellion etc.

If you notice some of the same problems in your life as in your siblings, parents, aunts, uncles, or grandparents it could very well be ancestral demonizing. The same demons have access to those in the family and do the same work in various members (not all members, that would be too obvious). They claim the blood line and use that as access. If you see some patterns in the symptoms or characteristics of demonizing that were covered previously in others in your family that could show ancestral access. That is why so often a boy who hates his father for beating his mother grows up to beat his own wife, or a child of an alcoholic becomes an alcoholic themselves.

A very, very common pattern is for the **first-born male** to be affect first and most by generational attacks. The first-born Jews were dedicated to God and so Satan tries to attack and claim them first, too. Often it is the first-born male in a family that is attacked spiritually.

Generational bondage can be broken by personally repenting of and confessing the sins of past generations. Claim the blood of Christ as stronger than your blood line and put that access under the blood of Jesus (Romans 5:15). Claim that you are a "new creation, old things have passed away, all things have become new" (II Corinthians 5:17). Ask God to turn curses into blessing (Deut. 23:5).

#### **PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE FROM GENERATIONAL BONDAGE**

"Gracious Father over all, I acknowledge before you the sins of my parents and ancestors. I know that they have sinned because all men and women are sinners. I know I cannot do what only they could have done in attaining forgiveness for their sins, but I am sorry for anything they have done in disobedience against you and I ask that you cover all of these with the blood of Jesus. Please do not hold their consequences against me or my descendants. I claim the finished work of Jesus Christ, Who bore all my sin upon Himself. In faith I accept that work on the basis of your holy Word. I reclaim any consent given to Satan's forces by my parents' sin. Dear Jesus, please set me free from all evil influences coming from my parents and ancestors in the name of Jesus. I know I am a new creation in Christ. Old things have gone and all things have become new. I take back any access any demons claim and in Jesus' name break any demonic working that has been passed on to me from my ancestors. As one who has been crucified and raised with Christ and who sits with him in heavenly places, I reject any and every way in which Satan may claim ownership of me. I declare myself and my descendants to be eternally and completely signed over and committed to only the Lord Jesus Christ. I now command every evil spirit and every enemy of the Lord Jesus Christ to be gone forever. I ask You, heavenly Father, to fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I submit my body as an

instrument of righteousness, a living sacrifice, that I may glorify You in every area of my life. All this I do in the name & authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

*What sin patterns do you see in your family? What do you struggle with that other family members struggle with, especially parents and grandparents? Seeing these patterns can help you know what to pray against. Use the prayer above and if I can help please write me (see below).*

### **BLOG 13: THE CURE FOR DEMONIZING – HOW TO BE FREE!**

Before anything can be said about how to bring about deliverance, there must be no doubt about whose power is in deliverance. It cannot be done in our own strength, we do not have any power to remove demonizing (Mark 9:14-18). In fact, we can cause more damage than good doing this in our strength and not Jesus' (Acts 19:13-20). Even Michael let God rebuke Satan and wouldn't do it himself (Jude 9). We must be strong in the power God gives us. Not our own. We can only be strong in Jesus' strength and power (Ephesians 6:10-18). We are strong "IN" Jesus (Ephesians 6:10-18), not just "from" Jesus. Strength only comes from a close personal relationship and dependence on Him. This is because Jesus has defeated Satan (Eph. 1:20-22; Philippians 2:9-11; Col. 2:15; Heb. 2:14; I John 3:8; Luke 4:18).

In Jesus we have both **power** (δυναμις *dunamis* - Luke 9:1; 24:49; Acts 1:8; 4:33; 6:8; Ephesians 1:18-23; Hebrews 2:14-15) and **authority** (εξουσια *exousia* - Luke 10:1,17-20; Matthew 10:1,8; Mark 3:15; 6:7; I John 4:4). Power comes from the Holy Spirit within (Acts 1:8), authority comes from our relationship as a child of Jesus (John 1:12). A policeman has both authority (badge) and power (gun or club). Both come from a source outside him, as do ours (Colossians 12:9-10). Satan also has power (Luke 10:19; I Corinthians 15:24; I Peter 3:22) and authority (Luke 4:6; Acts 26:10; I Corinthians 15:24; Ephesians 1:21; 2:2; 3:10; 6:12). Demons have these, also (Revelation 9:3,10,19; Colossians 1:16; 2:10; I Peter 3:22). God's power and authority is superior to that which Satan & the demons have. Men without Jesus do not have power or authority anywhere near to Satan and his demons, though.

In all areas it is **Jesus' strength**, not ours, that gives us victory (Philippians 4:13). God promises to give us power (II Timothy 1:7; II Thessalonians 3:2-3). God is faithful to keep His promise to strengthen us (Numbers 23:19; Philippians 1:4-6; Hebrews 10:22-23). Our part is to use His strength. We are to fight, but in His strength. We must put on the armor God provides and stand in His strength (Ephesians 6:10-18). We are promised what when we resist Satan in God's strength that Satan will flee (James 4:7; I Peter 5:8-9). Victory is assured when we fight in His might (I Corinthians 15:57; II Corinthians 2:14; I John 5:5). French Painter Emile Ranouf, in a painting called "A Helping Hand," depicted an old man dressed in fisherman's garb, seated in boat with little girl beside him. Both have hands on an oar. He is looking down fondly and admiringly at her. Apparently he has told her that she may assist him in rowing the boat, and she feels she is doing a great share of the task. It is easy to see it is his strong, muscular arm doing the work. That's how it is with us and Jesus! It's all by His grace!

Therefore we need not fear Satan or his forces (Joshua 1:9; 10:8; 23:9-11; Leviticus 26:8; Exodus 14:13; I Samuel 17:45-47; II Samuel 22:33-35, 40-41). They must have God's approval for all they do (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7; Luke 4:35). God protects His people (Luke 10:19; II Thessalonians 3:3; Revelation 9:4; I Samuel 18:10-11; 19:9-10). Nothing can get us away from God (Romans 8:38; John 10:29). When we ask, God will put a hedge around us or those we are praying for (Job 1:10; 3:23; Isaiah 5:5). God's power is greater than Satan's (Exodus 7:12; 8:18; I John 4:4).

**NO COMPROMISE WITH DEMONS** Like the boy in the checkout line- the more you give in to demonic demands the harder it will be to really say no and mean it. No one ever 'worked out some

sort of deal' with Satan and didn't regret it. It is motivated by fear and just makes things worse, giving the demons even more power in a person's life.

Instead, it's better to have some righteous indignation against what demons are doing. That is a healthy thing. Righteous indignation is the kind of anger you feel when a bully is hurting a smaller child. It's not a self-centered anger but one that says this isn't right! God gives us it to motivate us to take positive action against a wrong done against us or another.

*Do you understand the great power and authority that is yours in Jesus? If you aren't sure read the blog again. Ask God to help you grasp and use all that He has given you. Do not allow yourself to stay in defeat – victory is assured and help is available.*

## **BLOG 14: SPIRITUAL WARFARE: STEPS TO DELIVERANCE 1**

How are we to have victory over the demonic? How are we to get free from demonizing? The key is to follow Jesus' example.

### **AS JESUS DID IT**

Jesus is our **example** in casting out demons. At the start of His ministry He cast out many demons (Matthew 4:23-24; Mark 1:39,34). In the Gadarenes He cast demons out of two men (Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-17; Luke 8:20). He cast demons out of the daughter of a Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:21 Mark 7:20), and cured a demonized man (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-36). He healed a boy with seizures and demons (Matthew 17:14-20). He cast seven demons out of Mary Magdalene as well as out of other women followers (Luke 8:2; Mark 16:9).

**How did Jesus cast demons out?** Before casting them out He rebuked them (took their power away) (Matthew 17:18; Luke 9:42). Then He "drove" them out (Mark 1:39). He did it verbally (Matthew 8:16), not by a certain ritualistic procedure. He didn't let the demons speak (Mark 1:34; Luke 4:41), except Legion and that was just to give his name so others would know what was happening (Mark 5:9). He never let them say who He was (Mark 1:25; Luke 4:35; Mark 3:11-12). He told them to "be quiet and come out" (Luke 4:35; Mark 1:25). Other times He told them to "go" (Matthew 8:32). Sometimes He was quite far from the person whom He was delivering (Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30). When He cast them out He forbid them to ever return again (Mark 9:25).

### **AS THE DISCIPLES DID IT**

We have many **examples** of the disciples casting out demons, too. Jesus gave them power and commanded them to use it (Matthew 10:1; Luke 10:17; Mark 6:7; 16:17). They cast out demons as a regular part of their ministry (Mark 9:38; Luke 10:17). Paul cast out demons (Acts 16:16-18; 19:12) and so did Philip (Acts 8:7). When trying to do it in their own strength (without dependence on God) they failed (Mark 9:18, 28-29).

**How did the apostles cast demons out?** Paul brought deliverance by a word, too (verbally). He said, "In the name of Jesus I command you to come out" (Acts 16:16-18). When God was showing that Paul was His spokesman there was a time when just touching a cloth that Paul had used brought deliverance (Acts 19:12). That was a special event, not a pattern to follow! When directed by God, Paul defeated the demons in Elymas (an unbeliever) by making him blind so he'd stop interfering with God's word (Acts 13:6-12).

### **AS WE ARE TO DO IT TODAY**

When one is surrounded the best thing to do is to attack. That is what God wants us to do, too, when seemingly surrounded by Satan's forces. We are to **follow the example** of the apostles. They did what they did following Jesus' example and in His power (Matthew 10:1,8; Mark 3:15; 6:7; Luke 9:1). We, too, are given power over the enemy (Luke 10:19; Matthew 10:1; Zechariah 3:15).

We have the authority and power to bind demons and loose oppressed believers (Matthew 16:18-19). This must all be done in the power of Jesus' name (Matthew 8:22; Luke 9:49) for that is the only thing demons will obey. Always refer to His full name: "The Lord Jesus Christ." We, however, must be a clean vessel for Him to fill and use for deliverance (Revelation 12:10-11).

First **pray for God's protection** around us, our families and our properties as we begin (Job 1:10; 3:23; Isaiah 5:5). Ask for protection from the enemy's interference, that all things would be done decently and in order that angels would be present to minister and protect, that the demons would not hide or interfere and that the Holy Spirit would lead and guide in all that will happen. Claim your authority and power over the place, time and people involved. Forbid anything to interfere, distract or embarrass as the session continues. Ask God to take their power and authority away, as Jesus did when He rebuked the demons (Matthew 17:18; Luke 9:42). Seeing God's power over Satan's forces today brings glory to God (Psalm 149:6-9). God promises victory, saying we will see Satan crushed under our feet (Romans 16:20). The very gates of hell cannot prevail against God's work on earth today (Matthew 16:18-19).

Before anything positive can happen the person must be **willing to submit their whole lives to God** (Romans 12:1-2) and be willing to deal with any sin in their lives (1 John 1:9). There can be no known sin they are holding onto, no immorality or pride. They must be committed to daily Bible reading and prayer as well as regular attendance at a Bible-believing church. If they are not willing to obey and submit to God they won't find deliverance. Ask them to pray confessing any sin that is still in their life and to reaffirm their total submission to Jesus and their willingness to deal with whatever He shows must be dealt with.

It is not in response to our faith that God delivers, but faith in Him is of the utmost importance. It's not that if we have enough faith good things will happen and if we fall short they won't. God's deliverance isn't determined by nor limited to our faith. Still, faith in God to be able to deliver and trust in Him to bring to light what is necessary are primary ingredients for God to work.

*What lessons can you learn from this blog about how to bring deliverance from demonizing for yourself or someone else? What is the first/most important thing to do? Make sure your whole life is totally submitted to God now. It can't just be something you did some time in the past; it has to be as of now. Confess any sin. Rededicate your life to God now. If He convicts you of anything that is between you and Him confess and remove it. Spend some time enjoying His presence.*

## **BLOG 15: SPIRITUAL WARFARE: STEPS TO DELIVERANCE 2**

We have been talking about how to find freedom from demonic oppression. We saw first that it is important to totally submit our whole being to God for His glory. It is only through His power that we can have victory. That must be first.

Now it is time to **start gathering information**. Before a doctor writes a prescription or gives treatment he first gathers all the facts he can. He will then know by the symptoms and patterns what to prescribe and how to proceed. The same is true in spiritual warfare. These are some of the questions I ask those I am counseling. Other questions might arise depending on their answers.

Can you briefly tell me what some of your earliest memories are? (This can shed light into childhood events, trauma, etc., that may have contributed to the demonizing)

When did your problems and difficulties begin happening? (Going back to the start is very helpful in understanding why they began. If they've always been there then generational spirits can be assumed)

Do you know of any event that may have caused the first one? (This can show an opening that needs to be taken back or a sin that needs to be confessed)

How long have you been a Christian? (Make sure they understand what it means to be a believer and really have trusted Jesus. Seeing when they became a Christian in relationship to when the demonizing started is helpful as well.)

Does anyone else in your family or any ancestors have/had the same things happening to them? (This shows generational demonizing)

Where are your parents spiritually? (This can show if it is generational as well as how the person was influenced)

Are you married?

Where is your mate at spiritually? (Through the sexual union and through soul bonding demons can claim access to the other person)

Have you ever been sexually involved with anyone outside of marriage? (Through the sexual union and through soul bonding demons can claim access to the other person)

Is there any sin you are allowing to remain in your life? (God will convict them of this. If they aren't honest not much good will proceed from here.)

Have you experienced any trauma in life? (Abuse, car accidents, extreme fear can break down a person's defenses and take control of their lives out of their hands, thus creating an opening for the demonic.)

Do you have a church you attend? (The Bible commands we are to not forsake the assembling of ourselves. If this command is being broken it is sin and disobedience and must be changed for God to work in their lives. Only in very extreme, rare circumstances is it all right to not be attending a church.)

What denomination is it? (This can tell you something about their beliefs and practices.)

Were you ever involved in occult or demonic activities? (Many people have used Ouija boards or something similar in the past and this is a definite opening to demonizing.)

Do you speak or pray in tongues? (I and many others in spiritual warfare have found that a false tongue, really a demon, is present and entered through one asking for a spirit of tongues)

Did anyone ever lay hands on you to receive the gift of tongues, healing or any other reason? (When someone lays hands on another and prays for them, anything demonic he or she may be open to can be transferred to the person they are praying for)

At this point I may ask them to fill out the list of symptoms of demonizing (page 20) and or the list of sins that lead to demonizing (page 32-33, 37-38) if I feel more detailed information is needed. I may have them fill those papers in before we meet or at the very start. I will use these papers and notes I have taken as I've asked them the questions to guide my praying. Don't rush this stage; the final product will only be as good as your gathering of this information has been. Like a doctor, the results depend on this part of the process.

Of course, any sins that come up with will have to be dealt with and **confessed** (1 John 1:9). The person themselves must be the one to pray and confess the sin. You can't do it for them. Demons are like rats attracted to garbage, so get rid of the garbage to get rid of the rats.

It is of the utmost importance to make sure that **forgiveness of others** who have hurt them in the past or present, including parents, ex-mates, etc., is dealt with at this time. Ask if there is anyone they hold anything against, anyone they are bitter towards or don't like to see prosper. You will sense this as they have answered the previous questions but now forgiveness must take place for deliverance to continue. Unforgiven gives demons a solid stronghold from which to work (Ephesians 4:26).

As to forgiveness, what is forgiveness? Forgiveness is not forgetting or letting someone off the hook. Forgiveness is choosing to not desire revenge, to not want to see the other hurt for the hurt they have caused us. When we hurt we want to hurt back, or see the other hurt for the hurt that caused us. This desire for justice is normal but forgiveness means we don't expect justice; we will take our hurt and deal with it instead of turning it into anger at another. Remember, anger is a secondary emotion coming from hurt. To forgive means giving up any right you might have to see the other suffer for what they did to you. You can't forget, but whenever the hurt or anger comes back, you make that choice again to give up any right to see them suffer. That's how God forgives us - He gives up any right to see us pay for our sin against Him. Therefore when we forgive we are being like Him and when we don't we aren't. If you have trouble forgiving just tell God you are willing but struggling. As God heals the pain you will better be able to forgive.

### **PRAYER TO FORGIVE OTHERS**

Thank You, Jesus, for dying that I might be forgiven. I thank you for forgiving me. It is my free will choice to forgive those who have hurt me. (Name the people) Forgive me for anything I may have thought or done to hurt them pack. I turn that pain over to You for you to heal. In Jesus' name I take back any right I might feel I have to see them suffer for the pain they caused me. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen

*Is there anyone you need to forgive? Ask God to show you. Write down all the things people have done to hurt you and put their name with it. Then go through the list and forgive each person for each action. Forgiving means you give up any right you have to see them hurt for the hurt they caused you and instead you let God deal with it in His time and way (Romans 12:19; Hebrews 10:30).*

### **BLOG 16: SPIRITUAL WARFARE: STEPS TO DELLIVERANCE 3**

Having looked at past opening to allow demons to work in your life, putting them under the blood of Jesus, and confessing any sin in life, now you can move ahead in finding victory. You can use these steps for yourself or for someone you are counseling.

I explain it like opening a door and allowing someone to enter a room, and then realize you shouldn't have done that. You need to close the door so no one else enters, but you also need to command those who already have entered to leave. Confessing the sin and taking back the access closes the door. Rebuking and commanding them to be gone cleans the room. Both steps must be taken, in that order. Remind them there is nothing to fear (Luke 10:17-21) and that fear is one of Satan's biggest tools against them. Tell them to be sensitive to anything God is telling them in their mind or heart. If He brings up sins to confess ask them to interrupt the process so the sin can be dealt with at that time. If God says it needs to be removed then it must be removed to proceed.

As you pray for them start with the **oldest problems and accesses first**. Put any claim they make under the blood of Jesus, forbid them to do any more work against the person, and send them immediately and permanently to where ever Jesus wants them to go. Usually starting with **generational** spirits first is a good idea. Make sure there aren't any of them working and then go from there.

Next pray about **childhood** events and experiences: trauma, rejection, etc. Put them under the blood of Jesus, take back any access demons claim through them and send them to where Jesus would have them go.

Then deal with sins and openings that have come since childhood. Take your time and be thorough. There is no hurry and no rush.

As you proceed be sensitive as to who the **main ruler** (strong man) is. Sometimes it is best to attack him first for he holds the other demons there. Other times he is too entrenched and must be

weakened by first casting out the lesser demons, the ones creating the symptoms of sin and difficulties in the person's life. Ask for wisdom and be sensitive as to how God would lead you in this important step.

Usually it is best to **bind the main ruler first** (Matthew 12:29), then in Jesus name bind up any and all demons involved (Matthew 16:18-19). Demons never work alone. Search out the "root" spirits (the rulers) and pray against them. Quite often this will be a demon named 'Death' for that is Satan's ultimate plan against all of us. Other powerful rulers may be 'Fear,' 'Pride' or similar works. Each name describes the work of the demon. You can know their name by seeing what they do in the person's life. Remember, behind every demonic problem lies a flesh problem. By identifying the flesh problem that is at the root of everything the identity of the main ruler can be discovered. However that flesh problem must be completely confessed and renounced. Get rid of the garbage and you'll get rid of the rats!

You can **weaken their structure** by breaking up their organization, for they do feed off each other. Break off her children and claim them in the name of Jesus. Take back any access through blood line, name, etc., and set them free. You can separate the power structure in her from that in their mate, parent, or whomever you sense is involved. Just bind the demons into those people and forbid them to bind together or help each other in any way. They are often the same demons who share the person but limiting them to one person helps. Divide and conquer. Forbid any other spirits to come take their place or help from without. Satan's tactic is to isolate us, cut us off from other Christians and God, and then when we are weak work against us. The same strategy works against him, too.

Also be sensitive as you proceed to **sins that the counselee needs to confess**. If God pricks your thoughts go along with this and make sure you stop to deal with any sins that come up. Sins of attitude must be dealt with as well: fear, unforgiven, guilt, pride, revenge, jealousy, etc.

How can you know if the force against you is demonic or not? We are commanded to **"test the spirits"** to see their source (1 John 4:1). Challenge them with the deity (1 John 4:11), Lordship (1 Corinthians 12:3) and blood of Jesus (1 John 5:6-7). Be sensitive to the response in the other person or in your own spirit. Angels do not indwell people, nor do they communicate through people as demons do. Remember that demons always lie and deceive; they may even claim to be God or the Holy Spirit. Be sensitive to thoughts put in your mind or the mind of the one you are counseling. If God supplies someone with the gift of discernment as part of their spiritual gift mix (or if you have that yourself) that can be very helpful (Acts 13:9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:10).

Remember the things covered earlier: we are safe in Jesus and aren't to run from the enemy. We are to use our power and authority. Make sure all opening are confessed and access taken back.

**Command the demons to be gone** in Jesus name (Matthew 10:1; Luke 9:49; 10:17; Mark 8:22). Do it in faith in Jesus (Matthew 17:18-27; John 5:4), not fear (Joshua 1:9; 10:8; 23:9-11; Leviticus 26:8; Exodus 14:13; 1 Samuel 17:45-47; 2 Samuel 22:33-35, 40-41). Be in an attitude of prayer (communication with and sensitive to God - Mark 9:29). Don't be proud, stay humble and submissive to Christ (Luke 10:10; 2 Peter 2:11; Acts 19:12-16). When cast out commit the demons to Jesus' authority in where He would have them go, that He would carry out His sentence against them (Psalm 149:6-9; Romans 16:20; Job 30:3-8). Remember the "house" must be filled with God's Holy Spirit when the demons are removed or things could be worse than before (Matthew 12:43-45).

Sometimes God may lead you to **lay hands on** the person you are praying for, and on occasion Jesus Himself did this (Luke 4:29; 13:11-23; Matthew 8:15) as did the early church (1 Corinthians 1:14f; 12:4; 2 Corinthians 1:21f; James 5:13-16). Be sensitive to God's leading in this area and do whichever it is He leads you to do. One way is not better than the other. Being obedient to what God would have you do is the determining factor.

**Quote Scripture** as much as possible (Matthew 4:1-10). God's word is more powerful than and words we may use (Hebrews 4:12) and carry much more weight with Satan's forces. Our authority is God's Word (I Jn. 2:14). Our sword of the Word is our only offensive weapon.

*Have you ever had the opportunity to minister deliverance to someone who was attacked spiritually? How did it go? Ask God to give you opportunities to help those who are attacked by Satan and his forces. Pray for wisdom and courage to use what you have been learning here.*

## **BLOG 17: SPIRITUAL WARFARE: STEPS TO DELIVERANCE 4**

As you seek deliverance from Satan's attacks in your own life or try to help another find freedom, here are some principles to remember:

Playing **Christian music** during deliverance or at other times in your home is often very helpful for demons don't like to hear Jesus praised (I Samuel 16:23). There is power in praise (Psalm 22:3), so use praise in your warfare praying. You can praise God in prayer or in song during deliverance or afterwards. Use this whenever attacked.

**Do not converse with demons**, either by having them give messages to a person's mind or to speak verbally through a person's vocal cords. The object in deliverance is not to get in contact with demons but to remove them. Communication with them makes you a medium and God's words forbids that (Deuteronomy 18:9-13). There are good reasons to not communicate with them. Neither Jesus (Mark 1:25) nor Paul would (Acts 16:17). They are liars and deceivers (John 8:44) and you can't believe what they say. God wants you only to be in touch with Him (Deuteronomy 4:24). Through the Holy Spirit we have access to all truth and power (John 8:31-32; I Corinthians 12:7-11). By communicating with them you give them recognition, allow them to stall, make things much harder on all people involved, and open yourself up to pride. Besides, they are total liars and deceivers so nothing positive will come from it.

What about **when deliverance is slow or not at all**? Remember sometimes God has a greater purpose than casting out every demon as soon as we pray. Sometimes there is delay. Jesus even had times when He had to persevere for a while (Luke 8:31 Greek). Usually deliverance is a process. It's like peeling the layers off an onion. As new sin is revealed and removed, more ground is taken back from Satan's forces. This gradual process allows the person to better fill the ground which has been reclaimed with God's Holy Spirit and gives him time to grow spiritually (Psalm 59:11; 119:50,67,71) before the next 'layer' is removed. That's why the Jews under Joshua only conquered the Promised Land bit by bit instead of all at once. If they would have driven out the Canaanites immediately then lions would have come in and harmed them. There is a learning process involved that can be used to help others, too (II Corinthians 1:3-4). Other times complete deliverance never comes. Paul's thorn in the flesh is an example (II Corinthians 12:7). Paul testifies God then provides the grace needed to withstand. God wants us to learn to depend on Him (Psalm 119:59,92). Of course if the opening is allowed to continue then the demonizing will continue, too (Psalm 94:12-16; 81:11-14).

When you start sensing that as much as will take place has taken place you can begin **changing the direction** you are going. Ask the counselee if he has had any thoughts of impressions that he should share. Deal with whatever these may be. Ask if there is anything they would like to talk about or pray about.

**Pray again for wisdom**, asking God if there is anything else to be dealt with at this time and for His continued leading and guidance. Ask God what else needs to be done. Sometimes there is lots of spiritual growth and maturity needed. Other times it is consequences of sin that need to be faced. Faith gets tested. Quite often there are other demons or rulers (which are demons, but the leaders) that will need to be dealt with later.

**Make sure they understand** what has happened and what to expect in the next few hours and days. Doubt, unbelief, guilt are quite common tactics of the enemy. Encourage them to stay faithful, pray, read the Bible, memorize and use verses when attacked and write down any questions they might have. If they don't fill the vacated spaces in their lives then the demons will return in even greater number (Luke 11:24-26; Matthew 12:43-45).

**Encourage them to call** for prayer whenever needed. That very act on their part can be humbling and work against their pride, thus it can be very freeing. If demons know they will be calling for prayer help they will be more hesitant to attack than if they know the person will try dealing with them alone.

Remind them that this is a **process**, not a once-and-done procedure. It's not that clear cut and dried. Remember Paul's thorn in the flesh? Ultimately God has the final say, not the demons. Remember Job? So when demons remain after we think they should be gone the first thing we must do is ask God what He is trying to teach us, what He wants to show us. He uses it all for our growth. Do we need to learn perseverance? Patience? Dig deeper for a root sin? Humble ourselves more? Trust? Are we an example to others (as Job was)? The ultimate answer to the questions you are asking lie in God's will, not in a demon's power.

Close with a **prayer of thanksgiving** and praise for what God has done. Ask God to continue the good work He has started in the person. Pray for their protection and growth. Ask for their memories to be healed and the parts that have been emptied to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Forbid any demons to return or others to do the same work. Ask God to bless them and use them for His honor and glory.

#### **TO SUMMARIZE, SUCCESSFUL AND LASTING DELIVERANCE REQUIRES:**

1. HUMILITY: no pride in yourself or your own strength (James 4:6-7; 5:16)
2. HONESTY: admit any sin (Psalm 32:5; 139:23-24)
3. CONFESSION: put any and all sin under the blood of Jesus (I John 1:9)  
Make sure there is no unforgiveness of others (Matthew 6:14-15; 18:21-35)
4. ACCEPT FORGIVENESS: do not carry any guilt around (1 John 1:9)
5. REPENTANCE: attitude of willingness to turn from all sin (Amos 3:3; Ezekiel 20:43)
6. RENOUNCE EVIL: verbally reject anything (openings) that have given Satan access, take back that access, and do whatever you must to right any wrongs you have committed (Acts 19:18-19; Matthew 3:7-8)
7. PRAY: ask God to deliver you in Jesus' name (Joel 2:32). Don't forget YOU have the authority to cast demons out in Jesus' name and God expects you to use it.
8. CONTINUAL WARFARE: daily prayer and battle against sin & Satan

*Do you listen to Christian music at home or in the car? Especially when you feel attacked you should do so. When you start to struggle sing some favorite Christian songs to yourself. Take some time to listen to some of your favorite Christian music today. Use it to focus on God and guide your praise to Him.*

#### **BLOG 18: WHEN DELIVERANCE IS DELAYED**

As stated before, deliverance isn't a once-and-done thing. It is a process, like peeling layers off of an onion. Sometimes progress is very slow. It may seem no progress is being made at all. Then, too, it is certainly possible to loose what you have gained (through sin allowing the openings to

be used again). Satan's forces don't quit easily, and just because they are defeated or weakened once doesn't mean it is all over. Often the battle gets worse for a while. The more they tried to obey and stay close to God, the more opposition and battles the Jews faced when conquering the land. Paul's thorn in the flesh is an example of this (II Corinthians 12:7-10).

Another example is Nehemiah. When the walls of Jerusalem were in disrepair and no one was making any effort to rebuild them there was calm. But when Nehemiah started encouraging the people to rebuild there was much opposition. Some was external, other internal. Externally Nehemiah faced ridicule (2:19), anger (4:1), criticism (4:2), mockery (4:3), threat of war (4:8), compromise (6:2), and lies being told about him (6:6). The stronger attacks were internal. Satan attacked him within with discouragement (4:10), wanting to quit (4:10), greed (5:1,3,5), and fear (6:10). Nehemiah persevered despite it all and finally the work was completed (6:15) and the enemies of God defeated (6:16).

We, too, will face much opposition, and continuing opposition. When we fight against Satan's kingdom by being true to God's kingdom, we must realize the enemy will fight back. What are we to do about it? Satan's plan is for us to be discouraged, to quit, to not persevere, to stay where we are or to lose ground to him. Here's how to make sure that doesn't happen:

When the Jews crossed the Red Sea God opened the waters and they walked through on dried land, but after they matured in the faith things changed. When they got to the Jordan they had to rush down the hill and step into the water while it was still there, trusting God would move it when their feet hit the water. He did and again they walked through on dry land. You are no longer at the Red Sea. You've grown beyond that. Now God wants you to commit to obedience no matter what, to step into the rushing water trusting He'll be with you. If you wait for the waters to part first you'll never move. Commit to stop no matter what – even if it kills you. Decide you'd rather be dead than to continue to disobey. Now I don't think it's a live or death matter, but still you need to be willing to pay any price you may feel will come. I know God will take care of you through it. It will be more of a struggle than you've had with some of the other victories, for God increases the pressure so our faith muscles grown. I like the story of the old lady who was known for her faith. Someone said to her once, "I bet if God told you to run and jump into a wall you'd do it!" The lady said, "Yes, if he told me to do so I would. It's my job to run into the wall and it's His job to take care of the wall."

**WHY DOES GOD ALLOW THE BATTLE TO CONTINUE?** That's the age-old question. Why does God allow people to suffer and struggle? How can a God of love allow so much evil to continue? God doesn't defend Himself or explain what He allows. He gives us a free will choice and sin and the resulting evil are the natural consequences or turning from Him. Still, innocent people suffer. We can't try to evaluate God's person and character by these things for He has proven His character and love by leaving heaven, becoming a man, living on earth, then going to cross to take on the punishment for every sin we would ever commit. That proves His love for us beyond a shadow of a doubt. If it weren't for that we would all deserve eternity in hell from this moment on. So anything less than hell from now on is His grace and mercy. Why He seems to show more to some than others is not up to us to judge. God isn't accountable to us. We cannot stand in judgment of Him until we know all the facts as He knows them and see everything as good as or better than He sees it. Many things seem unfair to little children but they must trust their parents. Getting an injection from a doctor, having a pretty shiny knife taken away, many things seem to a child that a parent doesn't love them but a child doesn't have the perspective to truly view what is happening and we don't have God's perspective on life either. We do know that facing things we don't understand gives us an opportunity to trust. Our faith is stretched and we grow. God is glorified as we see Him deliver and as others watch us patiently trust Him. Spiritual warfare is just one of many forms of suffering God uses for our good and for His glory. That's another reason why deliverance often isn't instantaneous but a drawn-out process.

*While God's deliverance is full and complete, it often takes time because God wants us to learn to persevere and keep trusting. We learn how to fight by the battles we are in. Persevere. Be patient. If you are getting weary or discouraged, confess that to God and ask Him to help you persevere.*

## **BLOG 19: USE THE SWORD OF THE WORD OF GOD**

Knowing and using God's Word, the sword of the Spirit, is key for victory (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 77:12; I Chronicles 28:9; Matthew 22:37-38; I Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 4:8). That's how Jesus defeated Satan (Matthew 4:1-11). Satan tries to plant doubts about God's word in man's mind. This is how he got to Eve. She misquoted God's Word to Satan and when he added to God's Word (making God seem like He was keeping something good from her) she didn't pick it up. Satan was undermining God's Word, and he won! We must be skillful in the use of our sword to win. Below are some verses to memorize and use.

When Jesus was tempted He quoted Scripture to have victory over Satan's temptations. Paul says our only offensive weapon is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Psalm 119:9,11 tell us that it's through God's Word that we have victory. When you have these thoughts and attacks use Scripture to have victory. Ask God to give you some verses that will help against these things, write them down and memorize them. Say them over and over when these thoughts attack you. That is the only way to victory, and God guarantees it will work!

## **BIBLE MEMORY VERSES**

**GOD'S LOVE & ACCEPTANCE** The LORD is compassionate and gracious; slow to anger, abounding in love. Psalm 103:8

**THE BIBLE, GOD'S WORD** The Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Hebrews 4:12

**GOD'S TRUTH FREES** "If you hold to my teaching, you are really My disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:32

**LIVE IN HOLINESS** Therefore, I urge you, brothers in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God -- this is your spiritual act of worship. Rom. 12:1

**SUBMIT TO GOD, RESIST SATAN** God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and He will come near to you. James 4:6-8

**GOD IS GREATER THAN SATAN** The One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. I John 4:4

**GOD WILL MEET ALL OUR NEEDS** My God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

**RENEW YOUR MIND WITH CHRIST** Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is -- His good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:2

**PRAYER** The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. James 5:16

**AUTHORITY OVER DEMONS** Jesus replied: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you." Luke 10:18-19

**RESISTING SATAN** Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." Matthew 16:23

**SIN AS OPENINGS TO DEMONIZING** Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23-24

**CURSES** Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." Galatians 3:13

**ANCESTRAL & CHILDHOOD OPENINGS** Therefore if anyone is in Christ, He is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! II Corinthians 5:17

**OCCULT OPENINGS** Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists, for you will be defiled by them. I am the LORD your God. Leviticus 19:31

**NEW AGE OPENINGS** Such men (who preach a Jesus other than the Jesus I preached) are false prophets, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. II Corinthians 11:13-15

**DELIVERANCE FROM DEMONIZING** Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God ... This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. I John 4:1-2

**DELAYED DELIVERANCE** The Lord said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." ... For when I am weak, then I am strong. II Corinthians 12:9-10

**CONTINUING VICTORY** Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith. I Peter 5:8-9

*What are some of your favorite, most meaningful Scriptures? Write down ones that are helpful and keep them with you. Memorize them by reading them over and over several times a day. Quoting Scripture is the best way to have victory. It's what Jesus did when tempted by Satan, and it's our "Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God" (Ephesians 6:17).*

## **BLOG 20: RESIST AND STAND FIRM NO MATTER WHAT**

There are 2 keys to attaining and keeping spiritual victory: 1. You have to want it so bad you are willing to pay any price to get it. You must be 100% committed to sticking it out no matter what. 2. The other key is that, as soon as you fail, you get right back up and start again. Don't lay there in defeat but start over. It's taken a lifetime to get into this; it'll take a while to get out. Gradually you will log more and more time 'sober' and less and less 'under the influence.' That's how it works.

Persevere no matter what. God can and will set you free from this. Deliverance is a process He uses to teach us things about Himself and ourselves. He wants us to persevere in faithfulness to Him no matter what for that helps us learn to depend on Him and trust Him. It's also part of the way He works to make us more like Jesus.

I know God is greater and will give the victory. I know the victory comes gradually, as we learn to fight and take back ground that was given to the enemy. When the Jews entered the Promised Land under Joshua God gave them victory, but one battle at a time, even one generation at a time. He didn't give it all to them at once. He wanted them to learn to fight, to need to keep trusting Him, to develop patience and perseverance. What was true of them physically is true of us spiritually. So

don't give up. Persevere. It may be hard to see progress but remember - there is improvement. Look back at your life and you'll see improvement in the past to the present. You certainly wouldn't want to go back! Progress is slow but steady, like the story of the tortoise and the hare. Also be encouraged because it's obvious the enemy is now throwing everything at you he can. That means this is as bad as it gets, this is all he can do. If he could do more he would. While this is bad, knowing it is as bad as it gets and that it will gradually but certainly get better helps. It takes time. God is interested in the process you are going through as you grow, not just the final product. You do the same thing with your children.

We are told over and over again in the Bible to resist Satan (in Jesus' strength), to stand firm and not give in. "*Resist the devil and he will flee from you*" (James 4:7-8) is a promise to claim. The conditions for the promise to work, though, are that we are to *submit to God* (total commitment to God after salvation), *draw near to God* (quality and quantity time in prayer and meditation) and *be pure* (live a holy life, confessing all known sin). The key is keeping our eyes on Jesus.

*Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith.* (1 Peter 5:8-9). *Alert* means literally to "be sleepless," it implies a purposeful and active state of awareness. It implies being active and watching out for anything that would tone down our alertness (like being seduced by the world's pleasures). *Resist* is a strong word meaning to oppose. We aren't to hide in fear, hoping he'll leave us alone. Each must wage his own fight; you cannot expect a parent, mate, pastor or friend to resist for you. *Stand firm* means to stand solid, hard, unbending in the faith. Jesus prayed Peter would stand when attacked by Satan (Luke 22:32). Satan is like a bully. When he or his forces find someone who will give in they push them around. Taking a stand may mean a fight for a while, but then the promise comes that he will flee. We are to be courageous and not fearful, taking our stand in the Lord (Joshua 1:9; 10:8; 23:9-11; Leviticus 26:8; Exodus 14:13; 1 Samuel 17:45-47; 2 Samuel 22:33-35,40-41).

Since Satan works through getting us to believe his lies, we must really resist and stand fast in this area. By knowing which lies Satan trips you up with you can better be prepared for them. Here are some common ones to look out for.

*Where or how does Satan attack you? What tactics are most successful? What can you do to better stand firm and resist? Who can you turn to for prayer and support? Perhaps you should contact them today. Who around you is struggling? Offer them your support and prayer today.*

## **BLOG 21: PRAYING FOR SPIRITUAL WARFARE VICTORY**

Prayer is powerful (John 14:13-14; 15:7,16; Mark 11:24; 11:22-24; Luke 11:9-10; 1 John 5:14; Jeremiah 33:3). There should be six parts to your prayer life, all equally well developed. These are:

**1. CONFESSION** (1 John 1:9; Psalm 66:18; 51:1). To confess means to agree with God that the issue at hand is sin (not a mistake, someone else's fault, etc.). Use the lists on page 15-17 to help in this. After you confess your sin make sure you accept God's forgiveness (Daniel 9:9,19; Psalm 130:4; 86:5; 78:30; 99:8; 103:3; Amos 7:2). Only God can forgive sin (Mark 2:7; 11:25; Luke 23:24; 5:24; Matthew 6:14; Colossians 3:13). God doesn't overlook sin, he forgives because it was paid for with the blood of Jesus on the cross (Hebrews 9:22; Ephesians 4:32; 1:7; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18; Luke 24:46-47; Colossians 1:14; John 19:30). This forgiveness is available to all (Isaiah 53:6; Colossians 2:13; Romans 8:1). When you confess/admit your sin God forgives it. This means He blots it out (Isaiah 43:25; 1:18; 44:22; Acts 3:19; Colossians 2:14; Psalm 32), casts it behind His back (a place He can't see it - Isaiah 38:17; Jeremiah 31:34), forgets it (Hebrews 8:12; 10:17; Isaiah 43:25; Jeremiah 31:34), makes it disappear where it will never be found (Jeremiah 50:20), has it vanish like

the morning mist at noon (Isaiah 44:22; John 20:31; Matthew 27:51), and casts it into the deepest part of the sea (Micah 7:19) which will then be gone forever (Revelation 21:1).

**2. PRAISE** (Psalm 34:1-3; 48:1; Hebrews 13:15). Praise is glorifying God for Who and What He is. It is different than thanking Him for things He has done. We will be praising God for all eternity, so we should start now! God is pleased with our praise (Psalm 22:3; Hebrews 13:5).

The Bible says there is power in praise (Psalm 22:3). Praise can be done by word or song. Make sure you develop a strong praise life (Philippians 4:4; Hebrews 13:15). Read the following passages and turn them into praise prayers: Exodus 15:1-2; Deuteronomy 10:21; 32:3-4,43; I Samuel 2:1-2; II Samuel 22:4, 50; I Chronicles 16:9,25,31; 29:10-12; II Chronicles 5:12-14; 20:21-22,27; Psalm 8:1-2; 9:1-3; 31:21; 44:8; 40:16; 47:1-3; 68:3-4; 72:18-19; 86:12-13; 104:33; 108:3; 117:1-2; 119:108,175; 138:1-4; 142:7; 149:1,3,6-9; 150:1-6; Isaiah 25:1,9; 38:18-19; 60:18; Daniel 2:20-23; Jeremiah 20:13; Habakkuk 3:17-19; Zechariah 9:9; Luke 1:46-47; Luke 10:21; John 4:23-24; Ephesians 1:3; Jude 25; Revelation 4:10-11; 5:5,12-13; 15:3-4.

**3. THANKSGIVING** (Psalm 116:12; Philippians 4:6; I Thessalonians 5:18). Thanksgiving is thanking God for what He has done, is doing and is going to do in your life (as well as the lives of others). We all appreciate being thanked for things we do, and so does God. Be specific in your thanksgiving. Remember, everything comes from Him and is for our good (Romans 8:28) so we should thank Him for everything!

**4. INTERCESSION** (Psalm 28:9; James 5:14-20; I Timothy 2:1-4; I Samuel 12:23). Intercession is prayer for others. Often it is good to keep a list of prayer requests so you remember to pray for them and so you can mark down the answer, too. Then thank God for the answer. Remember God answers EVERY prayer. The answer is either yes (now), wait (later) or no (never). Every prayer gets one of these answers. God is able to do anything, but He isn't always willing to do what it is we think He should do to bail us out (Daniel 3:17). Therefore when you pray for others first be sensitive to how God would have you pray. Don't be so quick to come up with a solution and make that your prayer. God may have another solution (better than ours). Don't pray solutions to God, pray problems and let Him come up with His own solution. You'll find prayers answered more often when you let Him figure out how to take care of something. Often instead of removing something He gives us grace to endure it (II Corinthians 12:7-10). Include that option in your prayers for others

CONFESSING THE SINS OF ANOTHER Praying for another person is important. Confessing the sins of another person can help free them from demonic oppression. Sin, especially certain sins, is like opening a door for demons to work in a person's life. These sins can be an open invitation. Depression (self-pity), for example, can be almost a 'prayer' to Satan because one is so negative and sees everything from a very self-centered viewpoint about how it may affect them. It's almost like they enjoy wallowing in this, so demons just help them move in that direction by putting thoughts in their mind and the person accepts and feeds on these thoughts. When that person tells God they are sorry for opening the door and confess (admit) that as sin, He forgives them and the sin no longer blocks fellowship between the person and God. However the door is still open and demons, who can get very technical and never want to give up access they have, will continue to use it. When you enter the picture and put the sins of that person under the blood of Jesus and state that demons can no longer use that sin as an access to the person you are closing the door. If the person hasn't confessed the sin themselves that still blocks their relationship with God, but by interceding for them we can slow down or stop (at least temporarily) the demonic impact so the person can be free from that influence and be better able to turn to God for themselves. Now if they continue in the sin they keep opening the door. All you can do is keep trying to close it by putting the sin under the blood until the person does so themselves or it becomes evident they don't want to and won't do it.

**5. PETITION** (James 4:2; Hebrews 4:15-16; John 15:7). Petition means asking God for things for yourself. This is legitimate. We shouldn't always pray just for ourselves, nor should we feel unworthy

to ever pray for ourselves. Much of what I said under "Intercession" above fits in here. There are some things the Bible says we should ask for: an understanding heart (I Kings 3:7,9), fellowship with other believers (Philemon 4-6), forgiveness (Psalm 25:11,18,20), guidance (Psalm 25:4-5; 27:11), holiness (I Thessalonians 5:23), love (Philippians 1:9-11), mercy (Psalm 6:1-6), power (Ephesians 3:16), spiritual growth (Ephesians 1:17-19) and to know and do God's will (Colossians 4:12). As you pray for yourself think of a Bible promise to claim for it. God promises He will not forget us (Isaiah 49:15), not fail us (Joshua 1:5), will show us what to do (I Samuel 16:3), will help us (Isaiah 41:10) and will strengthen us (Isaiah 41:10).

Remember, it's always good to pray the problem, not the solution. Let God come up with His own solution. Often we miss it because He answers a different way than we expected. He is God. He can answer any way He wants. Just think of the ultimate result: God being glorified and you growing. Pray for that – God to be glorified in the situation no matter what.

**6. LISTEN** (1 Samuel 3:10; Hebrews 1:1-2; 3:15; Psalm 62:5; 46:10) Good communication is a two-way street. Pause a few minutes and listen to God talk to you. You should do that throughout your day. After all, which is more important: you passing on information to God or Him passing on information to you? Be still in your mind, let Him put in thoughts, feelings, ideas, etc., that you need. Be sensitive to His leading. As with any relationship, the better you know the person the better the communication. Good, deep communication is difficult with a stranger, but the more time you spend with a person the better you can 'hear' them, and that's true with God, too. This is an art that takes time to develop, but won't happen if you don't work on it!

*Follow the steps above and spend time praying to God.*

## **BLOG 22: BACK TO THE BASICS FOR VICTORY**

OK You've been struggling and have gone through the steps in the other blogs. Things are better but far from perfect. So what to do now? Whenever a sports team is struggling they go back to the basics. When a business is foundering they need to make sure they are following the basic principles necessary. That same is true of a marriage. Where you need to start is with the basics. That will set your foundation and you will grow through the other things. These are the basics:

1 Spend time with Jesus every day, preferably in the morning when you first wake up. Read your Bible. Start in Luke 1:1 and read from there, keeping on going to the end of the book. Ask God to teach you about Himself as you read. Then spend some time in prayer. Confess any sin you are aware of in your life which you haven't confessed before. Confession means agreeing with God that it is sin. Spend some time praising Him for who and what He is and thanking Him for what He has done for you. Then pray for the needs of others and finally for your own needs. If you can, do this in the morning and evening. Here is a prayer that is good to use when you start to pray. Remember, it's the thought that counts.

“Gracious God, I acknowledge that You are worthy of all honor, glory and praise. I am thankful for the victorious work of Your Son, Jesus Christ at Calvary for me. I apply His victory to my life now as I willingly surrender every area of my life to Your will.

“Thank you for the forgiveness and righteousness that has been given to me as Your adopted child. I trust in Your protection and provision daily. I know that your love for me never ceases. I rejoice in Your victory, my Lord, over all the principalities and powers in the heavenlies. In faith I stand in Your victory and commit myself to live obediently for You my King.

“I desire that my fellowship with You become greater. Reveal to me those things that grieve You and enables the enemy to secure an advantage in my life. I need the Holy Spirit's powerful

ministry in my life; bringing conviction of sin, repentance of heart, strengthening my faith and increasing perseverance in resisting temptation.

“Help me to die to self and walk in the victory of the new creation You have provided for me. Let the fruits of the Spirit flow out of my life so that You will be glorified through my life. Fill me with your love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control.

“Please place your hedge of protection around me, my possession, my family and all my descendants. Protect us from anything the enemy would try to do against us.

“I know that it is Your will that I should stand firm and resist all of the enemy's work against me. Help me to discern the attacks upon my thoughts and emotions. Enable me to stand upon Your Word and resist all the accusations, distortions and condemnations that are hurled against me.

“It is my desire to be transformed through the renewing of my mind, so that I will not compromise with the ways of the world, or yield to the enemy's attacks, but be obedient to Your will. So give me the mind of Christ in order that I may have His perspective, wisdom, compassion, holiness and truth.

“I draw upon those spiritual resources that You have provided me and I attack the strongholds and plans of the enemy that have been put in place against me. I command in the name of Jesus Christ that the enemy must release my mind, will, emotions and body completely. They have been yielded to the Lord and I belong to Him.

“Lord, enable me to become the person You created me to be. Help me as I pray to be strong in faith. Show me how to apply Your Word in my life each day. I know that I wear the full armor of God when I am committed to and stand firmly upon Your Word. I want You to have the supreme place in my life. Give me a hunger and thirst to know You better, to read Your Word more deeply, to pray more readily and to keep you first in all my thoughts all day long.

“I surrender myself completely to You, Lord. You are always faithful and You extend Your grace to me constantly, even when I do not realize it. I claim Your promise of forgiveness and cleansing in its fullness. In faith, I receive the victory today that you have already put in place for me. I do this in the name of Jesus Christ, my Savior with a grateful heart. AMEN”

2. Make sure there is no sin in your life. We all sin and continue to sin, that's why we confess it. But if there are any sins that are ongoing and you aren't stopping, they must be stopped. Sin breaks our fellowship with God and opens us to attack by the enemy. Ask God to give you the strength to overcome these things. They may be hard at first for they are long-time habits and the enemy doesn't want you to stop them, but they are important to stop. Commit to stopping. If you do fail confess it and don't do it again.

3. Make sure you have a church that preaches the Bible that you attend regularly. It is important to worship and fellowship with other Christians. Make sure you do this as often as you can. If you work Sunday mornings try to change your schedule or go other times during the week when you can. This is a great way of growing and sharing strength from others.

Start working on these 3 each day and you'll build a solid foundation with God. It took you a long time to get into this place you are in and it will take some time to grow out of it as well. If God just quickly removed everything and made your life perfect you would soon be tempted to get back into some of those things, or something else. That's why it's important to grow spiritually and get stronger so that as these things fade you stay close to Him.

*If you had to grade your spiritual life on a scale of 1 to 10 what grade would you give yourself? What can you do to improve? When is your best time to have a daily prayer time with God? What can you do to assure it isn't interrupted or postponed?*

### **BLOG 23: CAUSES OF DEMONIZING**

Having looked at what demonizing is and some characteristics of it, the next step is to find out what allows demons to do this work in/against us. These openings are like cracks in a wall which allow the enemy to slip in. When you have these openings, it could be that demons are using this to demonize you. Demons are like rats that feed on garbage. To get rid of the rats one must get rid of the garbage, then the rats will be gone.

The most common avenue to demonic entrance is through a family line. One person opens themselves to demonic influence and the demons claim them and all they have, including children. Then the same traits and influences pass on to the children and their children. Occult and Satanic involvement by activities, drugs, acid rock music, Ouija boards, etc. is another opening. Cult involvement in the family, especially Masons, opens one. The Bible says that when 2 people have sex the two become one flesh and that allows demons to claim the other person. Abuse of any kind or any form of trauma, especially when young, open one to the demonic. Strong soul ties with someone involved can cause an opening. Being unwanted when in the womb or young is a definite opening. These are some of the main avenues demons use to gain entrance and attack people.

#### **BECAUSE OF OUR PROPERTY**

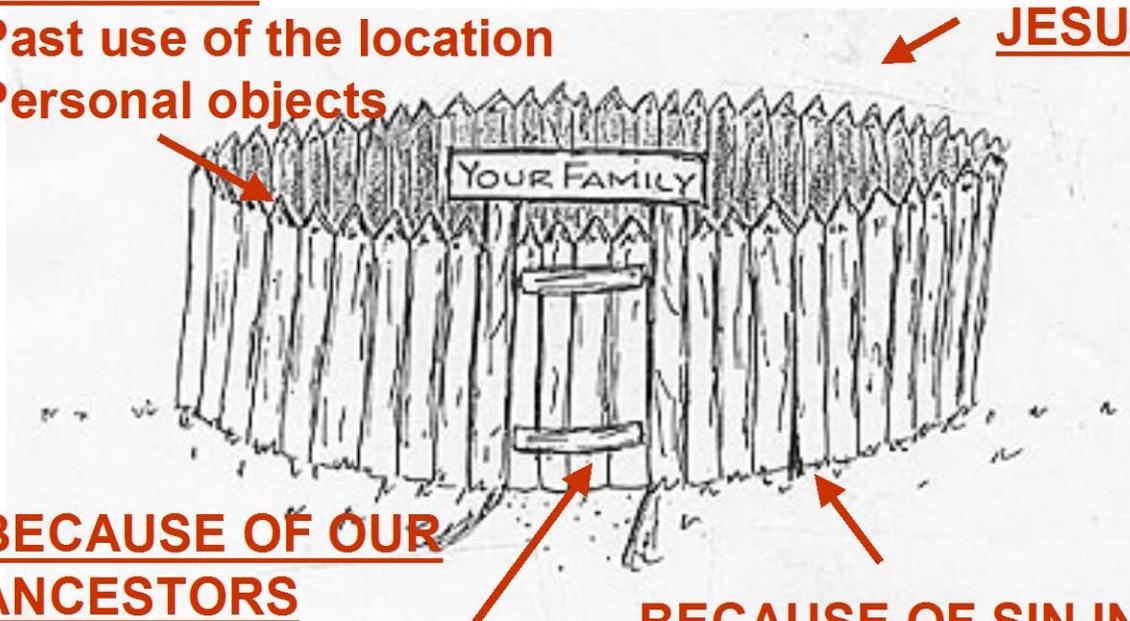
**Past use of the location  
Personal objects**

#### **BECAUSE OF OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS**

#### **BECAUSE OF OUR ANCESTORS**

**Ancestors past actions  
Our past actions**

#### **BECAUSE OF SIN IN OUR LIFE**



In order to have victory over the attacks of the enemy it is important to understand where those attacks come from – what is the cause of them. This is very important in being able to defend against them. If we know the direction from which our enemy will attack we can better defend ourselves and defeat those attacks. If you think of your life as a fort you can better understand what is happening. Think of a frontier fort such as were built for protection in the early days of the USA. An enemy can 1) claim access through an open door, 2) enter through a weak spot in the wall, 3) claim the land on which the fort is built, or 4) attack us because of our commitment to Jesus. Let's look at these four avenues of attack.

*Study the diagram of the fort above. It is important to understand. Pray for wisdom as future blogs will explain each way Satan can gain access to us. Spend some time in praise and worship, recognizing God's great sovereign protection over us.*

## **BLOG 24: SPIRITUAL ATTACKS THROUGH OUR PROPERTY**

We can be attacked because of access given through what has happened on the land or to the property in the past.

It can be **PAST USE OF THE LOCATION**. Some event may have happened on the land or in the home or room where you live. It could be a violent act, an occult activity, a curse, a dedicating of the property to the powers of darkness or similar acts. Sometimes when we go into a certain neighborhood or home there is a 'sense' of evil, a discomfort in our spirit. In a store that sells New Age materials you may 'feel' different in your spirit, a discomfort. This is the explanation for supernatural apparitions that happen in 'haunted' homes – demonic activity may be present. Some countries and even continents are in extra darkness and bondage and it can be sensed by believers. The message we get is from God's Holy Spirit Who is warning us against the evil around us.

Our solution is to pray, taking back any access the enemy may claim to the property and asserting our right as children of God to claim and use it. Put any other claims under the blood of Jesus and dedicate it to Him for His honor and glory. A sign, picture or cross on the wall can be a good visual reminder to all of the ownership of the property by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pray, anoint the house and property, etc. Walk around you boundaries praying out loud, claiming your property for God and forbidding any demons to have any access to it. Dedicate it to God and invite His presence through all of it. Take back any access any demons may claim to the property and put the access under the blood of Jesus. Break it in Jesus' name. Ask God to put an angelic hedge of protection around it. Do the same in all the rooms of the house, especially the basement (if you have one). Anoint each room with oil by dipping your finger in the oil and putting a cross on the door, walls, etc. Pray as you did when you walked around the property. If there is one particular part of the house that seems worse put a night light there so there is always light in to room. You could do that to all the rooms. Demons hate light, and they hate hearing Jesus praised, so you can play praise music in various places 24 hours a day. It can be real soft – they will hear it!

In addition it can be from **PERSONAL PROPERTY ON THE LOCATION**. When the Jews took possession of Canaan under Joshua they were told to not keep any of the objects they captured. Even animals and children were to be destroyed. They had been dedicated to Satan and were claimed by him. Those who used these things would be opening themselves up to the demonic powers they had been dedicated to. That's why Paul had the people in Ephesus burn all their occult books. Today we must watch for things like literature from other cults and religions, Ouija boards and other occult paraphernalia, pagan objects from primitive cultures, objects from Masonic or other secret societies, some Native American artifacts or the like. Pornography, drug or alcoholic supplies, music with a black or evil dimension

The solution is to remove and destroy such objects as God convicts you or as being openings for demonic access. Ask for forgiveness for having them, cleanse the room from their presence, take back any access the enemy may claim and dedicate the space as well as yourself to Jesus. Ask Him to reveal to you anything else that may need to be dealt with.

When a room or object is under the control of an evil spirit for whatever reason they claim, painting crosses by dipping a finger in oil and making them on a wall claims the place for Jesus. Playing Christian music and leaving a small light on also are offensive to the forces of darkness. Of course praying and quoting scripture while making the crosses is important, too. I know I, as a Christian, have great power in blessing people, especially my own family and other Christians. 'God bless you' is more than a slang or shallow comment. There's real power in it when one means it that way. It's a privilege I use and repeat often to people. Distance doesn't seem to affect it at all. Of course there is something even more special about touching a person when I pray or ask God to bless them, but when at a distance it carries just as well. The power is in God who is everywhere (omnipresent). Satan and demons are limited to one place at a time so they are at a distinct disadvantage in this, too.

The promise God gives us to claim and use is: ***The One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 1 John 4:4***

#### **PRAYER TO CLEANSE A ROOM OR HOME**

Remove and destroy all objects of false worship, then pray this aloud in every room. Using your finger to print small crosses of oil on the doors and walls is good to do. Also, leaving a light on (against darkness) and/or music praising Jesus playing in the room is also good. Demons don't like light or hearing Jesus praised.

"Heavenly Father, I acknowledge that You are the Lord of heaven and earth. In Your sovereign power and love, You have entrusted us with this place to live and we thank You for it. I dedicate this place to You for Your honor and glory. I pray this would be a place of spiritual, emotional and physical safety and blessing for me and my family and ask for Your protection from all the attacks of the enemy. I take back any access any of Satan's forces have claimed against this place and put that under the blood of Jesus. As a child of God I command every evil spirit claiming ground in this place to be gone. Any sin that has been committed here, any spirits invited here in any way and anything that may have happened on this location we put under the blood of Jesus and we forbid you to take any access to this place or do any work against us or anyone in this place. Dear Lord, fill this place with Your presence and only your presence."

*Pray and ask God to show you if you have anything in your possession that will open the door to demonizing. Dedicate your land, home and everything in it to God, giving Him complete ownership of it and taking back any access any demons might claim to it.*

#### **BLOG 25: SPIRITUAL ATTACKS THROUGH OUR ANCESTORS**

This attack comes through our or our ancestors' sins. It is the same as leaving the front door open while building a secure fortress.

It may be because of our **ANCESTOR'S/PARENT'S PAST ACTIONS**. When one person opens themselves up to demonic influence, that person's descendants are also at risk of demonizing. When a demon has access to a person, he also claims right to all that person has, including their children. The Bible says God "punishes the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation" (Exodus 20:4-5; Deuteronomy 5:8-9; Exodus 34:6-7). The Bible says that children are affected by their parents sins (Ezekiel 18:2) and this is one of the ways. In fact, this is one of the most common

reasons people are demonized. This is especially true of first born males, for Satan seeks to claim them just as God does (Exodus 34:20).

Generational bondage is often discerned by the sin patterns that repeat from generation to generation. It is not uncommon to observe generations of abuse, addiction, hatred, superstition and fear, pride, control and manipulation, rejection, sexual sins and perversions, aberrant religious beliefs, witchcraft, and rebellion etc.

If you notice some of the same problems in your life as in your siblings, parents, aunts, uncles, or grandparents it could very well be ancestral demonizing. The same demons have access to those in the family and do the same work in various members (not all members, that would be too obvious). They claim the blood line and use that as access. If you see some patterns in the symptoms or characteristics of demonizing that were covered previously in others in your family that could show ancestral access. That is why so often a boy who hates his father for beating his mother grows up to beat his own wife, or a child of an alcoholic becomes an alcoholic themselves.

A very, very common pattern is for the **first-born male** to be affect first and most by generational attacks. The first-born Jews were dedicated to God and so Satan tries to attack and claim them first, too. Often it is the first-born male in a family that is attacked spiritually.

Generational bondage can be broken by personally repenting of and confessing the sins of past generations. Claim the blood of Christ as stronger than your blood line and put that access under the blood of Jesus (Romans 5:15). Claim that you are a "new creation, old things have passed away, all things have become new" (II Corinthians 5:17). Ask God to turn curses into blessing (Deut. 23:5).

#### **PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE FROM GENERATIONAL BONDAGE**

"Gracious Father over all, I acknowledge before you the sins of my parents and ancestors. I know that they have sinned because all men and women are sinners. I know I cannot do what only they could have done in attaining forgiveness for their sins, but I am sorry for anything they have done in disobedience against you and I ask that you cover all of these with the blood of Jesus. Please do not hold their consequences against me or my descendants. I claim the finished work of Jesus Christ, Who bore all my sin upon Himself. In faith I accept that work on the basis of your holy Word. I reclaim any consent given to Satan's forces by my parents' sin. Dear Jesus, please set me free from all evil influences coming from my parents and ancestors in the name of Jesus. I know I am a new creation in Christ. Old things have gone and all things have become new. I take back any access any demons claim and in Jesus' name break any demonic working that has been passed on to me from my ancestors. As one who has been crucified and raised with Christ and who sits with him in heavenly places, I reject any and every way in which Satan may claim ownership of me. I declare myself and my descendants to be eternally and completely signed over and committed to only the Lord Jesus Christ. I now command every evil spirit and every enemy of the Lord Jesus Christ to be gone forever. I ask You, heavenly Father, to fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I submit my body as an instrument of righteousness, a living sacrifice, that I may glorify You in every area of my life. All this I do in the name & authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

*Ask God to show you any sin passing down through your family line. Ask God to forgive you for your part in it and take back any access any demons claim through your ancestors.*

#### **BLOG 26: SPIRITUAL ATTACKS THROUGH OUR SIN**

The sin that opens the door for demonic attack doesn't have to be done by others, though. It could be **OUR OWN PAST ACTIONS**. Sin opens the door to demons. So let's define sin. Sin is anything we do, anything we think or anything we feel that is not what Jesus would do, think or feel. It is anything we could do, think or feel that is right and He wants us to do but we don't do, think or feel

it. Or it could be something good we do, think or feel but do, think or feel it motivated by our own selfish reasons. Sin is more motive than action.

Sin can include occult, New Age, Ouija Board or other involvements in the past. Having become a Mason, Shriner or member of any secret society, have had a traumatic experience, rape, molestation or abuse experience, been involved in drugs, alcohol or immoral behavior, having someone lay hands on you to pray and they had demonic issues themselves or having a curse put on you or your family.

God clearly states that SEXUAL UNION means two become one flesh, even if it is sex with a prostitute (1 Corinthians 6:16). Therefore sexual activity with anyone before or outside marriage can be a direct opening to demonization. Any demons that have access to the person you are involved with will have immediate and instant access to you as well. It is like a spiritual AIDS infection, but there is no prevention, no 'safe sex' application. Those sexual involvements of the past must be confessed and put under the blood of Jesus. Any access given to any demons through them must be broken in Jesus name. Ask to be filled with His Presence instead, and thank Him for His mercy!

It may be someone has put a CURSE on you or your family by asking that something bad happen to you. That is really a prayer that Satan really loves to answer! Parents can curse their children by saying they wish they hadn't had them, they hate them, don't want them they are no good and will never amount to anything, and so forth. Finally, we can curse ourselves (Proverbs 6:2) by saying we hope we die, that we aren't good enough, that we'll never be happy or any of many such things about ourselves.

The area of curses is a less common but still a strong opening to demonic access. To curse someone is to ask for evil to happen to them. Those requests (really prayers) are heard by Satan and his forces and 'answered' when possible. This includes everything from occult and witchcraft curses to one individual 'wishing' harm on another. Balaam was paid to curse Israel, but God wouldn't allow it (Numbers 22 - 24). These curses, when in effect, can also be passed on from generation to generation. The Bible says that speaking evil of someone is the same as cursing them (Romans 12:14). Things like: "I hope you die..." "Since he/she won't love me I wish they'd ....." "You're no good, you'll never amount to anything..." "I hope she gets some of her own medicine..." "I hope your children do ..... to you when you grow up." You can even curse yourself by what you say (Proverbs 6:2). Our words are powerful and important. They aren't something to be taken lightly. Using profanity ("curse" words) also falls into this category. When someone "damns" someone to "hell" that is an awful, awful thing to say! Demons love to hear it; they use the power of the hate in the speaker and will latch onto any authority or justification to do their evil!

Balaam tried to curse the Jews (Dt 23:4). The Bible says we can curse others (Ps 109:17). Demons use this as an excuse to work against the person, as a 'prayer' to gain access. Old Testament men (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc. Gen 27:23, 38) would bless or curse their children (Genesis 48:20). Sometimes they even put a curse on them, as Abraham did with Ishmael and Isaac cursed Esau. The Levites were used to pronounce blessings (Dt 10:8; 21:5). When Naomi came back to Israel she said she was to be called 'mara' because things had turned 'bitter' for her. A father is to bless his children by his words and send them into life with his and God's blessing. What you have done is the opposite.

If you feel this may have happened to you remember to "*Bless them that curse you*" (Matthew 5:44). Treat the person with love and kindness, for when you return good for evil the "*undeserved curse does not come to rest*" (Proverbs 6:2). Break that curse against you in Jesus' name, claiming Galatians 3:10,13 which says "*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.'*" Ask God to turn the curse to a blessing (Deuteronomy 23:5).

SOUL TIES in our past can be another opening for demons. Just like they can transfer from one person to another through a physical union like sex, so they can transfer through an emotional union as well. Souls can bond as well as bodies. When one gives their trust, their heart to another a bonding is formed. Bonds between mates, parents and children, godly friends, etc., are good and necessary. But when we bond with someone who is demonized then those demons can use that as access to the other person. Souls become bonded, or tied together. If you have any of these in your past that you feel may not have been godly and healthy, confess them as sin and break the bond in Jesus' name.

#### PRAYER TO BREAK UNGODLY SOUL TIES

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, I ask God to break all ungodly spirit, soul and body ties that have been established between me and (name person). I put any access they claim under the blood of Jesus. I confess as sin anything I have thought or done to lead to these ties. (If anything specific comes to mind confess it.) In Jesus' name I forbid you to affect anyone else in my family. Father, please fill me completely and totally with only your Spirit. In Jesus' name. Amen

*Confess any and all sexual sin in your past. Ask God to forgive you for it and put it under the blood of Jesus. Take back any access any demons may take through that. Thank God for His forgiveness.*

*Ask God to show you any ungodly soul ties you may now have or have had in the past. Confess them as sin and break them in Jesus name. Forbid any demons from using them in any way to work against you. Pray and thank God for His mercy and forgiveness. Ask Him to show you anything else you may need to pray about or confess.*

*Demons are like rats which are attracted to garbage. If you want to get rid of the rats, get rid of the garbage. If you want to get rid of demons, get rid of the sin.*

#### **BLOG 27: SPIRITUAL ATTACKS BECAUSE WE FOLLOW JESUS**

We can be demonically oppressed because of openings given by our ancestors, because of the property we live on or things we possess, because of curses made against us, or because of sin in our own lives. But demons don't always need access to attack us anyway. One of the most common reasons for our attacks is because of our commitment to Jesus. The fort is attacked just because it is there and represents a threat to those who don't want it there.

We don't have to have done anything – just our stand with Jesus will draw attacks for Satan is committed to opposing God's kingdom in any and every way he can. Satan can't attack Jesus directly so he takes his hate and anger out on God's children. That's why the Jews have experienced such persecution through the years. While we were in Satan's army, or even when we were neutral and ineffective for God, demons didn't need to waste time and effort on us. But when we become committed to serving Jesus and building His Kingdom we find we have spiritual enemies sworn to do anything they can to destroy us. Sometimes these attacks are direct, other times they take an indirect approach. Our marriage, finances, children or health may be attacked to discourage us and cause us to cease to actively participate in the cause of Christ. These attacks can also take the form of opposition from others. There may be a person who does what he can to make life difficult for you. This is why Satan attacked Job – because he was effective in his faith and Satan wanted to stop that. That seems to be the cause of Paul's demonic 'thorn in the flesh' attack as well (2 Corinthians 12).

How can we tell what is a normal problem of the flesh or life in a fallen world from what is an attack of the enemy? If it brings a long, ongoing battle, and especially if you are having trouble having victory over it, you should seek for deeper causes. Or if it is a very new, very sudden attack

that threatens to overwhelm and defeat you. If it is something large that comes from nowhere, like a gigantic wave that threatens to wash you away. Then suspect spiritual causes as well.

Pray for a hedge of protection around yourself, your property and your family, as Job did (Job 1:45, 10-11). Turn to God's Word for guidance: God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and He will come near to you. (James 4:6-8) All things work together for the good of those who love God. (Romans 8:28) There is no testing taken you but such as is common to man. God will not allow you to be tested beyond what you can bear, but with the testing will make a way of escape so you can bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

So sometimes we are attacked because of where we live – property we own or where we live. Other times it is because of victories over parents or grandparents – attack us same way. It could be something we did or that happened to us early in life as well. In addition, it could be because of sin in our life. Or we could just be attacked because we are Satan's enemies since we now support God's kingdom. Understanding the direction of the attack can help you know how to defend yourself and have victory over the attack.

**REMEMBER, GOD PROMISES VICTORY!** *"Thanks be to God, He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I Cor. 15:57 "But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ." II Cor. 2:14 "Who is He that overcomes the world? Only he who believes Jesus Christ is the Son of God." I John 5:5*

*Thank God for the victory He has given us in Jesus. Ask Him to put a protection around you and your loved ones (mention them by name) (Job 1:45, 10-11). Make sure there is no sin in your life. Ask God to help you stay faithful to Him no matter what opposition you face.*

## **BLOG 28: COMMON SINS THAT ALLOW DEMONIC ACCESS - 1**

While any sin can be used as an open door for a demon to slip into a person's life and work against them, there are some sins that are especially harmful. We'll look at some of these in the next several blogs.

**ANGER BASED SINS** One of the leading causes of demonizing is unconfessed anger. Anger includes any form of unforgiveness, bitterness, hate, jealousy, gossip, criticism, etc. Paul says these can *"give the devil a foothold"* (Ephesians 4:26-27). He tells the Corinthians that if they don't forgive each other Satan will use that to *"outwit"* them (II Corinthians 2:10-11). Jesus Himself said that those who don't forgive others will be turned over to tormenting demons to bring them to repentance (Matthew 18:34). This anger includes anger toward others, parents self, or God. There can be no removing demons using this access until all anger is truly confessed and put under the blood of Jesus. This is one of the first things that usually come up when we counsel people and pray for their deliverance. Do NOT take this lightly!

<p><b>PRAYER TO FORGIVE OTHERS</b> Thank You, Jesus, for dying that I might be forgiven. I thank you for forgiving me. It is my free will choice to forgive those who have hurt me. (name the people) Forgive me for anything I may have thought or done to hurt them pack. I turn that pain over to You for you to heal. In Jesus' name I take back any right I might feel I have to see them suffer for the pain they caused me. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen</p>
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**IDOLATRY BASED SINS** Sins which specifically put something or someone before God also give openings to demons. Putting anything before God is idolatry, and is forbidden by God (Exodus 20:3,4,23; 23:24). These sins include greed, envy, jealousy, materialism, or putting anything (career, possessions, etc.) or anyone (mate, child, parent, self, etc.) before God. Demons receive the worship we give anything other than God (Zechariah 10:2; I Corinthians 10:19-21). Ananias and Saphira were

guilty of this (Acts 5:3). Spiritual adultery is something God hates (Jeremiah 3:8-10; Ezekiel 16:23-43; 23:24-30; Revelation 17:1-5). This starts in the mind (Judges 2:10-13; Ezekiel 14:7).

**IMMORALITY BASED SINS** God created sex to show the great oneness of believers and Christ (Ephesians 5). Therefore Satan tries hard to pervert and destroy this model. Any sex outside marriage is sinful (Ephesians 5:3, 5-6). This includes thoughts (Matthew 5:27-30).

Sexual sin has an element that other sins don't have. When you unite yourself with another person that also opens you to being demonized by any demons that are demonizing the person you are united to. This is true even if it is simply sexual lust with a prostitute (1 Corinthians 6:16). Sex creates a special union, a spiritual oneness, an opening of total sharing between two people. Often demons will claim this as access from one person to another. It is like a spiritual AIDS disease, but much more contagious and with far worse consequences.

It is important for each believer to confess all their past immorality and put it under the blood of Jesus, as well as taking back any access given to Satan's forces by that act. Ask God to heal and cleanse you spiritually. Of course a good spiritual life (connecting with God in devotions each morning, reading your Bible, etc.) is a must.

When a person first gets tempted, when the first thought pops into their mind, they must get victory over the thought and not allow it to stay and grow. Victory only happens by quoting scripture. Jesus had victory over Satan by quoting scripture and that is our sword of the Spirit. Here are some passages you can use. Start quoting or reading them when tempted and don't stop until well beyond the temptation" 2 Corinthians 5:17; Psalm 51:10-12; Romans 12:1; James 4:6-8; 1 John 4:4; Philippians 4:19; Matthew 16:23; Psalm 139:23-24; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10; 1 Peter 5:8-9; Job 31:1; Matthew 5:27-28. These verses can be your sword for victory. Make sure you have an accountability partner who will check on you and be there for you as well!

**PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS FROM SEXUAL SINS** Father, I confess that I have disobeyed You and committed sexual sins. Please forgive me for \_\_\_\_\_ (specifically confess each and every sin). I take back any access I have given to any demons through these sins and I put it under the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Jesus' name I forbid these demons to make any claim against me or any of my family because of it. Please cleanse me from these memories and help me to never repeat these sins again. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit and use me for your glory. In Jesus' name. Amen

*Which of these three sin groups gives you the most problem: anger, idolatry or immorality? Why? How are you doing in having victory in this area? Where is victory still needed? Make sure there is no unconfessed sin in the present or past. Ask God to give you victory over these things and to remove the root causes that open you to them.*

## **BLOG 29: COMMON SINS THAT ALLOW DEMONIC ACCESS – 2**

In the previous blog we looked at anger, idolatry and immorality as sins which make a person especially vulnerable for demonizing. We'll look at others in this blog.

**WRONG SELF IMAGE BASED SINS** While there is often too much focus on self today under the guise of "developing a good self-image," it is true we are to accept ourselves as God made us (Psalm 139). We are to accept ourselves as we accept others (Luke 10:27) - accepting both strengths and weaknesses without over-emphasizing one or the other. Overemphasizing our strengths is pride, and that is the sin that caused Satan's downfall. He tries to use it today as much as possible. The other extreme (under-emphasizing our strengths) is to dislike or not accept ourselves as God made us. Self-love and self-hate are both from pride. Both focus on self and are preoccupation with self. In

one we see ourselves as better than others in the other you see yourself as worse. Both are definite cracks to demonizing, sins which must be confessed.

King Saul is a fine example of someone with a poor self-image, someone who was insecure and thought he was inferior to others (I Samuel 10:22). This was a crack that opened him to demonizing (I Samuel 16:14, 23). It's as important to forgive yourself as it is to forgive others! Satan tries to bring up past sins to have us feel defeated, unworthy, etc. Don't let this tactic work! The next time the devil reminds you of your past, remind him of his future.

In addition to these we will look other sins in future blogs. These include occult activity, secret societies and Masonic organizations, Satanism, New Age and marital arts. Now let's talk about how to remove access given by these sins.

**PATCHING THE CRACKS** The only cure for sin is the blood of Jesus. Any sin you recognize in your life must be confessed (admit it is sin - I John 1:9). There is no other way of deliverance from demonizing caused by sin. Demons are like rats that feed on garbage. Remove the garbage and the rats will be gone!

When these are confessed and renounced, claim back for God the ground that Satan may have claimed for his through these sins. Then make sure you ask and invite God's Holy Spirit to fill those areas. If they aren't replaced with the Holy Spirit, Satan will re-enter in stronger fashion (Mt. 12:43-45; Lk. 11:24-26). If there is a particular fruit of the Holy Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, Gal. 5:22-23), that you need to counteract what you have confessed, ask God for His Spirit to produce that in you., Be specific when you pray.

**PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS FOR SIN AND DELIVERANCE** "Dear heavenly Father, You have told us to put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts (Romans 13:14). I acknowledge that I have given in to sinful acts and thoughts. I have also sinned by not doing things I should have done and by doing good things for selfish motives. I know that in Christ my sins are forgiven, but I have transgressed Your holy law and given the enemy an opportunity to work against me (Ephesians 4:27; James 4:1; I Peter 5:8). I come before Your presence to acknowledge these sins and to seek Your cleansing (I John 1:9) that I may be freed from the bondage of sin (Galatians 5:1). I ask You to reveal to my mind the ways that I sinned and grieved the Holy Spirit. (Confess each sin that comes to mind one by one.) In Jesus' name I take back any ground that evil spirits have gained through my sin. Please fill me instead with your Spirit and use me for Your glory. I ask this in the wonderful name of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen."

*Do you have a poor self-image? Do you feel insecure, inferior, not worth the love and acceptance of others? That is a sin because You made us perfect, in Your image. Sin has driven us from You, but we are worthy of your love. You proved this by Jesus' death for us on the cross. Thank you for loving me as I am. Help me to accept myself as Your creation and to love me as You love me. Convict me every time every time I look down on your creation – me!*

### **BLOG 30: OCCULT ACTIVITY AND DEMONIZING**

On the banks of the Amazon River live a species of large, colorful spiders. When they spread themselves out they look exactly like the blossoms of a brilliant flower. When bees and insects land on one to find pollen they find instead a spider that poisons and kills them. Satan does the same thing with the occult and New Age movement today.

Many, many Bible verses clearly forbid God's people to get involved in any occult activity. The power behind the occult is always demonic (Acts 8:9-24; 16:16-18). While sins of the flesh give opening to Satan's forces, involvement in the occult gives MUCH more access. It is direct

involvement with demons, and voluntarily asking them to work in your life. Deuteronomy 18:9-13 gives a list of some of the main occult activities which are forbidden.

**Deuteronomy 18:9-13. When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nations there. 10. Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination, or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, 11. or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. 12. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD, and because of these detestable practices the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you. 13. You must be blameless before the LORD your God.**

sacrifice son or daughter in the fire Worship of Molech (includes worship of stars, sorcery, divination, etc.) Manesseh did this (II Kings 2:1-17)

divination *kosem kesamim* Foretell future or discover hidden knowledge by supernatural powers. Ezekiel 21:21 used arrows (picked one with label that they likes), or livers (color and configuration).

sorcery *meonen* Predict future based on planets, etc. Drugs usually part of this (*pharmakeia* - Greek Gal 5:20) This is referred to in Acts 8:9-24

omens *menachesh* Inspect entrails of beasts, flight of birds, especially they used snakes back then. To find hidden, secret info, knowledge

witchcraft *mechashsheph* Literally to reveal truth, uncover mysteries, usually by magic or witchcraft (drugs, herbs, perfumes to call demons, etc.). The Jews learned it in Egypt & from pagans. It is associated with idolatry (turn from God) and is strongly forbidden (II Kings 9:22; II Chronicles 33:6; Micah 5:12; Nahum 3:4). God gave the death penalty for doing this (Exodus 22:18; Leviticus 20:27)

cast spells *chober chaber* A charmer, hypnotism, spells, curses

medium *shoel ob* 'engastromuthoi' or 'ventriloquist' - demon speaking through man (Isaiah 8:19, Leviticus 19:31; 20:27). This is the same as Pythona spirit in Acts 16:16,18. This is the name of the dragon/snake Apollo killed at Delphi who guarded the priestess there and gave her oracles. Thus this Apollo spirit became the one by which the god spoke to the person who had it, enabling them to pronounce oracles. This can be misinterpreted as 'speaking in tongues'.

spiritist *yiddeoni* A wizard (male witch) who would contact demons trying to get information God doesn't give out

consults the dead *doresh el hammethim* Necromancy, contact the dead, is forbidden (Leviticus 19:31; 20:6,27; II Kings 23:24; I Chronicles 10:13-14). Saul went to the witch of Endor to do this (1 Samuel 28:7-25).

Form of occult involvement today include use of amulets or good luck charms, astrology, astral projection, black or white magic, clairvoyance, spells, crystal ball readings, divination, drug usage, ESP, iridology, fire walking, fortune telling, herbology, horoscopes, levitation, 'magic' (not slight-of-hand tricks), mind reading, necromancy, numerology, occult healing, occult games, omens, Ouija boards, pendulum, palm reading, pyramidology, psychometry, reflexology, ring or needle on a thread, seances, sorcery Satanism, soothsaying, spells and curses, spiritistic visions, table tapping or rising, Tarot cards, reading tea leaves, telepathy, transcendental meditation, gitagenics, wizasry, yoga, etc. I'm sure other activities and beliefs could be added to the list. My purpose is not to make a conclusive list, but to give an idea of the types of things that open us to demonic involvement. The point is that sins of these kinds MUST be admitted, confessed, renounced, and all access taken back from Satan. Then any demons who are working through these areas must be cast out in Jesus' name. Prayerfully and honestly read the list and check anything you have ever been involved in, then confess, renounce, and take back all access. Command the demons to be gone, too.

PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE FROM OCCULT INVOLVEMENT Dear God, I confess all my occult involvement as sin. ('Confess each specific sin.) I put any and all sins of an occult nature that I may have committed under the blood of Jesus and ask for Your forgiveness for each of them. I take back

any access I have given to any of Satan's forces through these sins. I pray this in the name of Jesus, who became curse for me on Calvary and died that I might be set free. Amen

*Have you ever been involved in any occult activity? This offers a clear opening for demons to enter and work. Any of these in your past (or present), or in others in your family line, must be put under the blood of Jesus. Take back any access these have given to Satan's forces. Ask God to fill you with His present instead. If you have any books or object from any of these please destroy them immediately and ask God to clean your home from them.*

### **BLOG 31: SECRET SOCIETIES & DEMONIZING**

While often quite popular today, even in Christian circles, secret societies have definite occult connections. These are not so obvious from a distance, but are there. In Scottsdale, Arizona, hotels and motels paint their grass green to lure tourists. You can't tell the difference until you get up close. So with these societies. Secret societies include groups like the Masons, Shriners, Elks, Moose, Odd Fellows and Klu Klux Klan. They are counterfeit religions for they talk about God and being good, have chaplains, pray, quote Scripture and often meet in "temples." They appeal today because of their WASP policies and pride in belonging.

However, as the name implies, there are 'secrets' those without (and often the majority within, too) don't know. An oath is taken to join, with a curse that comes if the secrecy oath is broken. These secrecy oaths are commitments which open a person to demonizing. Jesus and the Bible are against this secrecy (Matthew 5:33-37; James 5:12; Exodus 20:7; John 18:20; Ephesians 5:11-12). In these societies believers are unequally yoked to unbelievers. Their view of God is wrong (they have a secret name for Him, which some say is Lucifer, and equate God with Allah and all other gods). Jesus is dethroned and made equal to Buddha, Mohammed, etc. Prayer is not "in Jesus' name." Salvation is promised through doing the good works of the group, and that is wrong (Ephesians 2:8-9). These groups usually see themselves as superior to the church and Christian fellowship. Titles for their leaders like "Worshipful Master" are pure blasphemy.

The power and appeal behind these things is demonic. They receive the worship and instill the pride (I Corinthians 10:19-21; Zechariah 10:2). Joining one of these groups give a clear opening to demonizing. Once in a family these usually pass down ancestrally, even if the next generation doesn't join a secret society.

The cure is to leave, confess the involvement as sin (I John 1:9), and put any access given under the blood of Jesus. Often these are powerful demons and this renouncement must be made over and over while depending on God's deliverance.

**PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE FROM MASONIC BONDAGE** Dear Father, I recognize that involvement in masonry opens one to spiritual bondage. I confess as sin any involvement I or any of my ancestors may have had to any form of masonry. In Jesus' name I take back any and all access any of Satan's demons may have claimed against through it. I am a child of God and I belong to Him. I break any claim against me by any of my ancestors. I break any curses or oaths taken by any ancestors which Satan uses against me. I put them under the blood of Jesus. Fill me completely with your Holy Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

*Have you ever been involved in the Masons or a similar 'secret society' group? Have your ancestors? If so it is very important you confess that and take back any access demons may claim to you through it.*

### **BLOG 32: SATANISM, NEW AGE, MARTIAL ARTS & DEMONIZING**

**SATANISM** is one of the fastest growing religions today. The dark nature of it has a strong appeal to those already demonized, and of course any involvement in it opens a person to deep demonizing. Children and teens are more and more drawn into this through drugs, sex, rock music, movies and other avenues. Satanists believe Satan represents indulgence (instead of abstinence), vengeance (instead of turning the other cheek), and meeting your sensual desires (instead of spiritual pipe dreams). Man is just another animal free to indulge any desire he wants. Satan represents power and immediate gratification instead of Jesus' seeming weakness and living for the future. Satan seems near and concerned, willing to quickly do whatever a person wants. Involvement in Satanism is usually the end result of a path that starts very subtly by allowing other openings to demonizing. Of course God is greater and it can be broken, but even dabbling with it in curiosity is very serious business.

There are many good Christian books in Christian bookstores that can give much more detailed information about this subject than we can here. If necessary, please avail yourself of them.

**NEW AGE** The New Age Movement is a loosely knit group of individuals and organizations that fundamentally believe that persons will all evolve into God and achieve a global unity that will transcend religious, racial, cultural and political ideologies.

Recognize that just because they use nice-sounding words, deep conviction, and even displays of power, that doesn't mean a thing is from God. *"False Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. Behold, I have told you in advance."* Matthew 24:24-25

Confess any and all involvement as sin (I John 1:9) and put any access you may have given Satan's forces through your involvement under the blood of Jesus. Take back any openings you may have given demons to work in your life. If anyone in your family has been involved in any of these occult activities (occult, Satanism, secret societies or New Age) put that under the blood of Jesus, too, and take back any access any demons may have tried to claim against you through it.

**MARTIAL ARTS** While many Christians participate in marital arts, I personally feel they are to be avoided by believers, especially by those who are open to demonic attacks. It is very hard to separate the physical aspect from the meditation techniques. These can be not just physical gym exercises but actually are seemingly innocuous doorways into non-Christian religions.

Some Christians practice the martial arts for exercise, or even as a way of evangelizing, but don't really know what they are getting into. If it works they don't ask questions about what it means. Eastern religious techniques often are portrayed as neutral so anyone from any religion can use them, but I think this is very deceptive. We can try to ignore the spiritual dimensions, but spirituality is their ultimate purpose historically. The Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs considers the martial arts as "forms of spiritual education that function as means toward self-realization or self-enlightenment." It can be difficult emotionally for a person to give up the martial arts, because they may be so involved with them. Rather than considering they may be dangerous they vigorously defend their right to practice them.

**PRAYER FOR THOSE INVOLVED IN NEW AGE OR OCCULT ACTIVITIES** "Dear heavenly Father, I ask You to reveal to me all the occult practices, false religions, and false teachers with which I have knowingly or unknowingly been involved. I confess that I have participated in \_\_\_\_\_. I ask Your forgiveness, and I renounce \_\_\_\_\_ as a counterfeit to true Christianity. I take back any access I may have given to Satan's demons through this. Please forgive me, cleanse me, and fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Use me for Your glory. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen"

*If you have been involved in Satanic or New Age activities or thought you must confess that and take back any access you have given to demonic forces through it. If you have been involved in yoga that includes meditation, saying words or chants, etc., that must be confessed as well. If you*

*have done yoga-type activities for exercise, ask God to show you what, if anything, need to be confessed. His Spirit will bring guidance and conviction when your heart is open to His truth, whatever it may be.*

### **BLOG 33: PHYSICAL AFFLICTION AND DEMONIZING**

There is often a strong relationship between **spiritual deliverance and physical healing**. Often physical problems are also gone when the demons leave. That is because the demons were causing the physical problems. Examples of these in the Bible include: crippled limbs (Luke 13:11), Paul's thorn in the flesh (eye disease? - II Corinthians 12:7), muteness (sometimes dumbness, too - Matthew 9:32-33; 12:22; Mark 9:17-18,24-25), blindness (Matthew 12:22), seizures (Mark 1:26; 9:17-18,20,22,25; Matthew 17:15,18; Luke 9:39), deafness (Mark 9:17-18,20,25), sores (skin cancer?) (Job 2:7), boils and other painful afflictions (Psalm 78:49 - the plagues in Egypt were demon-caused), and physical torments of all kinds (Revelation 9:5,10). The Bible states that Satan can cause illness (Job 2:7-8), even death (Job 1:19).

Physical healing can be a result of deliverance. If any of the demons were causing physical problems those problems will be resolved when the demons are removed. Generational spirits can cause the same ailments from generation to generation. Physical problems are usually not God's main concern; rather He is more concerned for the spiritual condition of the heart. We often pray for the symptom (physical problem) to be removed while God wants us to seek Him and what He is trying to teach us through it. Paul's thorn in the flesh is a clear example. It wasn't God's will for that demon to be removed, but for Paul to be spiritually strengthened through the experience.

If a physical problem is present it can be good to find out when it first started and what else was going on at that time. Instead of focusing on removing the physical symptom, look for the root cause, be it demonic, spiritual or whatever else it may be.

It must be noted that **not all illness is demonic** in origin. Jesus healed physical ills that weren't demonic (Matthew 4:23-24; 8:16-17 fulfilled Isaiah 53:4; Mark 1:34; Acts 10:34; etc.). The Bible clearly talks about illnesses that are not demonic: severe pain (Matthew 4:24), seizures (Matthew 4:24), paralysis (Matthew 4:24; Acts 8:7), leprosy (Matthew 10:8), blindness (Luke 7:21), crippled limbs (Acts 8:7) and many other various diseases (Matthew 4:24). The fact that some physical ailments are on both lists (like seizures) shows that many ailments may have demonic or natural causes. They could be from one source or the other.

**Jesus often cast out demons and cured illness at the same time.** Jesus said he would do this (Luke 13:32). He did this at the start of His ministry (Matthew 4:23-24; 8:16; Mark 1:34; Luke 4:41), around Tyre and Sidon (Mark 3:10-12; Luke 6:18-19), and in the middle of His ministry (Luke 7:21). Many female followers of Jesus were cured of both (Luke 8:2).

Even more precise are the accounts of when **Jesus both cast out demons and healed illness in a person at the same time** (Mark 6:13; Acts 5:16). Philip did this in Samaria (Acts 8:7) and Paul did it in Ephesus (Acts 19:12).

Thus it is obvious that **some, but not all illness is demonic**. There are no certain illnesses that are exclusively demonic, nor others that aren't. Any physical ill can be demonic, but no one ill is always demonic. In our day and age we err by seeing too little illness as being demonic. Thus we often miss the cure. How can we tell if an illness or physical problem is demonic or not? Some clues to look for are: medical doctors aren't able to bring relief or cure; there is a pattern of it running in the family; it seems strange or doesn't follow the regular pattern of symptoms (comes and goes for no particular reason, etc.); or you feel in your spirit that it should be prayed about and looked into as possibly being demonic.

Again, our pattern for bringing about this removal of physical ills by deliverance should **follow Jesus' example**. He rebuked a fever and it left immediately and strength instantly returned (Luke 4:39). On at least one occasion power came from within Jesus to heal (Luke 6:19). He often laid hands on a person to bring both deliverance and healing (Luke 4:40; 13:13; 4:29; Matthew 8:15; Luke 13:1-13).

As to us doing this today, again it must be **done in God's strength and power**. If He chooses to bring healing through deliverance that is His will. We must never demand it or make it dependent on having enough faith. No one today has a gift to heal anyone and everyone. It is right for us to pray for healing when doing deliverance and leave the results to God. It is also necessary to deal with any demons who may be causing the illness (physical or mental, see page 7). Often demons affect our health in indirect ways, such as working in us so we eat or do things that are unhealthy for us in the long run and undermine our health. All of these, too, must be dealt with in Jesus' name (Matthew 10:1). Sometimes God may lead you to **anoint with oil** as a symbol of the Holy Spirit who does the healing (Mark 6:13). Do NOT put any faith in the oil or any ritual in using it, it is simply an audio-visual. For more on healing see pages 116-117

Therefore, be aware that **often illness is demonic**, especially when doctors are unable to bring a cure. Even diseases they can cure can still be demonic, especially if there are other signs of demonizing active in the person's life. Keep this in mind when praying and seeking wisdom. Don't accept any illness as "incurable." Always make sure it isn't demonic (by asking God for wisdom and commanding any demons involved in that ailment to be gone in Jesus' name). Remember, when dealing with emotional and spiritual ills in your warfare praying, don't let out physical ills! Never fear, demons can only cause ills with God's approval (Job 1:6-12).

One word of warning: since demons can cause illness, they can also bring **counterfeit 'healings'** by stopping the physical ills they themselves cause (Matthew 12:24; 24:24; II Thessalonians 2:9; Revelation 16:14). This explains miraculous healings that aren't done in accordance with God's will and Word.

*Is there an ailment that doctors haven't been able to remove? Perhaps it could be in you or in someone you know. Ask God to show you if there could be a demonic cause behind it and what God is trying to teach through this. Then ask Him to show you if you should pray for it to be removed, or if He wants to allow it to use it for His glory. This kind of praying takes time, patience, perseverance and an open heart. But it is the only correct way to pray about these things.*

### **BLOG 34: IS IT GOD'S WILL FOR EVERYONE TO BE HEALED TODAY?**

There are those today who believe that Jesus not only paid for sin on the cross, but that He also paid for our sickness. They say that each is received by faith, if you have enough faith to receive it. Loss of faith, then, causes the loss of these benefits of faith. They claim some are especially gifted in healing and can heal those who come to them. They say God did miracles in the Bible and he is still a miracle-working God today.

What about this? Is this true? This is not just one peripheral issue, but stands very central in our salvation and Christian life. Is God's sovereignty or man's free will the final and ultimate deciding factor? It must be God's sovereignty. The motive for living for Jesus should not be fear of losing our salvation. The goal of living for Jesus should not be a problem free life. Pain and suffering isn't to be faced by whipping up enough 'faith' so that God removes it (or living with the feelings of failure and guilt if it isn't removed and we believe that is our fault by not having enough faith). What about these claims of 'faith healers'? What does the Bible say?

**IS THE GIFT OF HEALING FOR TODAY?** While it's true that Jesus and the Apostles healed, it was done as a sign to authenticate that they were from God (Mt 12:39). This was God's way

having people listen to them instead of all the counterfeits around. When they were fully authenticated, there was no longer any reason for the sign. In AD 35 all were healed but by AD 60 some were not (Epaphroditus, Paul's thorn in the flesh). Then by AD 67 very few were being healed (Trophimus was left at Miletus sick, Timothy's stomach was unhealed, etc.). Jerusalem, the scene of many early miracles, had not one miracle done in it after Stephen was stoned. The people had the evidence but rejected it. James, the oldest book in the Bible, says that if someone is sick we are to pray for them (James 5:14).

**SHOULD WE SEE MIRACLES TODAY LIKE IN BIBLE TIMES?** Actually if you list all the miracles in the Bible you will find almost all of them fit three time periods. They aren't evenly spread out throughout history but cluster in the times of Moses/Joshua, Elijah/Elisha and Jesus/apostles. In each of these times a new mess had developed so God sent a new message through a new messenger whom He authenticated by miracles ("signs"). One more time of miracles is coming, called the Tribulation.

**IS FAITH A PREREQUISITE FOR HEALING?** Jesus didn't make faith a requirement for healing. Many that He healed didn't have faith. The impotent man at the pool didn't even know who He was. The man with the withered hand and the man with dropsy were healed as a sign to religious leaders who were present; they didn't ask to be healed. The cripple that Peter and Paul healed outside the temple didn't exercise any faith. Of course the demoniacs who were delivered and those brought back from the dead didn't exercise faith. Then there are others who had strong faith but weren't healed: Stephen, Paul, Timothy, Job, David, Elisha, etc.

**IS 'HEALING' TODAY THE SAME AS IN BIBLE TIMES?** Today's 'healers' must meet the same characteristics of Jesus and the apostles to claim they are doing what was done then. Jesus and the apostles healed with a word or touch wherever and whenever. There was no special place or time, no chants or music, no gimmicks, nothing. Do today's faith healers walk down the hall in a hospital and empty every room? That's how Jesus and Peter did it. Also, Bible miracles were done instantly, not gradually or slowly. There was no healing to 'claim' or lose. Healing was then done totally, not partially, and it was never lost. Everyone was healed. There was no screening done. 100% of every one, no matter the need, was healed. Organic diseases were healed: limbs grew back instantly, strong enough to walk on, eyes were open, leprosy instantly gone and healthy flesh grown. Then, too, the dead were raised. Today's faith healing doesn't nearly meet these characteristics.

**DOES GOD NOT HEAL?** Yes, a sovereign God can always heal. He is always able to heal, but He is not always willing. Healing isn't guaranteed. Healing isn't based on our having enough faith. Miracles by Jesus and the apostles were done as a sign to authenticate the One who could heal an unseen soul. God can and does heal, but He doesn't gift others to do it, nor does He say that is the recommended norm for His people.

**WHAT ARE WE TO DO WHEN SICK?** When we are sick it's good to first make sure it isn't for sin or disobedience. If there is sin that God is using the sickness to point out, confess it and God will forgive and then use that illness for good (Romans 8:28). It's fine to pray, asking God to heal if that is His will. We are to submit to His will, not demand He do what we want. Ask Him to use the pain and suffering for His glory (that we and others can see His greatness through His provision and peace) and our growth (make us trust Him more and become more like Jesus). Use the best available resources: diet, rest, exercise and medical help. Realize that all healing does ultimately come from God. Leave the results to His will, though.

Granted, this whole subject of faith and healing can be a confusing and guilt-producing area. Specific verses can be found to seemingly support most any view. However an overview of the Bible and it's teaching about these things definitely seems to substantiate the above view of healing. Always remember, our faith must be in Jesus. HE is the object of our faith, never a human

person or group. Put faith in Jesus, not faith in your faith! HE is the one we are to look to and glorify. Always keep your eyes on Him. Trust and serve Him no matter what.

*Ask God to help you know how to pray about physical ailments for yourself and others. Don't just assume you should pray for immediate and total healing for everyone. God often uses these things to bring us and others closer to Him (as Paul's thorn in the flesh). Allow Him to use whatever He chooses in your life or in the lives of others to make the person more like Jesus.*

### **BLOG 35: DOES GOD WANT US TO SPEAK IN TONGUES TODAY?**

The whole question of speaking in tongues can be very controversial and divisive. That certainly isn't my purpose in this blog. This is a subject I have thoroughly and carefully studied in detail several times in my ministry, and I have encountered it many, many times in my ministry. In my counseling I often find demonizing that has come in through a seeking for the gift of tongues I must include this.

**BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT, SECOND BLESSING, TONGUES & SUCH MATTERS** What a land-mine this subject is! It gets so divisive. I'm sure God hates to see that among His children. I don't write this to be divisive, but God does require each of us to come to our own conclusions on this matter, based on the Bible. I don't try to explain how or why others feel led as they do, I don't in any way judge or condemn them, and I only know how God is leading me from His Word. I have thoroughly studied this whole issue with as open a heart as possible, even wishing there were some higher form of spirituality and victory that would take me to a higher plane. Still, I feel totally convinced God is showing me through His Word that these things are not for me nor the people I shepherd. What is happening in Pentecostal and Charismatic circles I do not know. I only know how He leads me.

The Bible teaches that each believer is **filled with the Holy Spirit** at the moment of salvation (1 Corinthians 10:1ff; 12:3; 6:19; Ephesians 4:5; Romans 5:5). One cannot be saved without the Holy Spirit indwelling them (John 7:37-39; 14:16-17; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20). From there on it is not a matter of getting more of the Holy Spirit but of the Holy Spirit getting more of us! As we totally submit and live a holy life He fills and works through us.

Then what about Acts 2, 8, 10 and 19, when the Holy Spirit came on those who were already believers? **Acts 2** is a one-time, non-repeatable experience (not even repeated in Acts 8, 10 or 19). Just like the Second Person of the Trinity made a unique, one-time entrance into the world through a virgin in a stable, so the Third Person made His entrance in a unique, one-time way. When Jesus came back to earth after the resurrection to the apostles, Paul or John on Patmos, He never repeated the virgin-in-a-stable entrance. Acts 2, also, is non-repeatable.

Acts 2 is a transition, from Old Testament law when the Holy Spirit only indwelt some believers sometimes, to New Testament grace, when the Holy Spirit indwells all believers for their whole life. The apostles had already accepted Jesus' claims and were saved in the old dispensation, then when the new dispensation started and the Spirit came they naturally would be the first to receive Him in that way. That is non-repeatable, too. In **Acts 8** we see this same truth applied to half Jews and half Gentiles, in **Acts 10** to Gentiles in Palestine, and in **Acts 19** to Gentiles outside of Palestine. They were similar to Acts 2 to show that Jews and Gentiles were now equal in the same Body, that the same thing happened to each. Each one showed the changeover from Old Testament law to New Testament grace. There had to be a definite time of change, showing the transfer had been made and those believers accepted. Still, what happened was different enough to show that it wasn't Acts 2 repeated again. Those were the only times anything even resembling Acts 2 happened in Acts, and it only happened once for each new group as the gospel spread from Jerusalem. All others received the Holy Spirit immediately at salvation.

**Tongues are not proof of Spirit baptism.** Many received the Holy Spirit but not tongues: 3,000 on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38-41), early church believers (Acts 4:31), Samaritans (Acts 8:14-17), Paul (Acts 9:17-18), John the Baptist (Luke 1:15-16), Jesus (Lk. 3:21-22; 4:1,14,18,21) and many others (Acts 4:8,31; 6:5; 7:55; 11:24; 13:9,52). Speaking in tongues is never mentioned in the leadership qualities in Titus or I Timothy. The Bible makes it clear that obedience is the proof of the Holy Spirit's indwelling, not tongues (Ephesians 5:18f).

**Tongues in Acts and Corinth were the same.** The same Greek word ('glossa' meaning 'tongue, to speak, language') is always used of known foreign languages and is used in both Acts (2:6-11, etc.) and Corinth (1 Corinthians 14:21; 12:10). In Acts is it obvious that the listeners heard known languages spoken by those who had no previous knowledge of the language. There is no indication that what Corinth experienced was different. It is only the church at Corinth that is mentioned as using tongues, and then many corrections were needed because it was a very carnal church (I Cor. 3:1-3).

**The purpose of tongues** was to show Jews that God's judgment was on them. They were to spread God's message to Gentiles but failed. God would show He was judging them for that by bringing His word to them by Gentiles in Gentile languages. This was prophesied in Isaiah 28:9-12; 33:19f; Deuteronomy 28:49; and Jeremiah 5:15. Paul said tongues fulfilled those prophecies (1 Corinthians 14:21-22). When the Jews didn't heed this sign and repent, God's judgment came upon them in 70 AD when Jerusalem was destroyed. After 70 AD there is no instance of tongues being used in the early church. Signs are placed before what they are to mark, not after! Paul said (I Cor. 13:8-12) that tongues "will be stilled." The Greek word, 'pauo,' is in the middle voice; they will stop by themselves and not start again. History records only a very few, very isolated, very minor outbreak of tongues from Acts to the present. These groups were often heretical in some or all of their other beliefs. Obviously tongues did stop. There is nothing to indicate that they would ever begin again, for their purpose has been fulfilled. When Joel 2 talks about the Holy Spirit coming back after the Tribulation, there is no mention of tongues!

Then what about those with the gift of interpretation? First, the Greek word for this refers to someone who interprets known languages, like from Spanish to German. The use of foreign languages was to show God's judgment to the Jews present. The content of the message was God's good news, which the Jews should have been spreading. Since speaking in an unknown language would mean nothing to Gentiles present, Paul said there had to be an interpreter present when the gift was used (1 Corinthians 14:26-28). This was necessary for the weak and immature Corinthian believers (14:20-22) who were ignorant of God's truth (12:13). It was to be kept to a minimum (14:6-12) because it was an inferior gift (I Cor. 14:4). Paul himself only used his ability to speak in unknown languages in Jewish synagogues, not Jewish services (14:39).

Applying these criteria to tongues today (known foreign language, showing God's judgment on the Jews, used only with Jews present, sees as a lesser/minor gift whose use was to be kept to a minimum, etc.) shows that what is happening today is different from what happened back then.

**Tongues are not a heavenly language.** The Greek word makes it clear they are a KNOWN language (Acts 2:6-11; 1 Corinthians 14:21; 12:10). This is different than the 'groanings' of Romans 8:26 for those are clearly said to be unutterable (not able to be spoken). The "tongues of angels" (I Cor. 13:1) is a hyperbole (overemphasis to make a point) like "faith to move mountains." Besides, when angels spoke in the Bible, it was always in the known language of those to whom they were speaking.

**Tongues are not a private prayer language.** All spiritual gifts are given for the sake of others, not the one having the gift (1 Corinthians 12:7, 12f; 14:19,27), that's why an interpreter had to always be present in Corinth (1 Corinthians 14:26-28). Every time the gift of tongues was given in the Bible it was given to a group, not an individual. It was always used in a group, too, no instance of

private use is recorded. The tongue is to be controlled by the speaker, not beyond his control (I Cor. 14:28-33). Plus, tongues were to be a sign to unbelievers, not believers (1 Corinthians 14:22). Jesus Himself warned about praying words we don't understand (Mt 6:7). Paul said he always understood what he said when he prayed, even in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:15). When asked how to pray Jesus gave the Lord's Prayer, not tongues.

**Dangers of speaking in tongues today.** Paul warns about Satan's ability to counterfeit this (1 Corinthians 12:2-3) as he has in other religions and cults today. Tongues is said to be an inferior gift because it is self-centered (1 Corinthians 14:4) and leads to emphasis being put on emotions which can lead people astray (2 Corinthians 6:11-12; Rom 16:17-18). We are told to pray with understanding (1 Corinthians 14:13-17) and control our spiritual gift (1 Corinthians 14:28-40). God arbitrarily chooses which gifts to give to whom (1 Corinthians 12:7,11,18,28). We are told to not seek any particular gift (1 Corinthians 12:31; 14:1-4). Tongues speaking can become a substitute for spirituality (1 Corinthians 14:26-28). Worse of all, it can produce a false security by those who put faith in it as proof that God loves and accepts them. Most who practice tongues-speaking do not believe in eternal security of salvation, so their speaking in tongues becomes their proof of acceptance by God. Our faith must be in Jesus' work on the cross, not in our ability to speak in 'tongues.' Those without the gift can feel pressured to fit in with the rest of the group.

*If you have been involved in speaking in tongues, especially if you have asked for the gift or have allowed someone to lay hands on you and pray you would have this gift, this is something that must be confessed and rebuked. Study the Scriptures above on your own. Pray for wisdom and guidance from God. Have an open heart to what God would show you.*

## **BLOG 36: FASTING AND SPIRITUAL WARFARE**

Fasting is often **neglected today**, but when done out of a right motive it can be a real help in spiritual warfare. Jesus fasted often (Matthew 4:1-11, etc.). Jesus assumed His disciples would fast (note the "when," not "if" in Matthew 6:16). Fasting is a spiritual exercise distinct from prayer, although often done in connection with prayer. It is still something for us to do today (Matthew 9:15). Usually fasting is done from food (all or a certain food group, like sweets, or a certain meal a day, or no food all day). Sometimes drink is abstained from, other times not. Sometimes sleep (II Corinthians 6:5; 11:27) and/or sex (I Corinthians 7:3-5) are included. Be sensitive to how and when God leads you to fast.

The **motive** in fasting is not to punish self for sin or prove sincerity to God so He will smile with more favor in a certain situation. Hunger pictures humility (Psalm 69:10; Deuteronomy 8:2-3,11-14; Hosea 13:6). Enduring hunger teaches self-discipline and works against pride (Ezra 8:21; Isaiah 58:3). It provides an attitude of submission. Fasting also opens up more time to be available to pray and seek God. It shows a willingness to sacrifice anything to get closer to God. It serves notice to demonic forces that you are serious in your pursuit of God's will and glory (Jeremiah 29:13-14). A side benefit of fasting is that one can learn to depend on God for self-control and thus better control their appetite (I Corinthians 6:12-13; II Peter 2:19). This also helps with self-control over sexual sins as well.

While we usually think of fasting as going without any food, there are various forms fasting can take. Partial fasts can involve eliminating certain foods or meals. Even with a complete elimination of food healthy drinks can be consumed.

Fasting is not a way to force God's hand or get our prayer answered quickly. It must be done for the right motive or there is no benefit (Matthew 6:6-18; Isaiah 58; Luke 8:11-12). Fasting can provide an attitude of submission (desire to please God and not self). It can free up extra time for

prayer. The accompanying hunger can be a reminder to pray without ceasing and the hunger itself can be offered as a sacrificial gift to God.

It is best to begin fasting gradually and not embark on an extended period of fasting the first time. Many good books and articles are available helping one learn what is best to eat before and after a fast. Just remember that the focus is on God, not the faster. The enemy can use it as a source of pride and this negates the whole purpose of fasting.

*Have you ever fasted for spiritual reasons? How did it help you spiritually? Ask God if He would have you fast in some way now. What would it be for? What would you fast from? For how long? What would be your goal or purpose for the fast? Prayerfully consider these things before starting.*

### **BLOG 37: CAN CHILDREN BE DEMONIZED?**

**ADOPTED CHILDREN** are quite often attacked because of openings in their past: rejection, illegitimacy, rape (mother or them), abuse or many other things. There are often many generational demons at work. Deliverance should be sought early for adopted children who show signs of difficulties adjusting and adapting to their new family. Any child who has experienced a traumatic experience when young can have demonic openings from it. A car or other kind of accident or any situation that causes terror can be the reason. So can abuse, rape, molestation or any form of rejection.

In order to bring deliverance to adopted children first of all the bond with the natural mother must be broken. It's like cutting an invisible spiritual umbilical cord. Pray to break any claim by spirits of abandonment, resentment, anger, lust, low self-esteem, self-centeredness, jealousy, rejection, self-rejection, etc., and pray for them to be free from any generational spirits who would be claiming them. Pray against any family curses, spirits of occultism or anything that had access to the family through the ancestors. For more information about children and deliverance see pages 57-58, 60.

**REJECTION** If, before birth, one or both of the parents reject the pregnancy and the baby is unwanted; demons can step in and claim the baby. Also, if there is a difficult birth or the parents are disappointed because of the sex or a physical feature (or handicap) of the baby then demons can claim it. Sometimes even extreme sibling rejection can cause this. Rejection can come later too, especially if a baby cries a lot or causes problems for the parents, or if it interferes in their life or career.

If you felt rejection in your childhood, what can you now do about it? First, make a free will decision to forgive the person/parent. In Jesus' name break anything they said/felt against you (as with curses above). Freely accept God's love to fill and heal you. In Jesus name forbid any demons of rejection to do any work against you. From then on take every thought captive (II Corinthians 10:4-5) and don't let negative thoughts about your past rejection dominate (Philippians 4:8). Claim your new relationship to God (II Corinthians 5:17).

**ABUSE** This includes any form of incest or physical abuse (physical or emotional). As seen before, sexual union gives demons access (I Corinthians 6:16). The trauma of abuse creates openings that demons often use in the child's life from then on.

**REBELLION** Rebellion is often seen as "natural," but can be as much an invitation for demonizing as direct occult involvement (I Samuel 15:23 says so!). There is a difference between normal "trying to find one's self" and real rebellion. In Israel older children who rebelled were stoned to death. How can we tell normal rebellion from abnormal?

It is normal for a child to want his curfew extended to that of his friends but abnormal to ignore their curfew and sometimes stay out all night. It is normal for a child to exhibit mood swings (without

violence of destruction) but abnormal when they become more and more irrational and violent. Showing less interest in family activities as they grow older is normal for children, but becoming so withdrawn they only use the home for a bed and breakfast is abnormal. Showing some impatience with rules and restrictions is normal, but purposefully disobeying and speaking disrespectfully are not. A gradual change in interests and friends as a child grows in normal, but suddenly dropping all former interests and activities is not. It is normal that a child will not confide in a parent as much as they used to as they mature, but abnormal for them to be sneaky and secretive, even dishonest and manipulative. Children may want to stretch the dress code you lay down, but it is abnormal to purposely dress in a way that will shock and offend you. The Bible says this abnormal rebellion will grow in the last days (II Timothy 3:1-5) and it certainly has been.

If you sense this in your child please pray specifically and regularly for them. Confront them in love. Reestablish the relationship so grounds of communication can be opened. Counseling can be helpful, too. Try to distinguish between their attitude and their action. Sometimes one must be addressed first, other times the other. Ask God for wisdom (James 1).

## **BREAKING ACCESS GIVEN IN CHILDHOOD**

FROM YOUR OWN CHILDHOOD Confess (admit) what happened as sin and put it under the blood of Jesus (I John 1:9). Even if it isn't your sin, you must label what happened as sin and break its power over you by Jesus' blood. Forgive anyone that has been influential or guilty in any of these areas. In Jesus' name take back any access demons can try to use. Ask to be filled by the Holy Spirit and healed from the results of any of these. Claim II Corinthians 5:17, that you are now a new creation in Jesus and all those old things are gone and passed away.

IN YOUR OWN CHILDREN Confess the sin and especially your part in it, putting it under the blood of Jesus (I John 1:9). Forgive anyone involved (others or yourself). In Jesus' name take back any access demons can try to use from it. Ask to be filled by the Holy Spirit and healed from the results of any of these. Pray for them regularly and specifically. Claim II Corinthians 5:17 for them if they are believers (they are a new creation and all these things in the past are gone). If they aren't a believer pray for their salvation.

God's promise to us in this area is: *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, He is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! II Corinthians 5:17*

*Do you see any of these things in your own childhood? Pray and ask God to remove them and put them under the blood of Jesus. Ask for wisdom to understand them and courage to pray against them. Ask him to heal you from them, fill you with His presence, and move ahead in your life for Him.*

## **BLOG 38: CHILDREN & DEMONIZING**

As we saw, **children can be demonized**. In fact, there is much more of this going on that we are aware of. The form the demonic attacks take could be anything from causing an infant to scream a lot at night to bed-wetting by an older child or to overt rebellion and disobedience. Anything that seems to defeat you or the child is suspect. God's deliverance is for them, too.

The Bible records demons afflicting children with physical illness (Matthew 17:15; Mark 9:18, 25). They prevent children from being able to control their own emotions (Mark 9:17, 22). They physically try to harm children (Mark 9:20-22). They defile children by satisfying their own evil natures through them (Mark 1:24, 34; 5:9; Luke 4:41). They make them perform or show off (Mark 9:20, 25) and defy the person trying to free the child from their control (Mark 9:19, 23). They may even induce symptoms of death when forced to leave (Mark 9:26-27).

A very, very common pattern is for the **first-born male** to be affect first and most by generational attacks. The first-born Jews were dedicated to God and so Satan tries to attack and claim them first, too. Often it is the first-born male in a family that is attacked spiritually.

Make sure the child knows that he is not the problem but that he has a problem. Often **children are more aware of these things than we think**. They may be so used to hearing voices in their heads, seeing manifestations in their room at night, or being controlled by feelings/emotions beyond their control that they don't realize these are unusual. Spend some unrushed time letting them talk. Ask lots of questions and listen carefully to the answers. Try to put yourself in their place, with their limited vocabulary. Gently probe all areas (voices, manifestations, too-real imaginary friends, etc.). Don't assume things. Take everything they say seriously. Make notes of things to pray about or talk about later. Be sensitive to God's leading. Go with your impulses and thoughts, they are from God at a time like this. Pray for wisdom from God (James 1) about these things and what the openings may be.

**Children are often more sensitive to the spiritual realm.** Many have a story from their younger years of seeing an angel. They are also more sensitive to evil. It isn't unusual for a house to have had certain parts (or all) of it opened to demonic forces by things said or done there in the past. If a certain **area of your home** seems to cause problems (especially fear, but it could be anything) go to that area and in Jesus name take back any access Satan's forces claim to it. We've used oil to form crosses on the walls, left a light on (symbol of light over darkness) and played Christian music which is something demons hate. Ask your child if there is a certain place in the house where he feels afraid or funny, or where he thinks ghosts or other things may be. They are usually more sensitive to these things than adults.

When too young to understand (below 5 or 6) **children don't even have to be present when you pray for their deliverance**. As a parent you can pray for your children with authority, the same as you pray for yourself. When they are older (about 5 to 10) they should be included for the purpose of educating them about these things. They can pray for themselves, and they can start learning about spiritual warfare, too. Of course when there is specific sin in their lives they should confess it. The older they are the more responsible they become (especially from about 8 years old on) and the more they should be involved. A lot depends on the openings, too. Free will sin needs their confession while ancestral oppression is something a parent can do for them when they are young. Adopted children especially should have all ancestral openings put under the blood of Jesus. The father as the spiritual leader should pray for the children. Each morning he should pray specifically for each one by name. If for whatever reason the father isn't filling this role as he should the mother can and should take over.

As for praying for deliverance for children just follow Jesus' example. He administered deliverance to children the same as He did to adults (Mark 7:24-30; 9:14-25). Demons are the same and work the same, so go about it the same.

**Pray regularly and specifically** for your child. Satan has a plan and purpose for their life. Be sensitive to what it might be and break it in Jesus' name. Some of the time pray out loud with them so they can learn how to pray for themselves and so they know they are committed to God's care and protection. Pray that Jesus be formed in the child (Galatians 4:19), that they be delivered from Satan (Matthew 6:13; Proverbs 11:21), that they will be taught by God and experience His peace (Isaiah 54:13), that they will learn to discern good from evil (Hebrews 5:14; I Peter 3:21), that God's principles will be in their minds and on their hearts (Hebrews 8:10), that they will choose friends who are wise and a good influence (Proverbs 13:20; I Corinthians 5:11), that they will remain sexually pure (Ephesians 5:3,31-33), that they will trust and honor their parents (Ephesians 6:1-3), that they will find as well as be the right mate and that their marriage will last their whole life, and that they will know the career of God's choosing.

PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE OF A SON OR DAUGHTER	"Dear Father, I come to you to intercede for my child _____. I bring him/her before You in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank You for your unconditional love of them. I ask You to forgive us that for all of our failures to
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guide him/her in the way he/she ought to go. In my position as mother/father I put all their sin under the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. I take back any access any of Satan's forces claim through any ancestral openings and I put that under the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. I plead the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ over their life. I ask that Your Holy Spirit would fill them and ever use them for your honor and glory, so that they would grow up to serve You. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

*If you have children in your home, or in contact with children, ask God to show you if any of this applies to them. Then pray for them in the way God shows. Think of your own childhood and what you can learn from this to help you understand what was happening then. Pray for that as well.*

### **BLOG 39: WHEN DEMONS ATTACK A MARRIAGE**

It is clear today that a large part of Satan's plan for the downfall of our country starts with a downfall of the family. He works in Christian marriages to undermine them, cause misunderstandings, develop selfish thoughts in the partners, bring focus on the other's weakness', set up little bickerings and negative feelings, fuel grudges, keep partners from forgiveness and restoration, builds resentment, inclines each one put their needs first, causing disagreements over money or raising children, brings unfavorable comparing of your mate with others, incites to keep secrets from each other, and just causes drifting apart in general. Be sensitive to what Satan's plan is for your marriage (how he is working to destroy or neutralize it). Think about lies of his you believe that make his plan work. Put it all under the blood of Jesus.

When one mate is demonized the other must pick up the slack in patience, love, leadership, and prayer. Depend on God's strength to do this. Apply all that has been said about forgiveness, bitterness, anger, pride, etc., to marriage relationships as well.

Keep God's authority pattern: husband as leader and wife submissive (Ephesians 5). Husbands and wives should pray together, out loud, for their marriage and family. The husband should take the lead in this.

When the man or spiritual leader in the family is going away on a trip demons can take that as a weakness and attack that family. The man should pray and declare to all the spirits that he, the high priest in the family, states that when away his wife is in authority. Let them know the children are dedicated to God and Satan's forces do not have permission to disturb them. Reaffirm that any spirits to attack the family still must come through the head of the family, and then forbid any of them to attack you.

**PRAYER FOR A MARRIAGE** Loving Heavenly Father, I thank You for Your perfect plan for our marriage. I know that You planned marriage to be beautiful and satisfying, a picture of our relationship with you. I ask that You would do what is needed in and through me to make our marriage all it should be.

Please forgive me for my sins of failure in my marriage. I confess my \_\_\_\_\_ (confess individually all the sins and shortcomings you are aware of). I ask You to forgive me. I put them under the blood of Jesus and take back any access I have given to any demons through them. Open my eyes to see all areas where I am deceived and help me to apply Your truth to those areas.

I pray for my mate as well and put their sins under the blood of Jesus as well. I intercede for them and ask for your mercy to cover their sins and shortcomings and to take back any access any of Satan's forces claim through them.

Father, I ask that You would fill each of us with Your Holy Spirit. Fill us with the fruit of Your Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, gentleness, meekness, faithfulness and self-control. Heal us from the hurts we have caused ourselves and each other. Give us a spirit of

forgiveness for each other. Put Your supernatural love in our hearts and help us to love each other as You love us.

Show me what I need to do to change to correct my hurts and errors from the past. Help me to apologize where necessary and to know what to do to restore our relationship. I submit myself to You to be used and changed as You see fit. I submit my marriage to You for You to do what is necessary to heal it and use it for Your honor and glory.

*If you are married, how does this blog apply to you? What can you learn to improve your marriage? What about marriages around you? Are there any that come to mind as in need of special prayer? How does this apply to them? Besides prayer, what can you do to help?*

## **BLOG 40: FAMILIES ATTACHED THROUGH THEIR CHILDREN**

We have blogged about children being demonized (see "Demonizing of Children"). As we talk about marriage and the family we must remember that demons often attack a family or marriage through one of the children.

**Demons often use children to cause problems in the family** for the parents or vice versa. For years we have battled demons named "Frustration" and "Misery" whose work was just what their names suggested. They would cause strife among the children, and it would spread to the whole house. Their plan was to make things miserable and they quite often succeeded. We have learned to pray against that at the start of each day and as soon as we sense ourselves feeling it happen. More recently there is a spirit of "Argumentativeness" that rears its ugly head. When we notice a lot of picking at each other in the children we pray against that. We deal with the children, too, but include spiritual warfare also. That really helps improve things! Quite often demons incite children to behavior that will affect others in the family.

We've seen several cases of children being motivated to do things to get into trouble so they would get scolded a lot. That developed an inferiority feeling in them, an image of always being bad or not pleasing their parents. Unless reversed that sets a pattern for life that is all too common! We've also seen several cases of children being afflicted at night (bed-wetting, crying, etc.) to interrupt the parent's sleep and make the parent have a harder time during the day. Impatient parents then scold more and the child also feels **rejected**.

Demons often set up things to cause a long-range cause-effect relationship, like dominoes in a row falling down. David's sin with Bathsheba, for example, was set up many years earlier when he indulged his lust for women (more than one wife). Satan patiently waited for the right time to pull the trap. It's important we raise our children correctly for Jesus and not let any openings develop which Satan can take advantage of.

*Does this seem like something that is happening in your family? If so, read the blog "Demonizing of Children" for more information about this. Pray for your family and children. Pray for families you know, especially focus on families with a particularly difficult child. Ask God for wisdom as to how to pray for them. Share with them the truth you have learned through these blogs and help them learn how to have victory over these things in their family.*

## **BLOG 41: THE CHURCH'S ROLE IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE**

Jesus' promise that Satan and his forces cannot destroy the church are what I base my church ministry on (Matthew 16:18). **Churches have demonic forces assigned to defeat and destroy them.** As in other cases, there is a ruling spirit (strong man) with other demons under him whose sole purpose it is to undermine a church's ministry (unless that church is already going the way Satan

wants it to go). Each church as a whole should be aware of Satan's work against it so they can pray specifically against that. Pray for your church and its community, binding up the powers of any demons assigned to work against it.

Pray especially for your **leaders**, for Satan attacks the leaders first and most since they are so influential in a church (Luke 22:31-32; I Peter 5:1,8). Pray for your church to be protected from false teachers and teachings which are so, so prevalent and subtle today.

Churches are to **discipline** sinning members so they will see the need to repent and also so they will not mislead others. Churches, too, can have openings to demonizing and often it is through those in the Body who are willingly allowing themselves to be demonized and/or are allowing known sin in their lives. This must be put under the blood of Jesus. Discipline means removing them from fellowship in the local church and putting them instead in Satan's kingdom, the world. There they are under his influence (Matthew 18:15-18). In effect it is putting the person in a place to follow their sin without restrictions. This way they will clearly see the consequences of their choice and repent (1 Corinthians 5:5 talks about this).

The local Body can be very **helpful in deliverance** from demonizing, too. God puts Christians in a local body to help each other in many ways, and spiritual warfare is certainly one such way. He gives spiritual gifts to some that are quite helpful in spiritual warfare. The purpose of all spiritual gifts is to serve others. God gives a person gifts to use for others in the Body, not for him or herself. Some gifts which are particularly useful in spiritual warfare are:

**WISDOM:** the special ability to know the mind of God in such a way as to receive insight into how certain knowledge may be best applied to specific needs arising in the Body of Christ. I Corinthians 12:8

**DISCERNING OF SPIRITS:** the special ability God gives which enables some to know with certainty and assurance whether certain behavior supposed to be of God is in reality divine, human, or Satanic. Acts 5:1-10; 8:23

**INTERCESSION:** the special ability to pray for extended of time on a regular basis and see frequent and specific answers to prayers to a degree much greater than that which is expected of the average Christian. I Timothy 2:1-2; Colossians 1:9-12; 4:12-13; Acts 12:12; James 5:14-16; Luke 22:41-44

**EXORCISM:** the special ability to command demons to leave people and have them respond and by Gone. Acts 16:16-19

**BEWARE:** Satan can counterfeit these gifts and even do miracles today. Make sure you know the source (II Thessalonians 2:8; Matthew 24:24; Revelation 13:13-14; 19:20; Acts 13:8). Demons can speak through people, a kind of demonic 'gift of tongues' (Isaiah 8:19; 29:4; Isaiah 24:8) and they can perform miracles (Matthew 7:22-23). Don't be impressed by something supernatural unless you know the source of the power, for Satan is a GREAT counterfeiter!

*Is your church involved in spiritual warfare? Ask God what He wants you to do to help in that ministry. If you aren't aware of a ministry pray God would open one. Speak to a few like-minded people and start a prayer time with them for these needs in your church and the people who attend. Let God lead you and use you for His glory.*

## **BLOG 42: KEEPING DEMONS FROM RETURNING**

Remember, when demons are gone the area must be filled with God's Spirit or it will be an invitation for them to come back -- more and worse than before (Matthew 12:43-45). Casting them

out is one thing, keeping them out is another. Close the opening (by confession and covering with the blood of Jesus) and fill the space they occupied in your life with the Holy Spirit.

It isn't my purpose here to go into detail about being filled with the Holy Spirit for many fine books cover that subject quite well. Suffice it to say that immediately at salvation each person receives the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13; I Corinthians 12:13). He never leaves (Ephesians 4:30). Each believer has the Holy Spirit indwelling him, but not each one has the Holy Spirit "filling" (literally "controlling") him (Ephesians 5:18). Allowing Him to fill/control us is a moment-by-moment responsibility. It means we must be 100% yielded to God in all areas of life (I Thessalonians 5:19), not allow any known sin in life (Ephesians 4:30), and to depend on Him and His strength in every area of life (Galatians 5:16). This way there will be no strongholds (openings) reestablished (II Corinthians 10:3-5).

#### **PRAYER OF SUBMISSION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT**

"Dear heavenly Father, You have said that rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry (I Samuel 15:23), I know that in action and attitude I have sinned against You with a rebellious heart. I ask Your forgiveness for my rebellion and pray that by the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ all ground gained by evil spirits because of my rebelliousness would be canceled. Show me any ways I continue to live in pride and help me to turn from them by Your strength. Fill me with Your Spirit and use for Your glory. In the name of Christ Jesus my Lord. Amen."

We all are either moving ahead or moving back. We cannot be dead still at the same place. If you aren't growing spiritually then you are fading. Continue to grow spiritually. Focus on the basics of the Christian life: prayer, Bible study, fellowship, worship, witnessing, etc. Sometimes growth comes in spurts, other times there doesn't seem to be much outer change (it is during these times that your spiritual roots are going deeper, getting you ready for the next growth spurt). The same is true in nature, there isn't always sustained growth, things grow in spurts.

Do NOT focus on Satan or demons, always thinking about them or fearing what they will do. Do not look for "a demon behind every bush." They love this attention, even if it is negative. It keeps your eyes off Jesus and on them, and that's what they want. It is important to have balance in this area of spiritual warfare. Keep it in balance. It is one of many important spiritual tools for growth. Don't neglect the others for this one.

#### **BLOG 43: HELPING OTHERS GET FREE FROM DEMONIZING**

Once you get involved in deliverance, you'll start to see how it can help those around you. You'll want to **share with others** what you've found. That's great! Remember, though, there is a cost of your time (Mark 7:24), energy (Mark 6:31) and patience (Matthew 17:17). Count the cost first (Mark 3:8-15). Getting involved in spiritual warfare for others may bring attacks against you but do not fear such a thing (Matthew 10:24-27). Often the worse part, though, is the criticism and rejection you get from others, believers and unbelievers alike (Matthew 9:32-34); Matthew 10:24-27). Don't fear that, either (Luke 13:31-32).

One danger to watch out for is thoughts popping into your mind of how spiritual you are, or feelings of **pride** because of having power over demons. Others may see you as more spiritual, too. This is a real danger. Jesus makes it clear that being able to administer deliverance is no sign of spirituality or even salvation (Matthew 7:21-23).

Keep in mind, too, that **others minister deliverance in different ways**. I feel strongly that what I have written here is what God has for me according to His Word. However I am not to judge or reject those who do it differently (Mark 9:38-40).

Follow the steps for deliverance outlined in this book on pages 48-54.

When you find yourself in a situation where you feel God wants you to talk or pray about deliverance just go ahead! **Don't worry about your lack of knowledge or experience** (that's a lie from the demons to silence you). It's God's power and He will give you the right words and wisdom at the right time. Nothing is worse than not doing anything and allowing the demons to continue their work. Just do your best, trusting God for each step of the way. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' way, no magic formula. God is greater, so just bring His power against the evil forces.

One thing to be careful of, though, is **your own time and schedule**. Don't allow yourself to be a crutch to anyone, for that isn't helping them. Wean them from you and onto God quickly. Don't become too involved with the one you are ministering too. It can become too draining on you and make it hard for you to be objective, plus harder to wean them. At first feeling needed can be very nice, but it is God they should need, not you.

Always **consider the big picture** when praying for deliverance. Keep deliverance in balance. Should they see a counselor? Would a physical from a doctor be helpful? Are they perhaps not giving you the complete, total picture, but just what they want you to know? Do they REALLY want to be free or are they more interested in having your attention? Is there any sin they aren't willing to get rid of?

I see myself as a quarterback (football) who throws passes to his receivers. The quarterback must throw the best pass he can – a nice, tight spiral right into the hands of the receiver. But ones the quarterback lets go of the ball it is no longer up to him if it is caught or not. Some receivers drop excellent passes, others make miraculous catches of poorly thrown balls. I used to be very concerned about the results but had to realize that isn't up to me. Now there must almost be callousness over my heart to some extent or I would get burnt out quickly. I give the best advice I can, with God's help, and know that is all God holds me accountable for – but He doesn't hold me accountable to do my best, to throw the best pass I can. If it is caught or not is not up to me but between the persona and God. Many times I don't if the pass is dropped or caught, but I keep throwing them anyway. And the more one practices the better he gets at it. I keep a list of all the people who wrote me and the emails beck and forth. There are hundreds and hundreds of names and almost all have more than one or two emails. Some I've been in touch with for years. They have become a core group to whom I send prayer requests, especially about my India trip. They are the ones I ask to pray for me when special needs come up. They keep me updated, sometimes every few months, and we write more regularly when things get difficult. Jesus spoke to millions, thousands liked what He said, hundreds believed, a dozen gave up everything to follow Him (and one of those turned back), three became His inner core and one His best friend (John). That's about how it goes. In the parable of the sower and the seed Jesus points out that only about one fourth of the seed sown grows, so if that's true of Jesus I can't expect better! One more factor is that I know I am only the servant and Jesus expects me to be faithful. He doesn't look at numbers.

I throw the best pass I can and then pray for them. For the most part that bit of callous self-protection that all people in the service ministries have to have takes care of it. Now when it's a person I know well, a really bad situation, especially a relative, then it can get to me more. But that motivates me to be the more faithful in prayer and ministry. Even Jesus had Judas.

#### **BLOG 44: HOW CAN I BE SURE I AM A CHRISTIAN?**

When a baby is born everyone checks immediately to make sure it is alive and healthy. There are certain signs that show life: movement, crying, pulse, etc. The same is true spiritually. There are certain spiritual 'signs' that show us that we have been born into God's family. It is very important to have assurance of your salvation for our enemy loves to put fear into us by telling us that we aren't really going to heaven, that we aren't one of God's children. Those are lies. I John lists 5 ways we can know we have salvation.

## **1. BELIEF IN JESUS AS SAVIOR AND LORD**

**1 John 5:1** *Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.* A sign of spiritual life is a deep awareness that Jesus is God and Savior, that He is the One who provides salvation and it isn't anything we do or deserve.

## **2. STRONG DESIRE TO OVERCOME SIN IN LIFE**

**1 John 5:18** *We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him.* Along with new birth comes a different attitude to sin. We now know it is wrong and have a strong desire to stop. While we may struggle with certain sins, there should be a slow but steady progress in godliness. Gradually we become more and more like Jesus in what we think and do.

## **3. DOING WHAT GOD CONSIDERS RIGHT**

**1 John 2:29** *If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him.* A baby doesn't know just how to live the moment it is born, and neither do we who are born spiritually. It is a learning process, it takes growth. Growth is a sign of life. God says that those who are alive spiritually will grow spiritually. "GROW in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ". **2 Peter 3:18** *"Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly -- mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?"* 1 Corinthians 3:1-3

## **4. LOVE FOR OTHER BELIEVERS**

**1 John 3:14** *We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.* There will be a natural bond between those are in God's family. We have the most important things in life in common. Usually there is instant rapport. We have a desire to spend time with and get to know other Christians. That is a joy and encouragement, for we are likeminded.

## **5. VICTORY OVER WORLDLY WAYS**

**1 John 5:4** *for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.* While victory over sin often comes slowly and gradually, as Christians we know that we have within us a Power greater than that which is in the world and we can experience God giving us victory over things that used to defeat us.

## **BLOG 45: HOW CAN I BE SURE I HAVEN'T LOST MY SALVATION?**

When first born babies are very susceptible to disease and illness so they must be protected from these. They are very vulnerable. Until they grow and become stronger they are in danger of things that won't be nearly as hard to fight off later on. When someone is a new believer there is danger they will start to doubt their salvation or fear they have lost it. Thus it is important to make sure young Christians are protected from the diseases of doubt and fear. Satan can't take away or salvation so he tries to take away the joy of our salvation in these ways.

**DISEASE OF DOUBT** It's not unusual for Satan to put doubt into a person's mind right after they become a Christian. Did it 'work'? Did they 'do it' right? There is no requirement to meet so there is nothing that can be done wrong. Salvation is simply a heart attitude of believing that Jesus is God who paid for your sins on the cross. If you believe that you are saved.

*Rom 3:28* *For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.*

*John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

*Ephesians 2:8-9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- not by works, so that no one can boast.*

If you aren't sure when you accepted Jesus as Savior and for that reason wonder if you really did, just take a moment right now to pray and ask Him to forgive your sins and live in you. You will know for sure that He has done that now if not before, so you never will have need to wonder or worry. Write down today's date so you can always go back to this time and remember that you really did put your faith in Him. \_\_\_\_\_

**DISEASE OF FEAR** If getting a person to doubt their salvation doesn't work Satan will try to have you believe that you have somehow lost your salvation. That will take away your peace and joy and replace it with fear. Believing you can lose your salvation will cause you to try to do all you can to not lose it. Thus instead of the Christian life being one of security and assurance in what Christ has done, the emphasis focuses to what you do or don't do. Fear of doing something that will cause you to lose your salvation becomes the primary motivating force in your Christian life. How could a family operate if everyone had to be nice to the others for fear they would be kicked out of the family?

God wants us to know for sure that there is nothing we can do to lose our salvation. He wants us to be assured of His love forever. He wants us to serve Him our love for Him, not because we are afraid He will send us to hell!

**WE ARE UNDER GRACE, NOT LAW**, so there is nothing we can do to lose salvation. *Rom 6:14 For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.*

**GOD IS FAITHFUL** to His promise to save us if we believe. Even if we become unfaithful He still keeps His promise to us. *2 Timothy 2:11-13 Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us; if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.*

**GOD PROTECTS US** when we are weak and faltering. When we sin and drift He does not cast us aside. *Matthew 12:20 A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out, till he leads justice to victory. Psalms 37:24 though he stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand.*

**GOD WILL NEVER HOLD OUR SINS AGAINST US** for they were all paid for on the cross. Thus there is no sin that will ever be charged to us. *Romans 4:6-8 David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him."*

**SALVATION CANNOT BE RETURNED, AND SATAN CANNOT TAKE US FROM GOD** There is nothing that can come between us and God, not even we ourselves. *John 10:28-29 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. Romans 8:37-39 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

So any time you feel one of these diseases trying to hit you and take your joy and strength, remember you have no reason to doubt your salvation and you have no reason to fear losing your salvation.

## **BLOG 46: TOPICAL INDEX of BIBLE VERSES 1**

God's Word is our weapon, our only way of victory against Satan and his forces. Knowing how to use it is important. Here are some key scriptures you can keep and use in your warfare. Find the subject that applies to you, read and memorize the verses, and quote them whenever the enemy attacks you.

**Abortion** is murder: Exodus 21:22-25; Psalm 139:13-15; Romans 14:22-23; Jeremiah 1:5; Genesis 2:7; 9:6

**Adversaries Will Be Defeated:** Deuteronomy 32:43; Philippians 1:28; Deuteronomy 33:27

**Angelic Intervention promised:** II Kings 6:17; Psalm 34:6-7; Psalm 91:11; Daniel 6:22; 10:5-14; Acts 12:15

**Angels, creation** of: Colossians 1:16; Job 38:6-7; Jude 6; Hebrews 12:11

**Angels, ministry** to believers today: Hebrews 1:14; Acts 12:7; 27:23-24; I Corinthians 4:9; I Timothy 5:21; Luke 15:10; 16:22; Acts 8:26; Jude 9

**Angels, nature** of: Hebrews 1:14; Mark 12:25; Luke 20:36; Psalm 8:4-5; II Peter 2:11

**Annihilation** at death doesn't happen: Matthew 17:1-3; 22:32; John 11:25; Genesis 35:18; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:21-23; John 3:36; Luke 23:43

**Assurance of salvation:** John 3:16; 5:24; 6:37, 44; 10:28-29; Romans 8:1, 29-39; Ephesians 1:13-14; Colossians 1:12-14; I Peter 1:3-4; I John 2:1-2; I John 5:13

**Assured Of Eventual Triumph Over Our Adversaries:** Acts 2:39

**Atonement for sin:** Exodus 12:13; Matthew 26:28;; 28:5-7; Luke 24:39; John 1:29; 19:33; Romans 5:6-8; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:20

**Believe**, what does that mean? Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12; I Corinthians 15:1; Colossians 2:6; II Thessalonians 2:10

**Bible, importance of studying** it: Luke 6:40; John 5:39; Acts 20:32; Ephesians 6:17; II Timothy 2:15; James 1:21-22; I Peter 2:2; II Peter 1:2

**Bible, inspired Word of God:** II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:19-20; I Corinthians 2:13; II Peter 3:15; Hebrews 1:1; 2:3; 4:12; I Peter 1:10-12, 25; II Samuel 23:1-2; Matthew 24:35; John 10:35; 17:17

**Bible, reliable & trustworthy:** John 19:35; I John 1:1; II Peter 1:16; Luke 1:1-4; Acts 2:22

**Comfort Promised:** Psalm 23:4; Lamentations 3:22-23; Matthew 5:4; 11:28-30; John 14:16, 18; John 14:16, 18; Romans 15:4; II Corinthians 1:3-4; II Thessalonians 2:16-17

**Confession Means Cleansing & Forgiveness:** I John 1:8-9; Thessalonians 5:23-24; I Timothy 4:5; Luke 11:13; II Timothy 2:21; Jude 1; Romans 8:33-39; Titus 3:4-5

**Conscience** used by God: Acts 24:16; Romans 14:14, 23; II Timothy 1:5; Titus 1:15; Matthew 6:22-23; Romans 1:14-15; 9:1; I Corinthians 10:27-29

**Courage promised:** Proverbs 38:1; I Corinthians 16:13; II Timothy 1:7

**Creation is by God:** Genesis 1:1, 26-27; Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 24:1; 8:3; Exodus 20:11; I Samuel 2:8; Psalm 33:6; 146:6; Isaiah 40:12; Jeremiah 51:15; Acts 14:15; Ephesians 3:9

**Creation shows God:** Romans 1:19-20; Psalm 19:1-2

**Death no fear to believers:** Psalm 23:4; 49:15; 116:15; John 14:1-3, 6,-19, 27

**Demons, activity** of: Daniel 10:10-14; Revelation 16:13-16; 12:3-4; Ephesians 6:11-12; Matthew 4:24; 9:33; Luke 3:11, 16; Mark 5:13; Colossians 2:15; I Timothy 4:1

**Demons, possession & deliverance:** Matthew 4:1-11; 17:19-21; 18:20; 28:18-20; Mark 5:9; Luke 8:30; 10:17; 18:1; John 14:14; 15:7; Ephesians 5:18-20; 6:10-18; Colossians 1:20; 3:16-17; II Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; James 5:14-16; I John 1:9; 4:1-8

**Depression Defeated:** Psalm 42:11; Isaiah 26:3; Philippians 2:5; 4:8; Nehemiah 8:10-11; Psalm 51:12; 1 Peter 5:7; Isaiah 26:3

**Don't judge others:** Romans 14:3-13; 2:1-6; I Corinthians 2:14-15; 4:5; but do evaluate/discern: Matthew 18:15-18; 6:2, 5, 16; 7:1-12, 16-17; I Corinthians 5:12-13; John 7:24; Luke 12:57;

**Eternal life:** Mark 12:25; Luke 16:19-31; Jn 11:25-26; I Thes 4:16-18; James 2:26; I Jn 5:11-13

**Everything Will Work Out Right In the End:** Romans 8:28

**Evil and suffering,** why exist: John 9:1-3; II Peter 3:9; Revelation 21:1-8; Romans 8:28

**Faith,** what does it mean: Psalm 118:8; Proverbs 3:5; Isaiah 26:3; Mark 11:22; John 3:16-17; Romans 5:1; 4:3-5; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-9

**False Teachers:** Matthew 7:13-27; Jeremiah 23:16, 32; Deuteronomy 18:20-22; Matthew 24:4-5; 11, 24; II Pet 2:1-3

**Fear of Death gone for believers:** Psalm 23:4; 49:15; 116:15; John 14:1-3, 6,-19, 27

**Fear, Promises to claim:** Proverbs 3:25; Isaiah 14:3; Psalm 34:4; Joshua 1:9; 10:8; 23:9-11; Leviticus 26:8; Exodus 14:13; I Samuel 17:45-47; II Samuel 22:33-35,40-41

**Fear, The Believer Has Nothing To Fear:** Proverbs 3:25; Isaiah 14:3; Psalm 34:4; Joshua 1:9; 10:8; 23:9-11; Leviticus 26:8; Exodus 14:13; I Samuel 17:45-47; II Samuel 22:33-35,40-41

**Forgiveness, receiving from God** I John 1:9; Psalm 19:12; 139:23-24; 32:1-5; Psalm 103; Isaiah 1:18; 43:25; Romans 4:7-8; Hebrews 8:12; I John 2:12

**Forgiving others:** Matthew 6:12-15; 18:23-27; 18:35; Ephesians 4:32; Mark 11:25-26; Colossians 3:13; Proverbs 24:17-19; Romans 2:23-24

**Free will** of man: Proverbs 1:23; Isaiah 31:6; Ezekiel 14:6; 18:32; Matthew 18:3; John 6:29; 19:1; I John 3:23

**Freedom from law, legalism:** law a unit, go by all of it or none (Matthew 5:19); law given only to Israel (Leviticus 26:46; Romans 2:14; 9:4); law fulfilled by Christ (Galatians 3:13); law done away with (Romans 6:15)

**God Hears & Answers Prayer:** Matthew 7:7; Luke 11:9; Jeremiah 33:3

**God Is Always With Us:** Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 18:20; John 14:16, 21; Revelations 3:20

**God judge** those who have never heard? Romans 1:18-25; 2:1, 14-16; Acts 14:15-17; Hebrews 11:6

**God Promises His Care & Protection:** Deuteronomy 33:27; Genesis 17:1; Jer. 23:24; 32:7

**God Promises To Fight For Us:** I Samuel 14:47; Jeremiah 1:8

## **BLOG 47: TOPICAL INDEX of BIBLE VERSES 2**

**God Will Help Us Carry Our Burdens:** Nehemiah 4:10; Matthew 11:30; Psalm 55:22

**God Will Meet All Your Needs:** Philippians 4:19; Psalm 84:11; Romans 8:32; I Samuel 12:24

**God, a Trinity:** Matthew 28:19; 3:16-17; Genesis 1:26; 11:7

**God, above** & separate from creation: John 4:24; Hebrews 1:3

**God, creator:** Genesis 1:1, 26-27; Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 24:1; 8:3; Exodus 20:11; I Samuel 2:8; Psalm 33:6; 146:6; Isaiah 40:12; Jeremiah 51:15; Acts 14:15; Ephesians 3:9

**God, existence:** Genesis 1:1-3; Romans 1:20

**God, grace:** Romans 3:24; 11:5; Ephesians 2:8; II Peter 3:18; Genesis 6:8; Psalm 51:1; John 1:16; Romans 5:2; II Corinthians 12:9; Hebrews 4:16

**God, holy:** Exodus 15:11; Leviticus 19:2; Habakkuk 1:13; Revelation 4:8

**God, personality:** personal (John 4:24; Hebrews 1:3); Remembers (Isaiah 43:25; Jeremiah 31:20; Hosea 8:13); Speaks ((Exodus 3:12; Matthew 3:17; Luke 17:6); Knows (Jeremiah 29:11; II Timothy 2:19; I John 3:20)

**God, seen in creation,** nature: Romans 1:19-20; Psalm 19:1-2

**God, sovereign:** Exodus 18:11; 15:18; Matthew 6:10, 13; 11:25; Deuteronomy 4:39; I Chronicles 29:11; Daniel 6:26; John 7:17; Ephesians 1:11; I Tim 2:4; 6:15; Rev 19:6

**Guidance Is Promised:** Psalm 32:8; Isaiah 30:21; 58:11; Luke 1:79; John 15:13

**Heaven:** Matthew 22:30; Luke 20:34-38; 23:43; Revelation 7:9; 8:1; I Corinthians 13:12; 15:42; Philippians 1:23; I John 3:2; II chronicles 2:6; Mark 16:19; Deuteronomy 26:15; Job 3:17; Psalm 17:15; 73:24; Matthew 3:17; 5:3; Luke 16:19-31; 12:32; John 14:1-3; I Thessalonians 4:17

**Hell & punishment** are real: Revelation 20;15; 14:9-11; Matthew 5:22; 8:11-12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; Mark 9:44-48; Luke 3:17

**Holy Spirit indwells believers:** I Corinthians 1:21; 5:5; I John 2:20, 27; John 3:3-8; 7:37-39; 14:16-17; Romans 5:5; 8:9; I Cor 2:12; 6:17-19; 12:13; John 7:37-39

**Holy Spirit:** John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 20:22; 16:8-14; I Corinthians 2:10-15; Matthew 1:18; 3:11, 16-17; 10:20; Isaiah 63:10; Acts 5:3-4; Ephesians 4:30; Acts 8:29; 13:2; Luke 12:12; John 16:7-18

**Homosexuality** is sin: Romans 1:26-32; I Corinthians 6:9-10; Leviticus 20:13; Genesis 2:18-22; I Timothy 1:8-10

**Hope in Jesus:** Psalm 31:24; 71:5; 62:5-8

**Hypocrisy** doesn't invalidate Christianity: Matthew 23:23-36; Isaiah 29:13; Matthew 7;23; Proverbs 26:23-26; Titus 1:16; I John 1:8, 10

**Israel, God's special protection** of: Isaiah 11:11-14; 19:19-25; Genesis 12:3; Jeremiah 48:12-15; Ezekiel 29:9-10; 35:1-5

**Jesus Greater than Demons, Satan:** Mark 1:21-28; 5:1-20; 7:24-30; 9:20-27; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Hebrews 2:14-15; Luke 9:1-2; Luke 10:17-20; Revelation 12:7-11; Revelation 20:7-15; Mark 1:21-28; Mark 5:1-20; Mark 7:24-30; Mark 9:20-27

**Jesus Is Constantly Praying & Interceding On Our Behalf:** I John 2:1; Hebrews 7:25

**Jesus, Deity** of: John 1:1, 34; 5:17-23; 10:30, 36-38; 12:45; 13:20, 45; 14:1, 9; 17:11, 21-22; 20:24-31; Ephesians 1:20-23; Philippians 2:6-10; Hebrews 1:18; Matthew 1:23; 3:17; 8:29

**Jesus, fully human:** Galatians 4:4; Luke 2:52; 19:10; I John 1:1; Matthew 26:12; 4:2; Hebrews 4:15

**Jesus, the only way to God:** John 14:6; 8:24; 3:16-18; 10:30; Matthew 26:63-64; Acts 4:12; Galatians 1:8; I Corinthians 3:11; I John 2:23; Luke 10:16

**Jesus' resurrection,** physical & literal: Luke 24:39-44; John 20:27-28; Mark 16:14; I Corinthians 15:15

**Jews, God's chosen people:** Deuteronomy 14:2; 7:6-7; 10:14-15; Ezekiel 22:17-22

**Jews, God's special protection** of: Isaiah 11:11-14; 19:19-25; Genesis 12:3; Jeremiah 48:12-15; Ezekiel 29:9-10; 35:1-5

**Law, legalism** – believers free from: law a unit, go by all of it or none (Matthew 5:19); law given only to Israel (Leviticus 26:46; Romans 2:14; 9:4); law fulfilled by Christ (Galatians 3:13); law done away with (Romans 6:15)

**Life after death**: Matthew 17:1-3; 22:32; John 11:25; Genesis 35:18; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:21-23; John 3:36; Luke 23:43

**Life**, only God can create: Jeremiah 10:16; Col 1:16-17; Job 33:4; Gen 1:26; Ps 8:6

**Light**: John 3:16-21; 8:12; 12:46; 1 John 1:5-7

**Marriage**, believers only marry other believers: II Corinthians 6:14-18

**Materialism**, attitude to money, accumulating money, uses of money, etc: see verses at end of this booklet

**Materialism**, attitude to: Proverbs 30:8-9; 10:15; 28:22; Matthew 19:23-24; II Corinthians 9:8; II Thessalonians 3:10; Ecclesiastes 10:19; Acts 8:20; Jeremiah 9:23-24; Mark 8:36-37

**Miracles** really happened: Matthew 8:14-15, 26-27; 9:2, 6-7, 27-30; Mark 1:32-34; John 2:1-11; 6:10-14; John 10:24-25; 20:30-31; 3:2

**Money**, attitude to: Proverbs 30:8-9; 10:15; 28:22; Matthew 19:23-24; II Corinthians 9:8; II Thessalonians 3:10; Ecclesiastes 10:19; Acts 8:20; Jeremiah 9:23-24; Mark 8:36-37

**Money, materialism**, attitude to money, accumulating money, uses of money, etc: see verses at end of this booklet

**Motives matter to God**: James 4:2-3; Proverbs 16:2; 1 Corinthians 4:5; Hebrews 4:12-13

**Nature** shows God: Romans 1:19-20; Psalm 19:1-2

**No Need To Worry**: Matthew 6:25,34; I Peter 5:7; Isaiah 40:11; Matthew 5:38-39; Psalm 37:1-9; Jude 24

**Occult, spiritism** wrong: Leviticus 19:31; 20:6-7, 27; Exodus 20:27; 22:18; Deuteronomy 18:10-12; I Chronicles 10:13-14; Isaiah 8:19-20; Galatians 5:20; Revelation 21:8

**Peace Is Available No Matter What**: John 14:27; Romans 5:1; Colossians 1:20; Isaiah 26:3; Philippians 4:6-7; Matthew 11:28-30; II Timothy 1:7

### **BLOG 48: TOPICAL INDEX of BIBLE VERSES 3**

**Peace Promised**: Philippians 4:6-7; Isaiah 26:3; Romans 15:13; Psalm 85:8; 29:11; Ephesians 2:14-15; Isaiah 53:5; Colossians 1:20; John 14:27; Romans 5:1; John 16:33; Galatians 5:22-24; Philippians 4:7

**Prayer, promises**: Matthew 18:19; 21:22; Mark 11:24; Isaiah 65:24; Jeremiah 33:3; Matthew 7:7-8; John 14:13; I Thessalonians 5:17; Ephesians 8:18; Hebrews 4:16; Philippians 4:6-7; I Timothy 2:1

**Resurrection of Christians**: Psalm 49:15; 16:9-10; Luke 14:14; II Corinthians 4:14; Job 14:12-15; 19:25-27; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; I Corinthians 15; Philippians 3:20-21; I Thessalonians 4:16-18; John 11:23-26

**Resurrection of Jesus**, physical & literal: Luke 24:39-44; John 20:27-28; Mark 16:14; I Corinthians 15:15; I Corinthians 15:1-19; Matthew 27:62-66; 28:1-17; Mark 16:9-14; John 20:19-31

**Salvation by faith** only is too easy: Matthew 19:16-26; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 20:31

**Salvation only through Jesus** John 14:6; 8:24; 3:16-18; 10:30; Matthew 26:63-64; Acts 4:12; Galatians 1:8; I Corinthians 3:11; I John 2:23; Luke 10:16

**Salvation, a free gift:** Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12-13

**Salvation, Atonement for sin:** Exodus 12:13; Matthew 26:28;; 28:5-7; Luke 24:39; John 1:29; 19:33; Romans 5:6-8; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:20

**Salvation, available** for whoever comes: Ezekiel 33:11; Romans 10:13; I Timothy 2:4; II Peter 3:9; Matthew 12:50; 18:4; 10:32

**Salvation, can't be lost:** John 3:16-18, 36; 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; 20:30-31; Romans 8:14-16, 28, 37-39; 14:8; II Corinthians 1:21-22; Ephesians 1:13-14; 3:12; Hebrews 6:4-6; 2 Timothy 2:11-12; Matthew 12:20; Psalm 37:24; Romans 4:6-8; 8:37-39

**Salvation, man can't save self:** Psalm 49:7; Luke 11:24-26; I Peter 1:18-19; II Peter 2:20-22

**Salvation, man's need of:** Isaiah 64:6; Romans 5:12; Hebrews 9:27; I John 1:10

**Salvation, not earned by good works:** Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 3:20, 27; 4:4-5; 5:8; 6:23; 11:6; Galatians 3:11; James 2:10; I Peter 2:24; Titus 3:5

**Salvation, not everyone** will get to heaven: Matthew 25:46; Luke 16:19-31; John 3:18, 36; 5:28-29; 6:37-40; I John 3:10; Revelation 20:10-15

**Salvation, provided by Jesus:** John 3:15-18, 36; 14:7; 10:10; Isaiah 53:5-6; I John 4:10; 5:12; Romans 5:6-8; I Peter 2:24; 1:18-19; II Corinthians 5:21; I John 5:11-13; Acts 4:12; Eph. 1:7

**Salvation, received by faith:** Romans 10:13; John 5:24; Acts 17:31; Galatians 3:22; 5:6; John 3:16

**Satan, defeated** Colossians 2:15; Psalm 3:4; Psalm 6:8-10; 72:12-14; 82:1-7

**Satan, defeating:** Matthew 4:1-11; John 15:7; 17:15; Ephesians 6:10-18; II Thessalonians 3:3; James 4:7; I Peter 5:8-9; I John 4:4; 5:18; Romans 8:28; II Cor 2:7; Jude 8-9

**Satan, fall of:** Ezekiel 28:11-19; Isaiah 14:12-20; I Tim 3:6

**Satan, nature of:** Ezekiel 28:12-14; Ephesians 6:11-12; Job 1:12; John 8:44; I John 3:8; I Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:10; II Thessalonians 3:3

**Sex, outside marriage** forbidden: Matthew 5:27-32; 19:9; I Corinthians 6:9-10, 18-20; Hebrews 13:4; Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18; 24:1-4; Luke 18:20; James 2:11; II Peter 2:14; I Corinthians 5:9; Ephesians 5:3; Leviticus 20:10; I Thessalonians 4:3

**Sex, to show love** in marriage: Genesis 3:16; 18:12; 26:8-9; 2:23-25; Deuteronomy 24:5; 34:7; Proverbs 5:15-19; Song of Solomon 7:6-10; Hebrews 13:4; I Corinthians 7:3-4

**Sexual Temptation, victory over** 2 Corinthians 5:17; Psalm 51:10-12; Romans 12:1; James 4:6-8; I John 4:4; Philippians 4:19; Matthew 16:23; Psalm 139:23-24; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10; 1 Peter 5:8-9; Job 31:1; Matthew 5:27-28.

**Sin defined:** Romans 3:23; 14:23; Galatians 5:19-21; James 4:17; I John 3:4

**Sin paid for by Jesus:** Exodus 12:13; Matthew 26:28;; 28:5-7; Luke 24:39; John 1:29; 19:33; Romans 5:6-8; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:20

**Sinfulness of man:** Mark 10:18; Isaiah 53:5-6; 59:1-2; Rom 3:10-12, 23; 6:23; James 2:10; I John 1:8-10; 3:4; 5:17

**Sins of believers,** forever gone: John 3:18, 36; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Romans 8:1; II Peter 3:9-14; Revelation 20:11-15

**Sorrow, God Will Help In Your Sorrow:** Proverbs 10:22; Isaiah 53:4; John 16:22; II Corinthians 6:10; I Thessalonians 4:13; Revelation 21:4

**Soul sleep** wrong: Matthew 17:1-3; 22:32; John 11:25; Genesis 35:18; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:21-23; John 3:36; Luke 23:43

**Spiritism, occult** wrong: Leviticus 19:31; 20:6-7, 27; Exodus 20:27; 22:18; Deuteronomy 18:10-12; I chronicles 10:13-14; Isaiah 8:19-20; Galatians 5:20; Revelation 21:8

**Spiritual warfare** promises, memory verses: see verses at end of this booklet

**Suffering and Evil**, why exist John 9:1-3; II Peter 3:9; Revelation 21:1-8; Romans 8:28

**Suffering, attitude** to: Philippians 1:29; 3:10; I Peter 2:19-21; 5:10; John 15:2; 13:7; Hebrews 12:7; 11:25; Revelation 3:19; Romans 8:18, 28; II timothy 2:12; I Peter 4:12-19; Hebrews 2:10; 5:8; II Corinthians 4:17; Matthew 5:45

**Suffering, reasons** for: Job 1 – 2; Hebrews 5:8; II Corinthians 12:7; I Peter 1:7-8; John 16:33; II Corinthians 4:8-11;; 1:3-24; II Timothy 2:10-13

**Thoughts, Rejecting Wrong Thoughts:** II Corinthians 10:5; Psalm 139:23-24; 141:3-4; Isaiah 26:3-4; Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 3:18-21

**Trials Are Allowed To Bring Spiritual Growth:** Psalm 119:67,71,75; 94:12; Isa. 48:10; Rom. 5:3

**Trinity:** Matthew 28:19; 3:16-17; Genesis 1:26; 11:7

**Truth:** Psalm 51:6; 25:5; John 14:6; 16:13; 1:17; 8:44; 14:17; 17:17; Matthew 5:33-37; John 8:31-36; Ephesians 4:25

**Victory in spiritual warfare:** Hebrews 2:14-15; Luke 9:1-2;10:17-20; Revelation 12:7-11; 20:7-15; Matthew 25:41

**Victory Is Guaranteed Us:** I Corinthians 15:57; Romans 8:37; I Chronicles 29:11; I John 5:4, 18; II Chronicles 32:8; Revelation 3:5; 21:7

**Victory Promised:** I Corinthians 15:57; I Chronicles 29:11; Proverbs 21:31; I John 5:4, 18; Rev. 12:11; 15:2; Romans 8:37; II Corinthians 2:14; John 16:33

**We will never Be Separated From God:** Romans 8:35-39; John 10:27-29; 3:36; 5:24

**Wisdom Is Promised Those Who** Ask: James 1:5; 3:15-17; Luke 16:8; 21:15; I Cor. 2:5; 3:19

**Word of God's Power:** Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12; Isaiah 55:11; 59:21; Psalm 119:81, 105, 111-112; Proverbs 30:5; Lamentations 2:17; 3:37; Matthew 24:35; John 5:24; 8:51; 15:7; Romans 10:17

**You Won't Ever Face Anything You Can't Handle With God's Help:** I Corinthians 10:13

# SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN THE BIBLE

## OLD TESTAMENT

### BLOG 49: THE ONLY GIFT YOU CAN EVER GIVE GOD

When I was a young boy I had a wooden dog that I pulled with a string. That dog followed me everywhere when I pulled it along. It did whatever I made it do. It never disobeyed, never rebelled, never caused me any problems. Years later I got a real, live dog. Sometimes this dog would follow me, lick me and want to be with me, but other times it would disobey and cause difficulties and problems. The real dog wasn't nearly as well behaved as the wooden dog. But guess which dog I loved best? Yes, there's something special about a dog choosing to want to be with me, not 'having' to follow. God wanted those who followed Him to do so because they made that choice, not because there was no alternative. So God chose to make the beings He created have a free will choice to follow or not.

Some time before He created human beings, God created angels. He chose to create angels, and then human beings, with free will. He didn't want them or us to follow Him because we had no choice, because we were like robots. God wanted His created beings to relate to Him, to enjoy and to follow Him because we choose to. Thus His plan was to create angels and people with the ability to make free will choices.

However, God knew that creating us with a free will choice would lead to a problem. Humans would use that choice to sin and rebel. Then, because God is holy and nothing sinful can be near Him, He would not be able to allow us in His presence. So, creating us with a will to choose would mean that He would have to condemn us to hell when we used that free will to sin. That would cause Him to lose our fellowship and presence with Him. But that is what He wanted in the first place.

That's when the plan was made to remedy the problem caused by our free will. God Himself would come to earth to die on the cross for our sins. He would become a man and be our substitute, thus enabling all who received this free grace gift to be with God forever.

Now man could have a free will choice, and still have fellowship with God. The only way to have both is through Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross. We call this "salvation" because it saves us from the consequences of losing fellowship with God. This great gift is available for any who will receive it by putting their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

This was a great plan, made before the creation of the world (Ephesians 1:4). But it would lead to an ongoing battle. We would constantly have to struggle against the tendency in us to sin, the impact of others who would tempt us to sin, and the influence of angelic beings who used their free will choice to rebel against God and oppose His kingdom. Warfare was inevitable.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Sin has been described as "meeting a legitimate need in an illegitimate way." Sin is looking for ways to meet our needs for peace, pleasure, comfort, support and satisfaction. Instead of waiting for God to provide for our needs in His way and time, we try to find a way to do that ourselves. Satan's lie that maybe God won't do it, or that God is withholding something good from us, still is successful today. He does the same thing today, putting doubts into our mind about why, if He loves us, God would allow pain, suffering, injustice, poverty, rejection, lack of mate or children, lack of job, etc. When we face trials or painful situations then doubts of God's goodness abound.*

*But God has proven His goodness by leaving heaven and going to the cross so we can spend eternity with Him. His goodness is no longer in question. We may not understand His plan or His*

*timing, but we must trust that a God so good He would literally die for us certainly has our best interests in mind, whether we understand His workings or not (Matthew 7:10).*

*Thank God for the free will He gave you to choose to follow Him. Make choices today that would please Him. Choose to obey Him and love Him. You have a free will, and the only thing you can ever give God is your choice to serve Him. It's the best gift we can give. It's the only gift He wants from us!*

## **BLOG 50: ADAM & EVE and SPIRITUAL BATTLES**

Very shortly after Adam and Eve were created, their free will was tested as well. Satan twisted God's words and put doubt of God's goodness in Eve (Genesis 3:1). The battle started in their minds, and continues so today (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). He implied God was withholding something good from them, a lie he continues to use with good success even today.

Adam chose to believe Satan's lie and act on it, and thus sin entered into the human race (Romans 5:12). Humans, too, used their God-given free will choice to opt for sin. Immediately there were consequences: shame (Genesis 3:7) replaces innocence (Genesis 2:25), guilt and separation from God (Genesis 3:8, 22-24), deception and lies (Genesis 3:10), blaming each other (Genesis 3:12) and continuing consequences of sin in daily life (Genesis 3:16-24).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Having gotten her to dialogue with him and having planted doubts about God's goodness in Eve's mind, Satan then denies the truth of God's Word (Genesis 3:4). Eve misquoted God, saying they couldn't even touch the fruit, when all God said was that they could not eat it (Genesis 3:3). Satan took advantage of her lack of correct understanding of the Word of God. From this we learn that knowing and believing God's Word is totally essential for our victorious living today. We must know it completely and totally (Ephesians 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). Also, we must believe it, especially the part about God's holiness and hatred of sin. Mistaking patience and grace for approval of sin is very wrong. God will judge sin. Sin does bring death. Satan is a liar and deceiver (John 8:44). Unless a thought lines up with God's Word it is wrong.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Sin, and demonizing, all start in the mind, in our thoughts. Actions result from mental choices we make. The majority of demonizing consists of demons putting thoughts into a person's mind or snatching thoughts out of a person's mind. While they don't have access to our minds and thoughts to the same extent that God does, the Bible makes it clear that there is some access. Jesus said this in the Parable of the Sower and the Seed: "Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown." (Mark 4:15). David's thought to take a census was demonic (1 Chronicles 21:1ff; 2 Samuel 24:1ff). So was Ananias & Sapphira's greed (Acts 5:3) and Saul's jealousy/anger (1 Samuel 16:14-23). That's why, when talking about spiritual warfare, Paul says we are to "bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:4-5). Not only can Satan's forces put wrong thoughts into our minds, they can snatch right thoughts out of our minds (Mark 4:15) so that we forget them.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Eve was deceived by Satan because she acted according to her feelings and emotions, putting them over the truth of what God had clearly said (Titus 2:13-15; 2 Corinthians 11:3). Feelings and emotions are fine, important and necessary. They are icing on the cake of life, adding color and enjoyment, and indeed God created them for this purpose, but He didn't create them to be the source of our decision-making. Our feelings should depend on our rational thought. When our feelings get ahead of it or away from it then trouble comes. You know in your mind that you are an OK person, yet fear you will be a failure and rejected. When feelings aren't founded on truth they go wrong. The truth is that you are who you are because God created you that way (Psalm 139), but your emotions reject that truth and try to do the 'thinking' themselves. We must let our mind explain reality to our emotions. When we place feelings over fact, we are wrong.*

## **BLOG 51: JOB and SPIRITUAL BATTLES**

Satan not only attacked God's kingdom on a world-wide scale, but he opposed individuals who were part of that kingdom as well. Job is a prime example of this. He lived around the same time as Abraham, but not much is known about where he fits in historically or geographically. He is a picture of a righteous man, following God, facing his own warfare because he is faithful to God (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7).

One of the ways Satan attacks God's kingdom and people is by bringing accusations of sin against believers (Zechariah 3:1-4; Revelation 12:10). Because God is holy and must judge sin, Satan tries to point out the sins of believers in order to bring God's wrath upon them. However we are safe from condemnation because Jesus paid the price for our sins on the cross (Romans 8:1). Still, Satan is forever tattling on us to God.

We don't know how Satan is allowed in God's presence, but in some way or form this with certain limits which God imposes (Job 1:12; 2:6).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: All Satan's attacks against us are 'Father filtered,' allowed by God for His glory and our good (Romans 8:28). This painful suffering of Job's served as an example of faithfulness to all heavenly beings, and to the millions who have read of Job in the Bible.*

One other item of interest in this account is the way Satan was able to attack Job and his family. He used evil men (Job 1:13-15), nature (lightning, Job 1:16), hostile men (take animals, kill servants, Job 1:17), natural disaster (wind to destroy a house and kill Job's children, Job 1:18-19), and sickness and pain against Job himself (Job 2:6). While we aren't to fear Satan or give him credit for more power than he has, still he clearly has more ability to use nature, people and sickness than we often recognize. He has many weapons in his warfare against us.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Why does God allow people to suffer and struggle? How can a God of love allow so much evil to continue? God doesn't defend Himself or explain what He allows. He gives us a free will choice as to whose kingdom we will pursue. Sin and the resulting evil are the natural consequences of turning from Him.*

*The fact of pain in the world is not a reason to see God as less than loving. Still, innocent people suffer. We can't try to evaluate God's person and character by these things for He has proven His character and love by leaving heaven, becoming a man, living on earth, then going to the cross to take on the punishment for every sin we would ever commit. That proves His love for us beyond a shadow of a doubt. If it weren't for that we would all spend eternity in hell. So anything less than hell from now on is because of His grace and mercy. Why He seems to show more love and mercy to some than others is not up to us to judge. God isn't accountable to us. We cannot stand in judgment of Him until we know all the facts as He knows them and see everything as He sees it. Many things seem unfair to little children but they must trust their parents. Getting an injection from a doctor, having a pretty shiny knife taken away, things like these seem to a child that a parent doesn't love them. But a child doesn't have the perspective to truly understand all that is involved and we don't either. We do know that facing things we don't understand gives us an opportunity to trust. Our faith is stretched and we grow. God is glorified as we see Him deliver and as others watch us continually trust Him no matter what happens. Spiritual warfare itself is often very painful. It is just one of many forms of suffering God uses for our good and for His glory. Often deliverance isn't a sudden, complete act. God allows the struggle to go on for it teaches us to fight and to trust Him.*

## **BLOG 52: MOSES and SPIRITUAL BATTLES**

The whole conflict between Moses and Pharaoh, Israel and Egypt, is one of spiritual warfare. The battle with Satan's magicians, Janees and Jambrees, the victory of God over the gods of Egypt through the plagues and the miraculous deliverance at the Red Sea all show God's great power over Satan and His forces. He led them by the cloud of fire, by His very Shekinah Presence.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: God protected and provided, but the Jews had to learn to fight their battles in His strength. God delivered them, but after deliverance (salvation) they had to learn to fight, as must we. God does not prevent the battles we have with Satan, but He does give us victory through them. We are not exempt from warfare and never will be, but we have His promises of ultimate victory when we trust Him and follow Him. Don't waste energy and prayer time asking for the battle to be milder so you can manage, instead ask for greater strength so you can fight and win. Don't try avoiding the battle, face it right on. And most of all, don't compromise or give in. Being taken captive by your enemies will NOT make your life any easier!*

In their travel from Egypt to Mount Sinai the Jews had to travel near the land of the Amalekites. The Amalekites followed them, picking off the weak and sickly who weren't part of the main body of Israel (Deuteronomy 25:17-18).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan as a roaring lion looks for weak and sick sheep, those who aren't with the main body, and easily picks them off (1 Peter 5:8). We can't fight alone; we must be close to the main army. Be part of a sound Bible-believing church. Be involved in its ministry. Surround yourself with good Christian friends. When you notice one of them drifting do all you can to bring them back to the fellowship. When you are being attacked let others know what they can do to help you. Stragglers and the weak are easy targets for the enemy. Support those who are struggling and ask for help when you need it.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Amalek is a picture of the flesh. The flesh is always here to battle us. Demons don't always attack directly, they use our flesh (sin nature, natural tendency of self-centeredness and sin) as well. In fact, many times they don't have to do anything, they just let our sin nature defeat us. We, like the Jews, must learn to have victory over the flesh by prayer and fighting. Sins of the flesh include such things as lust, greed, laziness, self-indulgence, etc. – anything outside of God's will for us, anything that keeps us from us from being more like Jesus.*

God allowed Amalek to continually attack so the Jews would stop and fight. They had to learn to fight. They were armed by God after the Egyptian army drowned (Exodus 14:30) but had to learn to use their weapons.

The Jews experienced victory when Moses prayed and the army fought behind Joshua (Exodus 17:8-15). Both were necessary for victory. Victory over Amalek was only temporary, for there were many future encounters to come.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: For us to have victory means we must pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17) for it is part of the weaponry God gives us (Ephesians 6:18). We must also fight using the armor He has provided (Ephesians 6:10-17). Prayer without doing our best in life's battles isn't enough; neither is doing our best but neglecting to pray. It takes both faith and works for victory. Our warfare with the flesh will never end. Like the Jews with the Amalekites, battles will continue as long as we are on this earth. Don't ask God to remove the battle but to give you strength to endure.*

*What do you need to do today to have victory over Satan and his forces? The battle won't go away, so prepare for it. That's the only way to victory.*

## **BLOG 53: SPIRITUAL WARFARE THROUGH YOUR FAMILY TREE**

We usually don't associate the Ten Commandments with spiritual warfare, but there is a close connection (Exodus 20:4-5). After the commandment to not make any idols God gives the reason: He is a jealous God "punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me" (Exodus 20:4-5). God does not hold us accountable for the sins of our ancestors (Deuteronomy 24:16) but the consequences of their sins does pass on from generation to generation (Ezekiel 18:2). There is a big difference between 'sins' (individual acts of sin) and 'sin' (general term for the culmination of all sin together).

One of the main ways sin passes from generation to generation is through demonic control. When a person opens themselves to demonizing, that demon claims them and all they have. When they have children the demon then claims the child as well (Exodus 34:6-7; Deuteronomy 5:8-9). There are many examples of this in Scripture (Nehemiah 1:4-9; Jeremiah 14:20; Daniel 1:1-19). This goes on from generation to generation until broken by prayer in Jesus' name. As believers we have authority to break this in Jesus' name (1 Corinthians 7:14).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: When one person opens themselves up to demonic influence, that person's descendants are also at risk of demonizing. When a demon has access to a person, he also claims right to all that person has, including their children. The Bible says these sins pass on down to the third and fourth generation (Exodus 20:4-5; Deuteronomy 5:8-9; Exodus 34:6-7). Ancestral, or generational access is one of the most common reasons people are demonized. This is especially true of first born males, for Satan seeks to claim them just as God does (Exodus 34:20).*

*This is especially true of first born males, but certainly not limited to them. Satan seeks to claim them because God says they belong to Him (Exodus 34:20). This is by no means limited to firstborn males, or even to males. Any child is open to this. If you notice some of the same problems in your life as in your siblings, parents, aunts, uncles, or grandparents it could very well be ancestral demonizing. The same demons have access to those in the family and do the same work in various members (not all members, that would be too obvious). They claim the blood line or family name and use that as access. If you see some patterns in the symptoms or characteristics of demonizing that were covered previously in others in your family that could show ancestral access. That is why so often a boy who hates his father for beating his mother grows up to beat his own wife, or a child of an alcoholic becomes an alcoholic themselves. It is not uncommon to observe generations of abuse, addiction, hatred, superstition and fear, pride, control and manipulation, rejection, sexual sins and perversions etc.*

*Generational bondage can be broken by personally repenting of and confessing the sins of past generations. Claim the blood of Christ as stronger than your blood line and put that access under the blood of Jesus (Romans 5:15). Claim that you are a "new creation, old things have passed away, all things have become new" (II Corinthians 5:17). State that you are "born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God" (John 1:13). Then ask God to turn that curse into a blessing (Deuteronomy 23:5).*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: When talking to someone who you feel may be demonized be sure to start by asking questions about similar sins and problems in other members of the family. This is especially true if the person struggled with the issue since they were quite young. Generational bondage can be broken by putting the sins of past generations under the blood of Jesus and forbid any of Satan's forces to make any claim against you through them. Claim the blood of Christ as stronger than your blood line and put any demonic access under the blood of Jesus (Romans 5:15). Ask God to turn curses into blessing (Deuteronomy 23:5).*

If you sense any of these things in your life use the following prayer:

"Gracious Father over all, I acknowledge before you the sins of my parents and ancestors. I know that they have sinned because all men and women are sinners. And so, I openly confess the sins of my parents and ancestors. I am sorry for their sins against you and I ask

that you cover their sins with the blood of Jesus and not hold their consequences against me or my descendants. I claim the finished work of Jesus Christ, Who bore all my sin upon Himself. In faith I accept that work on the basis of your holy Word. I reclaim any consent given to Satan's forces by my parents' sin. Dear Jesus, please set me free from all evil influences coming from my parents and ancestors in the name of Jesus. I know I am a new creation in Christ. Old things have gone and all things have become new. I here and now reject and disown all the sins of my ancestors. As one who has been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, I cancel out all demonic working that has been passed on to me from my ancestors. As one who has been crucified and raised with Christ and who sits with him in heavenly places, I reject any and every way in which Satan may claim ownership of me. I declare myself to be eternally and completely signed over and committed to the Lord Jesus Christ. I now command every familiar spirit and every enemy of the Lord Jesus Christ that is in or around me to flee my presence and never to return. I now ask You, heavenly Father, to fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I submit my body as an instrument of righteousness, a living sacrifice, that I may glorify You in my body. All this I do in the name & authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

#### **BLOG 54: FEAR, A TOP WEAPON OF SATAN**

Despite all God's show of power and clear provision, the Jews failed to enter the land because of their fear of the giants who were already living there. Quite naturally, they had chosen the best land for themselves. But God promised this to His people. Instead of trusting Him they let their fear control them. Therefore God set the generation who left Egypt aside, causing them to wander for 40 years until all those over 20 had died.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: The Jews in Moses' day never went into the land God had promised them. They never attained spiritual victory or maturity because their fear and lack of faith defeated them. Today fear is still one of Satan's greatest weapons, something that keeps many believers from growing to maturity and attaining spiritual victory. If you struggle with fear this is where your battle must be won. Maybe you don't call it 'fear' but rather refer to it as worry, concern, anxiety, nervousness, fretfulness, apprehension or some similar term. Believe God's promises and move forward in faith, not fear (Proverbs 3:25; Isaiah 14:3; Psalm 34:4; Joshua 1:9; 10:8; 23:9-11; Leviticus 26:8; Exodus 14:13; I Samuel 17:45-47; II Samuel 22:33-35,40-41; Philippians 4:6-7; 4:13; 2 Timothy 1:7 Exodus 14:13). Write some of these down, memorize them, and quote them whenever your faith struggles.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: There are numerous lessons we can learn from Joshua, and an extended personal study of the book will reap rich benefits, so become very familiar with this book. One of the most clear lessons is that fear is a main tool of the enemy and something we need to recognize and defeat by faith (1 John 5:4-5). Also knowing that each battle is different and God has no one way for victory is important. As always, the importance of perseverance is clear throughout. Depend on God alone for victory (Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 3:5-6; Romans 8:28).*

#### **BLOG 55: JOSHUA: FIGHTING SPIRITUAL BATTLES**

The book of Joshua is one of the most detailed books on spiritual warfare in the Bible. 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 tells us that the things that happened to the Jews who left Egypt and eventually settled the Promised Land happened as examples for us. Physical events in the Old Testament teach spiritual truths in the New Testament. That is especially true of Joshua.

In Genesis we see the need of salvation – man is sinful. The book starts in Eden in God's presence and ends with the Jews in captivity in Egypt. Exodus brings deliverance by innocent blood

being shed (Passover) and by power (Red Sea open, close). Then in Leviticus instruction is given as to how to live for God now that they are delivered. In Numbers they start learning to apply what God has taught them about winning battles they face in life. Deuteronomy reviews lessons from the past about obeying God. God's people must learn from the past so they can move ahead in the future. Then comes Joshua, entering the Promised Land (God's perfect will for them) and conquering through warfare. That's where we are in our Christian life: God has redeemed us and taught us in His Word and from past experiences. Now we pursue His perfect will for our lives but find we must fight to achieve what He has for us.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: The same happens today – God freely gives us salvation and has peace, rest and victory available as we live in His perfect will, but there is a battle involved for us to experience and enjoy those blessings. We fight our sinful nature and we fight Satan's demons who try to do all they can to keep us from experiencing all God has for us. It's available, it's ours, but we must battle to reach it. Some Christians believe that if they trust God enough then He will remove all obstacles and bless them with a simple, easy life. Others think that God owes them health, wealth and whatever they want. The truth is that we are in a lifelong battle if we want to remain faithful to God's kingdom. If we give in or compromise, then the battle stops until we start living in faithfulness and obedience again. We are living in enemy-occupied territory seeking to overthrow the prince of this world and release as many of his prisoners as possible. Of course he will oppose all we do!*

The generation of Jews who left Egypt died in unbelief, not attaining all the blessings God had for them in this life. They lacked faith and obedience. Their children took over – each generation must pick up where the last generation stopped or failed. They needed faith to face the giants their parents feared. They couldn't do this in their own strength, only in God's.

*LESSON FOR US: The physical warfare of the Jews over their enemies in the Old Testament pictures our spiritual warfare against our enemies (the flesh and Satan) in the New Testament. We can learn many spiritual lessons from their physical battles. Numbers 32:18-22 gives the key for our victory in spiritual warfare. First of all, we must be totally committed to having victory (Numbers 32:18) and willing to pay whatever price is necessary (Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23). How badly do you want to experience all God has for you? How willing are you to fight for it no matter the cost?*

## **BLOG 56: JERICHO: EACH BATTLE IS DIFFERENT**

The first battle was at Jericho (Joshua 5:13 – 6:27). It is important to note that no two battles, then or now, are exactly alike. At the Red Sea the Jews were to stand still and see God deliver (Exodus 14:3), but against Amalek the men were to take up weapons and fight (Exodus 17:9). Now at Jericho they were told to march around the walls in faith and God would take care of the walls (Joshua 6:1-3). The Jews followed the Ark of the Covenant which symbolized the seat of God's presence.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Each battle we fight will be different than the battles others fight, and even different than past battles we were involved in. We must follow God's lead each time. There is no one way or 'best' way – be sensitive and follow God. Don't look for a magic formula – obedience to God brings victory, disobedience brings defeat.*

Despite victory over great Jericho, the Jews were soundly defeated in their next battle against a small outpost called Ai because there was sin in the camp (Joshua 6:18-19; 7:13). Achan tried to keep that which belonged to God. This sin was confessed and removed from the camp, and then there was victory at Ai. We, too, must make sure there is no sin in our lives or we won't have victory but will live in defeat.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: An entirely new strategy was used for victory at Ai – an ambush from behind the town. There is no magic formula, no one human leader, and no ritual that guarantees victory. Sensitivity to God’s leading and following His Spirit is the only sure way to win. Don’t be judging the way God leads others, and don’t limit Him in what He wants to do to bring victory in your situation.*

After these victories the Jews paused to regroup and refocus. By this time the tribes in the north and south had started unifying to better stand against the Jews.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan’s opposition grows stronger in time. The enemy does not give up and surrender. He often gathers more demons and even motivates unbelieving human beings in opposition against God’s people. Big victories on our part often bring bigger opposition from Satan and his demons.*

## **BLOG 57: JOSHUA: THE BATTLES NEVER END**

During this time the northern tribes had time to unify and prepare (Joshua 11:1-5). Victory in the north did not come in one quick, short battle as we would often like to see happen, but was a slow and gradual process. The enemy just doesn’t quit. Again the greatest problem the Jews faced is fear. The same is true today. God encouraged them in their faith (Joshua 11:6) and brought the victory as they fought (Joshua 11:8). We must fight but it is God who brings victory.

The last great battle to claim and settle the Promised Land, the place of God’s blessing, was against the giants (Anakim, Numbers 13:28; Joshua 11:21). It was fear of them that kept the Jews out of the land in Moses’ day.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: This was a retest. When we are defeated God allows us to face the same enemy time and time again until we learn to have victory. This final series of battles were the hardest, for it was Satan’s last great stand and he did all he could to hold on to his territory. Joshua and Caleb were old by this time, but they still battled and God gave victory. As long as we are alive we will face battles, we never grow too old to keep growing and serving.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: God equips us with the weapon we will need to win our battles. The sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, is our offensive weapon (Matthew 4:4; Ephesians 6:17). Read, study, memorize and use God’s Word. The more proficient you are in God’s Word the more powerful you will be in battle.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Another very important lesson to learn about warfare from the book of Joshua is that warfare never ends. God’s principle was for the Jews to gradually win over the land, bit by bit (Exodus 22:27-30; Deuteronomy 7:21-22). While the last great battle was with the giants, there were always mop-up operations, pockets of resistance, and rebellion which would break out in various places. Were the Jews to conquer the whole land in Joshua’s time they wouldn’t have been able to settle and cultivate all of it, so some would return to a wild state. Instead God let them conquer some land and settle, then move ahead to conquer a little more. God’s wanted them to conquer and settle the land before moving ahead. We, too, are to learn and grow from each conflict we face. This also was how God taught them to fight: by continual practice. They were to teach their children who would continue the battles, and pass it on to their children.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Fortunately, though, the warfare isn’t continual. It comes in cycles. The Jews had times of intense warfare, then times of consolidating and applying their gains. There wasn’t constant battle every minute of every day. God interspersed times of rest, times to grow and mature and times to solidify what was won in the previous battle before they had to move ahead again. God does that today as well. We have times of great stretching and challenge, then times of peace and rest during which we gather our strength and apply what we have learned. Then another*

*battle comes. Don't expect the battles to ever end, but don't become discouraged thinking the current battle will last forever. Battles come and go in cycles. We grow spiritually in spurts just as plants, animals and even a child's body grows in spurts.*

## **BLOG 58: SAUL: STAGES OF DEMONIZING - 1**

Saul was the first king over Israel. He was the choice of the people for he was tall and good looking (1 Samuel 10:23-24) – external traits being all the Jews cared about. He didn't follow God nor did he lead the people to victory in their battles. Pride and insecurity turned him from a shy, humble man to a self-centered tyrant. His insecurity and fear opened him up to demonic oppression.

**Stage 1 demonizing** The first stage of his demonic oppression was mild. When he was tormented David's music brought relief (1 Samuel 16:14-23). He opened himself to the influence of demons by his sin. When he allowed his fear to manifest itself in anger and rage, demons fed on his hate and injected more fear and anger into him (1 Samuel 18:10-22; 19:9-10; 20:30-33). He only found relief when David played and sang to him.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: God assigns angels to protect us, and He does it in an organized way, not haphazardly. So, too, Satan is methodical in assigning demons to attack us as well. Certain ones are assigned to focus on defeating us, perhaps also to other family members as well. They get to know us and our weaknesses so that they are better able to find chinks in our armor and attack us either head on or in new subtle ways, which often are more successful. They have had thousands of years of experience doing this so we are no match for them. God alone knows us better than they do and only He can help us have victory.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Sin opens the door to demons. Sinful desire is like a prayer, a request which demons are more than willing to fill. Anger especially leads to demonizing (Ephesians 4:26-27; Matthew 18:34; II Corinthians 2:10-11). We voluntarily lose self-control and the anger becomes like a prayer, a seeking for something ungodly to empower us. Confess any anger as sin and take back any access you have given to Satan through it.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Christian music is a good way to have victory over demonic oppression today as well (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Not only does it reset our mind and thoughts with God's truth, but demons hate hearing Jesus praised and avoid places where that is happening. Playing music that lifts up Jesus when you are attacked is a good way to help win the battle. It is also a profitable practice at night for those who have thoughts and dreams that aren't from God. Letting Christian music play quietly in your room can help with that. If a certain part of your home or property seems to be especially under attack leave some music playing there all day and night. Leaving a light on can have the same affect for demons love darkness and hate the light.*

## **BLOG 59: SAUL: STAGES OF DEMONIZING - 2**

Saul allowed himself to be demonized when he opened himself to the influence of demons by the sin in his life, especially his anger and jealousy of David. That was like a 'prayer' which demons gladly 'answered' by feeding more anger and jealousy into his mind. It didn't end there, though. Their power and influence over him continued to grow.

**Stage 2 Demonizing** The second stage then followed. Saul became more violent, even trying to kill David while he played music (1 Samuel 18:10-11; 19:7-17; 20:30-33). This shows how demons hate music that praises God and will do anything to silence it if possible. As the demons gather more control over Saul by his continual sin they are able to incite him to seek to kill David. Those in this

stage start acting out in their sin area – in violence, greed, lust or whatever area they have opened in their life.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Violence and rage are common effects of demonic presence. That is not to say that Saul, or anyone who has rages, is not responsible for their actions - they are. But at this point it takes more than just “trying harder” to have victory; it takes confessing the sin and rebuking the work of the demons in your life. Then ask God to fill that void. The battle will then begin for they will seek to retake the property in your life they have gained. Using God’s word by quoting His promises is the only way to have sustained victory.*

**Third Stage Demonizing** The third and final stage of demonizing is then evident in Saul’s life. Deeply destructive and totally ungodly behavior begins as Saul goes to a witch at Endor for advice (1 Samuel 28:8-15). Despite the fact that he knows God forbids this (Deuteronomy 18:9-13) he wants the witch to call up the spirit of Samuel so he can find out information about the future. Assuming a demonic manifestation would appear counterfeiting Samuel, they were both shocked when God allowed Samuel himself to manifest to them. Samuel foretold his future as he wanted, but it was one of death for disobedience.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: While God has a plan for our lives that includes life, joy and peace, Satan also has a plan but it includes misery, destruction and death. He can only do what God allows. If he had his own way all Christians would be cruelly killed. He can only do what God allows (Job). Demons seem to bring that which is good for us, but like Satan’s deception in Eden it is really for our destruction (John 8:44). Therefore there can be no compromise in our warfare with Satan and his forces. We cannot give one inch of ground but must tirelessly battle for total freedom.*

## **BLOG 60: DAVID & SOLOMON: SUBTLE WAYS OF SATAN**

**David** was a man after God’s own heart (1 Samuel 13:13-14) who killed a bear and lion by God’s power. He defeated Goliath the same way (1 Samuel 17:45-47). His downfall was his sin with Bathsheba and the subsequent attempted cover-up. That was the result of a pattern of deception and lies that started earlier in his life. Another thread of sin woven throughout the years was lust – unfortunately David had married several wives. Satan had been patiently setting up this snare for years. The trap was set and David was caught. He was victorious over open frontal attacks, but Satan had been developing this noose patiently for quite a while. That’s why we must always be alert to the smallest sin and get rid of it immediately.

There is another time when Satan deceived and defeated David as well. Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel.” (1 Chronicles 21:1) David, in pride which was encouraged by Satan, took a census of his soldiers against Joab’s advice and God’s warning (1 Chronicles 21: 2-7). God severely punished Israel with a plague because of it (1 Chronicles 21: 8-29). God allowed an “angel” to bring death to many (1 Chronicles 21:14-27). Was this “angel” who caused death in the plague a demon or an angel of God? Either way, we see Satan putting thoughts of pride into David’s mind which led to death for many.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Demons will work for years setting a Christian up for a fall. We think we can get away with a certain sin, or it isn’t a big deal, but gradually it grows until we are captured and defeated by it. Demons are smart and they are patient. Without God’s wisdom and help we are sure to fall. Don’t give in one inch. Don’t allow one sin, however small, to remain and grow. Demons are working on a way to trap you at this very moment so be very alert or you will be defeated. We may be ready for the large battles and faithfully fight them, then fall into a cleverly laid trap of the enemy (1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Timothy 2:26).*

**Solomon**, too, is an example of someone who was brought down by deception and trickery. Despite all his wisdom and riches, he followed his father's example and married many women (1 Kings 11:3). He went way beyond David in this, though, and these women led him into idolatry and paganism (1 Kings 11:4). He had everything but lost it.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Those closest to us can be used to mislead us and tempt us into sin, as Eve did with Adam (Genesis 3:6) and perhaps Job's wife when she told him to curse God and die (Job 2:9). Don't mistrust those closest to you, but if they tempt you to stray from the truth even the littlest bit avoid that trap of Satan's and do what you know God wants.*

## **BLOG 61: ELIJAH: WINNING SPIRITUAL BATTLES**

Satan and his demons love blood, pain, suffering and death. This is the opposite of God who loves life, light, peace and joy. Destruction and misery characterize the work of Satan and his demons. The demonically empowered pagan religions in Israel were full of blood, suffering and death. The priests of Baal cut themselves to call on their gods to start their altar on fire when Elijah challenged them to a power encounter to see whose god was the greatest (1 Kings 18:28). They shed the blood of innocent victims to their gods as well. Sacrificing children to their detestable, blood-thirsty gods was common (Jeremiah 32:35; 2 Kings 16:3; 17:17; 21:6; Ezekiel 20:31). Demons demand sacrifice; they thrive on pain and love to cause suffering and misery, even death.

A clear example of this is when Israel defeated the Moabites and drove them back into their own walled cities. The Jew's power from their God was greater than that of Satan and those who called on him. But then their king sacrificed his own firstborn son before everyone on the city wall (2 Kings 3:25-27) and the tide of the battle turned. They now had power to drive back the Jews and defeat them. What made the difference? Where did that power come from? By appealing to demons in this way they received their help in battle. If the Jews had understood the spiritual warfare that was behind the physical battle they could have called on their God and He would have given them the power they needed to have victory (1 John 4:4). But they fought in their own strength and lost the battle.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: We, too, need to know and practice spiritual warfare so we have victory. Many of God's people live in defeat because they do not understand the way the enemy works or the principles of spiritual warfare and how to have victory (2 Corinthians 2:5-11).*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan and his demons still love blood, darkness, misery and suffering. They feed off of the music, movies, dress and lifestyles that focus on darkness. They go wild for human blood and are behind the recent rise in incidents of teens cutting themselves today (Mark 5:5). They love to cause pain of any sort, including physical pain (Matthew 17:15). Perhaps that is one of the reasons for the rise of interest in tattoos today despite the pain of getting them. By the way, the Bible clearly forbids tattoos (Leviticus 19:28).*

While we see Satan and his forces at work throughout the pages of the Old Testament, we also see God's greater power through those who are obedient to Him. Elijah's victory over the prophets of Baal and Ashtoreth in the time of Ahab and Jezebel is one example (1 Kings 18:16-46). God takes on the gods behind the false religions, the ones empowering the pagan idols and clearly defeats each and every one of them.

## **BLOG 62: HEZEKIAH: PROVISION & PROTECTION IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE**

Hezekiah tried to buy off King Sennacherib of Assyria when he attacked them to defeat them (2 Kings 18:14-16). Sennacherib took the money but attacked the Jews anyway (2 Kings 18:17).

Jehosaphat, in a similar situation, turned to God instead of trying to make a deal with his enemy. God delivered him (2 Chronicles 20:17) and the nation responded in praise and thanksgiving to God (2 Chronicles 20:12). When God didn't deliver, though, the prophets stayed faithful to God even though they were greatly persecuted and often killed (Hebrews 11:32-38).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Often we are tempted to compromise with sin, to back off when the battle gets intense, to fade a bit in our commitment to God – and when we do the pressure from the enemy seems to let up. So we back off a bit more from our obedience to God and enjoy the rest from battle. What is happening, though, is that we are trying to buy off the enemy. He'll take what we give him, but he'll soon be back stronger than ever and then we will be in worse shape than before. Surrender to the enemy is certainly one way to find relief from conflict, but then there is no spiritual growth, no fruit of the spirit, no reward in eternity and no peace in this life. The only way for victory is to trust God and continue to stand against the enemy (Ephesians 6:11-14).*

Throughout all the Jews' battles, God was with His people and helping those who turned to Him. He often used angels to protect His people and bring judgment on His enemies (2 Kings 6:15-17; 19:35; 2:11; Psalm 34:7; 68:17; 91:11; Zechariah 1:8; 6:1-7; Revelation 19:11).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: God's angel's today fight for us as they did for God's people in times past. They protect us at times and in ways we aren't aware of (Hebrews 1:14; Matthew 26:53). We don't see them or if we do they appear as human beings (Hebrews 13:2). We aren't to pray to them, for we are fellow warriors in the fight to advance God's kingdom against the kingdom of darkness. It's good to know we aren't ever alone in our battles, though.*

## **BLOG 63: GOD IS STILL IN CONTROL**

God allowed demons to mislead the false prophets. God used demonic deception of the false prophets. He allowed it because they couldn't do it without His permission (1 Kings 22:19-23) in order to use the results for His purpose. When the king followed the Satan-inspired laws of his prophets he was destroyed, which is what God wanted (1 Kings 22:1-28).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: When we are able to see behind the scenes we learn that God is using Satan's evil for His good (Romans 8:28). He allowed a demon of lying and deception to cause false prophets to give a wrong message to Ahab, thus luring him to God's judgment of death on him (1 Kings 22:19-23). God uses all things for His plan and purpose (Romans 8:28). (See notes with Job for more about this.) Sometimes it is hard to understand why God doesn't answer or deliver, why He allows the enemy to work as he does. Always remember God is totally in control. He allows man a free will choice but ultimately uses all that happens for His final purpose.*

Even though it seemed like Satan's kingdom was advancing and defeating God's kingdom, God foretold their ultimate defeat several times. First, God decreed through Isaiah that Satan would be brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit (Isaiah 14:12-20). Next, God says Satan and his forces will be bound in a dungeon, shut up in prison for many days (consigned to hades for the Millennium, Isaiah 24:21-23). Third, God promises (Isaiah 27:1) that the serpent or dragon (Satan, Revelation 12:7-12) will be defeated by the sword of God's Word (Revelation 19:15). Through Ezekiel God says Satan will be cast from heaven to earth by God's power (Ezekiel 28:11-19).

*LESSON FOR US: While Satan is aware of the fate that awaits him, it just causes him to act with more fury as the end comes closer. He even has deceived many of his demons into thinking their cause will one day be victorious. A good way of defeating them when attacked is to read these*

passages and others in Revelation (Revelation 20:1-3, 7-10; etc.) about their coming defeat, about God's power over them (1 John 4:4). Use God's Word to make sure they know they are defeated by God's power and must submit to His authority. It is good for us to remember that God is the most powerful One and ultimate victor in our daily battles as well.

## **BLOG 64: DANIEL: SPIRITUAL WARFARE PRAYER**

For 70 years the Jews were in captivity to other nations who took them from their homeland. Daniel was one of those taken to Babylon as a young boy. He spent his life there in service to God and his new country. Throughout all of his life he was involved in spiritual warfare. We gain valuable insight into the battle in the heavenlies from an event in his life (Daniel 10:2-14). Towards the end of his life he was fasting and praying for wisdom from God. After 24 days without an answer an angel appeared to him and told him that the first day he started praying God sent a messenger to answer Daniel's prayer. However for 3 weeks the demon who was the territorial ruler of Persia fought against this messenger angel to keep him from getting to Daniel. Michael came to join in the battle so the heavenly courier from God was able to defeat the demonic oppression. He was then able to come to Daniel and complete his mission. While this sounds like a strange event, it sheds much light on the spiritual battles we fight. These kinds of things probably happen around us all the time but we aren't aware of them.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: There are several lessons for us in this account. First, we gain insight into the organization of Satan's forces. Satan arranges his demons in the same manner God has angels organized - in a military-like structure. These are similar to soldiers in an army: generals, colonels, majors, lieutenants, sergeants, corporals, privates, etc. (Ephesians 6:12). Usually a "strong man" (or ruler) is assigned to a task, and he has lesser demons under his command to help in the work (Matthew 12:25-29; Daniel 10:2-6, 12-14). The names of these demons usually refer to what they do: "Fear," "Anger," "Lust," "Pride," "Deception," etc.. Satan assigns powerful demons as leaders to oversee the work against various people groups and geographical areas as well. Persia was controlled by demons who were organized under the command of a very powerful demon who took the role as the "prince of Persia". We can be assured that all countries, people groups and major movements among mankind have a structure of demons assigned to defeat and control them. So do churches, Christian ministries, families and of course individuals as well. No one gets overlooked, and those doing the Lord's work receive special attention! Understanding these things is important for us to know what we are fighting against and how to pray for God's power and protection.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: We also see the importance of prayer, and that God answers it. Even if it seems to take a while, persevere and await God's answer. It has been correctly said that prayer is not preliminary to the battle, prayer is the battle. So persevere in your prayer and warfare. The warfare we go through here is just a small reflection of what is taking place in the heavenlies. You are not alone in your battles. All God's people are attacked, and angels and demons are constantly in conflict in the unseen world around us. If it seems you are alone, or something must be wrong because you face these things more than others remember that all who seek to serve and advance God's kingdom will be attacked.*

## **BLOG 65: "NOTHING TO FEAR BUT FEAR ITSELF!"**

Babylonian beliefs influenced the Jews in their beliefs as well. While in captivity in Babylon they picked up many of the beliefs of the Babylonians. The Babylonians were very superstitious and their religion was based on fear. They believed the gods sent demons to cause illness and difficulties

when these gods were offended by something someone did, so their goal was to find which god was upset and appease him by ritualistic formulas, incantations, rites, amulets, charms or sacrifices.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Fear is still one of Satan's very best tools and often the name of the ruling demon of many who are demonized. "Fear" and "Death" are common, powerful, and often work together to bring the destruction of their host. Demons commonly instill fear in those they attack and use it to control the person (Romans 8:15). Demons put the fear of David into Saul (I Samuel 18:10-15) and put fear and terror into Eliaphaz by gliding by his face (Job 4:15). Anything not of faith is sin (Romans 14:23). God does not give us fear (II Timothy 1:7; Romans 8:15), so if you experience fear realize it is not from God but from Satan. This doesn't mean it is always through demonizing, for you can be attacked with fear without being demonized.*

*Fear takes root when we choose to focus on circumstances instead of God. Peter walking on water is a good example. When his eyes were on Jesus his faith was strong, but when he looked at the waves they grew in his mind to be greater than Jesus' power and he started sinking. He did the right thing, though, and put his eyes back on Jesus.*

*Trust is the antidote to fear. How can we understand trust, what it means and how it works? I think understanding how a family should work is the best answer. God established a family relationship to answer all those questions. He is the Father, we are the children. Do your children trust you? What do they have to do? What do you expect of them? It's exactly the same. Jesus says we are to be like little children in order to learn faith and trust. Let your children teach you. Put yourself in their position - with a Perfect Father.*

*When you notice fear attacking you defeat it by quoting scripture. When Jesus was tempted He quoted Scripture to have victory over Satan's temptations. Paul says our only offensive weapon is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Psalm 119:9,11 tell us that it's through God's Word that we have victory. When you have these thoughts and attacks use Scripture to have victory. Ask God to give you some verses that will help against these things, write them down and memorize them. Say them over and over when these thoughts attack you. That is the only way to victory, and God guarantees it will work! Here are some verses you may want to use: Proverbs 3:25; Isaiah 14:3; Psalm 34:4; Joshua 1:9; 10:8; 23:9-11; Leviticus 26:8; Exodus 14:13; I Samuel 17:45-47; II Samuel 22:33-35,40-41; Philippians 4:6-7; 4:13; 2 Timothy 1:7 and Exodus 14:13.*

*Watch for fear in your own life and look for it when you minister, in spiritual warfare or in other areas as well. Fear is something we all must learn to have victory over. Every person who ever lived faced a battle with fear.*

## **BLOG 66: OLD TESTAMENT CONCLUDES BUT WARFARE CONTINUES**

After 70 years in foreign captivity some of the Jews were allowed to return to their home land and rebuilt Jerusalem. Several small groups made the journey home, but most stayed in Babylon where there was better financial prosperity. Those who returned, like Nehemiah and Ezra, were attacked from without and within. Externally they faced ridicule, criticism, mockery and threats of violence from neighboring nations who didn't want the Jews returning to their land. Internally they faced discouragement, gossip and criticism from fellow Jews. It was a battle with two fronts.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: We, too, face a two-pronged attack from our enemy. He hits us head on with external problems and painful circumstances, criticism and rejection from others and obstacles in our way. Internally we fight against fear, anger, greed, lust, pride, self-centeredness, laziness and many more. It's hard enough to battle on one front, but to fight both battles well at the*

*same time is truly difficult. In fact, it's impossible without God's help. Without learning to depend on Him, remember His promises, and keep our eyes on His person, we won't be able to have victory.*

For five hundred more years the Jews lived in Palestine, their home land. They rebuilt their civilization but never attained their freedom or the prosperity they once had. Greece took over from Babylon and Persia, but their religion was similar to Babylon's, for they got much of it from the Babylonians. Greece adopted many Babylonian beliefs and practices and included them in their own religious system. They used concoctions, incantations, invocations (spoken or written on paper and hung around the neck), amulets, recipes (mixing oils, burning roots, sprinkling water, etc.) and blowing upon the person to remove demons. Many of these practices eventually became part of the Jews rituals at that time. To most Jews of the period, as indeed to most men of that time, the world was full of supernatural agencies. As there were angels to accomplish every good act, so there were demons or evil spirits to perpetuate every evil deed or to prompt every sinful impulse. These were an important part of their world view. Trying to live at peace with them, or manipulate these forces for their own benefit, was an important part of daily life and religion.

Warfare – no one wants it. But we will experience much of it if we will follow God. The only ones who aren't in a battle are those who are in Satan's army or captured by him. Any and all who follow God will have to fight. But God will bring victory. D Martin Lloyd-Jones in "God's Battle, Not Ours" writes: "All the battles of Israel, if they could have seen it, were not their battles, they were the battles of the Lord. They were involved because they were His people. This is God's battle, we are given the privilege of being in it and of fighting as individual soldiers, but God's honor is involved in it all. He cannot allow this to fall because His character, His glory, and His honor are involved at every point. Be strong in the Lord; remember that He is there, and that it is His battle."

## **SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN THE BIBLE** **LIFE OF JESUS**

### **BLOG 67: JESUS: LANDING BEHIND ENEMY LINES**

The coming of Jesus Christ was the invasion of the kingdom of Satan by the kingdom of God in the person of the true King. His incarnation was an infiltration, a landing behind enemy lines. The enemy mustered all the opposition it could to stop Him. He came to rescue mankind which had been held captive in sin since the time of Adam and Eve. He provided the only way man could get out of bondage. Jesus came to end Satan's undisputed rule (Matthew 12:28-29). Darkness fought against the Light, but praise God the light was greater (John 1:5; 3:19; 8:12)!

Jesus' birth was truly an infiltration of enemy-occupied territory, a landing behind the lines of a baby who would change everything. While the accounts of Jesus' birth speak of a quiet, peaceful event, reading between the lines shows there was much conflict involved both in heaven and on earth. The news of Mary's pregnancy before the consummation of her marriage with Joseph clearly led to community rejection. Strong opposition to Jesus' coming is seen in the fact that there was no comfortable place to stay in Bethlehem, the religious leaders failed to come see the baby even though they knew when and where He was born (Matthew 2:1-7), and Herod's attempted to kill Him (Matthew 2:16).

There were others who were very willing to recognize this baby as God Himself come to earth. God affirmed Jesus' deity through the words of Gabriel to Mary, Joseph and the shepherds. Each of

them believed. Simeon and Anna in the temple knew who He was, and the Magi from the east were clear confirmations that God had come to earth in the form of a baby (Matthew 1:18-2:12).

However most people, including the religious rulers, rejected Him. Some of those who did follow Him traveled with Him to watch and learn each day. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John record these events. They are not just history lessons; they are practical examples of how we are to win the battles in our lives.

We, too, fight behind enemy lines. Jesus may be gone, but we remain to infiltrate enemy territory. We draw their fire. We face their attacks. That's why God gave us the Bible as our training manual and the life of Jesus as our practical example. The following series of blogs will draw lessons in spiritual warfare from the life of Jesus.

“All the battles of Israel, if they could have seen it, were not their battles; they were the battles of the Lord. They were involved because they were His people. This is God's battle, we are given the privilege of being in it and of fighting as individual soldiers, but God's honor is involved in it all. He cannot allow this to fall because His character, His glory, and His honor are involved at every point. Be strong in the Lord; remember that He is there, and that it is His battle.” D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

## **BLOG 68: JESUS COMMITS TO THE BATTLE**

To escape being killed by Herod, Joseph took Mary and Joseph to Egypt for several years. Then, in obedience to God's direction, he took his little family back to Nazareth (Matthew 2:13-23). The only event recorded during Jesus' childhood was when He went to the temple at the age of 12 (Luke 1:41-52). We have no way of knowing how much Jesus understood of His origins or future while growing up. We can confidently assume He grew up experiencing all the feelings, emotions and temptations any normal human being would go through (Hebrews 4:15; 2:18). He voluntarily chose not to use any part of His deity which would have made His life as a human any easier (Philippians 2:7); He laid aside all knowledge and power, the ability to be present anywhere, anything that would have given him an advantage that other human beings did not have. Clearly, though, He grew up with a deep faith and attained a clear understanding of God's Word through study and training (Luke 2:52).

It's hard to know just how aware He was of His deity and purpose in coming, but there is no doubt the angels and demons were quite aware. Jesus didn't get married when other boys would have (late teens or early twenties) but stayed single, knowing God had something else for Him. When He reached thirty (Luke 3:23), the age when young men would enter the priesthood, He felt God's Spirit leading Him to leave His family and home and go to where His cousin John the baptizer was preaching (Luke 1:1-60).

While He was there He publically committed Himself to the work He had volunteered for before the world was created – providing redemption for us (Ephesians 1:3-4). This was the only way God could give us a free will yet still have us in heaven with Him. He became our substitute, our sacrifice, the “lamb of God” as John calls Him (John 1:29, 36). When He was baptized God Himself affirmed His approval and sent the Holy Spirit to fill Jesus in a special way and enable Him to do the work of the Messiah/Christ (Luke 3:21-22).

While the people watching Him be baptized by John may not have been aware of the great significance of what was happening, the spiritual forces, both angelic and demonic, were totally aware of what was occurring. The enemy knew what they must do – defeat the Messiah before He defeats them! The battle was on.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: When God calls us to come follow Him and serve Him, there is a time we need to make that commitment public. It could be by baptism or some other way of letting others*

know of our promise to live for Him and follow Him in all we do. This usually brings opposition. Even Jesus was greatly attacked after His baptismal statement of commitment.

## **BLOG 69: SATAN THROWS THE FIRST PUNCH (Wilderness Temptation 1)**

Immediately following His baptism Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit, the 'dove' who had just descended on Him, into the desert (Matthew 4:1). He needed time to focus on what was about to come, to strengthen His spirit and commitment. He needed time alone with His Father, something that would happen time after time during His earthly life. After 40 days of fasting and praying Jesus was tempted by Satan. Whether He waited because God restrained him or because he wanted to hit Jesus when He was weakest is unknown. Satan, who had been opposing God's plan of redemption from the beginning (Genesis 3:14-15), now focuses his attacks on Jesus.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Note that Jesus was in the perfect center of God's will when He was tempted, for God Himself led Him to the desert (Matthew 4:1). Being tempted to sin does not mean we are out of God's will or not following closely to Him. Often the opposite is true, like with Jesus. It is because we are following God closely that we are attacked the hardest. Be aware so you aren't taken by surprise. Don't think it is a bad sign that you are tempted. Being attacked is actually a good sign for Satan only attacks those who are doing damage to his kingdom. When you aren't being attacked is the time to make sure you haven't drifted from the conflict (Luke 6:26).*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Note that Satan attacks immediately, as soon as Jesus commits to doing God's will by being baptized. For us, too, the attacks come when we move in the direction of following God. When we are not as close to God, Satan and his forces leave us alone, but when our devotion increases so do the enemy's attacks. We soon discover that when we fade a bit in our walk with the Lord then the pressure decreases, tempting us to follow God, but not quite so closely!*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Notice, too, that this battle with Satan was God's perfect will for Jesus. "Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil" (Matthew 4:1). God does not prevent our battles, no matter how hard we pray for that to happen, but He does help us through them. So it is better to focus on fighting them in His strength than looking for ways to avoid them. They are part of God's will for us because they strength us and show us that His grace is sufficient, as was true of the Jews fighting for the Promised Land behind Joshua's leadership.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: The place where Jesus was sent by God to fast, pray and battle Satan was the "desert," considered the abode of demons (Matthew 12:43). Sometimes God leads us into strongholds of Satan's so we can do battle for Him, knowing we can experience have victory through His power (1 John 4:4). We aren't to run from such encounters but face them with His strength.*

When Satan was unable to defeat Jesus after three tries he left, and the angels came to minister to Jesus (Matthew 4:11). Satan wasn't done, though. Luke 4:13 says he left but would return at an "opportune time." He is never done, he never stops working against Jesus.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: There will be lulls in demonic oppression against us. Often it seems oppression comes in cycles or waves. Some times things are very difficult, then it seems the attacks get milder or even disappear for awhile. But they always return. We will never have ultimate, total victory in this life. If you are going through a difficult time remember that it will one day lessen. If you are not going through a time of challenges and attacks, be prepared for when it returns. Don't be surprised or discouraged when it returns, either. Use this rest time to refresh and prepare for the battle when it starts again.*

## **BLOG 70: THREE STRIKES AND YOU'RE OUT (Wilderness Temptation 2)**

After being baptized by John Jesus immediately went to the wilderness to pray and prepare Himself for what was to come. At the end of that time Satan used his best three temptations to defeat Jesus. He uses them against us as well!

The **first temptation** was for physical needs – Jesus was hungry after 40 days of not eating. Jesus could turn the stones to bread, but that was not God's will. This was a legitimate need but not God's way of meeting it.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Sin is using an illegitimate way to meet a legitimate need. Hunger is a legitimate need, but Jesus must meet it in God's way, not in his own or Satan's way. When tempted look for the legitimate need behind it (peace, comfort, companionship, joy, etc.) and seek to have that need met God's way instead of taking a 'shortcut' that is sinful.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Building on what was just said, the fact that we have a legitimate need doesn't mean it has to be immediately met. The very common "entitlement mentality" today seems to say we should have everything we want as soon as we want it, and that parents, God, the government, or life itself owes it to us! That is a very unbiblical attitude and quite dangerous. In fact, it's the very lie Satan used with Eve in Eden – "You are entitled to this fruit!"*

The **second temptation** Satan used was an appeal to Jesus' pride. He was due recognition from all so Satan suggested an easy way to get it - by throwing Himself down from the highest part of the temple and letting angels come rescue Him in the sight of the watching crowds. If Satan wanted to defeat Jesus, why would he offer to help Him have everyone come worship Him? While this might have seemed like something that would benefit Jesus, it really was a subtle way to give him recognition without having to go to the cross. This would have been a short-cut to His Kingship – giving Him the throne of Israel without having to go through the agony of crucifixion. But if He had taken this route, then there would be no salvation for us – and that was exactly why Satan tempted Him in this way. He was willing for Jesus to have His temporary throne on earth as long as He didn't pay for our sins in the process.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Pride is what motivated Satan to sin and rebel against God (Isaiah 14:13-14). It is still one of his best tools against us today (1 Timothy 3:6). There is no short-cut to maturity or spirituality, no easy way to grow. The way up is down. God exalts those who humble themselves (James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:6). He humbles those who exalt themselves (Luke 18:14). Pride is self-centeredness, a focus on one's self. It is pride if we think we are better than others or if we think we are worse than others. Either extreme is pride, an inordinate attention to self. Either extreme is wrong. Satan doesn't care which direction he gets us to fall as long as we fall!*

Satan's **third temptation** was a final desperate measure. He put it all on the line, something he didn't have to do with Adam and probably didn't want to do with Jesus. But everything was at stake so he offered Jesus ruler ship of the whole world if Jesus would bow down to Satan. Ruler ship of the world was what Jesus had come to win back, and Satan was offering to give it to Jesus for free. But there was one condition – Jesus would have to recognize Satan as His authority instead of God the Father. Again we see that the end does not justify the means.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan seems to offer people today everything they want if they turn to this world system. He received ownership from Adam of the world system of values and motives as it operates today (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). He tries to get us to think that we, too, can have everything we want. Adam and Eve believed this lie, and many today believe it as well. But it is a lie. It is Satan's bait to trap people into bondage.*

## **BLOG 71: JESUS WINS ROUND ONE (Wilderness Temptation 3)**

Satan attacked Jesus in the wilderness after was baptized by John. Three times Jesus resisted and was victorious. What can we learn from how He was able to have victory?

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus faced these human temptations as a man just like us. He did not rely on His deity to make it through. He was attacked just as Adam had been, but unlike Adam He did not sin and therefore He won back what Adam lost (Romans 5:12-21). We, too, can have victory through God's power, just as Jesus did. The same resource is available to us!*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Fasting can be a useful tool in spiritual warfare, not because our suffering earns God's pity so He is more apt to answer our prayers, but because it is a way of denying our flesh and putting spiritual things before personal needs. It clears our mind and helps us focus on the battle at hand. Hunger reminds us of our weakness, our need of His strength and it reminds us to pray. It frees up more time to spend in prayer as well. We must be sure God wants us to fast before we do so, and we must use wisdom in what kind of a fast it is and how long it lasts, but it is a weapon we should make use of. Jesus used it often.*

Jesus had victory over Satan's temptations by quoting God's Word each time He was tempted. That is the only way to have victory. Jesus knew the Bible well enough to quote the book of Deuteronomy three times.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Quoting Scripture is our best weapon against Satan's attacks against us as well. Paul says our only offensive weapon is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17). Psalm 119:9-11 tell us that it's through God's Word that we have victory. When thoughts or temptations you don't want come into your mind, use Scripture to have victory. There is power in God's Word that is lacking in our own words (Hebrews 4:12). Reminding demons of God's truth shows them they must submit to it, and helps us put our faith in Him and not give in to the lie behind the temptation. It allows our mind to explain reality to our emotions. Always have some verses that speak to your situation memorized or written down where you can reference them at any time. Use them as soon as you sense opposition coming against your thoughts.*

## **BLOG 72: JESUS FREES A CAPTIVE OF SATAN (Capernaum Synagogue encounter 1)**

While Satan continued to harass Jesus after the wilderness temptations, especially through his demons, no direct overt attack is recorded until Jesus is half way through His ministry, about a year and a half after Jesus' baptism and temptation.

Jesus had proclaimed Himself as the Messiah ('Christ') for two years. Some responded but most turned away, following the lead of the religious rulers who completely rejected Jesus and His claims. He did miracles to authenticate His authority and to show His power. If He can heal a body then He can certainly heal a soul as well.

One day Jesus went to Capernaum (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37), His new home and the home of several of His disciples. While teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath a demonized man cried out, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who You are – the Holy One of God!" (Mark 1:24) Jesus commanded the demon to be quiet and leave the man, which he did after shaking the man and causing a loud shriek to be heard. Naturally, everyone was amazed and word of this soon spread throughout the whole area. With this event the battle between Satan and Jesus moved to a new level.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: The Greek word δοιμονιζομαι ("demonizing") refers to one who is heavily impacted by demons. It is used 15 times in the New Testament. The term "demonizing" does not differentiate between possession (demons within) and influence (demons without). God doesn't make that clarification or distinction, and we shouldn't try to make it, either. We don't need to know*

the exact extent of demonizing, just that it is taking place. The cause is the same, as are the symptoms and so is the cure. In the spiritual realm there are no clear-cut divisions like we try to make (demons 'within' or 'without', etc.). There are, of course, degrees of demonizing depending on the person, the demons involved, the access, and other factors, but it isn't always possible or necessary to pinpoint what is 'without' and what is 'within'.

Other words the Bible uses for 'demonizing' are "entered in" (as when Satan entered into Judas - John 13:27) and "filled" (Acts 5:5 about Ananias and Saphira, the same word that is used of believers being filled with the Holy Spirit). The common denominator is that the person being demonized usually doesn't separate his own consciousness from the demonic influence. He assumes that the thoughts and feelings the demon feeds him are his own. A person always has a free will to turn to God for help, but when followed these demonic impulses bring one deeper and deeper into bondage. Perhaps demonizing can be better understood by thinking of it as a kind of spiritual hypnotism from within. Hypnotism of any kind is something for God's people to avoid (Psalm 54:4-5; Joshua 1:8; Philippians 4:8).

**LESSON FOR TODAY:** How many demons were involved in this incident? "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who You are – the Holy One of God!" Usually there is more than one demon involved when someone is demonized, there is a structured organization. Satan organizes his demons in the same manner God has angels organized - in a military-like structure. These are similar to generals, colonels, majors, lieutenants, sergeants, corporals, privates, etc. (Ephesians 6:12). Usually a "strong man" (or ruler) is assigned to a task, and he has lesser demons under his command to help in the work (Matthew 12:25-29; Daniel 10:2-6, 12-14). The names of these demons usually refer to their work ("Fear," "Anger," "Lust," "Pride," "Deception," etc.). In this case the ruling demon is the one speaking ("I") for the others who are part of the group working against this man ("us").

### **BLOG 73: JESUS FREES A CAPTIVE OF SATAN (Capernaum Synagogue encounter 2)**

Since Jesus is our great example in all we do, especially in spiritual warfare, what lessons can we learn from how He delivered the man in the Capernaum synagogue (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37).

**LESSON FOR TODAY:** It is not coincidental that it was Jesus' presence and teaching that caused the demon to react (see also Mark 5:39). When Jesus is lifted up and His Word communicated, demons who are present will be affected for they can't stand to hear these things. Correct teaching of God's Word is essential for a church or individual to grow spiritually. Don't be surprised when it stirs up opposition against a person, family or church. Satan will do what he can to silence it, to keep the light from shining in his kingdom of darkness.

**LESSON FOR TODAY:** The first occasion of an act or event in the Bible often sets the prototype for others to come, and that is true of this first deliverance in the Caernaum synagogue. The exact methods used by Jesus to cast out spirits are mentioned in only five specific cases and in only one generalized case (which appears first on the following list):

Matt 8:16: "he cast out the spirits with a word."

Matt 15:28: "Then Jesus answered her, 'O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire.' And her daughter was healed instantly."

Mark 1:25: "But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be silent, and come out of him!'"

Mark 5:8: "For he had said to him, 'Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!'"

Mark 9:25: "He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, 'You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again.'"

Luke 13:12-13: "He called her and said to her, 'Woman, you are freed from your infirmity.'

And he laid his hands upon her ...."

So generally speaking, it is true to say that Jesus cast out the spirits “with a word.” This refers to a short sentence or phrase according to the five examples given above, and not to some singular word. And what was that “phrase?” According to the above examples it was: “Be it done,” “Come out (3 times)” and “You are freed.” Jesus cast out spirits by a verbal command. In three of these cases, the command was, “Come out” (*exerchomai ek*), which is an adjuration. In the remaining case[s] it was, “Be it done,” [and “You are freed,”] which are decrees of accomplishment. In two of these cases, He accompanied the verbal command with a verbal “rebuke.” This rebuke was once stated as being, “Be silent.” Hence, the commands used by Jesus contained variety, being tailored to fit the occasion or the subject. He used no rigid formula, no incantations, no rituals, no charms, etc. as did Hebrew exorcists. There are no special prayers, no ‘magic’ words or phrases to use or pray, no set way of “doing deliverance.” Each situation is different, but all include the believer using Jesus’ power and authority to stop the demons’ work and to command them to be gone. Be sensitive to God’s Spirit when dealing with such things and proceed as you feel Him leading you. Don’t expect Him to lead the same as He does others, nor will He always lead you the same way. It’s not our words or actions that bring deliverance, it’s always and only His power. Just tap into it!

**LESSON FOR TODAY:** Always forbid the demons to return when you cast them out (Mark 9:25). It’s good to forbid any others to replace the ones driven out. Also forbid them to enter anyone else but to go where Jesus sends them. All this must be done in Jesus’ name and power. Ask God for wisdom and be sensitive as to how He leads.

#### **BLOG 74: WHAT NOT TO DO IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE (Capernaum Synagogue encounter 3)**

There are some things Jesus didn’t do with demons when He faced them, and neither should we. We can see this from the story of the demonized man in the Capernaum synagogue (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37).

**LESSON FOR TODAY:** While the demon(s) in this man try to bait Jesus into communicating with them, He refuses to do so. Do not converse with demons, either by having them give messages to a person’s mind or to speak verbally through a person’s vocal cords. The object in deliverance is not to get in contact with demons but to remove them. It is not to get them to speak but to cause them to be silent! Communication with them makes you a medium and God’s words forbids that (Deuteronomy 18:9-13).

There are good reasons God forbids communication with them. Neither Jesus (Mark 1:25) nor Paul would (Acts 16:17) encouraged them to speak. They are liars and deceivers (John 8:44) and you can’t believe what they say. God wants you to be in touch with Him only (Deuteronomy 4:24). Through the Holy Spirit we have access to all truth and power (John 8:31-32; I Corinthians 12:7-11). By communicating with demons you give them recognition, allow them to stall and deceive, give them the focus and attention they crave, make things much harder on all people involved, and open yourself up to pride. Communicating with demons can be a temptation to pride and we can find ourselves drawn into working by the power of our own flesh. We don’t need any information they might give us, we walk by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7). The only time Jesus ever talked to a demon was for the purpose of showing those who were watching how many demons were involved and therefore how great His power was (Mark 5:9). Eve got into a dialogue with Satan and was deceived by him (Genesis 3:1-16 – for more about this see *THE BATTLE BEGINS* Genesis 3:8-15). If there is something you need to know, God will show it. Don’t ever expect a demon to give information that will lead to his own defeat!

**LESSON FOR TODAY:** When the demons left this man they shook him and caused him to scream loudly. Sometimes demons will try to manifest in ways that are intended to bring fear to a

person, but Jesus never allowed demonic manifestations to get out of hand and neither should we. In Jesus' name bind them, take away their power to resist, and command them to obey immediately and quietly when commanded in Jesus' name. We do not have to put up with their antics for they are only done to distract and to cause fear in us and recognition of their power. We know God is greater than they are (1 John 4:4).

#### **BLOG 75: BELIEVERS CAN BE DEMONIZED (Capernaum Synagogue encounter 4)**

Quite often the question comes up concerning believers being demonized. If God is greater and He is in us, how can Satan have any foothold? How wonderful it would be if we were exempt, but while salvation adds a new dimension to us (a new nature) God does not eradicate our old sin nature. Jesus' first recorded encounter with a demonized person was in the Capernaum synagogue (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Demons can impact believers as they do unbelievers. Note that the demonized man was not a pagan who worshipped Satan. He was a faithful Jew who regularly attended synagogue, someone familiar to the people there and whom no one previously had suspected of being demonized. Probably he wasn't aware that the struggles he had in life were caused by demons. This happened at other times as well (Mark 5:39). While we don't know this man's exact spiritual state, this still brings up the question of believers being demonized. While there is general agreement that unbelievers can be demonized, some don't believe that can happen to believers because believers belong to Jesus. That is true, but demonizing doesn't imply ownership, just influence.*

*As long as we are in this body we still have a sin nature, a capacity to sin just the same as we did before salvation. Salvation creates a new spiritual nature within us. But the old capacity to sin still remains. It is in this area, this sin nature, this capacity to sin, that demons work. Salvation does not remove our capacity to sin (sin nature) but gives us a new nature so we don't have to sin but can live in obedience to God. Believers can still sin after salvation as they did before. It is in this area of our 'flesh' or sin nature that demons work. Our new nature is greater but doesn't take away our free will choice to still function in our sin nature. Paul's struggle as recorded in Romans 7 describes this well.*

*The Bible makes no distinction between believers and unbelievers as far as demonizing is concerned. In fact, the Bible refers to many believers who were demonized: Paul's thorn in the flesh was a demon (2 Corinthians 12:7), King Saul was a believer (1 Samuel 11:6) and was obviously demonized (1 Samuel 16:14-23), David was motivated by Satan to take a census of the people (1 Chronicles 21:1ff; 2 Samuel 24:1ff), Ananias and Saphira were believers (Acts 4:32-35) but allowed Satan to "fill" them (Acts 5:3), and Peter was Satan's spokesman in tempting Jesus to not go to the cross (Matthew 16:23). Paul warns believers to not give Satan a "foothold" in their life (Ephesians 4:26-27), showing such a thing is possible. Jesus Himself called deliverance "the children's bread" (Matthew 15:22-28), meaning it was for His children. A Christian can receive another spirit (2 Corinthians 11:2-4) and there are other examples of believers being demonized (Luke 13:10-16; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5). Christians are warned to guard against this (1 Peter 5:8-9; Ephesians 6:10-18).*

*A believer belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. Satan cannot own him as he did before salvation (1 John 4:4), but he can still influence him, "demonize" him. When the words 'possessed' or 'oppressed' are used, then the question is asked if a believer can be 'possessed.' To answer that then 'possessed' must be defined. The Bible simply does not define it, nor does it even talk about 'possession' – just 'demonizing' which means being influenced by a demon.*

*A Christian has every right and resource to be free from this demonizing, however. Property which you own can be trespassed on by another person, but you have every right and resource to put him off your property. You just need to learn how to do it. That's what spiritual warfare is all about.*

## **BLOG 76: KEEPING SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN BALANCE**

We'd all love to have the success Jesus had at spiritual warfare. Certainly His disciples wanted that as well. But Jesus had to warn them to keep this skill in perspective.

Shortly after Jesus delivered the man in the synagogue from demons (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37) He warned the disciples that even being able to drive out demons in Jesus' name wasn't something to use as assurance of salvation. "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' " (Matthew 7:21-23) Even claiming supernatural works by His name doesn't prove salvation, only faith in Jesus brings salvation and assurance of eternal life with God.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Don't put emphasis on your skill in spiritual warfare, as if that makes you a more mature believer or someone special in God's sight. Our relationship with God is all about who we are, not what we do. It is all His doing anyway, never ours. Focusing on it can only lead to pride. No matter how greatly God uses you, you are still just the instrument, the channel for His power. It is never us. It is only and always Him!*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Spiritual warfare is a means to an end, not an end in itself. It is another tool that God gives us to live for Him and serve Him. When building something various tools are needed: hammer, saw, screw driver, etc. No piece of furniture can be built with only one tool. For the job required, each tool has a specific purpose, but no tool is greater than all the others. Spiritual warfare is a tool God gives us to have victory over Satan and his demons, but we have other tools that are also needed to live the Christian life: prayer, teaching, worship, fellowship, meditation, fasting, listening to God, knowing God's will, being controlled by the Spirit, walking by the Spirit and others. All are needed. Each has its specific purpose. No one does it all. Don't get spiritual warfare out of perspective. Don't see it as some superior way to live and serve. It is great for its purpose, but we need a balanced Christian life. It's a tool we must master and keep close, but in doing so we must not neglect the other tools God gives us.*

## **BLOG 77: WHEN DEMONS LEAVE, WHAT HAPPENS TO THEM AND US?**

Jesus trained His disciples in spiritual warfare. He taught them many lessons that apply to us today as well. One was about what happens when demons are commanded to leave the person they indwell.

"When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation" (Matthew 12:43-45).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Where do demons go when cast out of a person? Where should we command them to go? Here Jesus says they go to "arid places" (Matthew 12:43-45; Job 30:3-8). Other times they are said to be "sent away" (Mark 5:12-13), go to "destruction" (Mark 1:24), or go to*

“torment” (Matthew 8:29). Eventually they will all be sent to the lake of fire for all eternity (Revelation 20:10 – 21:8). Whatever term you use, God will decree where they are to go. You can command them to “go to the place where Jesus sends you.” It is important to forbid them to return, forbid them to go into any other family members, and forbid any new demons to come to take their place. Don’t just send them out, leaving them free to continue their evil work wherever they choose. Command where they are to go, at least commanding them to go where Jesus would send them.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus’ words also show the extreme importance of being filled with God’s Spirit when the demons are sent away. If one does not turn to God’s Word and live a life of holiness to God, the door that was closed will be immediately open again and more and worse demons will enter to work against the person. When praying to have demons removed also pray for God’s Spirit to fill the person and remove all the work of the enemy. Pray for them to be filled with the fruit of the Spirit, mentioning each fruit one by one (Galatians 5:22-25). Ask God to remove all the work and effects of the demons in the person’s life and to heal them from it. Ask God to send angels and/or His Spirit through their life to remove every work of the demons and anything any demon might try to leave behind to continue their work. Ask God to fill each and every part of the person with His light and glory, His Spirit and presence. Then dedicate the person to God as a new creation in Him (2 Corinthians 5:17).*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: The purpose of deliverance from demonizing is so a person can grow spiritually. Often that comes slowly and by stages because all growth comes that way. It is often more of a process than a one-time event. Each lesson we learn and step of progress we make must become part of us as we fill that part of our lives with His presence and bring it under His control. Freedom from demonizing is not a one-time event where God does everything for us, but a series of steps whereby we grow in faith and become more like Jesus. It is very important to stay close to Jesus and grow spiritually when seeking to be delivered from demonizing. This includes prompt repentance from any and all sin (Ephesians 4:26-27; Genesis 4:7), doing all we do out of a motive of love (1 Corinthians 13:5), living a life of disciplined thoughts and actions (Philippians 4:8), and implementing God’s principles into daily family life (Ephesians 5:22 – 6:4).*

## **BLOG 78: THE BATTLE FOR OUR MINDS**

When Jesus was half way through His three year ministry things were not going well. He has been preaching and doing miracles to proclaim Himself the Messiah, but only a small group has accepted His claims and followed Him. The majority, including the religious rulers, have rejected His offer because their pride kept them from admitting their need of Him. At this point a change takes place in His ministry. His focus shifts from trying to reach the masses, to training those who will follow Him. Teaching replaces miracles, and parables become Jesus’ main way of teaching truth to His followers while hiding it from those who would mock and reject (Matthew 13:10-17).

His first extended use of parables were those about the growth of the kingdom, starting with the parable of the sower and the seed. In this series Jesus taught His disciples that the rejection He was experiencing was to be expected. His Kingdom was starting small, but would eventually grow and expand. His followers weren’t to be alarmed by the lack of response from the majority of the Jews.

When interpreting the parable of the sower and the seed to His followers, Jesus gives insight into the workings of Satan. “Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown” (Mark 4:15). Evidently to some extent Satan and demons can influence our thought processes.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: The majority of demonizing consists of demons putting thoughts into a person’s mind or snatching thoughts out of a person’s mind. While they don’t have access to our minds and thoughts to the same extent that God does, the Bible makes it clear there is some access*

*(Mark 4:15). David's thought to take a census was demonic (1 Chronicles 21:1ff; 2 Samuel 24:1ff). So was Ananias & Saphira's greed (Acts 5:3) and Saul's jealousy/anger (1 Samuel 16:14-23). That's why, when talking about spiritual warfare, Paul says we are to "bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." (II Corinthians 10:4-5). Not only can Satan's forces put wrong thoughts into our minds, they can snatch right thoughts out of our minds (Mark 4:15) so we forget them. Pray specifically for those you are ministering to, claiming their minds and thoughts for God. Watch your own mind, making sure God is in control of every thought (Romans 12:1-2). The mind is the key, for actions always start as thoughts!*

*Satan doesn't have access to our thoughts like God does. But he doesn't have to know every thought to be able to insert thoughts of lust, pride, greed, fear, anger, jealousy, etc., etc., etc. at opportune times. The same is true of demons. They have been studying people for centuries and know what works and when it works. We are no match for them unless we keep the helmet of salvation in place (Ephesians 6:17) and focus our mind and thoughts on Him (Romans 12:1-2).*

## **BLOG 79: SYMPTOMS OF DEMNIZING 1**

About six months after Jesus' first recorded deliverance, casting demons out of the man in the synagogue (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-37), one of His major confrontations with demons occurred. He was about half way through His three year public ministry. Unlike most of the other occasions, when the demonized person came to Jesus, this time He went to them.

Jesus left the crowds He was ministering to in order to take a boat across the Sea of Galilee. He wanted to go help a man who couldn't come to Him. Satan didn't want Him to go free that man so he sent a storm to sink the boat. Jesus spoke to the storm and got safely to the other side.

When Jesus got there He was met by a man with an evil spirit, actually many demons afflicted this man. Matthew 8:28 says there were two demonized men present, but Mark and Luke only refer to the one who was the spokesman. By looking at the lives these men were living we can see some of the symptoms of demonizing.

**Symptom 1: Darkness and death.** These men lived in a graveyard, probably in caves in the limestone cliffs by the lake. Dead bodies were placed in these caves to decay, so it was a very unnatural way to live (Mark 5:3, 5; Luke 8:29). God is light and life, but Satan and his demons are all about death and darkness. They are attracted to death and darkness, and bring death and darkness wherever they go.

**Symptom 2: Anger and violence.** Demons fuel violence and anger, and that characterized these men (Mark 5:3-4; Luke 8:29; Matthew 8:28). They attacked whoever came nearby. Demons love pain and destruction, and they enjoy using humans to bring suffering and misery to others. This can be physical, mental or emotional abuse of any form.

**Symptom 3: Out of control.** These men didn't have control of their actions (Mark 5:5). They would cry out and continually did evil. Demonizing takes control away from a person and motivates them to do what the demons want them to do.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Demons can never take 100% control of a person's free will, but over time they can build so much influence over a person that the person seems to be unable to resist. No matter what, no matter how strongly a person is controlled by demons, he or she still has a free will to reach out to Jesus. Demons can never take away their free will. That is the key to deliverance, especially for those who are greatly controlled. The demonized person **MUST** want to be free. If they don't, no one can force deliverance on them against their will. Pray not that they would be delivered; for God won't force their free will, but pray they would see the facts clearly and make a decision for God, however small it may seem. Deliverance is not done by the one ministering to the demonized,*

*but by Jesus responding to the free will of the demonized person. Jesus chooses to use us as His vessel to bring this about, but it all depends on the will of the demonized.*

When Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee and landed they immediately came to Him and knelt before Him (Mark 5:1-8). The demons recognized He was God. Perhaps the men did as well or somehow sense something different about Him. Despite the terrible control the demons had, they still have free will to choose to come to Jesus or not.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: The demons could not prevent these men from coming to Jesus. No matter how many demons or how strong the influence, God always makes sure the person still can make a free will choice to move away from the demons and towards God should they choose to do so. No one is helpless, locked in – not unless they choose for it to be that way. (see Symptom 3. Out of Control. above for more information about a demonized person's free will).*

## **BLOG 80: SYMPTOMS OF DEMONIZING 2**

One of the most detailed accounts of a demonized person is in the passage about the 2 men who lived in the graveyard at Gadarenes (Mark 5:1-20; Matthew 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-37). From the information given about them we can learn symptoms to look for which are signs of demonizing. We already saw that a preoccupation with death and darkness, a lack of control over anger and violence, and not being in control of actions all can be symptoms of demonizing. Here are some other signs.

Symptom 4: **Pain and self-destruction.** Another characteristic of demonic activity which is also unnatural is inflicting pain on themselves by cutting themselves (Mark 5:5). The only other time this is seen in the Bible is when the prophets of Baal slashed themselves so they bled in order to have Baal hear their cries and send fire to consume their altar (I Kings 18:28). Both cases are clearly demonic.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Demons are behind self-destructive desires. It is unnatural for a person to want to harm themselves. Everything normal in us pushes for self-protection. When a person inflicts pain on themselves by cutting, tattoos (Leviticus 19:28) or taking their life we can be sure something has caused them to go against what is normal and natural, and usually that is demonic influence (Mark 9:20).*

*Suicidal thoughts should always be assumed to be motivated by demons (Matthew 17:14-19; Luke 9:37-45; Mark 9:14-29). This is also the case with Judas who was indwelt by Satan (Luke 22:3; John 13:27) and then committed suicide (Acts 1:18-19). If you or someone you know has these thoughts, pray against them. The person with the thoughts must confess them and take back any ground they have given to demons. These kinds of thoughts are like 'prayers.' All kinds and types of thoughts are like prayers. The difference in suicidal thoughts is that one dwells deeply in them and that gives them more power. Thoughts of hate, death, fear, lust, etc., also have power. The greater the thought given it the greater the power. The power is in the thought which empowers demons to help bring this about in a person's life. It is always with the person's free will choice never forced on them against their free will.*

Symptom 5: **Ungodly sensuality and sexual perversion.** These men did not wear clothes (Luke 8:27). Their natural inhibitions and modesty were affected by the demons influencing them. Demons are often behind the sexual sins and perversion so common today.

Symptom 6: **Thoughts into their mind.** These sinful actions start with sinful thoughts. Demons are able to put a thought into a person's mind, and then keep bringing it back again and again. It's not always a thought that the person wants, and certainly isn't a thought God would give them. Therefore the only other source must be demonic. The thoughts lead to actions that bring

bondage and destruction. They could be thoughts of anger, fear, violence, lust or greed. The thoughts could be sexual, self-destructive, vengeful or blasphemous. They can even be thoughts that cause a person to feel unforgiven or unloved by God, that a person has lost their salvation, or are too evil to ever be in heaven. Thoughts of fear, insecurity, unworthiness, failure, being alone, rejection and revenge are some of the many that demons strive to instill in a person's mind.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Not all evil thoughts are from demons, so how can we tell if our thoughts are from a demon or from our sin nature? When the source is our sin nature we can have victory by confessing the sin and growing spiritually. It may take time, but there will be progress being made as we become more like Jesus. If the source is demonic then trying harder will have no lasting effect. These men in the graveyard were unable to change their own behavior because they had allowed the demons to have a powerful hold over them. They had given up control which only Jesus' power could get back for them.*

## **BLOG 81: WHAT CAUSES DEMONIZING? 1**

We've been considering the account of Jesus' confrontation with the demons indwelling the men in the Gadarenes (Mark 5:1-20; Matthew 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-37). This is one of the most detailed accounts of demonizing and deliverance in the Bible and has many important lessons for us. It is natural to wonder how these men ever got to such a state. Why are some people so greatly demonized and others seemingly unaffected? The Bible doesn't tell us what allowed this in these men but does give us information as to the most common causes of demonizing. While any sin can open the door to allow demons in, there are some sins that are particularly effective in allowing this. Some of the more common openings to demonizing include:

*Opening 1: **Sins that allow another power to control us.** If we turn to another power other than God, if we open our lives to influences that aren't from God, if we indulge in sins that allow us to be vulnerable to spiritual influences from demons, then we are opening the door for demons to enter and impact us. Idolatry, for example, opens the worshipper to demonizing because they allow the demon behind the idol to have access to themselves (1 Corinthians 10:20). Drug or alcohol abuse can do the same thing. Involvement in false religions also opens a door. Sexual sin is also a way demons enter a person's life (1 Corinthians 6:15-16). Pride, anger and fear also make us vulnerable, for they become a prayer for these things to grow in our lives, and only Satan's forces would answer such a prayer.*

*Opening 2: **Sin in our family line.** The sin that opened the door for demons to enter doesn't have to have been committed by us. It could have been committed by an ancestor of ours. When a demon has access to a person, he also claims right to all that person has, including their children. The Bible says God "punishes the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation" (Exodus 20:4-5; Deuteronomy 5:8-9; Exodus 34:6-7). The Bible says that children are affected by their parents sins (Ezekiel 18;2) and this is one of the ways. Children are not accountable for them, but are impacted by their consequences. The same is true of positive, godly influences from our parents which also are passed on. This is often called "generational openings" or "ancestral openings" and is one of the most common reasons people are demonized. (For more information see under Old Testament, Moses (Exodus – Deuteronomy).)*

## **BLOG 82: WHAT CAUSES DEMONIZING? 2**

The demonized men in the graveyard at Gadarenes were greatly controlled (Mark 5:1-20; Matthew 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-37). What allows this to happen to a person? We've looked at two

possible openings for demonizing: sin that allows another power to control us and sin in our family line. Another is the location where we live:

*Opening 3: **Where we live.** Some event may have happened on the land or in the home or room where you live. It could be a violent act, an occult activity, a curse, a dedicating of the property to the powers of darkness or similar acts. Sometimes when we go into a certain neighborhood or home there is a 'sense' of evil, a discomfort in our spirit. In a store that sells New Age materials you may 'feel' different in your spirit, a discomfort. This is the explanation for supernatural apparitions that happen in 'haunted' homes – demonic activity may be present. Some countries and even continents are in extra deep darkness and bondage. Often this can be sensed by mature, sensitive believers. The message we get is from God's Holy Spirit Who is warning us against the evil around us. Pray against it. Rebuke it. Leave unless you have a reason God wants you there.*

*If it is your home or church property then cleanse it. Pray, taking back any access the enemy may claim to the property and asserting your right as a child of God to claim and use it. Put any other claims under the blood of Jesus and dedicate it to Him for His honor and glory. A sign, picture or cross on the wall can be a good visual reminder to all of the ownership of the property by the Lord Jesus Christ.*

*If God wants you to do so, you can anoint the house and property while praying. Walk around your' boundaries praying out loud, claiming your property for God and forbidding any demons to have any access to it. Dedicate it to God and invite His presence throughout all of it. Take back any access any demons may claim to the property and put the access under the blood of Jesus. Break it in Jesus' name. Ask God to put an angelic hedge of protection around it. Do the same in all the rooms of the house, especially the basement (if you have one). Anoint each room with oil by dipping your finger in oil. Any kind will do, it is not the oil but the symbolism of God's Spirit being present that matters. With your finger then draw a cross on the door, walls, whatever seems appropriate. Pray as you would when you're walking around the property.*

*There is no power in the ritual or symbol, but in your heart attitude as you make a statement about whose side you are on. You are showing them you are ready to battle in God's strength. The cross announces to the spirit world whose side you are standing on and that you will battle rather than give in. The cross shows you are challenging their claim to that area.*

*If there is one particular part of the house that seems worse put a night light there so there is always light in to the room. You could do that to all the rooms. Demons turn from light because it shows truth and reality, which they don't want to see. They live in the realm of lies and deceptions. Demons hate light, and they hate hearing Jesus praised, so you can play praise music in various places 24 hours a day. It can be real soft – they will hear it! It's a constant reminder or Who is your Lord and Savior. It reminds them of the truth which counters their lies. Playing recordings of the Bible being read is even more powerful.*

### **BLOG 83: WHAT CAUSES DEMONIZING? 3**

The men in the graveyard at Gadarenes were indwelt by thousands of demons (Mark 5:1-20; Matthew 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-37). What causes this? How can demons gain entry into a person? We've seen that it could be sin that allows another power to control us or sin in our family line. It can also be because we live on ground they claim. Curses are a fourth reason.

*Opening 4: **Curses.** It may be someone has put a curse on you or your family by asking that something bad happen to you. That is really a prayer that Satan loves to answer! That desire empowers demons to try to carry out the person's desire. Parents can curse their children by saying they wish they hadn't had them, they hate them, don't want them, they are no good and will never amount to anything, and so forth. Finally, we can curse ourselves (Proverbs 6:2) by saying we hope*

*we die, that we aren't good enough, that we'll never be happy, we'll fail in what we try or any of many such things about ourselves(Proverbs 6:2).*

*The area of curses is a less common but still a strong opening to demonic access. To curse someone is to ask for evil to happen to them. Those requests (really prayers) are heard by Satan and his forces and 'answered' when possible. Cursing thoughts are like prayers. The more a person thinks of them and focus on them, the more power will go to the curse, or the blessing, whichever the case. This includes everything from occult and witchcraft curses to one individual 'wishing' harm on another. Balaam was paid to curse Israel, but God wouldn't allow it (Deuteronomy 23:4; Numbers 22 - 24). Curses can also be passed on from generation to generation. The Bible says that speaking evil of someone is the same as cursing them (Romans 12:14). Curses can be thinking or saying things like: "I hope you die..." "Since he/she won't love me I wish they'd ....." "You're no good, you'll never amount to anything..." "I hope she gets some of her own medicine..." "I hope your children ....." You can even curse yourself by what you say (Proverbs 6:2). Our words are powerful and important. They aren't something to be taken lightly. Using profanity ("curse" words) also falls into this category. When someone "damns" someone to "hell" that is an awful, awful thing to say! Demons love to hear it. They use the power of the hate in the speaker and will latch onto any authority or justification to do their evil!*

*It's not the verbal sounds that make the difference but our thoughts and feelings inside as we express them verbally. Rote chanting of words does nothing, but heartfelt desires communicated to God mean a lot. God reads our mind and thoughts even when we pray silently, but demons do not have access to our thoughts so praying or expressing ourselves out loud makes them aware of how we feel and where we stand. If it is inappropriate to pray out loud then do so in thoughts and let God take care of the rest, but when it is possible to express yourself out loud it is best to do so. It's important to realize that our thoughts are breathing and living and so are our feelings and, therefore, so is prayer.*

*The Bible says we can curse others (Ps 109:17). Demons use this as an excuse to work against the person, as a 'prayer' to gain access. Old Testament men (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc. Gen 27:23, 38) would bless or curse their children (Genesis 48:20). Sometimes they even put a curse on them, as Abraham did with Ishmael and when Isaac cursed Esau. The Levites were used to pronounce blessings (Deuteronomy 10:8; 21:5). When Naomi came back to Israel she said she was to be called 'mara' because things had turned 'bitter' for her. A father is to bless his children by his words and send them into life with his and God's blessing. What you have done is the opposite.*

*If you feel this may have happened to you remember to "Bless them that curse you" (Matthew 5:44). Treat the person with love and kindness, for when you return good for evil the "undeserved curse does not come to rest" (Proverbs 6:2). Break that curse against you in Jesus' name, claiming Galatians 3:10,13 which says "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.'" Ask God to turn the curse to a blessing (Deuteronomy 23:5).*

*Good is stronger than bad, so when you speak good into a situation where previously bad was spoken then the good is stronger and purer and it stops the curse. You can throw it back at the person who threw it at you, but turn it into a blessing – bless those who curse you (Luke 6:28). Love the person who hates you and God will use that stronger love to overcome the hate (Luke 6:27).*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Curses can and must be broken in Jesus' name for the truth is that they can't prosper against God's people (Isaiah 54:17). 1) Break any and all of them in Jesus' name (Galatians 3:13) and 2) ask God to surround you and protect you with His presence and angels instead (Job 1:5).*

## **BLOG 84: WHERE DEMONS LIVE**

When Jesus cast the demons out of the men in the Gadarenes graveyard, the demons made an unusual request – to indwell the pigs which were nearby since they could no longer indwell the men (Mark 5:1-20; Matthew 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-37). Jesus allowed this, again probably to show those watching the power and destruction of the demons He had so easily defeated.

Where do demons really live? Where did, and didn't, they want Jesus to send them?

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Demons want to indwell something; if they lose their host they will immediately seek another. Often they share several hosts at one time, moving from one person to another. That's why demonic oppression often seems to go in cycles.*

*If demons can't indwell people they will indwell animals. Perhaps this is why sometimes whales, the animals with the greatest intelligence and the closest to humans in many ways, beach themselves. I've often wondered if what happened to these pigs doesn't still happen sometimes today. That could be an explanation of why these great sea creatures sometimes beach and kill themselves. This shows that demons seek to bring death and destruction, and self-destructive tendencies come from demonic influence. Why else would pigs suddenly commit suicide?*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: The demons didn't want to be sent "out of the area" (Mark 5:10). This was the territory they were assigned to and they didn't want to leave it. It was their 'home' area. Demons are assigned to different geographical locations, families, groups, world movements, religious or secular groups, etc. They stay with them for generations and want to continue working in those areas. They become very good at what they do.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Neither did they want to be sent "into the abyss" (Luke 8:31). The Greek word, 'tartarus,' is used as a place of confinement for demons who are awaiting their expulsion into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:1-3). They didn't want to go there because they would then be inactive and not able to cause harm to God's kingdom.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: The demons knew they would one day be tormented, but it was not time for that yet (Matthew 8:29). They fear the coming judgment. We can have courage and confidence that they fear us when we are ministering in Jesus' power.*

## **BLOG 85: HOW TO BE FREE FROM DEMONIZING**

When Jesus delivered people from demonic influence or control, He always did it verbally. Only once did He ever allow a demon to speak. The only time Jesus ever talked to a demon was before He delivered the demonized men in the graveyard at Gadarenes (Mark 5:1-20; Matthew 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-37). He asked him his name, which was 'Legion' meaning about 5,000 or 6,000 soldiers, signifying the number of demons influencing this man. Jesus wanted everyone to see how great His power was by how many demons He could defeat at one time. The only other thing they said was a request to go into the pigs. Jesus had commanded them to leave and, while they stalled as long as they could, they knew they couldn't resist His command.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus had to command the demons to come out over and over (Mark 5:8, continual present tense in the Greek, "kept saying over and over").. They were very resistant to leaving, even when Jesus commanded them. This is the only time that happened for every other time they left immediately (Matthew 8:16). Some demons have such a strong hold on their host that it takes persistent warfare to remove them (Mark 9:29).*

The end of the story has a happy ending: "When they came to Jesus they saw the man, who had been demonized by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind" (Mark 5:15). Today we talk about chemical imbalances, emotional disorders and bipolar tendencies. We

prescribe various kinds of medicines. When Jesus faced people with these symptoms, He cast out the demons and immediately they were total freed and completely normal and mentally healthy

*LESSON FOR TODAY: When Jesus cast demons out of someone or forgave them He, in some manner or way, told them to not sin any more (John 8:11). It was sin that led to the bondage and demonizing in the first place. The sin must be confessed (admitted to as sin, I John 1:9) in order for the demons to no longer be able to claim it and stay.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Here is a prayer you can use if you sense any demonic activity against yourself. You can change the words and use them for others. It is only an example. There is no one right way to pray or say things. Adapt and use this however you would like:*

*“Dear Jesus, I thank you for the salvation you give me in Jesus. I know You are greater than Satan and His demons. I know You have power and authority over them. I know You have given us that power & authority in Jesus’ name. In Jesus name I forbid any demons to work against me or my family or my church. In Jesus name I close the door to any reason they think they can work against me. If I have committed any sin that they use to work against me I put it under the blood of Jesus. In Jesus’ name I forbid them to work and command them to be gone. In Jesus’ name I break any claim that comes down through my family line. I am a new creation in God’s family. I forbid any claim against me through my name or family line. In Jesus’ name I dedicate the land where my home and church are to God. In Jesus’ name I break any claim demons may make through those places. I ask for Your presence only to fill and use those places. In Jesus’ name I break any curses any one has made against me, my family or my church. Jesus has taken my entire curse on the cross. His power has broken any power of the enemy against me. So in Jesus’ name I forbid any demons to work against me or my family or my church. I commit myself and my family and my church to God only. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Surround me with Your angels. Use me for Your glory. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen”*

## **BLOG 86: WE HAVE AUTHORITY OVER DEMONS**

There must have been much discussion between Jesus and His disciples as they walked the dusty roads, sat and ate in the evenings, and ministered to others who were demonized. Jesus took every opportunity to teach the disciples what they would need to know to continue the battle when He was gone. Only a very small part of all that happened is recorded in the Gospels for us. As John so aptly states, “If everything Jesus did was written down there wouldn’t be enough room in the whole world for all the books!” (John 21:25)

Because of this, what is recorded about spiritual warfare is all the more important. There must be good reasons for choosing that which is recorded for us. It must be information we need. God Himself kept it accurate for us (2 Timothy 3:16). That being said, Jesus’ comments about the power and authority believers have over Satan and demons are all the more significant (Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-19). These comments were recorded because they are something we must know.

“When Jesus had called the Twelve together, He gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases” (Luke 9:1). “After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of Him to every town and place where He was about to go. ... The seventy-two returned with joy and said, ‘Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.’ He replied, ‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you’” (Luke 10:1,17-19).

“I HAVE given you” Jesus says indicating it happened in the past, it is already done. It’s not something for them to wait for in the future. The Greek tense indicates the action is completed and

the results continue on. Jesus had given to them, and therefore to us as well, two things: “power” and “authority.”

**Authority**, ‘exousia’ in the Greek, is used 108 times in the New Testament and refers to the right to use power. He gave the disciples the authority to enforce His spiritual commands and laws. Policemen have authority, a badge, which allows them to enforce the laws of the government. It’s not their own authority but that which comes from their government. It is delegated authority, like a husband has over a wife and a parent over a child. Everything Jesus did was because God had given Him authority to do it (John 5:19). He had laid aside His own divine authority (Philippians 2:6-8) to live life as any other human being. All He did was by God’s own authority given to Him, as it is to us as well.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus has given us that same authority to use today (John 14:12; Matthew 28:18-20). Satan deceives us into thinking we are powerless victims but that is a lie. As God’s children we have access to the same resources Jesus did when He lived on earth. God has given us His full blessing because we are His children. He planned salvation and chose us to receive it before creating the world (Ephesians 1:4; Jeremiah 1:5). He created us in His own likeness (Genesis 1:26). He paid for our sins before we were ever born (Romans 5:8). He formed and cared for us while we were still in our mother’s womb (Psalm 139:13-15). He chose us and He calls us His friends (John 15:15-16). We are born into His family, He is our Father (Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6) and we are His children (John 1:12; I John 3:-2). He rescued us from slavery (Galatians 4:4-7) and put His Holy Spirit inside us (John 14:17). He gives us an equal inheritance with His Son, Jesus (Romans 8:14-17). When He looks at us He sees us as holy because of what Jesus did for us (Romans 1:7; 2 Corinthians 5:17). We can come into His presence in prayer any time we want, we have eternal life guaranteed, we are free from any condemnation and He has delivered us from the power of Satan. All these things and more He gives us.*

## **BLOG 87: WE HAVE POWER OVER DEMONS**

Jesus taught His disciples what they needed to know about spiritual warfare. He did this by His example and by teaching them basic principles. One of the most important truths is that we have His power and His authority (Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-19). We already talked about the authority we have, now let’s look at the power.

Not only did Jesus give His disciples authority, He also gave them **power**. A policeman needs authority, a badge, but sometimes he needs power to enforce that authority – a club or gun. ‘Power’ is used 118 times in the New Testament and refers to power, might, strength and force. Our word ‘dynamite’ comes from it. God has also given us His power as well as His authority (Acts 1:8; Luke 10:17).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: We also have this power available to us (Acts 1:8; John 14:12). It is His power that transforms us into a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17) as He makes us a new man (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10). His power delivers us from temptations and trials when we rely on Him (1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 2:14). He has power to put His divine nature in us (2 Peter 1:4) and give us abundant life now and eternal life in heaven (John 3:16; 10:10).*

Jesus gave His followers power and authority to drive out ALL demons (Luke 9:1) – none are greater than His power. He did not enable His followers to cure all diseases, though. Some He will remove in response to our prayers, but only with demonizing are we assured that ALL must obey and yield. When Jesus returns all disease will be gone, but we don’t have authority to remove all of it now (for more information on healing see under 13. LAYING ON OF HANDS, Luke 13:10-17).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Always remember the power and authority you have in Jesus. You can pray and preach in His name and power. Use it to encourage people when they need it, give counsel*

*with the wisdom of God's Spirit, rebuke demons in Jesus' name, ask God to heal if it is His will, claim protection for your family and yourself, teach His word with authority, witness to others with power, forgive those who hurt you and show unconditional love to all. We don't have to live in defeat nor do we ever have to fear Satan or his forces. We have everything we need for victory in Jesus, but we must use the power and authority He gives us because on our own we can do nothing (John 15:5).*

## **BLOG 88: GOING ON THE ATTACK**

“When Jesus had called the Twelve together, He gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases” (Luke 9:1). “After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of Him to every town and place where He was about to go. ... The seventy-two returned with joy and said, ‘Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.’ He replied, ‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you’” (Luke 10:1,17-19).

Jesus sent the disciples out. He didn't order them into a defensive protective framework but told them to take the fight to the enemy – and they did. Still today the command is to go!

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Another important lesson from this is that Jesus sent the disciples out to minister (Luke 10:1). The way we learn is by doing, not by waiting, by letting someone else do it, or by trying to learn everything there is to know. We will never know it all, never feel competent, never be on top of everything – we must keep depending on God which is how He wants it (2 Corinthians 12:9). All you need to know to begin your own spiritual warfare is that Jesus is greater than Satan (1 John 4:4). That is enough to start. God will be with you, honor your attempts and help you learn. God knows when we start this work we will not be experts but will learn as we go. Read worthwhile books, talk with others who do this in a Biblical way and do whatever it takes to learn more about spiritual warfare. Fight wisely, or the demons will not leave, or if they do they will come back even stronger (Matthew 12:44-45; Luke 11:25-26). Do your best with God's strength and keep growing in wisdom and skill.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Not only did Jesus send them out, but He sent them out by twos. As much as possible have someone with you to pray for you, to help you and encourage you, for extra wisdom, and so you can train them (or learn from them) so that they can then go on their own and train someone else. Especially when getting started, try to have someone else with you when you confront the demons realm.*

Jesus' power over demons was from God, but those who didn't want to recognize this needed to find a different way to explain His power because clearly it was super human. The only other power source in the universe besides God is Satan, and so they were forced to say that what Jesus did was by demonic powers (John 7:20; 8:48-52; 10:20-25). They said Jesus was an imposter, a deceiver (Matthew 27:63; John 7:12, 47). When Herod heard about Jesus' miracles he thought it was some kind of supernatural 'magic', somehow John came back to life (Matthew 6:14-16).

## **BLOG 89: DEMONIZING OF CHILDREN**

A few months after Jesus sent the disciples out to do spiritual warfare there was an encounter with a demonized girl that is recorded by both Matthew and Mark. A Gentile woman asked Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter but He resisted, saying He came to bring deliverance for the Jews. Her faith was strong enough to accept that but to also know He was able to help her without taking away from the Jews. Jesus honored her faith by casting out the demon even though the girl was back at home in bed far from Jesus (Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Children can be demonized. The Greek word for ‘daughter’ here refers to a very young daughter. When one person opens the door to demons those same demons claim all the person has, including their children. They claim the blood line and/or name as access.*

*Often adopted children, who have experienced rejection, are demonized by demons who use the open door of rejection to move into the child’s life. Usually there is a history of alcohol, drugs and/or sexual sin in one or both of the birth parents. This makes adopted children all the more vulnerable to demonizing.*

*If a child is an unwanted pregnancy, even if the parent keeps and raises the child, this can open the door for demons to enter. If someone curses a child that prayer to Satan is something his demons will draw power from and do what they can to bring that about in the child’s life.*

*Sometimes, too, young children are attacked as a way of getting back at a parent or family who is serving God and living for Him.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: This child was delivered without confessing or repenting of any sin, without even being in Jesus’ presence. Often this is the case with children. Parents, who are their authority figure, can represent them and pray for deliverance for their children. Many times they are quite young or don’t understand what is happening, so being present would be more of a distraction than a help. It is usually the parent’s sin (through family line) that has to be dealt with by confession and taking back access.*

## **BLOG 91: WHEN DELIVERANCE FAILS....**

Shortly after the event with the Gentile girl there was a situation with a Jewish boy that is also recorded (Matthew 17:14-19; Luke 9:37-45; Mark 9:14-29). A young boy was demonized to the extent he would have a seizure, foam at the mouth, gnash his teeth and then become rigid. This has been happening since childhood. The demons also caused him to try to kill himself buy throwing himself into fire or water. Evidently the boy was deaf and mute as well – all work of the demons influencing him. We saw previously how demons bring death and destruction, and this is another example of that (see Mark 5:5; I Kings 18:28). Jesus was disappointed that the Jews didn’t have enough faith in God to have victory over these demons. Even his own disciples were unable to drive them out. Jesus said it would have been possible for them to have driven the demons out if they believed. Jesus commanded the demons to leave and never return and they obeyed! They had no choice but to obey Him. When the disciples asked why they weren’t able to drive the demons out Jesus said “this kind can come out only by prayer” (Mark 9:29).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: It takes faith in God, that He is greater and able to deliver, to have successful prayer for deliverance. Satan and his demons use fear as a big weapon to undermine our faith. If we don’t firmly believe that God is greater than they and totally able to defeat them we will never see victory through our prayers. Only prayer brings deliverance, no other rituals, public ceremonies, emotional activities or anything else – only prayer in faith. That is because prayer taps into God’s power and that is what brings victory. It’s not the prayer that does it, but the God to Whom we pray!*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Learn from your failures, for you will have them. The disciples had been living and traveling with Jesus all day every day for over a year and had been trained by Him to do this. They had great success in spiritual warfare in the past (Luke 10:1, 17-18) but not now. Jesus uses this to teach them. Don’t fear failure – try your best and learn from any mistakes you may make. Trying and failing is not nearly as bad as not trying at all.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus explained their failure to use their authority and power to command the demons to be gone by saying "This kind can come out only by prayer" (Mark 9:29). "This kind" clearly implies there are various kinds of demonic strongholds and some are easier to break than others. The demons who controlled this boy, causing him to be mute and deaf, have seizures and try to kill himself, were strongly entrenched and took 'prayer' to remove them. Jesus didn't elaborate, but evidently the disciples understood. Perhaps they were trying to have victory in their own strength instead of God's strength, trying to command the demons on their own instead of through God's power and authority.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Epilepsy, in fact any kind of seizures, cannot always be proven to be demonic, but that possibility should always be considered when praying for them. When Jesus confronted someone having seizures He always cast out demons and they were healed (Matthew 4:24; 17:15; Luke 9:38; 22:54; Mark 9:18). As we see in this account, demons who work in this way usually have a strong foothold and aren't easily removed, but with God's power and authority we can defeat them in Jesus' name.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: What about when deliverance is slow or not at all? Remember sometimes God has a greater purpose than casting out every demon as soon as we pray. Sometimes there is delay. Even Jesus had times when He had to persevere for a while (Luke 8:31 Greek). Usually deliverance is a process. It's like peeling the layers off an onion. As new sin is revealed and removed, more ground is taken back from Satan's forces. This gradual process allows the person to better fill the ground which has been reclaimed with God's Holy Spirit and gives him time to grow spiritually (Psalm 59:11; 119:50,67,71) before the next 'layer' is removed.*

*That's why the Jews under Joshua only conquered the Promised Land bit by bit instead of all at once. If they would have driven out all the Canaanites immediately then lions and other wild animals would have increased and done harm to the people. In addition, there is a learning process involved that can be used to help others (II Corinthians 1:3-4).*

*Other times complete deliverance never comes. Paul's thorn in the flesh is an example (II Corinthians 12:7). Paul testifies God then provides the grace needed to withstand. God wants us to learn to depend on Him (Psalm 119:59, 92). Of course if the opening is allowed to continue then the demonizing will continue, too (Psalm 94:12-16; 81:11-14).*

## **BLOG 92: BINDING & LOOSING**

As Jesus' time on earth wound down and opposition, both human and Satanic, kept getting stronger, Jesus continued to teach and prepare His disciples. During a time of informal discussion, Jesus asked His disciples who they thought He was (Matthew 16:13-19; Mark 8:27-29; Luke 9:18-20). Many and various opinions were circulating and bringing much confusion. Peter stepped to the front and affirmed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God! Jesus was greatly pleased and told them all that on this truth Jesus would build His church, which not even Satan himself would be able to overcome. He also said "whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:19).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus promises He will build His church. No one else can do so, and nothing can stop it from happening. It is not our church for us to grow; it is His church for Him to grow. There will be opposition, even from the 'gates of Hades" (Satan and his evil forces) but nothing can defeat God and His people.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Binding and loosing is very similar to rebuking, just a bit more specific. Rebuking means to resist, oppose what an evil spirit is doing. Binding and loosing, which applied to demonizing, refers to stopping (by binding) evil spirits and freeing (loosing) those they have*

*in bondage. This passage (Matthew 16:19) is quite difficult to understand in detail, but clearly some authority over evil is given to God's people.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus gave Peter, as he spoke the truth about Jesus as revealed to him by God, the keys to the kingdom so that whatever they bound on earth would be bound in heaven and whatever they loosed on earth would be loosed in heaven (Matthew 16:19). This is authority and power to minister in His name, as seen before (Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-19). Jesus will be gone, and He is giving His disciples the right to represent Him, like a parent would give a grown child were the parent to be leaving for a long time. These keys are hard to understand, but they don't have to do with salvation. They are not keys TO the kingdom but keys OF the kingdom. Whatever is bound or loosed on earth is first bound or loosed in heaven. When we affirm that someone is forgiven when they confess their sin, or not forgiven when they do not humble themselves and confess their sins, we are applying God's truth as revealed in His Word. We can represent God and tell others when they have done what God accepts to receive salvation, and also when they don't.*

### **BLOG 93: ATTACKED THROUGH THOSE CLOSEST TO US**

Towards the end of His earthly ministry Jesus repeatedly told His followers that He must go to Jerusalem, suffer, be crucified but come back to life on the third day (Matthew 16:21-23; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22-27). Peter rebuked Him and said it would never happen! In response Jesus said, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men" (Matthew 16:21-23; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22-27). Satan was subtly attacking Jesus through Peter, making a way for Him to avoid the cross. This was a repeat of the temptation in the wilderness after Jesus was baptized.

Almost 3 years after being baptized by John, Jesus revealed that one of the twelve He chose was being used by Satan (John 6:70). Judas, in his pride and greed, will allow Satan to indwell him (Luke 22:3-4).

"Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus" (Luke 22:3-4). Being demonized is terrible, being 'Satanized' is beyond comprehension. The only other person recorded to be indwelt by Satan is the antichrist (Revelation 13:2, 14-15). Satan wants to handle this with Jesus himself and not take a chance by letting even one of his top demons do the job. It is that important. Everything depends on keeping Jesus from dying and rising again. If they fail it will mean hell for them for all eternity!

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Some of Satan's attacks are overt, clear attempts to overpower us. But the more successful ones are subtle and often go unnoticed. Without being aware of it Peter is being used by Satan to tempt Jesus to avoid the cross. We don't know if Satan inserted the thought into Peter's mind or just used what He said to tempt Jesus. Either way Jesus recognized Satan was behind it and using it. Satan will use those closest to us to mislead us if possible. He will use seemingly innocent comments by those closest to us to influence us in the direction he wants us to go. Perhaps this is why Satan allowed Job's wife to remain when he took everyone else in his family (Job 2:9). He used Eve, who was deceived, to influence Adam, who knew what he was doing was wrong (2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14).*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: In order for Satan to use Peter, Peter had to be open and available. There had to be negative thoughts of fear and/or pride in Peter which he fed and allowed to remain. Then Satan was able to work through Peter and use him to tempt Jesus. It is of the utmost importance to keep every thought and feeling captive to Jesus (Romans 12:1-2), to make sure they all line up with the Word of God.*

## **BLOG 94: LAYING ON OF HANDS**

Three full years after Jesus left the carpentry shop in Nazareth and was baptized by John, a final example of Jesus' power over Satan is recorded (Luke 13:10-17). Jesus was teaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath and a woman who had been crippled by a demon for 18 years was present. When Jesus saw her He called her to Him, put His hands on her, and immediately she was healed. The religious rulers objected to Jesus doing this on the Sabbath and Jesus rebuked them as hypocrites. Talking about the woman, Jesus referred to her being crippled as Satan binding her (Luke 13:16).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Sometimes God may lead you to lay hands on the person you are praying for, and on occasion Jesus Himself did this (Luke 4:29; 13:11-23; Matthew 8:15) as did the early church (I Corinthians 1:14f; 12:4; II Corinthians 1:21f; James 5:13-16). Touch can be a way of bestowing God's power and presence from you to the person you are praying for. It can help God's power break down the demons' defenses. It is a way of identifying with the person and connecting to them. Demons hate being touched, so laying hands on a person helps break their resistance as well. Be sensitive to God's leading in this area and do whatever it is He leads you to do.*

*When a person is demonized they experience sound, touch, etc. through the host person. Making the person look at you forces them to be aware of the truth you are speaking and not able to hide from it. Touching the person also gets their attention and focus so they are recipients of the truths you are speaking and they can't hide behind their lies and deceptions. Physically touching someone who is demonized often brings physical pain to the demon which gets their attention and reminds them of whose power is greater. So have the person sit or stand up straight and look at you when you speak so the demons can't hide and avoid your commands.*

*When a person allows someone to lay hands on them they in effect submit themselves to the authority of that person. If that person, the one in the position of authority, is open to something demonic then that can pass onto the person on whom hands are laid.*

*Make sure there is no sin in your life when you lay hands on someone, for when you stir up demonic opposition their first target will be you. Make sure you are walking closely with the Lord. Make sure that every sin is put under the blood of Jesus (1 John 1:9). To engage in this form of spiritual warfare is similar to taking the Lord's Supper with sin in your life for you are opening yourself up to demonic activity or God's discipline (or both).*

*By the same token, people who have had someone who wasn't a believer living in obedience to God lay hands on them have had a demon transferred to them by this. A casual touch will not do this, but submitting to the authority of someone else by bowing your head and letting them put hands on you opens you to them and their power, and therefore any demons that may have access to them. If this has happened this must be confessed and any demons who claim that as access to the person commanded to be gone.*

## **BLOG 95: SPIRITUAL WARFARE AND HEALING - 1**

One of the first facts that becomes clear when one reads the accounts of Jesus casting out demons and healing is that very often they were both closely related. It is important to understand this more fully.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: There is often a strong relationship between spiritual deliverance and physical healing. Often physical problems are also gone when the demons leave. That is*

because it was the demons who were causing the physical problems. Examples of these in the Bible include: crippled limbs (Luke 13:11), Paul's thorn in the flesh (eye disease? - II Corinthians 12:7), muteness (sometimes dumbness, too - Matthew 9:32-33; 12:22; Mark 9:17-18,24-25), blindness (Matthew 12:22), seizures (Mark 1:26; 9:17-18,20,22,25; Matthew 17:15,18; Luke 9:39), deafness (Mark 9:17-18,20,25), sores (skin cancer?) (Job 2:7), boils and other painful afflictions (Psalm 78:49 - the plagues in Egypt were demon-caused), and physical torments of all kinds (Revelation 9:5,10). The Bible states that Satan can cause illness (Job 2:7-8), even death (Job 1:19).

Physical healing can be a result of deliverance. If any of the demons who were removed were causing physical problems those problems will be resolved when the demons are removed. Generational spirits can cause the same ailments from generation to generation. Physical problems are usually not God's main concern; rather He is more concerned for the spiritual condition of the heart. We often pray for the symptom (physical problem) to be removed while God wants us to seek Him and what He is trying to teach us through it. Paul's thorn in the flesh is a clear example. It wasn't God's will for that demon to be removed, but for Paul to be spiritually strengthened through the experience.

If a physical problem is present it is helpful to find out when it first started and what else was going on at that time. Instead of focusing on removing the physical symptom, look for the root cause, be it demonic, spiritual or whatever else it may be.

Jesus often cast out demons and cured illness at the same time. Jesus said he would do this (Luke 13:32). He did this at the start of His ministry (Matthew 4:23-24; 8:16; Mark 1:34; Luke 4:41), around Tyre and Sidon (Mark 3:10-12; Luke 6:18-19), and in the middle of His ministry (Luke 7:21). Many female followers of Jesus were cured of both (Luke 8:2).

Even more precise are the accounts of when Jesus both cast out demons and healed illness in a person at the same time (Mark 6:13; Acts 5:16). Philip did this in Samaria (Acts 8:7) and Paul did it in Ephesus (Acts 19:12).

It must be noted that not all illness is demonic in origin. Jesus healed physical ills that weren't demonic (Matthew 4:23-24; 8:16-17 fulfilled Isaiah 53:4; Mark 1:34; Acts 10:34; etc.). The Bible clearly talks about illnesses that are not demonic: severe pain (Matthew 4:24), seizures (Matthew 4:24), paralysis (Matthew 4:24; Acts 8:7), leprosy (Matthew 10:8), blindness (Luke 7:21), crippled limbs (Acts 8:7) and many other various diseases (Matthew 4:24). The fact that some physical ailments are on both lists (like seizures) shows that many ailments may have demonic or natural causes. They could be from one source or the other.

## **BLOG 96: SPIRITUAL WARFARE AND HEALING – 2**

We have been looking at the close connection between spiritual warfare and deliverance. Let's continue what we have been noticing.

It is obvious that some, but not all illness is demonic. There are no certain illnesses that are exclusively demonic, nor others that aren't. Any physical ill can be demonic, but it doesn't seem that any one physical illness is always demonic. In our day and age we err by seeing too few illnesses as being demonic. Thus we often miss the cure. How can we tell if an illness or physical problem is demonic or not? Some clues to look for are: medical doctors aren't able to bring relief or cure; there is a pattern of it running in the family; it seems strange or doesn't follow the regular pattern of symptoms (comes and goes for no particular reason, etc.); or you feel in your spirit that it should be prayed about and looked into as possibly being demonic.

Again, our pattern for bringing about this removal of physical ills by deliverance should follow Jesus' example. He rebuked a fever and it left immediately and strength instantly returned (Luke

4:39). On at least one occasion power came from within Jesus to heal (Luke 6:19). He often laid hands on a person to bring both deliverance and healing (Luke 4:40; 13:13; 4:29; Matthew 8:15; Luke 13:1-13).

Epilepsy, in fact any kind of seizures, cannot always be proven to be demonic, but that possibility should always be considered when praying for them. When Jesus confronted someone having seizures He always cast out demons and they were healed (Matthew 4:24; 17:15; Luke 9:38; 22:54; Mark 9:18). As we see in this account, demons who work in this way usually have a strong foothold and aren't easily removed, but with God's power and authority we can defeat them in Jesus' name.

As to us doing this today, again it must be done in God's strength and power. If He chooses to bring healing through deliverance that is His will. We must never demand it or make it dependent on having enough faith. No one today has a gift to heal anyone and everyone. It is right for us to pray for healing when doing deliverance and leave the results to God. It is also necessary to deal with any demons who may be causing the illness (physical or mental). Often demons affect our health in indirect ways, such as working in us so we eat or do things that are unhealthy for us in the long run and undermine our health. All of these, too, must be dealt with in Jesus' name (Matthew 10:1). Sometimes God may lead you to anoint with oil as a symbol of the Holy Spirit who does the healing (Mark 6:13). Do NOT put any faith in the oil or any ritual in using it, it is simply an audio-visual. For more on healing see under 13. LAYING ON OF HANDS (Luke 13:10-17).

In conclusion, be aware that illness is often demonic, especially when doctors are unable to bring a cure. Even diseases they can cure can still be demonic, especially if there are other signs of demonizing active in the person's life. Keep this in mind when praying and seeking wisdom. Don't accept any illness as "incurable." Always make sure it isn't demonic (by asking God for wisdom and commanding any demons involved in that ailment to be gone in Jesus' name). Remember, when dealing with emotional and spiritual ills in your warfare praying, don't let out physical ills! Never fear, demons can only cause illness with God's approval (Job 1:6-12).

One word of warning: since demons can cause illness, they can also bring counterfeit 'healings' by stopping the physical ills they themselves cause (Matthew 12:24; 24:24; 2 Thessalonians 2:9; Revelation 16:14). This explains miraculous healings that aren't done in accordance with God's will and Word.

## **BLOG 97: IS IT GOD'S WILL FOR EVERYONE TO BE HEALED TODAY? - 1**

There are those today who believe that Jesus not only paid for sin on the cross, but that He also paid for our sickness. They say that each is received by faith, if you have enough faith to receive it. Loss of faith, then, causes the loss of these benefits of faith. They claim some are especially gifted in healing and can heal those who come to them. They say God did miracles in the Bible and he is still a miracle-working God today.

What about this? Is this true? This is not just one peripheral issue, but stands very central in our salvation and Christian life. Is God's sovereignty or man's free will the final and ultimate deciding factor? It must be God's sovereignty. The motive for living for Jesus should not be fear of losing our salvation. The goal of living for Jesus should not be a problem free life. Pain and suffering isn't to be faced by whipping up enough 'faith' so that God removes it (or living with the feelings of failure and guilt if it isn't removed and we believe that is our fault by not having enough faith). What about these claims of 'faith healers'? What does the Bible say?

Is the gift of healing for today? While it's true that Jesus and the Apostles healed, it was done as a sign to authenticate that they were from God (Matthew 12:39). This was God's way of having

people listen to them instead of all the counterfeits around. When they were fully authenticated, there was no longer any reason for the sign. In AD 35 all were healed but by AD 60 some were not (Epaphroditus, Paul's thorn in the flesh). Then by AD 67 very few were being healed (Trophimus was left at Miletus sick, Timothy's stomach was unhealed, etc.). Jerusalem, the scene of many early miracles, had not one miracle done in it after Stephen was stoned. The people had the evidence but rejected it. James, the oldest book in the Bible, says that if someone is sick we are to pray for them (James 5:14).

Should we see miracles today like in bible times? Actually if you list all the miracles in the Bible you will find almost all of them fit three time periods. They aren't evenly spread out throughout history but cluster in the times of Moses/Joshua, Elijah/Elisha and Jesus/apostles. In each of these times a new mess had developed so God sent a new message through a new messenger whom He authenticated by miracles ("signs"). One more time of miracles is coming, called the Tribulation.

Is faith a prerequisite for healing? Jesus didn't make faith a requirement for healing. Many that He healed didn't have faith. The impotent man at the pool didn't even know who He was. The man with the withered hand and the man with dropsy were healed as a sign to religious leaders who were present; they didn't ask to be healed. The cripple that Peter and Paul healed outside the temple didn't exercise any faith. Of course the demoniacs who were delivered and those brought back from the dead didn't exercise faith. Then there are others who had strong faith but weren't healed: Stephen, Paul, Timothy, Job, David, Elisha, etc.

## **BLOG 98: IS IT GOD'S WILL FOR EVERYONE TO BE HEALED TODAY? - 2**

We have been looking at the issue of healing as it applies to us today. Let's conclude our discussion on this subject.

Is 'healing' today the same as in bible times? Today's 'healers' must meet the same characteristics of Jesus and the apostles to claim they are doing what was done then. Jesus and the apostles healed with a word or touch wherever and whenever. There was no special place or time, no chants or music, no gimmicks, nothing. Do today's faith healers walk down the hall in a hospital and empty every room? That's how Jesus and Peter did it. Also, Bible miracles were done instantly, not gradually or slowly. There was no healing to 'claim' or lose. Healing was then done totally, not partially, and it was never lost. Everyone was healed. There was no screening done. 100% of every one, no matter the need, was healed. Organic diseases were healed: limbs grew back instantly, strong enough to walk on, eyes were open, leprosy instantly gone and healthy flesh grown. Then, too, the dead were raised. Today's faith healing doesn't nearly meet these characteristics.

Does God not heal? Yes, a sovereign God can always heal. He is always able to heal, but He is not always willing. Healing isn't guaranteed. Healing isn't based on our having enough faith. Miracles by Jesus and the apostles were done as a sign to authenticate the One who could heal an unseen soul. God can and does heal, but He doesn't gift others to do it, nor does He say that is the recommended norm for His people.

What are we to do when sick? When we are sick it's good to first make sure it isn't for sin or disobedience. If there is sin that God is using the sickness to point out, confess it and God will forgive and then use that illness for good (Romans 8:28). It's fine to pray, asking God to heal if that is His will. We are to submit to His will, not demand He do what we want. Ask Him to use the pain and suffering for His glory (that we and others can see His greatness through His provision and peace) and our growth (make us trust Him more and become more like Jesus). Use the best available resources: diet, rest, exercise and medical help. Realize that all healing does ultimately come from God. Leave the results to His will, though.

*Granted, this whole subject of faith and healing can be a confusing and guilt-producing area. Specific verses can be found to seemingly support most any view. However an overview of the Bible and it's teaching about these things definitely seems to substantiate the above view of healing. Always remember, our faith must be in Jesus. HE is the object of our faith, never a human person or group. Put faith in Jesus, not faith in your faith! HE is the one we are to look to and glorify. Always keep your eyes on Him. Trust and serve Him no matter what.*

## **BLOG 99: WE FIGHT A DEFEATED FOE**

After entering Jerusalem on a donkey and proclaiming Himself Messiah, the Jews continued rejection of Jesus became final. Jesus, knowing crucifixion was certain, told His followers what would happen so they wouldn't be surprised or discouraged. "Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out" (John 12:31). The coming judgment on Satan and this evil world system is so certain Jesus speaks of it as if it is currently happening. "Driven out" is the same Greek word (edballoe) that is used of casting demons out of people.

A few days later, after the Last Supper and while walking to Gethsemane, Jesus affirmed the same truth. "The prince of this world now stands condemned" (John 16:11). Satan was given authority over this world system from Adam when he sinned and followed Satan's advice. Now Jesus is winning it back (Romans 5:12-21). Satan will be condemned by Jesus' victory over sin on the cross. Again, using the present tense shows Jesus' assurance that it is as good as done!

*LESSON FOR TODAY: We must always remember that Satan is a defeated foe. He was cast out of his original position in heaven because of pride (Ezekiel 28:16; Luke 10:18; Isaiah 14:12). His judgment was pronounced in Eden (Genesis 3:14-15). He was defeated by the cross (John 12:31). He will be cast to the earth in the tribulation (Revelation 9:1; 12:7-12), bound during the Millennium (Revelation 20:1-3) and then cast into the lake of burning sulfur forever (Revelation 20:7-10; Isaiah 27:1; 40:23-24; 2 Thessalonians 2:8).*

The culmination of the battle between God and Satan which started in Eden ended as God predicted, with Satan painfully wounding Jesus but with Him defeating Satan (Genesis 3:15). But it was a terrible battle, the worst ever. Jesus, as a man, faced all the hate, violence and evil Satan and all his demons could throw at Him. They literally drug Him through hell for those hours, totally separated from God and facing it as a man. Yet He stayed faithful and endured, paying the price for every sin we would ever commit (Hebrews 2:14-15; Colossians 2:15).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan and his forces are defeated foes, having given their all to destroy Jesus on the cross, but being beaten by Him instead (Hebrews 2:14-15; 1 Peter 3:18-22). Now they are free to continue their work because God still honors man's free will and allows each one to decide whom they want to serve. They have been condemned and sentenced; now they are awaiting that sentence to begin. Knowing their time is short they strive to do all the evil they can against God and His people. When Jesus returns Satan and his demons will be cast into the lake of fire forever (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:1-15).*

*Jesus defeated death on the cross. He paid for every sin, then said "It is finished (John 19:30)." Only then did He voluntarily leave His body for there was no more any need to suffer in humiliation (John 19:30). Every sin had been paid for, Satan and his forces had been defeated. Technically Jesus didn't die for our sins; He suffered for them and died because His work was done. Sin did not kill Jesus, nor did Satan. It wasn't a matter of waiting to see if He'd come back to life. He voluntarily died and so He also voluntarily came back to life. Jesus' resurrection and ascension showed His victory over Satan on the cross. He freed us from sin and gave us eternal life (Ephesians 4:8).*

## **BLOG 100: SPIRITUAL WARFARE LESSONS FROM JESUS**

Jesus is our **example** in how to have victory over Satan and his demons. At the start of His ministry He cast out many demons (Matthew 4:23-24; Mark 1:39,34). In the Gadarenes He cast demons out of two men (Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-17; Luke 8:20). He cast demons out of the daughter of a Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:21 Mark 7:20), and cured a demonized man (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:31-36). He healed a boy with seizures and demons (Matthew 17:14-20). He cast seven demons out of Mary Magdalene as well as out of other women followers (Luke 8:2; Mark 16:9).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Jesus is our example in delivering people from demonizing. Before casting them out He rebuked them (took their power away) (Matthew 17:18; Luke 9:42). Then He "drove" them out (Mark 1:39). He did it verbally (Matthew 8:16), not by a certain ritualistic procedure. He didn't let the demons speak (Mark 1:34; Luke 4:41), except Legion, and that was just to give his name so others would know what was happening (Mark 5:9). He never let them say who He was (Mark 1:25; Luke 4:35; Mark 3:11-12). He told them to "be quiet and come out" (Luke 4:35; Mark 1:25). Other times He told them to "go" (Matthew 8:32). Sometimes He was quite far from the person whom He was delivering (Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30). When He cast them out He forbid them to ever return again (Mark 9:25).*

During a time of ministry the disciples happened upon someone driving out demons in Jesus' name but not doing it the way they did. Jesus said to not stop them because anyone who is not against them is for them (Mark 9:38-40; Luke 9:49-50).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Deliverance is done many different ways today. We are to seek God's wisdom and will in how we are to approach this ministry, patterning what we do after Jesus and the disciples as revealed in His Word. Yet when confronted with someone who doesn't share our practices we aren't to judge or withdraw fellowship from those whose methods differ from ours. We don't have to agree or support them, but neither are we to criticize or try to oppose them. Make sure they know Jesus as Savior for it is possible to be able to drive out demons in Jesus name without being a believer (Matthew 7:22).*

The King of Kings and Lord of Lords invaded the kingdom of Satan, but He did it in the form of a man. His first coming brought out all the opposition the enemy could muster against Him. He came to rescue mankind from the consequences of sin. The darkness opposed Him but He was victorious (John 1:5; 3:19; 8:12).

Satan and his demons are defeated, and Jesus shares that victory with us. However until Jesus comes for the second time and Satan and all demons are removed, the battle continues. Satan can no longer attack Jesus directly, so he takes his fury out on God's people – Jews (because they are God's chosen people) and Christians (because we are children of God). However we can have victory because we fight a defeated foe! But we must learn spiritual warfare to do so. The rest of the books in the New Testament add further detail to how to have victory over our enemy.

## **SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT BLOGS**

### **BLOG 101: AN INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN ACTS**

Jesus' first coming was God's invasion of enemy occupied territory. He landed behind enemy lines to begin the work of setting the captives free (Isaiah 42:7; 49:9; Luke 4:18-21). He provided

freedom from bondage by His work on the cross (Luke 13:12; Romans 6:18, 22). He showed the way to have victory through the light that overcame the darkness (John 1:5; 3:19; 8:12). When His mission was completed He ascended to heaven.

However, the fact that He left didn't mean the war ended. Although defeated and awaiting his ultimate doom, Satan is still free to attack God through His people. Because he knows his end is near he works all the harder to wreak havoc on God's people and work. God allows Satan freedom to attack because that is part of allowing mankind a free will. Also, God uses Satan's evil to show mankind their need of Him and for His people to grow in faith as we trust Him and learn to fight.

Now it is Christians who are the ones in enemy-occupied territory. Jesus has called us to be the light of the world. It is up to us to spread His message of deliverance. But the darkness tries to put out our light so none will be attracted to it (John 1:5; 3:19; 8:12). Satan and his demons try to get us back into bondage and misery. It is their entire focus, day and night, and all their skill and energy are focused on bringing this about. We know that God is greater (1 John 4:4) and His kingdom will prevail (Revelation 19-22), but still the battle rages.

So the Christian life is a life of warfare. As the book of Acts shows, that has always been the case. We are at war: war with our sin nature and war with Satan and his forces. That was true for the Christians who were left when Jesus returned to heaven as well. As the early church grew we see the battles continuing. We live in a Satan-controlled world (1 John 5:19). We must fight. God has given us the equipment we need (2 Corinthians 10:4; Ephesians 6:10-20). We can learn how to have victory in our battles by studying the victories, and failures, of those who have gone before. The book of Acts shows examples of those who have already fought their spiritual battles. The writings of Luke, Paul, Peter, John and others help us learn how to apply Jesus' victory to our own life.

The book of Acts records the growth of the early church. This comes about through evangelism. The Christians are young believers with much to learn, including spiritual warfare. Satan continued to do all he could to stop and destroy the young church before it grew large and strong. There are about 150 references to the spirit world in the Gospels (many of these are from parallel accounts found in more than one gospel) but about 178 additional such references in the rest of the New Testament, so spiritual warfare by no means ended with the ascension. If there is any change in Satan's tactics between the Gospels and Acts it would be that he attacked Jesus directly and overtly when He was on earth.

However, in Acts we see more deceptive, subtle ways of working to bring about their destruction. That doesn't make him any less dangerous for us, but actually more dangerous. He works harder to cover his trail and make what he does appear like it is something else (emotional disorder, chemical imbalance, etc.). He attacks more from within instead of just from without. He still uses persecution, but has become adept at dividing families, churches and even nations from within. The battle continues, it just changes a bit. If anything, it is more difficult to fight a subtle, hidden foe than one who is obvious and easily seen.

Spiritual warfare has not decreased. Rather it has increased through the centuries. God tells us it will continue to get worse and worse until Jesus returns. The book of Revelation has the most references to Satan and evil spirits – about 86 references. We know that the nearer to the end times we come, the more active Satan and his forces will be. God has given us His Word to teach us how to live for Him in these days of increased warfare. There is much instruction for us in Acts and the Epistles.

## **BLOG 102: NEW SOLDIERS EQUIPPED FOR BATTLE**

The book of Acts opens with **Jesus returning to heaven** after His victory over sin and Satan while on earth (Acts 1:1-11). Then after choosing Matthias to replace Judas (Acts 1:12-26) the believers waited for Jesus' promised gift, the Holy Spirit. When He came they had God's power and immediately seen in Peter's change from a coward who denied Jesus (Mark 14:66-72) to courageous spokesman (Acts 2:14-40). Three thousand responded by putting their faith in Jesus (Acts 2:41).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: God's Spirit is essential for us to have victory in our battle against sin and Satan. Without His wisdom, guidance, power, peace and protection we wouldn't be able to stand against all that comes against us. It is essential to learn to listen to Him, be sensitive to His guidance, follow His leading and know how to tap into His power.*

Satan had failed to stop Jesus from sealing his doom by His crucifixion and resurrection. Satan was not able to stop Jesus from defeating him at the cross and the empty tomb. But if he could keep the gospel message from spreading, he could still rule the vast majority of humanity. His goal at this point became to limit the power of the brand new Christian church, intending to keep it weak, keep it from growing. So he put all his energy into defeating the early Christians, hoping to extinguish the spark before it grew and spread, and keep mankind in darkness and bondage. However, as we follow the growth of the early church, we will see how his attempts worked against him!

His first approach was to bring **physical opposition**. The early Christians experienced rejection, suffering, persecution, and imprisonment (Acts 4:1-4). However, this opposition actually worked against Satan! The disciples responded to their trials with increased faithfulness and commitment (Acts 4:5-22). God used even the efforts of the enemy to make them stronger as they trusted in Him and saw His provision (Romans 8:28).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: While Satan still attacks the church today, God often uses persecution to make the church stronger and increases their witness. He uses Satan's attacks for His purpose. All things may not be good in themselves, but God does use them for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28). It has been said that the church can stand anything but success. Where the church has not faced opposition but has been popularly accepted, there has often been a compromising that leads to weakness among God's people. While we never like to experience pain of any kind, God still uses it for His glory and our growth. This is a key way that we can defeat Satan's efforts in our lives. We must respond to trials with increased faithfulness and commitment, as the early disciples did. In that way, we can actually turn Satan's efforts against himself and take ground for God's kingdom.*

### **BLOG 103: CASUALTIES IN THE WAR WITH SATAN – 1**

When external persecution didn't stop the church's growth (Acts 4:4) Satan tried **attacking from within**. He wanted to contaminate the spiritual life of the church members, as seen in the case of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10). God revealed to Peter that Satan had filled their heart so that they lied to the Holy Spirit by not being honest about the amount of money for which they sold their land (Acts 5:3).

The sin was not in keeping some of the money for themselves that would have been fine. The sin was lying and saying they gave all the money to the church in order to impress their fellow believers. They did this despite the Holy Spirit convicting them that such a statement was wrong. To set an example of the importance of holiness, God took the lives of these two carnal believers (Acts 5:3-11). They still went to heaven, but lost opportunity to serve and grow in this life. Again, God took the work of Satan and used it instead for His own glory. The Christians were taught vividly of the importance of holiness, and as a consequence, unbelievers were attracted to Jesus (Acts 5:42 – 6:1).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Our pride often keeps us from sharing with others the areas in life where we are struggling. As a result they stay hidden in the dark and we don't have encouragement and support. If Ananias or Sapphira would have shared their struggle with greed with someone it would have brought the work of the enemy against them into the light and weakened it. Prayer support and accountability would also have occurred. We play into the enemies' hands when we allow our pride to keep us from sharing our struggles with others.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan still uses this strategy today. He causes more damage to the church from within than he does through attacks from without. Christians hurting other Christians, churches hurting Christians, Christians hurting churches - this is a very common and successful approach of Satan even today. It can be more dangerous because when we are attacked from without we recognize the hand of the enemy and pull together in unity. When it is from within, though, we often fail to recognize it for the attack that it is. Instead of joining together against it we allow divisions to come among God's people. And again it is our pride that feeds this, wanting to be first and be right. It is our pride that keeps us from humbling ourselves and confessing our sins to God and others (when the sins have hurt others). Keeping our sin in the darkness allows it to grow, bringing it into the light exposes it and weakens it.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: "Satan filled your heart" (Acts 5:3) is Peter's appraisal of what happened to Ananias and Sapphira. "Fill" (Greek 'pieroo') means "to fill to the full" and is the same word used for the filling of the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 5:18. There is no way of knowing to what extent they were demonized or exactly what Satan did. Surely he helped them go in the direction they themselves chose and gave them opportunity to believe his lies so as to deceive themselves as to what they were really doing. He may have fed their greed or even encouraged fearful thoughts of not having enough money. He did this to counter the conviction of sin in them by the Holy Spirit. We do know they always had a free will to resist and are totally responsible for their thoughts and actions. We don't know today, either, where human responsibility ends and demonic influence takes over, but we know both are often present. Whatever the balance, the cause, symptoms, results and cure are the same. Don't waste time trying to figure out details about what demons do and how they do it. Focus on the solution, not the problem! And the solution starts with the person who is demonized admitting and confessing the sin in his life that has allowed the demons to work. They don't cause a sin, they enhance a sin that is already there, and so it must be removed and stopped so the demons stop as well. As it has been said, if you want to keep the rats away, get rid of the garbage!*

## **BLOG 104: CASUALTIES IN THE WAR WITH SATAN – 2**

We have been looking at the account of Ananias and Sapphira and the example God made of them for others in the early church (Acts 5:1-10). Satan "filled" their heart and they lied about how much they were giving, saying they gave all they received for the sale of their property when in fact they only gave part of it. The sin wasn't in the amount they gave but in the lie and deception about it. There are many lessons for us today from this account.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Peter states that Satan enticed them to lie to the Holy Spirit. Whether this was literally Satan or one of his demons we don't know. Often we say that 'Satan did \_\_\_\_' when we know it wasn't personally him, but done by his forces. Perhaps it was Satan himself since this was a direct, frontal attack on the young church. If the flame could be distinguished before it took root and spread, then the church could be severely crippled. If it was a demon assigned to destroy them, saying 'Satan' did it is still applicable for they are all his forces working with him for the same effect. It would be most unlikely that Satan would personally attack any of us today. He has far greater places to exert his influence and has plenty of demons to work against us. It doesn't take Satan to help us sin, the weakest demon, along with our sin nature, can bring about plenty of sin in us because we freely go along with it.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: The specific sins that Ananias and Sapphira were guilty of were greed, pride, lies and deception to cover the lies. They were also guilty of jealousy (of Barnabas Acts 4:32-37), and that is greed and pride combined. Their attitude to material things was idolatry, for they put something before God. Idolatry is really spiritual adultery (Jeremiah 3:8-10; Ezekiel 16:23-43; 23:24-30; Revelation 17:1-5). It is clearly forbidden by God (Exodus 20:3,4,23; 23:224). Pride is also seen in wanting to impress everyone with their generosity and have the affirmation which Barnabas had just received (Acts 4:32-37).*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Fear of not having enough money for them in the future probably entered in as well. Seldom is there a sin that doesn't have fear as part of it somewhere! As do all sins, it starts in the mind (Judges 2:10-13; Ezekiel 14:7) and then becomes an action. When anything is more important to us than God there are demons who receive that adoration and 'worship' that we bestow on the object (Zechariah 10:2; 1 Corinthians 10:19-21).*

*LESSONS FOR TODAY: When a demon has access to one person that demon can also claim anyone that person becomes attached to, emotionally or physically (1 Corinthians 6:16). Emotional soul ties or physical sexual activity open a person to the demonizing of another.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Peter was made aware of what was happening so he could deal with the sin. As the leader he was responsible for those under him. God gives insights into the workings of demons so their work can be defeated to those with a need to know. When dealing with something demonic always pray for supernatural insight, wisdom and protection so you will be able to defeat the plans of the enemy. Some have the gift of distinguishing between spirits as part of their spiritual gift mix (1 Corinthians 12:10; Acts 13:6-12). If so, it must be used wisely and with maturity, always in total dependence on God so the person isn't misled or deceived.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: God is a holy God and does not allow sin. He uses this first clear rebellion as an example to show how He feels about sin, but in His mercy He doesn't deal with every sin among His believers in this way. God did the same when He first formed the Jewish nation (Exodus 32:1-35). In each case, starting the Jewish nation or the church, He showed His holiness by bringing strict judgment at the first sin. He doesn't enforce the same penalty of death on subsequent sinners, not because He shouldn't but because He chooses to show mercy. His failure to judge our every sin today is not weakness, but mercy, certainly not something we should take advantage of. Every sin of lying, greed, jealousy, fear, etc., like Ananias and Sapphira also deserves death like they received. If you don't know of anything else you can thank God for, then you can certainly thank Him for not striking you dead for sin.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: God promises to bring good out of all things (Romans 8:28). That happened here. A new respect for God and fear of sin gripped the church (Acts 5:5, 11) which led to renewed reverence for God and an increased motivation for holiness. This strengthened the church and allowed God to work through them all the more (Acts 5:12, 15-16). A great number of people were attracted to Jesus and joined (Acts 5:14) but others without pure motives stayed away (Acts 5:13). God's power was manifested in many being healed and delivered from demonizing (Acts 5:15-16). To have God's power in your life or your church there must be cleansing from sin and a deep desire for holiness. Revival starts with a deep awareness of the holiness of God and sinfulness of man.*

## **BLOG 105: DELIVERED BY A SHADOW?**

To validate the **authenticity of the message** the disciples were bringing, God did the same kinds of miracles through them that He did through Jesus. "As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of

them as he passed by. Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed” (Acts 5:15-16).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: These special manifestations of spiritual power through healing and deliverance have not been seen since the first days of the early church, nor should they have been (1 Corinthians 13:8). At the start of the church, with Satan’s attacks, God made sure the spark took hold and grew. He validated and authenticated His servants when it was needed, where the church had not been established before, but as it took root these manifestations faded. Do not think these should regularly occur everywhere today or something is wrong with the church. These are necessary to open a new area of darkness to God’s truth, but not what a growing Christian builds his faith on. God is always able, and will do these kinds of miracles again in the Tribulation (Revelation 11:1-6). These signs had, and still have their place. But that place is not as part of everyday life in areas where the church has been established. So, when we see signs like this, we should be careful how we interpret them. Satan can and does counterfeit these things as well (Matthew 7:22-23; 24:44; Mark 13:20-22; Revelation 16:24). We live by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7).*

Satan continues to stir up problems within the church today as he did then. Tension, jealousy and competition took root not just in Ananias and Sapphira but in others as well. What was given by those who sold their land was intended to help the poor among them, yet some felt they weren’t getting their fair **share of food and clothing** (Acts 6:1). The church responded by ordaining deacons to make a fair distribution of the resources to those in need (Acts 6:1-7).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan’s strategy is still to bring division. Jesus says our distinguishing mark as Christians is to be love (John 18:35). Satan has many subtle but effective ways of dividing friends, couples, families and churches. Many times these things happen and he or his demons aren’t even involved for our sin nature brings these about without his influence. Even so, his demons are always there to provide whatever ‘help’ they can to bring division among believers. Pray regularly against that. Encourage others to do the same. Be alert to small things that can easily grow into big problems. Pray, give counsel, encourage and show love to all.*

As the early church grew Satan continued to attack from within and without. He continued to stir up the political and religious leaders to bring more persecution by having **James killed** (Acts 12:1-2) and **Peter arrested** awaiting death (Acts 12:3-4).

How did the disciples counter this strategy? Or rather we should ask how God’s Spirit led them to counter Satan’s persecution without and division within. They did exactly as they saw Jesus do when attacked. They faithfully persevered in their mission. They weren’t discouraged or swayed into changing their focus. They went out by twos and spread His Word wherever they went. Large numbers turned to Jesus for salvation. That, of course, brought up much demonic opposition but it also brought many people freedom from demonizing (Acts 8:5-13). Everything they accomplished was done in Jesus’ name (Acts 4:7).

## **BLOG 106: SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN DIFFERENT CULTURES**

For the next two years the church continued to grow despite persecution. In fact, persecution caused much of the growth. As believers were forced to flee from Jerusalem they took the Good News of Jesus with them wherever they went (Acts 8:1). One of the reasons God allowed the persecution was to move the people out so they would fulfill the great commission (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). Again God used Satan’s attacks for His purpose (Romans 8:28).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Again we see that God always uses what Satan planned for evil to bring about good (Genesis 50:20). He uses specific individual events intended for evil in the lives of*

*certain individuals, including us, to bring about His plan. He also uses attacks against His Body as a whole and brings good from it as well. God is sovereign over Satan (1 John 4:4) and limits what he is allowed to do (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6). Satan and his demons eventually go too far and overplay their hand, causing the person or group they are attacking to become more alert and turn to God for help. When they overplay their hand people become aware that something unusual is happening and they are in a spiritual war (2 Corinthians 2:5-11). Never fear, God is in control, nor panic when it seems demons are winning. God is ALWAYS in control and always has a plan and purpose.*

As the church spread into new cultures they found themselves confronted by a different spiritual world view, a greater openness to contact with spiritual forces of any kind. The Jews believed evil spirits were everywhere and behind virtually anything negative. Various and strange means were used to drive demons out, but only had success when they used god's name, and even then it was minimal.

In the Greco-Roman world 'magic' was common and well recognized. Contact with a supernatural power who could bring protection against disease, bring revenge by harming an enemy, cause another to fall in love or to attain power over others or to foretell the future was a part of everyday life. When King Herod heard about Jesus and the miracles He was performing his Greco-Roman world view led him to believe that Jesus really was John the baptizer, the one he had killed, come back to life (Matthew 6:14-16).

When the Jews came into these cultures they brought their deeper understanding of and power over these evil forces. As a result, some who sought to use these forces for their own gain were attracted to the Jews. When Christians started moving into these cultures they brought with them something unknown before – power over unseen forces in the name of Jesus. This, along with physical healings, validated their message as being from God.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Today, too, we must be aware of the spiritual world view of the culture to which we are ministering. The Western world is, for the most part, closed to recognizing spiritual powers behind what happens. Third World countries, especially those with animistic beliefs, see supernatural powers and forces at work all around them. Demons adapt to and work within the beliefs of the people in the culture where they are assigned. In the West they do all they can to hide their identity but in animistic cultures they do all they can to manifest their presence and therefore bring fear on those around them.*

Thus when Philip went to Samaria with their Greco-Roman worldview he faced a different audience than he had in Jerusalem. "When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. So there was great joy in that city" (Acts 8:6-8).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: In cultures today that don't have a Christian heritage or much of a gospel witness God still uses physical healing and deliverance from demonic influence or even dreams to show His power and bring others to His truth. I personally have seen this many times in India, especially in dark northern India.*

## **BLOG 107: SORCERERS, MAGICIANS AND THE DEMONIC**

As word of the Christians' power in the name of Jesus spread, a man named Simon who practiced 'sorcery' heard of it (Acts 8:9). He had been using local traditions and pagan religions to remove demonic influence but with limited success. The powers he contacted to overcome the demons were demonic themselves, and therefore all of this was forbidden by God (Leviticus 19:26; Deuteronomy 18:10; 2 Kings 16:5; 17:17).

The word translated 'sorcerer' in the Bible is the Greek word 'magos.' Our word 'magic' comes from this but the real meaning does not refer to sleight of hand tricks which we associate with magicians today. It refers to those with supernatural abilities. It can be translated magician, sorcerer, wizard, enchanter, and astrologer or even wise men ('Magi' in Matthew 2). Actually, the word started with the 'wise men' of the east, especially Babylon. These were men with learning and education that far exceeded anyone in their culture. This superior knowledge caused others to look up to them as something 'supernatural'. Daniel was one of these learned men who had great wisdom and insight (Daniel 2:12-48; 4:6, 18; 5:7-8, 15). As Greek culture spread into this area they picked up this word and applied it to anyone who did special acts or had special powers.

Simon used his demonic connections to impress the people around him (Acts 8:10) but when Philip came with his greater powers many came to Jesus and were baptized, including Simon himself who followed Philip everywhere because this new power was greater than anything he had seen (Acts 8:13). Simon, acting from his sin nature, tried to buy the power Philip had (Acts 8:18-19). Peter, who had come up from Jerusalem to help with the great working of God's Spirit that had broken out in Samaria, sternly rebuked Simon who immediately repented (Acts 8:20-24). God was teaching His followers that He bestows His powers freely and not to the highest bidder.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Unfortunately there are still many like Simon in the church today, those who want to use God and His power for their own benefit. Many are overly impressed with works of power, sign gifts and the like. They want the most and the best for themselves. They focus on the supernatural instead of the God behind the supernatural. Pride lures them in dangerous directions like it did Simon. God's message is the same as it was then – repent and stop trying to use God for your own glory!*

*Today it is easy to find those who are impressed with the power behind spiritual warfare and bringing deliverance to those who are demonized. They are in awe of demonic powers and spend way too much time and energy focusing on them. Instead our focus must go to God and His glory. Don't let demons, or those who are gifted to fight them, impress you or distract you from giving your attention and glory to Jesus alone. Don't make a god of spiritual warfare. It is a means to an end, not an end in itself!*

## **BLOG 108: LOOK THEM RIGHT IN THE EYE**

The next clear incident of spiritual warfare recorded in Acts happened about a dozen years after the incident with Simon, about fifteen years after Jesus' resurrection. Paul had come to salvation and started his training (Acts 9), and Peter had begun began taking the Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10-11). Persecution continued as James was killed, and Peter was imprisoned and awaiting death (Acts 12:1-4) until God supernaturally intervened and released Peter (Acts 12:5-19). Then Paul and Barnabas left on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:1-3). When they reached Cyprus they met strong Satanic opposition (Acts 13:4-12). Since Jesus Himself had found Himself in numerous power encounters with Satan and demons, it is no surprise that His followers would experience the same opposition as they continued His mission and ministry.

Bar-Jesus, a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet who had a lot of influence with the local official, opposed Paul and Barnabas when they tried to present the gospel to him (Acts 13:4-12). Bar-Jesus is also called Elymas, meaning "sorcerer". The same word, 'magos,' is used of him as was used of Simon Magus (Acts 8). That man was a Gentile but Bar-Jesus was a Jew and was demonized (Acts 13:10). He was Satan's pawn against God and His work in the continuing battle of Satan to defeat God's Kingdom (Genesis 3:15). The results of who won this power encounter between Satan (through Bar-Jesus) and God (through Paul) would determine who would have the most influence on

the leaders and people of Cyprus. The kingdom of darkness was again challenging the kingdom of light (John 1:5; 3:19; 8:12).

Paul was not intimidated but gave Bar-Jesus direct eye contact (Acts 13:9) and gave him the strongest recorded rebuke he ever gave anyone: “Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, ‘You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind, and for a time you will be unable to see the light of the sun.’ Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand.” (Acts 13:9-11).

How did Paul know this man was a pawn of Satan and seeking to undermine God’s ministry there? God’s Spirit must have shown Him, as He did Peter about Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5; 1 Corinthians 12:10).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: When encountering a demon in someone who is demonized do not let them intimidate you or cause any fear. God is greater (1 John 4:4) and we have nothing to fear (2 Timothy 1:7). Looking them in the eye is important, for this contact establishes your authority in Jesus over them and puts them under Jesus’ authority. Our eyes show truth, along with who we are and the words we speak. This truth is greater than anything that lives in lies and deception. Be sensitive to God’s Spirit as He shows you what you need to know to have victory against these demonic forces.*

God’s judgment on Bar-Jesus was very appropriate – physical blindness to illustrate the spiritual blindness he already had (Acts 13:11-12). Everyone present saw God’s power defeat Satan’s power and that opened the way for the gospel to spread in that area. Hopefully his time in darkness brought Bar-Jesus to a realization of the truth and he found the true light in Jesus.

## **BLOG 109: PAUL CASTING OUT DEMONS**

Paul and Barnabas continued their mission trip for about a year and a half (Acts 13:13 – 14:28). Wherever they went the gospel spread and people, Jews and Gentiles, came to Jesus for salvation. In fact, so many Gentiles were coming that the leaders of the Jewish Christian church met in Jerusalem to consider if Gentiles would have to become Jews also in order to be Christians (Acts 15). The clear answer was no. Paul then went back to the churches he had started on his first missionary journey, taking Silas and later Timothy with him (Acts 16:1-1-5). God led them through Asia Minor and across the sea to Philippi which was in Europe (Acts 16:6-12). They established a small church there in the home of Lydia (Acts 16:13-15). This sets the background for the next power encounter between Satan’s forces and God’s people, about two years after the previous encounter with Bar-Jesus.

When going to the place of prayer in Philippi, Paul and those with him were met by a young slave girl who “had a spirit by which she predicted the future” (Acts 16:16). The Greek word translated “spirit by which she predicted the future” is “python.” Thus she was a “pythoress,” a name used to refer to those indwelt by a spirit from the Greek god Apollo who gave oracles. This is the name of the dragon/snake, Apollo, killed at Delphi who guarded the priestess there and gave her oracles. Apollo was worshipped as the python god at the shrine of Delphia in central Greece. This Apollo spirit was the spirit by which the ‘god’ spoke to the person he indwelt, enabling them to pronounce oracles. The people thought Apollo was speaking through this young slave girl, especially since it was probably a male voice they heard coming out of her. While there are many explanations to what some today call ‘speaking in tongues’ (see with 1 Corinthians 11-13), there are those who feel that at least some of what was happening in Corinth, and even today, is done by these types of

demons. Paul knew the true source of the slave girl's oracles was a demon. The girl was just their medium.

A medium is someone through whom a demon speaks (Isaiah 8:19; Leviticus 19:31; 20:27; Deuteronomy 18:9-13; Acts 16:16-18). For many days she followed them shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved" (Acts 16:17). This shows us that the demons immediately recognized Jesus as God and couldn't deny who He was and is. Perhaps some of this has to do with the girl herself knowing who He is through the demons and wanting to be free from them.

Whatever the cause of her continual comments, Paul became very troubled. It wasn't what she was saying, but knowing that she was demonized that bothered him. The Greek word for 'troubled', *disponeou*, has the idea of grief, pain and anger all together. It describes how the Jewish leaders felt when they heard John and Peter were still preaching (Acts 4:2). Paul was upset because the young girl was being victimized by the demons as well as her owner. Therefore he turned and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her (Acts 16:18).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Paul didn't go out of his way to track down demonic activity, but when it was there he dealt with it. When demons interfered with his ministry or the lives of those he was ministering to, he expelled them. We can and must do the same thing. We don't have to go searching for demons to attack, we are to go about our daily lives and ministry. But when demons interfere with us or those we are ministering to, then we are to remove them.*

## **BLOG 110: HOW THE EARLY DISCIPLES MINISTERED DELIVERANCE**

We have just seen the account of Paul casting demons out of the slave girl in Philippi (Acts 16:16-18). We have the same power and authority in Jesus that Paul had, so we must learn from his example.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Notice that Paul cast the demon(s) out in Jesus' name (Acts 16:18). We have no power or authority of our own to do this, only in Jesus. Jesus has given us that same authority to use today (John 14:12; Matthew 28:18-20). Satan deceives us into thinking we are powerless victims but that is a lie. As God's children we have access to the same resources Jesus did when He lived on earth. For more information about this see the following sections: II. LIFE OF JESUS, C. SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN JESUS' MINISTRY, 6. POWER & AUTHORITY GIVEN (Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-19).*

*We have this power available to us as well (Acts 1:8; John 14:12). It is His power that transforms us into a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17) as He gives us new life (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10). His power delivers us from temptations and trials when we rely on it (1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 2:14). He has power to put His divine nature in us (2 Peter 1:4) and give us live abundant now and eternal life in heaven (John 3:16; 10:10).*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: How did the apostles cast demons out? Paul brought deliverance by a word (verbally, just as Jesus did). He said, "In the name of Jesus I command you to come out" (Acts 16:16-18). Paul was not establishing a pattern for us to following by using cloths to cast out demons. When God was showing everyone that Paul was His spokesman there was a time when just touching a cloth that Paul had used brought deliverance (Acts 19:12). That was a special event, not a pattern to follow! When directed by God, Paul defeated the demons in Elymas (an unbeliever) by making him blind so he'd stop interfering with God's word (Acts 13:6-12).*

*We have many examples of the disciples casting out demons, too. Jesus gave them power and commanded them to use it (Matthew 10:1; Luke 10:17; Mark 6:7; 16:17). They cast out demons*

as a regular part of their ministry (Mark 9:38; Luke 10:17). Paul cast out demons (Acts 16:16-18; 19:12) and so did Philip (Acts 8:7). When trying to do it in their own strength (without dependence on God) they failed (Mark 9:18, 28-29).

## **BLOG 110: SATAN'S PLAN & PURPOSE**

**LESSON FOR TODAY: SATAN'S PURPOSE** His goal is to rule the whole world instead of God. He was given authority over this world system by Adam when he sinned (2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2) and controls our world system (1 John 5:19). He rules over it (Matthew 4:8-9; John 12:31; Luke 4:5-7; John 14:30; 16:11). He is behind its values and world view (James 3:15). Presently he works to deceive the nations (Daniel 10:13,20; Matthew 4:8; Ephesians 6:12; Revelation 20:3,7-8; 16:14; 1 Kings 22:6-7). He leads mankind into idolatry (Psalm 96:5; 106:36-38; Leviticus 17:7; Deuteronomy 32:17). He especially wants to destroy God's special people: Israel (Revelation 12:13-17; 20:10; 2 Thessalonians 2:9) and the Church.

**SATAN'S WORK AGAINST ALL PEOPLE** He works against the gospel, hardening hearts to God's truth (Matthew 13:19-22). He blinds their minds (2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-10; Luke 8:12; Colossians 2:18). When they hear the truth Satan tries to snatch it from their minds (Mark 4:15; Matthew 13:19). He denies the truth (Genesis 3:1; 2 Timothy 4:3-4) and promotes false teaching (1 Timothy 4:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 2:9). As is true of any good counterfeiter, he tries to make his deceptions as close to the truth as possible so as to deceive more. The authority of the Scriptures, the person and work of Jesus and salvation by grace are areas he especially tries to obscure so make sure anything you believe has these at its heart and core. Satan brings oppression on all he can. He does this through sickness such as dumbness (Mark 9:17-29), blindness (Matthew 12:22), deformity (Luke 13:11-17), epilepsy (Luke 9:37-43) and other ways. He also uses the following to oppress: mental illness (Mark 5:1-20; 9:14-29; Luke 9:39), sin (Genesis 3:13-24; Ephesians 2:2), lawlessness (2 Corinthians 6:15) and death (Revelation 18:2; 9:13-18).

**SATAN'S WORK AGAINST BELIEVERS** A primary objective of Satan is to oppose God's work and God's people. He oppresses and leads the persecution against the Jews (Revelation 12:13-17; 20:10; 2 Thessalonians 2:9). He works especially hard against believers, for we are the light in his darkness, the only threat on this work against his kingdom. Since he can no longer attack Jesus directly he does so indirectly by attacking His children. He accuses us before God (Job 1:6-21; 2 Corinthians 2:11; Revelation 12:9-10; Zechariah 3:1-2) but Jesus is our defense attorney, our Advocate when accused (1 John 2:1). Satan does all he can to oppose and hinder our service to God (2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:18; 2 Corinthians 11:27; Zechariah 3:1; Matthew 13:19). He tries to infiltrate the church through false teaching (1 Timothy 4:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 2:9), false teachers (1 Timothy 4:1-3; 1 John 4:1; 2 Peter 2:1-2) and false 'Christians' (Matthew 13:38-40). While not all temptation comes from Satan and demons, he certainly does all he can to entice us into sin (2 Corinthians 2:11; 1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Timothy 2:26; 1 Corinthians 7:5) as he did when tempting Jesus. He will use our sin nature (James 1:14-15), the world system (1 John 2:15-16) or attack directly through demons (1 Corinthians 7:5). He can cause and use anger (Ephesians 4:27), pride (1 Timothy 3:6; 1 Chronicles 21:1; 1 Timothy 3:6), immorality (1 Corinthians 7:5), lies (Acts 5:1-3), doubting God's Word and goodness (Genesis 3:1-5; Luke 4:9-12), 'miracles' to deceive (Mark 4:8-9; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; 2 Thessalonians 2:3,9-11), hypocrisy (John 8:44; Acts 17:22), self-sufficiency (1 Chronicles 21:1-7), worry and fear (1 Peter 5:7-9; Hebrews 2:14; Psalm 23:4), lack of faith (Luke 22:31-32; 1 Peter 5:6-10), physical affliction (Job 1:6-22; 2:1-7; John 8:44; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Timothy 1:20) and sin of any kind (1 Thessalonians 3:5; Matthew 4:3; 1 Corinthians 10:19-21, 2 Corinthians 11:3,13-15; 1 John 3:8).

**DEMON'S WORK AGAINST ALL** Demons carry out Satan's commands and wishes. After enticing Adam and Eve to sin and getting authority over the world from them, Satan and his forces have continued trying to keep worship from God and getting it for themselves. They blind the minds of

unbelievers (II Corinthians 4:4) and snatch the Word from their hearts (Luke 8:12). They do all they can to oppose God's work (Revelation 2:13). Since they can't attack God, they take their anger out on those who are God's -- His people (Jews and Christians today). Satan and his forces tempt Christians to lie (Acts 5:3), accuse and slander them before God (Revelation 12:10), hinder their work (I Thessalonians 2:18), do anything possible to defeat them (Ephesians 6:11-12), tempt to immorality (I Corinthians 7:5) and incite persecution against them (Revelation 2:10). They promote human wisdom (1 Corinthians 2:12; 2 Corinthians 11:4; 1 John 4:5-6). They influence and control the nations (Daniel 10:13,20; Ephesians 6:12) and mislead them so they can destroy them (Isaiah 9:14). It must always be kept in mind, however, that God is in sovereign control. They can do nothing without God's permission (Job 1:6-12).

**Physically** they can give superhuman strength (Mark 5:4); physically torment (Revelation 9:5,10), emotionally torment (1 Samuel 16:14-23); do miracles (Revelation 16:13-14; 13:12-15), inflict disease (Matthew 9:33; Luke 3:11,16), indwell people (Matthew 8:28-34) and indwell animals (Matthew 8:31-32).

**Emotionally** they torment (1 Samuel 16:14-23), cause fear (1 Samuel 18:12,15; 2 Corinthians 11:4; 2 Timothy 1:7; Romans 8:15; Job 4:14-15), cause anger (1 Samuel 18:10-11), cause jealousy (1 Samuel 18:10-15) and harden consciences (1 Timothy 4:2).

**Sexually** they cause immorality (Revelation 9:21-22; 2 Timothy 3:1-9; 1 Timothy 4:1-3) and cause all kinds of impurity (Zechariah 13:2).

**Mentally** they cause bondage (2 Corinthians 11:4), influence the mind (Genesis 3:15; Ephesians 6:10-20; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:13), control the mind (1 Corinthians 10:20; 2 Corinthians 4:4), and deceive, mislead and lie to people (1 Timothy 4:1,6; 1 Kings 22:22-23; 2 Chronicles 18:20-23).

**Religiously** they promote false doctrine (1 John 4:1-3; 1 Timothy 4:1; 1 Kings 22:22; Revelation 16:13), counterfeit the truth (2 Corinthians 10:20-21), promote hypocrisy (1 Timothy 4:2), promote legalism (1 Timothy 4:3), use false prophets and false teachers (1 John 4:1; 1 Kings 22:22-23; 2 Chronicles 18:20-23), use fortunetelling and occult practices (Acts 16:16-18) and promote idolatry while receiving the worship of idols (Leviticus 17:7; Deuteronomy 32:17; Psalm 106:37; Revelation 9:20; Hosea 4:10-12; 5:4; Acts 16:16; 1 Corinthians 10:20).

**DEMON'S WORK AGAINST BELIEVERS** They especially work against believers by frustrating and opposing God's perfect will (Acts 16:16-18), putting obstacles in the path of those following God (1 Thessalonians 2:18; Romans 15:22), influencing believers to mislead other believers (Matthew 16:22-23.) and instigating things such as jealousy, pride and disunity (James 3:13-16). They seek to get believers to turn from God and living for Him (1 Timothy 4:1), they can cause physical torment (2 Corinthians 12:7), and they try to get us to operate by our own strength and ability (2 Timothy 3:5). All this work will intensify as the return of Jesus gets closer (1 Timothy 4:1).

## **BLOG 111: PAUL'S POWER ENCOUNTER #1**

Paul ran into strong demonic opposition when he went to Ephesus (Acts 19). The pagan goddess Artemis was worshipped there. The people there were Asiatic and thus animists who were really worshipping demons. She was a widely worshipped deity whose temple in Ephesus was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. She was recognized by her followers as the greatest power in the universe. She was seen as savior, lord and queen and was worshipped by many long festivals. 'Missionaries' were sent out to spread her message. This cult was very influential and very rich.

Of course the power behind Artemis was demonic, and those who promoted her worship knew it. They used those powers to help her reputation, and therefore theirs as well, grow and expand. She was recognized as the goddess over the underworld and the one with authority over

all demons. In fact, these demons who served her were given Jewish, Egyptian and Greek names. The 'magic' she had, the supernatural power over natural forces, was demonic.

Because of Artemis, Ephesus became the main center for pagan demonic worship in all Asia Minor. Because of its key place in Asia Minor, geographically as well as culturally, Paul visited Ephesus at least twice (Acts 18:19-21; 19:1 – 20:1). Eventually the center of early Christianity moved from Jerusalem to Ephesus, then later to Rome itself. John and Mary lived in Ephesus. Because of its importance, Satan and his forces did all they could to oppose this. That is why spiritual warfare came to a head at Ephesus, as can be seen in the book of Acts as well as the epistle to the Ephesians, which was a circular letter read in all the churches in the area.

Luke records several of these power encounters between God and Satan during Paul's first visit to Ephesus.

A power encounter is a crisis point occurring in the on-going spiritual warfare between God and Satan. Paul was bringing the kingdom of light into Satan's kingdom of darkness. Satan was doing all he could to keep the area under his control. God gave Paul the ability to show God's greater power by doing "signs, wonders and miracles" (2 Corinthians 12:12; Romans 15:19). Towards the end of Paul's time there, God worked in a special way through Paul to show the people the power of Paul's God and message.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Again we see that in cultures today which don't have a Christian heritage or much of a gospel witness God still, many times, uses physical healing and, deliverance from demonic influence and even dreams to show His power and bring others to His truth.*

*LESSONS FOR TODAY: This is not a standard way to evangelize or to do deliverance. In fact, Paul probably wasn't aware of it when this began. Perhaps helpers or others took these cloths and gave them to needy friends. God honored their faith and used this to verify His power through His servant Paul. Of course it wasn't Paul who healed, only God. But this validated Paul's claims to have the best and right power with him. It was a necessary first step to gain a hearing so Paul could spread the good news of Jesus Christ. We must not get involved in objects that seem to have supernatural power for our full faith and attention must only be on God Himself. These things are counterfeit, even superstitions, good luck charms, etc., are to be totally avoided.*

## **BLOG 112: PAUL'S POWER ENCOUNTER #2**

Word of God's supremacy as shown by Paul spread through Ephesus (Acts 19). As a result there were those who saw Jesus' name as a magic charm they could use to their own advantage. "Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, 'In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out.' Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. One day the evil spirit answered them, 'Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?' Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding" (Acts 19:13).

Sceva, a Jew, was a self-proclaimed chief priest. He claimed to do Jewish exorcism but used occult ways to accomplish this. He thought he would try this new 'charm' so he could have better results in driving demons out, and therefore earning high fees for doing so. However using Jesus' name just brought him and his sons misery because they weren't believers. The people learned that Jesus isn't a magic word to use. Only a personal relationship with Him will bring victory.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Often demons work together in cooperation to make it seem like the human they used had the power to cast out demons. Really they were just working together to*

make it seem that way. One demon would attack a person, then another would indwell a false deliverer so that when the demon was commanded to be gone it would leave. It was all set up to make it look like the person had power to deliver. This deceived the person himself and those watching. But this time the demons from the demonized man overpowered the demonized deliverer and beat him up. Demons don't always work together, though. They are filled with hate and jealousy and often take it out on each other, as happened this time.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: When we feel confusion in our minds it may be from demonic interference, trying to confuse and mislead us. Other times, though, what we sense as confusion is conflict among the demons themselves as they struggle with each other for authority and influence, especially the leader is gone working elsewhere. The distraction and/or confusion the demonized person senses could be conflict among the demons themselves, for their self-centeredness, pride and ego isn't just manifested against us but against each other also. They cooperate out of fear and being overpowered, not for any other reason.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Our power and authority are in Jesus and His name, but we are not to use His name as a magic charm. We must always make sure there is no sin in our life, that we are right with God, and, of course, that we are His child through faith in Jesus.*

(This blog is taken from "Spiritual Warfare and the Bible: Advanced Spiritual Warfare Training" by Jerry Schroyer. See also "Spiritual Warfare Handbook: Basic Spiritual Warfare Training." For advice or a free electronic copy of either or both contact [Jerry@Schroyer.net](mailto:Jerry@Schroyer.net))

### **BLOG 113: PAUL'S POWER ENCOUNTER #3**

As it became more and more obvious that God's power shown through Paul was much greater than that the Ephesian followers of Artemis claimed, many came to God for salvation (Acts 19). "When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor. Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power" (Acts 19:17-20).

*LESSONS FOR TODAY: "Sorcery scrolls" refers to magic texts, adjurations, formulas, protection rituals, curses, incantations and similar things. Such things exist today as well and have an amount of power behind them – demonic power. Keep away from such things. If someone you minister to has them they must be destroyed – anything that can be used by demons to gain access to their lives or family must be destroyed.*

*When the Jews took possession of Canaan under Joshua they were told to not keep any of the objects they captured. Even animals and children were to be destroyed. They had been dedicated to Satan and were claimed by him. Those who used these things would be opening themselves up to the demonic powers to whom they had been dedicated. Today we must watch for things like literature and objects from other cults and religions, Ouija boards and other occult paraphernalia, pagan objects from primitive cultures, objects from Masonic or other secret societies, some Native American artifacts and the like. Pornography, drug or alcoholic supplies, music with a black or evil dimension, even certain movies or articles of clothing dedicated to darkness can allow access.*

*The solution is to remove and destroy such objects as being openings for demonic access. Ask for forgiveness for having them, cleanse the room from their presence, take back any access the enemy may claim and dedicate the space as well as yourself to Jesus. Ask Him to reveal to you anything else that may need to be dealt with.*

*When a room or object is under the control of an evil spirit for whatever reason they claim, dedicating it to God by painting crosses by dipping a finger in oil and making them on a wall is a good practice. Playing Christian music and leaving a small light on also are offensive to the forces of darkness. Of course praying and quoting scripture while making the crosses is important, too. We as a Christian have great power in blessing people, especially our own families. 'God bless you' is more than a slang or shallow comment. There's real power in it when one means it that way. It's a privilege to use and repeat it often to people. Distance doesn't seem to affect it at all. Of course there is something even more special about touching a person when we pray or ask God to bless them, but when at a distance it carries just as well. The power is in God Who is everywhere (omnipresent). Satan and demons are limited to one place at a time so they are at a distinct disadvantage in this, too.*

## **BLOG 114: LESSONS FROM PAUL'S ENCOUNTERS IN EPHEBUS**

Paul faced some of his stiffest spiritual opposition in Ephesus (Acts 19). Through a series of power encounters he showed God's strength is greater than Satan's might. Many left their false idols and turned to Jesus. We have already seen several lessons and principles from his time there, but there are two more important applications we should make.

Those who merchandized Artemis in Ephesus made a good profit by selling amulets and charms that claimed to have power to heal. Many of the illnesses were demonic, as were the 'cures.' Demons would be the cause of illnesses, then stop when the 'cures' were used making it seem like they worked, thus deceiving people into thinking the amulets and charms had power to heal.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan can cause illness: crippled limbs (Luke 13:11), Paul's thorn in the flesh (eye disease? - II Corinthians 12:7), muteness (sometimes dumbness, too - Matthew 9:32-33; 12:22; Mark 9:17-18,24-25), blindness (Matthew 12:22), seizures (Mark 1:26; 9:17-18,20,22,25; Matthew 17:15,18; Luke 9:39), deafness (Mark 9:17-18,20,25), sores (skin cancer?) (Job 2:7), boils and other painful afflictions (Psalm 78:49 - the plagues in Egypt were demon-caused), physical torments of all kinds (Revelation 9:5,10), painful illness (Job 2:7-8), and even death (Job 1:19). Since he can cause these things he can seem to 'heal' them by stopping what he did/does to cause them in the first place. Only God can heal, but Satan can counterfeit that by making it seem like he heals.*

If the God Paul preached was greater than Satan and the demons who worked through Artemis, then everyone assumed He would be able to do what they did and heal people. "God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them" (Acts 19:11-12). These free articles of Paul's worked much, much better than Satan's counterfeits.

A final lesson concerns what happened when Paul left Ephesus. This extended time there turned out to be Paul's last freedom of movement for some time. From Ephesus he went to Jerusalem (Acts 21) where he was falsely charged and arrested (Acts 22). He spent the next several years in prison, finally being transferred to Rome (Acts 23-28) where the book of Acts ends. Paul was eventually released to travel some more, but his health had been broken and the brunt of the load of ministry which he had carried was now spread to many new evangelists and missionaries. Paul was again arrested and this time put to death in Rome. But during his travels and imprisonment he wrote letters to churches to stay in touch. We can learn much about spiritual warfare from these letters.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: It must have been very frustrating for Paul to have to write letters to people and places he wanted to see in person. No doubt he wondered what purpose God would*

ever have in that. However that is what God used to form the majority of the New Testament and its teaching. Were Paul free to visit these places in person, millions of Christians for two thousand years would not have had these priceless letters and their teachings. God always has a purpose in what He does. When things don't seem to make sense to you trust that God knows what He is doing (Romans 8:28).

## **BLOG 115: SEXUAL IMMORALITY LEADS TO DEMONIZING**

Corinth was the most problematic church Paul dealt with. Although believers, the people there were thinking and living as unbelievers. Pride, greed, immorality, selfishness and jealousy were rampant everywhere in the church. In one case, a man was living with his father's wife and the people were proud of this open minded attitude (1 Corinthians 5:1-2). Paul strictly warns against this and says they are to "hand this man over to Satan" (1 Corinthians 5:5). Paul is saying that Satan's world system will be so bad for him that he'll miss what he had in the church and will repent of his sin and return (see also 1 Timothy 1:18-20). Sexual immorality is bad for many reasons, one being that it opens the participants to being demonized.

God created sexual intimacy to show the great oneness of believers and Jesus (Ephesians 5:25-32). Satan tries hard to destroy this model by perverting and destroying the model of sex as a special union between a husband and a wife.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Sexual sin opens the sinning person to demonizing (1 Corinthians 6:13-20; Ephesians 5:3; Revelation 2:14, 20-21)*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan understands the power of human sexuality and uses it to gain control over people through their sin (Ephesians 5:3-6). When a demon has access to one person and that person physically unites themselves to another person, the sexual union allows that demon (or demons) to also have access to the other person. This does not have to be a marriage relationship, or even a love relationship. Paul says it happens even when one has sex with a prostitute (1 Corinthians 6:16). Therefore sexual activity with anyone before or outside marriage can be a direct opening to demonization. Any demons that have access to the person you are involved with will have immediate and instant access to you as well. It is like a spiritual AIDS infection, but there is no prevention, no 'safe sex' application.*

*When going through deliverance with someone, or for yourself, it is very important to confess any sexual sin and put it under the blood of Jesus. Then any demons who have claimed access through this sin must be commanded to be gone and not return. Ask to be filled with His Presence instead, and thank Him for His mercy!*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Physical intimacy can lead to demonizing, and so can emotional intimacy. Soul ties in our past can be another opening for demons. Just like they can transfer from one person to another through a physical union like sex, so they can transfer through an emotional union as well. Souls can bond as well as bodies. When one gives their trust to another a bonding is formed. Bonds between mates, parents and children, godly friends, etc., are good and necessary. But when we bond with someone who is demonized then demons can use that as access to the other person. Souls become bonded, or tied together. If you have any of these in your past that you feel may not have been godly and healthy, confess them as sin and break the bond in Jesus' name.*

## **BLOG 116: SPEAKING IN TONGUES & SPIRITUAL WARFARE**

Before salvation the Corinthian believers spoke in ecstatic utterances, prophecies, revelations, spells and curses through the 'power' of Artemis (Acts 19). This was a regular part of their pagan

worship, and was still happening in their church services. They were unable to distinguish demonic utterances from their pagan past to the 'languages' the Holy Spirit gave them as believers (1 Corinthians 12:1-3). Without knowing it, some were saying things that were blasphemous to God, so of course that didn't come from the Holy Spirit. Paul writes 3 chapters (1 Corinthians 12-14) showing the place, purpose and limits of speaking in 'tongues.'

**LESSON FOR TODAY:** *Does God want us to speak in tongues today? Are they from the Holy Spirit or from demons (or both)? A correct understanding of 'tongues' is important for those involved in spiritual warfare.*

*The Bible teaches that each believer is **filled with the Holy Spirit** at the moment of salvation (1 Corinthians 10:1ff; 12:3; 6:19; Ephesians 4:5; Romans 5:5). One cannot be saved without the Holy Spirit indwelling them (John 7:37-39; 14:16-17; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20). From there on it is not a matter of getting more of the Holy Spirit but of the Holy Spirit getting more of us! As we totally submit and live a holy life He fills and works through us.*

*Then what about Acts 2, 8, 10 and 19, when the Holy Spirit came on those who were already believers? **Acts 2** is a one-time, non-repeatable experience (not even repeated in Acts 8, 10 or 19). Just like the Second Person of the Trinity made a unique, one-time entrance into the world through a virgin in a stable, so the Third Person made His entrance in a unique, one-time way. When Jesus came back to earth after the resurrection to the apostles, Paul or John on Patmos, He never repeated the virgin-in-a-stable entrance. Acts 2, also, is non-repeatable.*

*Acts 2 is a transition, from Old Testament law when the Holy Spirit only indwelt some believers sometimes, to New Testament grace, when the Holy Spirit indwells all believers for their whole life. The apostles had already accepted Jesus' claims and were saved in the old dispensation, then when the new dispensation started and the Spirit came they naturally would be the first to receive Him in that way. That is non-repeatable, too. In **Acts 8** we see this same truth applied to half Jews and half Gentiles, in **Acts 10** to Gentiles in Palestine, and in **Acts 19** to Gentiles outside of Palestine. They were similar to Acts 2 to show that Jews and Gentiles were now equal in the same Body, that the same thing happened to each. Each one showed the changeover from Old Testament law to New Testament grace. There had to be a definite time of change, showing the transfer had been made and those believers accepted. Still, what happened was different enough to show that it wasn't Acts 2 repeated again. Those were the only times anything even resembling Acts 2 happened in Acts, and it only happened once for each new group as the gospel spread from Jerusalem. All others received the Holy Spirit immediately at salvation.*

**Tongues are not proof of Spirit baptism.** *Many received the Holy Spirit but not tongues: 3,000 on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38-41), early church believers (Acts 4:31), Samaritans (Acts 8:14-17), Paul (Acts 9:17-18), John the Baptist (Luke 1:15-16), Jesus (Luke 3:21-22; 4:1,14,18,21) and many others (Acts 4:8,31; 6:5; 7:55; 11:24; 13:9,52). Speaking in tongues is never mentioned in the leadership qualities in Titus or I Timothy. The Bible makes it clear that obedience is the proof of the Holy Spirit's indwelling, not tongues (Ephesians 5:18f).*

**Tongues in Acts and Corinth were the same.** *The same Greek word ('glossa' meaning 'tongue, to speak, language') is always used of known foreign languages and is used in both Acts (2:6-11, etc.) and Corinth (I Corinthians 14:21; 12:10). In Acts is it obvious that the listeners heard known languages spoken by those who had no previous knowledge of the language. There is no indication that what Corinth experienced was different. It is only the church at Corinth that is mentioned as using tongues, and then many corrections were needed because it was a very carnal church (I Corinthians. 3:1-3).*

**The purpose of tongues** was to show Jews that God's judgment was on them. They were to spread God's message to Gentiles but failed. God would show He was judging them for that by bringing His word to them by Gentiles in Gentile languages. This was prophesied in Isa. 28:9-12;

33:19f; Deuteronomy 28:49; and Jeremiah 5:15. Paul said tongues fulfilled those prophecies (I Corinthians 14:21-22). When the Jews didn't heed this sign and repent, God's judgment came upon them in 70 AD when Jerusalem was destroyed. After 70 AD there is no instance of tongues being used in the early church. Signs are placed before what they are to mark, not after! Paul said (I Corinthians. 13:8-12) that tongues "will be stilled." The Greek word, 'pauo,' is in the middle voice; they will stop by themselves and not start again. History records only a very few, very isolated, very minor outbreak of tongues from Acts to the present. These groups were often heretical in some or all of their other beliefs. Obviously tongues did stop. There is nothing to indicate that they would ever begin again, for their purpose has been fulfilled. When Joel 2 talks about the Holy Spirit coming back after the Tribulation, there is no mention of tongues!

Then what about those with the gift of interpretation? First, the Greek word for this refers to someone who interprets known languages, like from Spanish to German. The use of foreign languages was to show God's judgment to the Jews present. The content of the message was God's good news, which the Jews should have been spreading. Since speaking in an unknown language would mean nothing to Gentiles present, Paul said there had to be an interpreter present when the gift was used (I Corinthians 14:26-28). This was necessary for the weak and immature Corinthian believers (14:20-22) who were ignorant of God's truth (12:13). It was to be kept to a minimum (14:6-12) because it was an inferior gift (I Corinthians. 14:4). Paul himself only used his ability to speak in unknown languages in Jewish synagogues, not Jewish services (14:39).

Applying these criteria to tongues today (known foreign language, showing God's judgment on the Jews, used only with Jews present, see as a lesser/minor gift whose use was to be kept to a minimum, etc.) shows that what is happening today is different from what happened back then.

**Tongues are not a heavenly language.** The Greek word makes it clear they are a KNOWN language (Acts 2:6-11; I Corinthians 14:21; 12:10). This is different than the 'groanings' of Romans 8:26 for those are clearly said to be unutterable (not able to be spoken). The "tongues of angels" (I Corinthians. 13:1) is a hyperbole (overemphasis to make a point) like "faith to move mountains." Besides, when angels spoke in the Bible, it was always in the known language of those to whom they were speaking.

**Tongues are not a private prayer language.** All spiritual gifts are given for the sake of others, not the one having the gift (I Corinthians 12:7, 12f; 14:19,27), that's why an interpreter had to always be present in Corinth (I Corinthians 14:26-28). Every time the gift of tongues was given in the Bible it was given to a group, not an individual. It was always used in a group, too, with no instance of private use recorded. The tongue is to be controlled by the speaker, not beyond his control (I Corinthians. 14:28-33). Plus, tongues were to be a sign to unbelievers, not believers (I Corinthians 14:22). Jesus Himself warned about praying words we don't understand (Mt 6:7). Paul said he always understood what he said when he prayed, even in tongues (I Corinthians 14:15). When asked how to pray Jesus gave the Lord's Prayer, not tongues.

**Dangers of speaking in tongues today.** Paul warns about Satan's ability to counterfeit this (1 Corinthians 12:2-3) as he has in other religions and cults today. Tongues is said to be an inferior gift because it is self-centered (I Corinthians 14:4) and leads to emphasis being put on emotions which can lead people astray (II Corinthians 6:11-12; Rom 16:17-18). We are told to pray with understanding (I Corinthians 14:13-17) and control our spiritual gift (I Corinthians 14:28-40). God arbitrarily chooses which gifts to give to whom (I Corinthians 12:7,11,18,28). We are told to not seek any particular gift (I Corinthians 12:31; 14:1-4). Tongues speaking can become a substitute for spirituality (I Corinthians 14:26-28). Worst of all, it can produce a false security by those who put faith in it as proof that God loves and accepts them. Most who practice tongues-speaking do not believe in eternal security of salvation, so their speaking in tongues becomes their proof of acceptance by God. Our faith must be in Jesus' work on the cross, not in our ability to speak in 'tongues.' Those without the gift can feel pressured to fit in with the rest of the group.

Another danger of tongues, despite Paul saying it is the least of all gifts (1 Corinthians 14:1-25), is that it is often elevated to equal importance to what God says in the Bible. This happens with 'interpretations of tongues' and those with the 'gift of prophecy' as well. These people can be looked up to and their 'word' taken on the same par as, or even above Scripture. That is a deception from the enemy for NOTHING is to be seen as authoritative as Scripture (Revelation 22:18-19).

I have been told by those who are more experienced in dealing with tongues spirits than I am that these demons are often 'gatekeepers' and keep other demons in. They also call others in and keep them from exiting.

### **BLOG 117: UNFORGIVENESS: A SHORT-CUT TO DEMONIZING**

Soon after writing 1 Corinthians Paul wrote another letter to the Corinthians, called 2 Corinthians in the New Testament. In it he warned the believers to **be aware of Satan's schemes** so they aren't tricked and defeated (2 Corinthians 2:11). The brother who was living with his father's wife and was disciplined by exclusion from church fellowship (1 Corinthians 5:1-5) evidently repented and was restored to fellowship (2 Corinthians 2:5-6). Now Paul encourages them to forgive the man and treat him with love and acceptance (2 Corinthians 2:7-10). If they don't forgive him, Paul says Satan will use that to work against them (2 Corinthians 2:11).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Many believers today are ignorant of spiritual warfare, some even deny it exists, or that believers are immune from Satan's attacks. Nothing could be further from the truth. We must be soldiers who know how to use the equipment our commander provides in order to defeat those who would destroy us. Ignorance of how Satan works plays into his hands and leads to sure misery. Learn spiritual warfare, teach it to others, and use it whenever necessary.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Paul is warning them that Satan will use their unforgiveness as an opening to attack them. One of the leading causes of demonizing is unconfessed anger. Anger includes any form of unforgiveness, bitterness, hate, jealousy, gossip, criticism, etc. Paul says these can "give the devil a foothold" (Ephesians 4:26-27). He tells the Corinthians that if they don't forgive each other Satan will use that to "outwit" them (II Corinthians 2:10-11). Jesus Himself said that those who don't forgive others will be turned over to tormenting demons to bring them to repentance (Matthew 6:14-15; 18:34). This anger includes anger toward others, parents, self, or God. There can be no removing demons who claim this access until all anger is truly confessed and put under the blood of Jesus. This is one of the first things that usually come up when we counsel people and pray for their deliverance. Do NOT take this lightly! Don't rush through this step. Spending time praying for God to show anger and unforgiveness is time well spent.*

### **BLOG 118: SATAN BLINDS PEOPLE TO SPIRITUAL THINGS**

Satan blinds unbelievers so they don't see the truth of the Gospel. "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (2 Corinthians 4:3-4). Satan does all he can to keep men from leaving his kingdom/army and joining God's kingdom/army.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: All unbelievers are children of Satan (Matthew 13:37-39; John 8:44; 1 John 3:3-10) and are in Satan's kingdom (Colossians 1:12-14). All are bound by Satan (Acts 26:18) and blinded by him (2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 3:14-15) and are under Satan's power (1 John 5:19). They belong to him (Matthew 12:22-29) and are enslaved in a world system controlled by Satan (John*

12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 1 John 5:19). Believers are a small minority, living in enemy-occupied territory, seeking to free some of those bound in darkness so they can find freedom in Christ. Meanwhile those who oppose us do all they can to dim our light and render us ineffective in our battle against them. That is where we find ourselves. That is our battle. We do not live in a neutral world nor are people nonaligned until they decide who they will follow. Everyone who has not committed their lives to Jesus is under the power of darkness and under judgment (John 3:16-21). Every one of them needs rescuing by us!

**LESSON FOR TODAY:** Since all unbelievers are in Satan's possession, does that mean that all of them are demonized? Not all have had their lives invaded to the greatest extent, but without Jesus' protection and God's power they are potentially open to demonizing to one degree or another. They still have the image of God in them which we all have, and they have a free will to use to make wise choices, and that can limit the amount of influence demons can have over them. But we must always be aware of the demonic when we witness to or counsel someone who is not a believer. That is why Paul's strong works about being 'unequally yoked' carry so much weight today (2 Corinthians 6:14-16). "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God." This isn't just about marriage, but about business partnerships, close friendships, and the like. As believers we cannot be closely bound to those who are closely bound to demons.

**LESSON FOR TODAY:** If you are a believer then you have left Satan's kingdom of darkness (Ephesians 2:1-10) and deserted his army, choosing instead to join the forces of his arch rival. If you think he will take that lightly and leave you alone, that he will do nothing to retaliate and render you ineffective for God, then you are greatly mistaken (Daniel 10:10-21; Acts 13:6-12; 16:16-24; 19:11-18). He is totally committed to your destruction (Ephesians 6:10-18). That is why it is imperative to learn to fight. In addition, we still fight our old sin nature (Romans 7:14-25), so in reality we are fighting a battle on two fronts. Often they combine and make things that much harder on us!

**LESSON FOR TODAY:** When a blind person does not see the sun shining, that is no reflection on the brightness of the sun but rather on the inability of the person to see it. The same is true of spiritual things. Satan is the ruler of the kingdom of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4) and in authority over it (Luke 4:6). Naturally he wants to keep his subjects in darkness, which he does. In addition, our sin nature keeps us from coming to God for salvation. It is only as His Spirit works in us to draw us to Him that we come (John 6:37-46; 15:16, 19; Ephesians 1:3-6, 11; Romans 9:23; Acts 16:13-15). Still, man has a free will to choose or reject salvation (1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9; Acts 2:21; John 3:14-16; Exodus 8:15, 32). Somehow, even though our brains are not great enough to understand how it can be, both are true (John 6:37, 44, 47; Romans 9:1-23). It should not bother us that there are some things about God and His working that we are unable to understand for He is God (Daniel 4:35; Isaiah 55:8; Romans 11:34; 9:14-16; Isaiah 40:13, 2 Corinthians 2:16). Both are true, and when we get to heaven we will see how that can be (1 Corinthians 13:12). Our purpose is not to reconcile the two, for they are mutually exclusive, two truths which cannot be put together, but each must be believed by faith. What concerns us in this study is that at least part of the reason why it is necessary for God to work in someone for salvation is that Satan does all he can to blind them to the truth.

Therefore it is imperative that we pray for those who are blinded. How should we pray? Pray that God would roll back the blindness for a time so they can clearly see the claims of the Gospel and make a free will choice to accept or reject Jesus. We can't pray for God to make them believe, for God will not violate a person's free will choice, but we can pray they can unmistakably see the issues so they can make their own choice. Now having said that, we must acknowledge that sovereign God will make sure every person who ever lived understands the issues and makes his or her own choice.

*No one will stand before Him in judgment and say they didn't know or didn't have a chance. Everyone will acknowledge God is just in condemning them for they had a chance to turn to Him but, of their own free will choice, turned it down. This whole issue takes great wisdom and none of us can really understand all of it. What we do understand is that God is fair and just, He doesn't want anyone to go to hell, and the proof of that is that He paid for our sins voluntarily when He wouldn't have had to. His love and justice have been proven and we cannot question that. Just because we cannot understand all He understands is no reason to doubt His goodness.*

## **BLOG 119: DEMONS LOVE TO MESS WITH YOUR MIND!**

Paul clearly states that Christians battle an unseen enemy, Satan and his demons "For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete" (2 Corinthians 10:3-6). There are powers that set themselves up against God. They use thoughts which lead to sinful actions. Actions start with thoughts, so the key is to have victory over the thoughts before they develop into actions.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan can and will use thoughts inserted into our minds to control us. He will use worldly philosophies and views to get access to and control of us. The majority of demonizing consists of demons putting thoughts into a person's mind or snatching thoughts out of a person's mind. While they don't have access to our minds and thoughts to the same extent that God does, the Bible makes it clear there is some access. Jesus said this in the sower and the seed: "Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown." (Mark 4:15). David's thought to take a census was demonic (I Chronicles 21:1ff; II Samuel 24:1ff). So was Ananias & Saphira's greed (Acts 5:3) and Saul's jealousy/anger (I Samuel 16:14-23). That's why, when talking about spiritual warfare, Paul says we are to "bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." (II Corinthians 10:4-5). Not only can Satan's forces put wrong thoughts into our minds, they can snatch right thoughts out of our minds (Mark 4:15) so we forget them.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Feelings and emotions are fine, important and necessary. They are icing on the cake of life. They add color and enjoyment to life. God created them for this purpose. But He didn't create them to be the source of our decision-making. Our feelings should be dependent on our rational thought. When our feelings get ahead of it or away from it then trouble comes. You know in your mind that you are an OK person, yet in your emotions you fear you will be rejected. When feelings aren't founded on the truth they can easily mislead. The truth is that you are a fine person, but your emotions reject that truth and try to do the 'thinking' themselves. We need to let our mind explain reality to our emotions. We must be very, very careful not to follow our emotions when they differ from our rational thoughts. One of the greatest needs of our emotions/feelings is security. This is closely related to love so we could say the core of our heart is love/security. Love must bring security but doesn't always do so. Other factors can tribute to our security as well.*

## **BLOG 120: UNDERSTANDING PAUL'S DEMONIZING**

Paul shares part of his own testimony about God's grace when he writes this letter to the Corinthians. He tells about his own personal battle with demons. "To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But

he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).

Clearly believers can be attacked by demons, for Paul says his battle was with a "Messenger" (literally 'angel') of Satan. But God was in control and, like with Job, allowed this only for His glory and Paul's growth. God is more concerned in making us what we need to be than giving us what we want to have - a nice, easy life.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Sometimes God has a greater purpose than casting out every demon as soon as we pray. Sometimes complete deliverance never comes, like with Paul in this passage. Paul testifies God then provides the grace needed to withstand. God wants us to learn to depend on Him (Psalm 119:59,92). Of course if the demonic opening is allowed to continue then the demonizing will continue, too (Psalm 94:12-16; 81:11-14).*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: God does not want us to know what Paul's 'thorn in the flesh' was, just that it was exceedingly painful and that he really wanted freedom from it. God allows different 'thorns' in each of our lives for He knows what we need to keep coming back to Him. If you haven't been healed (spiritually, emotionally or physically) that isn't because of lack of faith on your part, but because it is God's perfect will for you, your growth and your testimony.*

## **BLOG 121: FEAR: THE CAUSE & RESULT OF MOST DEMONIZING**

Not long after writing to the Corinthians Paul wrote to the Romans. He had been wanting to minister in this great center of civilization for many years but God always has kept him from doing so. Eventually he arrived as a prisoner after a shipwreck, but for now he wants to let them know he won't be coming and why. Instead of speaking to them in person, again he is limited to sending a letter. But what a letter it has been for mankind! The book of Romans is a very key part of God's Word to us through the centuries. Paul's loss is our gain. As would be expected, Paul refers to demons and spiritual warfare in this great epistle several times.

**Fear.** Paul reminds his readers that God does not give us fear (Romans 8:15). Any fear we entertain comes from the flesh, our sin nature, the part of us that tends to sin. We had this before salvation and still have it after salvation.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Fear is one of Satan's biggest weapons. Demons are often behind it and use fear (Romans 8:15). If it takes the form of insecurity, anxiety, worry, preoccupation with problems, or whatever, it is still fear. Demons put fear of David into Saul (I Samuel 18:10-15) and put fear and terror into Eliaphaz by gliding by his face (Job 4:15). Anything not of faith is sin (Romans 14:23). God does not give us fear (II Timothy 1:7; Romans 8:15), so if you experience fear realize it is not from God but from Satan. This doesn't mean it is always through demonizing, for you can be attacked with fear without being demonized.*

*Fear takes root when we choose to focus on circumstances instead of God. Peter walking on water is a good example. When his eyes were on Jesus his faith was strong, but when he looked at the waves they grew (in his mind) to be greater than Jesus' power. Thus he started sinking. He then did the right thing, though, and put his eyes back on Jesus.*

*Dream with me for a minute. Suppose as a young child you had a father who loved you more than anything and constantly showed it. He was always there for you, always showing his love, enjoying you and laughing with you. Whatever you needed he was there to help and supply. How would that make you feel? How can such a relationship benefit a child as they grow up? There is*

something down deep inside all of us that would love to have someone we could trust, someone to take care of us, someone to always be there no matter what. Then we wouldn't need to try to be in control of things we fear. Control is a poor substitute for love and trust. It may have seemed necessary in your past but isn't necessary anymore!

**Trust is the antidote to fear.** How can we understand trust, what it means and how it works? I think understanding how a family should work is the best answer. God established a family relationship to answer all those questions. He is the Father, we are the children. Do your children trust you? What do they have to do to earn your love? What do you expect of them? It's exactly the same with us and God. Jesus says we are to be like little children in order to learn faith and trust. Let your children teach you. Put yourself in their position - with a Perfect Father.

## **BLOG 122: THE NAMES OF SATAN**

After writing to the Corinthians and Romans, Paul headed back to Jerusalem where he was falsely arrested and kept in prison for several years. Finally he was transferred to Rome for trial. In prison at Rome Paul wrote four very important letters, his prison epistles. They are Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians and Philemon. Ephesians was written about four years after Romans.

Much spiritual warfare had taken place when Paul was in Ephesus (see Acts 19 above). It's been about seven years since those power encounters, but the warfare is still going strong. So Paul writes to encourage and help them in their spiritual warfare.

Satan's world system. Unbelievers are not only misled by demons, but actually energized and used by them to promote Satan's ungodly world system (Ephesians 2:20). Satan is called "the ruler of the kingdom of the air" and "the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient" (Ephesians 2:2), two of numerous names for Satan.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Looking at the various names of Satan help us understand his character and work better.*

**Abaddon, Apollyon** (Rev 9:11) Abaddon is the Greek form and Apollyon is the Hebrew equivalent. These words mean 'destroyer,' 'destruction.' This title stresses his work of destruction; he works to destroy the glory of God and God's purpose with man. He further works to destroy societies and mankind.

**Accuser of the Brethren** (Revelation 12:10) The Greek word for "accuser" is *kathgor*, which refers to one who brings condemning accusations against others. In view of Job 1 and 2, this is also an attempt to malign the character of God and His plan. 2).

**Beelzebul** (Matthew 12:24; Mark 3:22) Three possible spellings of this word each have a different meaning: (1) Beelzebul means "lord of the dung," a name of reproach. (2) Beelzebub means "lord of the flies." Either one of these are names of reproach and of uncleanness applied to Satan, the prince of the demons and uncleanness. (3) Beelzeboul, means, "the lord of the dwelling." This would identify Satan as the god of demon possession. This spelling has the best manuscript evidence behind it.

**Belial** (2 Corinthians 6:15) This name means "worthless" or "hopeless ruin." The personification of worthlessness, hopeless ruin and the source of all idolatry and religion which is also hopeless or futile.

**Devil** (Matthew 4:1, 5, 9; Ephesians 4:27; Revelation 12:9; 20:2)"Devil" is the Greek word *diabollos* which means "slanderer, defamer." This accentuates his goal and work to impugn the character of God.

**Dragon** (Revelation 12:7) The Greek word is drakon (as in draconian) and refers to a "hideous monster, a dragon, or large serpent." This word stresses the cruel, vicious, and blood thirsty character and power of Satan.

**Evil One** (John 17:15; 1 John 5:9) The Greek poneros means "wicked, evil, bad, base, worthless, vicious, degenerate." It points to Satan's character as active and malignant.

**False Angel of Light** (2 Corinthians 11:14) One of his purposes is to make men as much like God as he can, but always without God. So, he will copy as much of God and His plan as he can, but he will always either distort, pervert, substitute or leave out those key ingredients of truth that are vital to the plan of salvation and sanctification through Christ.

**Father of Lies** (John 8:44) Using his network of deception through demonic forces and duped people, he promotes false doctrines in the name of God.

**God of This World or Age** (2 Corinthians 4:4) The fact Satan is called the god of this world (Greek, aionos, "age, course") may emphasize Satan's rulership over this final period or economy which is so marked by a growing increase in apostasy, deception, and moral decay.

**Lucifer** (Isa. 14:12) The Hebrew word for Lucifer (KJV translation) is literally "the shining one." This name draws our attention to his pre-fall condition and to the nature of the cause of his fall - pride.

**Prince or Ruler** (John 12:31) The Greek literally means, "the ruler of this world system." This points to Satan as the head and energy behind the arrangements of things as they are in the world today.

**Prince of the Power of the Air** (Ephesians 2:2a) This points to Satan as the head of the demonic hosts which includes all the fallen angelic beings who operate night and day in our immediate spiritual atmosphere-an atmosphere of demonic influence controlled by Satan.

**Satan** (Job 1:6-9; Matthew 4:10) The title "Satan" occurs 53 times in 47 verses in the Bible. The primary idea is 'adversary, one who withstands.'

**Serpent** (Revelation 12:9) This name for Satan looks back to Genesis 3 and the temptation in the Garden.

**Tempter** (Matthew 4:3; 1 Thessalonians 3:5) This title reveals him in another of his primary activities as seen from the very beginning with Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3).

## **BLOG 123: WE FIGHT A DEFEATED FOE**

God shows demons His greatness through us. "His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms" (Ephesians 3:10). "Rulers and authorities" refer to the breakdown of Satan's organization of demonic forces (see below under Ephesians 6:10).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: ALL powers are under God's authority (Ephesians 1:22), but not yet brought under His final control (Ephesians 6:12). God allows them freedom as He respects mankind's free will. He allows man the choice to follow Satan or not. We are living and building God's Kingdom of light in the middle of Satan's kingdom of darkness. Therefore they can clearly see what we are doing – they carefully watch so they can destroy our work. But by our lives, our faithfulness and Christlikeness, we proclaim God's power and greatness. Our victory over their work reminds them of their ultimate final defeat and demise. Many, however, are ignorant of this fact, so by our small victories over them now we show them of God's sovereign control and final defeat of them. Satan, the great deceiver, has deceived many of his own demons about their final defeat. Thus by our lives, and our words, we proclaim God's victory over them.*

Satan defeated by God's people. Paul reminds the struggling believers that, although it may seem like Satan is winning at the moment, it won't always be that way. "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet" (Romans 16:20).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan has already been defeated at the cross (Hebrews 2:14-15; Colossians 2:15; Ephesians 4:8). In the future he will be crushed and removed forever (Revelation 20:1-3, 10). Now, in the present, we have authority and power over him in Jesus' name (John 14:12; Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-19; Acts 1:8). God uses us to gain victory over Satan even today. His future fall and removal is sure. It's just a matter of time.*

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*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan has already been defeated at the cross (Hebrews 2:14-15; Colossians 2:15; Ephesians 4:8). In the future he will be crushed and removed forever (Revelation 20:1-3, 10). Now, in the present, we have authority and power over him in Jesus' name (John 14:12; Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-19; Acts 1:8). God uses us to gain victory over Satan even today. His future fall and removal is sure. It's just a matter of time.*

## **BLOG 124: UNDERSTANDING AND OVERCOMING ANGER**

Anger as a foothold. Many verses warn about the danger of unconfessed unrighteous anger and how demons can use it to gain access to the angry person (2 Corinthians 2:10-11). "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold" (Ephesians 4:26-27).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Anger comes from mishandling hurt and pain. Instead of feeling the hurt we turn it into anger for revenge or control. This allows demons to use it as an opening. There is a lack of control that opens the door. Also, it is almost like a prayer for power to hate someone, and demons seek to answer that prayer. They made Saul angry at David, so much so that he tried to kill David (1 Samuel 18:10-11; 19:9-10). Paul says there is a very close connection between anger and demonizing (Ephesians 4:27).*

*Pain must be handled as pain, not turned into anger. You can't bury something alive and think you are getting rid of it. The hurt must be dead - faced, admitted, healed, removed, forgiven. When a person buries hurt alive it keeps poisoning everything until it is dug out and destroyed.*

*While there is a legitimate use for anger ('righteous indignation') most of what we face is not right. Anger is a secondary emotion, unlike fear which is a basic emotion. Wrong anger is always the result of mishandling another, deeper emotion like fear or pain. Let's take pain, first of all. When a person hits their finger with a hammer what do they do? Usually they get angry. What they feel is pain, but it comes out as anger because anger is a much easier emotion to handle than pain. When someone says something critical or threatening it hurts, but the natural response in many is to get angry. That way they don't have to face the pain – but it stays and causes more and more anger. That's where fear comes in. It's not just pain that causes anger, but fear of pain. Fear is at the root of anger in other ways as well. To seek to manage our fears we try to control our lives and circumstances (thus the control emphasis part grows). We feel that is necessary to prevent pain and other things we fear. We use anger as a control tool. The adrenalin rush makes us feel in charge instead of a victim. We learn that people can be manipulated and controlled by our anger (or the threat of it) and we use that to control as well. This is another reason why it's important to deal with and get victory over the fears down inside. When they go the anger and control issues will become*

*much more manageable. A person can't stop their anger as long as what causes it is still inside pushing it out. They must get the root cause out, and that is where dealing with the fear comes in. (For more information see 5. 2 Corinthians.)*

## **BLOG 125: PUTTING ON THE ARMOR OF GOD**

Paul included his most complete account of how to win spiritual battles in his letter to the Ephesians (Ephesians 6:10-18). In light of all the warfare going on in Ephesus this is very appropriate. Writing from prison in Rome, chained to a Roman soldier who was guarding him, Paul must have looked for a way to convey what he wanted to say about spiritual warfare in terms the people would understand. While looking at his guard, he applied the pieces of equipment that Roman soldiers used to those that Christian soldiers use.

Paul knew that Roman soldiers didn't supply their own equipment, it was provided by their commander. Thus he starts by telling his audience that it is God's power and strength that gives us victory (Ephesians 6:10; Philippians 4:13; 1 John 4:4). We have the same power that raised Jesus from the grave (Ephesians 1:18-23; Hebrews 2:14-15). Our victory comes from God – He provides the equipment necessary to achieve it.

However just because equipment is provided doesn't mean Christian soldiers use theirs appropriately, or even use it at all. It is Satan's schemes (Ephesians 6:11; 2 Corinthians 2:11) that deceive and trap us, like a hunter seeking to trap an animal. Therefore it is up to us to use the power and equipment God provides – all of it ("full armor").

*LESSON FOR TODAY: What makes this an even more difficult battle is that our enemy is not a physical soldier whom we can see and fight in our power, rather it is a spiritual enemy, a demonic power (Ephesians 6:12). "Rulers ... authorities ... powers ... spiritual forces" refer to various groups of demons in Satan's organization. Demons are organized according to their power like an army: generals, majors, captains, lieutenants, sergeants and privates. The generals and majors oversee large geographical areas or philosophical ideologies. Down it goes to the privates, demons with names like Lust, Greed, Pride, Fear or Self-Destruction. These are the ones we usually deal with in a personal way when we are involved in our spiritual warfare.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: When a person is demonized there is a ruler (lieutenant or sergeant) who has a group of other demons (privates) under him. They set up their stronghold and each demon present is chosen for the particular focus of the work he does. Under the guidance of the ruler, they work together to accomplish the mission of the group which is always the destruction of the person they are attacking. The ultimate goal is the death of the person, but since they can't take a life they seek to make life so miserable that only death seems to hold hope of escape. Their goal is to cause the person to take their own life. Until they can get a person to that point they seek to make his witness for Jesus ineffective and his life as painful and empty as possible.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Paul says we are in a 'struggle' (Ephesians 6:12). This word refers to a fight to the death. Satan assigns demons to destroy each believer, their family and their church. We are in a life and death struggle, but often we don't realize how serious our enemy is about our destruction.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Not all problems and struggles are from Satan. While we want to know what he does so we can defeat him, we don't want to give him and his demons more credit than is due them. When he is bound man's sin nature will still lead him into sin without Satan's help (Revelation 20:1-3). That can assist u in knowing what is from demons and what is from our sin nature. If the source is our sin nature without demonic influence, than confession, submission to God, prayer, Bible reading and memory and good Christian fellowship will bring immediate or*

*progressive victory. If that does not happen then it is good to consider there might be something demonic involved as well.*

Before listing the pieces of equipment available to us Paul wants to emphasize the importance of Christian soldiers standing firm against any attack the enemy launches at them. Three times he commands them to “stand” (Ephesians 13-14a).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: We are to be alert and ready, not sitting or lying down sleeping. We shouldn't be caught off guard but must be alert. Nor should we retreat in fear or defeat. Yet the truth is that the stronger we stand the hotter the battle will get for the harder the demons will attack. The battle will never end until our Commander comes and takes us home. Our fight here will be over when we are promoted to heaven at death, or when Jesus returns, but not before.*

Paul then specifically states each piece of equipment God provides for His soldiers. “Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints” (Ephesians 6:14-18).

## **BLOG 126: PUT ON THE HELMET OF SALVATION (Ephesians 6:17)**

The helmet Roman soldiers wore was made of metal. An enemy would lift his heavy four foot long sword over his head with two hands and bring it straight down on the Roman soldier's head. The helmet was to protect his head from these attacks. Without proper protecting the damage done could be devastating!

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan attacks our mind and thoughts whenever possible, for the damage done there can be tremendous. Demons seek to put thoughts of doubt, fear, confusion, lust, greed, pride or any other sin in our mind. We must know God's truth to have protection and victory. Our spiritual battles are won or lost in our minds first of all.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Often the thoughts that defeat us have been with us for many years, even since early childhood. Quite often they are thoughts others in our family struggle with as well – generational sins passed down through our ancestors (Exodus 20:4-5; 34:6-7; Deuteronomy 5:8-9). (For more information see under Old Testament, Moses (Exodus – Deuteronomy).)*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: The solution to victory over demonic thoughts placed into our minds is to 1) close the door that let them in by confessing as sin any thoughts you entertained that were not godly (1 John 1:9). Know in your mind that they can't defeat you. Don't let them put fear or confusion into your mind. God has given us the power and authority to command them to be gone in His name (Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-19). Then 2) pray and take back any claim they make against you through your family line (2 Corinthians 5:17; John 1:12-13). Finally 3) whenever they knock on the door and try to return, quote Scripture to keep the truth of God's Word in your mind (Psalm 119:9-11) and to defeat them. Knowing and using God's Word, the sword of the Spirit, is key for victory (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 77:12; 1 Chronicles 28:9; Matthew 22:37-38; 1 Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 4:8). That's how Jesus defeated Satan (Matthew 4:1-11). Satan tries to plant doubts about God's word in man's mind. This is how he got Eve to sin. She misquoted God's Word to Satan and when he added to what God said (making God seem like He was keeping something good from her) she didn't recognize the error. Satan was undermining God's Word, and he won! We must be skillful in the use of our sword to win.*

*When Jesus was tempted He quoted Scripture to have victory over Satan's temptations. Paul says our only offensive weapon is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Psalm 119:9,11 tell us that it's through God's Word that we have victory. When you have these thoughts and attacks use Scripture to have victory. Ask God to give you some verses that will help against these things, write them down and memorize them. Say them over and over when these thoughts attack you. That is the only way to victory, and God guarantees it will work!*

## **BLOG 127: PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE of RIGHTEOUSNESS (Ephesians 6:14)**

The breastplate was made of small pieces of metal or leather fastened together so they would move and bend but so no arrow, spear or sword could go through them. It was important for it covered the heart and other vital organs. If an enemy soldier could inflict a serious wound to the upper body he would be victorious. In hand to hand combat the enemy would grab the Roman soldier's arm to pull him close and with his sword in try to stab him in the chest or stomach.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Suppose a soldier didn't bother putting on his breastplate some morning? Maybe it was too hot or too heavy, or maybe he was in a hurry or just lazy. What would happen? That's what happens to us when we don't put on our breastplate. Paul calls it the "breastplate of righteousness" because it refers to our holiness. We are holy because Jesus paid for our sins on the cross, but then we must strive to live a life free from personal sin as well. If we allow sin in our life our breastplate will have openings through which our enemy can attack and destroy us.*

*Demonizing happens because there is a sin that opens the door for demons to enter. The most common avenue to demonic entrance is through a family line. One person opens themselves to demonic influence and the demons claim them and all they have, including children. Then the same traits and influences pass on to the children and their children (for more information see Old Testament, 3. Moses (Exodus – Deuteronomy). Occult and Satanic involvement in demonic activities, drugs, acid rock music, Ouija boards, etc. is another opening. Cult involvement will also open the door for them. Involvement of a family member in a 'secret society' such as the Masons is an open invitation to demonizing. The Bible says that when two people have sex the two become one flesh and that allows demons to claim the other person. Abuse of any kind or any form of trauma, especially when young, open one to the demonic. Strong soul ties with someone who is demonized can cause an opening. Being unwanted when in the womb or young is a definite opening. These are some of the main avenues demons use to gain entrance and attack people.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: If you have any of these openings in your life pray to have them removed. It's like opening a door and allowing someone to enter a room, then realize you shouldn't have done that. You need to close the door so no one else enters, but you also need to command those who already have entered to leave. Confessing the sin and taking back the access closes the door. Rebuking and commanding them to be gone cleans the room. The solution for sin openings is to 1) ask God to show you any sin in your life (Psalm 139:23-24), then 2) confess the sin and close the door that let the demon(s) in (1 John 1:9). You must also 3) command any demons working against you or your family to be gone, using the authority we have in Jesus' name and power ((John 14:12; Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-19; Acts 1:8).*

*Then when you notice any kind of spiritual attack you defeat it by quoting scripture. When Jesus was tempted He quoted Scripture to have victory over Satan's temptations. Paul says our only offensive weapon is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Psalm 119:9,11 tell us that it's through God's Word that we have victory. When you have these thoughts and attacks, use Scripture to have victory. Ask God to give you some verses that will help against these thing. Write them down and memorize them. Say them over and over when these thoughts attack you. That is the only way to victory, and God guarantees it will work!*

## **BLOG 128: PUT ON THE BELT of TRUTH (Ephesians 6:14)**

The belt a Roman soldier wore was an important piece of equipment for it held the weapons and equipment which he carried with him. It also held his clothing out of the way so he wouldn't stumble and fall when moving or fighting. In cool weather a heavy cloak was worn and it was easy to get tangled up in it if there wasn't a belt to hold it out of the way.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Paul equates this with knowing God's truth which keeps us from stumbling and falling spiritually. Satan would do anything he can to trip us up with his lies and deceptions (John 8:44). His demons put thoughts in our mind that we'll never have victory but will always be defeated, that God doesn't care about us because our sin is so great, that what we are going through is our own fault and we deserve to suffer, that Jesus isn't God, that we are inferior to others and a failure, or any lie that can trip us up. Whenever we get a thought that doesn't line up with God's truth as revealed in His Word, a thought that Jesus wouldn't have entertained, make sure you reject it as well.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: The way to have victory over Satan's lies and deceptions is by knowing God's truth. 1) Ask God to show you any lies you believe, then 2) confess them as sin and replace them with the truth of God's Word. Find Scripture passages and write them down to carry with you and use them when attacked. Make sure 3) you take back any access any demons have claimed through these lies. Also 4) spend time each day reading and learning God's Word, including marking and memorizing passages which speak to you.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: God's truth is the basis for all we are and have. We are God's people under His care and protection. Nothing can harm us. Not even curses that are knowingly or unknowingly placed against us.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Did the Ephesians use their armor and have victory in their spiritual warfare? Yes and no. Yes, for they didn't fall back into the sins that opened them to demonizing in the past. But also no, for Satan changed his tactics and attacked from within the church instead and this was much more successful. Deceptions and lies from false teachers brought confusion and often disunity among the believers. Satan still attacks from without and within today. It is the subtle attacks within we must be aware of for they often take us by surprise. That makes them more dangerous and deadly. We must know God's Word thoroughly and apply it to all things in life to avoid being deceived.*

## **BLOG 129: PUT ON THE SANDALS of PEACE (Ephesians 6:15)**

The Romans needed sturdy sandals on their feet for marching and fighting. They would walk in sand, on sharp rocks, and through streams of slippery stones. They could be attacked at any moment so they needed something that would help them stand firm no matter where they found themselves. Their enemy would pick a location to fight that was advantageous for them but not for the Romans. They would do anything to gain an unfair advantage!

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Our enemy still does the same thing to us today. He does anything he can to gain even the slightest advantage over the Christian. He tries to choose the footing that will give him victory and take away our peace. When he gets us on his ground he presses the attack. We can be on his ground when something that happened at that place in the past opened the door to demonic control.*

Some event may have happened on the land or in the home or room where you live. It could be a violent act, an occult activity, a curse, a dedicating of the property to the powers of darkness or similar acts. Sometimes when we go into a certain neighborhood or home there is a 'sense' of evil, a discomfort in our spirit. In a store that sells New Age materials you may 'feel' different in your spirit, a discomfort. This is the explanation for supernatural apparitions that happen in 'haunted' homes – demonic activity may be present. Some countries and even continents are in extra darkness and bondage and it can be sensed by believers. The message we get is from God's Holy Spirit Who is warning us against the evil around us.

**LESSON FOR TODAY:** Our solution is 1) to pray, taking back any access the enemy may claim to the property and asserting our right as children of God to claim and use it. Put any other claims under the blood of Jesus and dedicate it to Him for His honor and glory. Then 2) claim the place for Jesus and dedicate it to Him alone. A sign, picture or cross on the wall can be a good visual reminder to all of the ownership of the property by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pray, even anoint your house and property, inside and out. Walk around your boundaries praying out loud, claiming your property for God and forbidding any demons to have any access to it. Dedicate it to God and invite His presence through all of it. Take back any access any demons may claim to the property and put that access under the blood of Jesus. Break it in Jesus' name. Ask God to put an angelic hedge of protection around it. Do the same in all the rooms of the house, especially the basement (if you have one). Anoint each room with oil by dipping your finger in the oil and putting a cross on the door, walls, etc. Pray as you did when you walked around the property. If there is one particular part of the house that seems to have demonic presence in an especially strong way, put a night light there so there is always light in to room. You could do that to all the rooms. Demons hate light, and they hate hearing Jesus praised, so you can play praise music in various places 24 hours a day. It can be real soft – they will hear it!

**LESSON FOR TODAY:** Another way we can find ourselves having poor footing and a harder time standing against Satan, is when we have something in our possession that gives demons access to the place where we are. When the Jews took possession of Canaan under Joshua they were told to not keep any of the objects they captured. Even animals and children were to be destroyed. They had been dedicated to Satan and were claimed by him. Those who used these things would be opening themselves up to the demonic powers to whom they had been dedicated. That's why Paul had the people in Ephesus burn all their occult books (Acts 19:17-20). Today we must watch for things like literature from other cults and religions, Ouija boards and other occult paraphernalia, pagan objects from primitive cultures, objects from Masonic or other secret societies, some Native American artifacts or the like. Pornography, drug or alcoholic supplies, music with a black or evil dimension and similar items can also be used as points of entry by demons.

**LESSON FOR TODAY:** The solution is 1) to remove and destroy such objects as God convicts you as being openings for demonic access. Ask for forgiveness for having them, cleanse the room from their presence, 2) take back any access the enemy may claim and dedicate the space as well as yourself to Jesus. Ask Him to reveal to you anything else that may need to be dealt with.

When a room or object is under the control of an evil spirit for whatever reason they claim, painting crosses by dipping a finger in oil and making them on a wall claims the place for Jesus. Playing Christian music and leaving a small light on also are offensive to the forces of darkness. Of course praying and quoting scripture while making the crosses is important, too. I know I, as a Christian, have great power in blessing people, especially my own family and other Christians. 'God bless you' is more than a slang or shallow comment. There's real power in it when one means it that way. It's a privilege I use and repeat often to people. Distance doesn't seem to affect it at all. Of course there is something even more special about touching a person when I pray or ask God to bless them, but when far away from them God still answers the prayer. The power is in God who is

everywhere (omnipresent). Satan and demons are limited to one place at a time so they are at a distinct disadvantage in this, too.

### **BLOG 130: TAKE UP THE SHIELD of FAITH (Ephesians 6:16)**

The equipment mentioned so far (helmet, breastplate, belt, sandals) form an inner wall of defense. There is an outer wall of defense as well – a large shield every Roman soldier carried. He would hold this in front of him for outer protection. Other soldiers would stand or walk alongside him as they all held up their shields forming a wall in front of them, sometimes above them as well. When enemies would throw balls of burning tar at the Romans this outer wall of defense would provide much-needed protection for they would be severely wounded or killed if the hot tar hit them. At least they would be out of the battle for quite some time.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Paul says this is like our faith – our outer wall of protection. Having faith in God's sovereign control no matter what is happening is key to our spiritual health. The greater your faith the larger your shield, the smaller your faith the smaller your shield. People with little faith get hit by whatever Satan throws at them: fear, guilt, greed, pride, anger, lust.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan attacks us through his demons even if don't open the door through sin. He attacks everyone in God's army, especially leaders like pastors and missionaries. They don't have to have done anything to open a door – just standing with Jesus will draw attacks because Satan is committed to opposing God's kingdom in any and every way he can. Satan can't attack Jesus directly so he takes his hate and anger out on God's children. That's why the Jews have experienced such persecution through the years. While we were in Satan's army, or even when we were neutral and ineffective for God, demons didn't need to waste time and effort on us. But when we become committed to serving Jesus and building His Kingdom we find we have spiritual enemies sworn to do anything they can to destroy us. Sometimes these attacks are direct, other times they take a more indirect approach. Our marriage, finances, children or health may be attacked to discourage us and cause us to cease to actively participate in the cause of Christ. This is what happened to Job. These attacks can also take the form of opposition from other people. There may be a person who does what he can to make life difficult for you. Satan attacked Job because he was effective in his faith and Satan wanted to stop that. That seems to be the cause of Paul's demonic 'thorn in the flesh' attack as well (2 Corinthians 12).*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: How can we tell what is a normal problem of the flesh or life in a fallen world from what is an attack of the enemy? If it brings a long, ongoing battle, and especially if you are having trouble having victory over it, you should seek for deeper causes. Or if it is a very new, very sudden attack that threatens to overwhelm and defeat you that can be a sign of demonic attack. If it is something large that comes from nowhere, like a gigantic wave that threatens to wash you away, then suspect spiritual causes as well.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Pray for a hedge of protection around yourself, your property and your family, as Job did (Job 1:45, 10-11). Turn to God's Word for guidance: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and He will come near to you" James 4:6-8. "All things work together for the good of those who love God" Romans 8:28. "There is no testing taken you but such as is common to man. God will not allow you to be tested beyond what you can bear, but with the testing will make a way of escape so you can bear it" 1 Corinthians 10:13).*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Our defense against these attacks of Satan when sin isn't involved is for us to 1) keep our faith strong, keep our eyes on Jesus only (Matthew 14:28-31). Also, 2) pray for His protection for you, your family and your church (Job 1:4-5).*

## **BLOG 131: USE THE SWORD of the SPIRIT - WORD OF GOD (Ephesians 6:17)**

So far all the equipment Paul has mentioned has been defensive. Its purpose is to protect the soldier from enemy attack. However none of it will bring victory, none will defeat an enemy. There is no defensive equipment to protect their backs so retreat was not possible. They could only move forward. They needed an offensive weapon to do that. For the Romans that was their short sword. It is with skillful use of it that the Romans conquered their world.

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Paul saw this piece of equipment as so important that he makes sure we know what it stands for – he clearly identifies it as the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17). God's Word is our only way to defeat Satan. Jesus quoted the Bible when attacked (Matthew 4:1-11). The Word is God's sword for us: "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12-13) Make sure you know the Bible and memorize verses so you can quote them when you need them. Quoting Scripture resets our mind to the truth, lets our mind explain reality to our emotions and is God's authority to Satan and demons for it is much more powerful than our words! It is the truth that brings freedom (John 8:32).*

### **PROMISES SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO SPIRITUAL WARFARE:**

Our Adversaries Will Be Defeated: Deuteronomy 32:43; Philippians 1:28; Deuteronomy 33:27

Victory is Promised: I Corinthians 15:57; I Chronicles 29:11; Proverbs 21:31; I John 5:4, 18; Rev. 12:11; 15:2; Romans 8:37; II Corinthians 2:14; John 16:33

God Promises To Fight For Us: I Samuel 14:47; Jeremiah 1:8

No Weapon Formed Against The Believer Can Prosper: Isaiah 54:17

Jesus Is Constantly Praying & Interceding On Our Behalf: I John 2:1; Hebrews 7:25

God Is Always With Us: Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 18:20; John 14:16, 21; Revelation 3:20

Confession Means Cleansing & Forgiveness: I John 1:8-9; Thessalonians 5:23-24; I Timothy 4:5; Luke 11:13; II Timothy 2:21; Jude 1; Romans 8:33-39; Titus 3:4-5

God Hears & Answers Prayer: Matthew 7:7; Luke 11:9; Jeremiah 33:3

We will never Be Separated From God: Romans 8:35-39; John 10:27-29; 3:36; 5:24

God Will Meet All Your Needs: Philippians 4:19; Psalm 84:11; Romans 8:32; I Samuel 12:24

There Is No Need To Worry: Matthew 6:25,34; I Peter 5:7; Isaiah 40:11; Matthew 5:38-39; Psalm 37:1-9; Jude 24

God Promises His Care & Protection: Deuteronomy 33:27; Genesis 17:1; Jeremiah 23:24; 32:7

Everything Will Work Out Right In the End: Romans 8:28

You Won't Ever Face Anything You Can't Handle With God's Help: I Corinthians 10:13

Peace Is Available No Matter What: John 14:27; Romans 5:1; Colossians 1:20; Isaiah 26:3; Philippians 4:6-7; Matthew 11:28-30; II Timothy 1:7

Trials Are Allowed To Bring Spiritual Growth: Psalm 119:67,71,75; 94:12; Isa. 48:10; Rom. 5:3

The Believer Has Nothing To Fear: Proverbs 3:25; Isaiah 14:3; Psalm 34:4; Joshua 1:9; 10:8; 23:9-11; Leviticus 26:8; Exodus 14:13; I Samuel 17:45-47; II Samuel 22:33-35,40-41

We Are Assured Of Eventual Triumph Over Our Adversaries: Acts 2:39

Victory Is Guaranteed Us: I Corinthians 15:57; Romans 8:37; I Chronicles 29:11; I John 5:4, 18; II Chronicles 32:8; Revelation 3:5; 21:7

God Will Help Us Carry Our Burdens: Nehemiah 4:10; Matthew 11:30; Psalm 55:22

God Promises Comfort: Psalm 23:4; Lamentations 3:22-23; Matthew 5:4; 11:28-30; John 14:16, 18; John 14:16, 18; Romans 15:4; II Corinthians 1:3-4; II Thessalonians 2:16-17

God Will Give Us Courage: Proverbs 38:1; I Corinthians 16:13; II Timothy 1:7

Guidance Is Promised: Psalm 32:8; Isaiah 30:21; 58:11; Luke 1:79; John 15:13

God Will Help In Your Sorrow: Proverbs 10:22; Isaiah 53:4; John 16:22; II Corinthians 6:10; I Thessalonians 4:13; Revelation 21:4

Wisdom Is Promised Those Who Ask: James 1:5; 3:15-17; Luke 16:8; 21:15; I Cor. 2:5; 3:19

Rejecting Wrong Thoughts: II Corinthians 10:5; Psalm 139:23-24; 141:3-4; Isaiah 26:3-4; Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 3:18-21

Power of the Word of God: Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12; Isaiah 55:11; 59:21; Psalm 119:81, 105, 111-112; Proverbs 30:5; Lamentations 2:17; 3:37; Matthew 24:35; John 5:24; 8:51; 15:7; Rom. 10:17

God's Promise of Angelic Intervention: II Kings 6:17; Psalm 34:6-7; 91:11; Daniel 6:22; 10:5-14; Acts 12:15

## **BLOG 132: SPIRITUAL WARFARE PRAYER (Ephesians 6:18)**

After having described the equipment God provides for His people, Paul talks about prayer. Any soldier must be in direct communication with those he serves in order to be of use to them. Paul connects the section about our armor with the section on prayer by the use of "and" showing they go together (Ephesians 6:18).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: The importance of a good, solid prayer life cannot be overemphasized (Matthew 7:7; Luke 11:9; Jeremiah 33:3). Fasting can be an important part of prayer as well when God directs it.*

*LESSON FOR TODAY: God does promise ultimate victory for His people, not always immediately in this life but enough for now and the rest in the future (1 Corinthians 15:57; 2 Corinthians 2:14; 1 John 5:5).*

**PRAYER OF THE ARMOR OF GOD** Heavenly Father, I desire to be obedient by being strong in the Lord and the power of Your might. I see that this is Your will and purpose for me. I recognize that it is essential to put on the armor that You have provided, and I do so now with gratitude and praise that You have provided all I need to stand in victory against Satan and his kingdom. Grant me wisdom to discern the tactics and sneakiness of Satan's strategy against me. I delight to take the armor You have provided and by faith to put it on as effective spiritual protection against the spiritual forces of darkness present in the world today.

I confidently take the **belt of truth** that You offer me. I take Him who is the truth as my strength and protection. I reject Satan's lies and deceiving ways which seek to gain advantage against me. Grant me discernment and wisdom to recognize the subtle and sneaky methods in which Satan seeks to cause me to accept his lies as truth. I desire to believe only the truth, to live the truth, to speak the truth, and to know the truth. I worship and praise You that You lead me only in the ways of truth. Thank You that Satan cannot stand against the truth.

Thank You for the **breastplate of righteousness** which you offer me. I eagerly accept it and put it on as my protection. Thank you for reminding me again that all of my righteousness comes from You. I embrace that righteousness which is mine by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is His

righteousness that is mine through justification. I reject and repudiate all trust in my own righteousness which is as filthy rags. I ask You to cleanse me of all the times I have counted my own goodness as being acceptable before You. I bring the righteousness of my Lord directly against all of Satan's workings against me. I express my desire to walk in righteousness before God today. By faith I appropriate the righteousness of Christ and invite Him to walk in His holiness in my life today that I might experience His righteousness in total context of ordinary living. I count upon the righteousness of my Lord to be my protection. I know that Satan must retreat from before God's righteousness.

Thank You, Lord, for the **sandals of peace** You have provided. I desire that my feet should stand on the solid rock of the peace that You have provided. I claim the peace with God which is mine through justification. I desire the peace of God which touches my emotions and feelings through prayer and sanctification (Philippians 4:6). Thank You that as I walk in obedience to You the God of peace promises to walk with me (Philippians 4:9), I thank you that as the God of peace You are putting Satan under my feet (Romans 16:20). I will share this good news of peace with all others that Your Spirit will bring into my life today. Thank you that You have not given me a spirit of fear but of love and power and a sound mind (II Timothy 1:7). Thank you that Satan cannot stand against Your peace.

Eagerly, Lord, I lift up the **shield of faith** against all the blazing darts that Satan and his host's fire at me. I recognize that You are my shield and that in Your incarnation and crucifixion You took the arrows of Satan which I deserved. By faith I count upon You to shield me from above and beneath; on my right and my left; in front of me and behind me, that I might be protected, walled in, and encapsulated by You that Satan may gain no way to hurt me or keep me from fulfilling Your will today.

I am willing that any fiery darts of Satan You wish to touch me should do so, but I shall look upon them as refining fires permitted in Your providence and by Your love for my refining and Your glory. Thank You, Lord, that You are a complete and perfect shield and that Satan cannot touch me apart from Your sovereign purpose.

I recognize that my mind is a particular target of Satan's deceiving ways. I take from You the **helmet of salvation**. I cover my mind and my thoughts with Your salvation. I recognize that the Lord Jesus Christ is my salvation. I fill my head with Him. I invite His mind to be in me. Let me think His thoughts, feel His love and compassion, and discern His will and leading in all things. Let my mind be occupied with the continuing, daily, saving work of my Lord in and through my life. May You meet and defeat all Satanic thoughts in my mind.

With joy I take hold upon the **sword of the Spirit**, which is the Word of God. I affirm that Your Word is the trustworthy, infallible Word of God. I choose to believe it and to live in its truth and power. Grant me the love for Your Word which comes from the Holy Spirit. Forgive and cleanse me from the sin of neglecting Your Word. Create in me a hunger and thirst to study and know Your Word. Enable me to memorize it and to meditate upon its truth. Grant me proficient recall and skill in using Your Word against all of Satan's subtle attacks against me, even as my Lord Jesus Christ used the Word against Satan. Enable me to use Your Word not only to defend me from Satan, but also to claim its promises and to wield the sword strong against Satan to defeat him, to take away from him ground he claims, and to win great victories God through Your Word. Thank You that Satan must retreat from Your Word applied against him.

Thank You, dear Lord, for prayer. Help me to keep this armor well-oiled with prayer. I desire to pray at all times with depth and intensity as the Holy Spirit leads me. I trust the Holy Spirit to enable me and to intercede for me and through me. Grant me great supplication and burden for others in God's family of blood-washed saints. Enable me to see their needs and to assist them through prayer as the enemy attacks them. All of these petitions, intercessions, and words of praise I

offer up before the true and living God in the name and worthy merit of my Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. (Adapted from “Prayers for Spiritual Warfare” by Phillip Kayser and Mark Bubek)

### **BLOG 133: SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN 1 & 2 TIMOTHY**

Two years after writing his letters from prison, after he was released and started traveling again, Paul wrote a letter to Timothy called 1 Timothy in our Bibles. Timothy was in Ephesus, that important center of the early church, and was struggling with difficulties in pastoring and leading the people. His youth and shyness, combined with the pushiness of some people, made leading the church difficult for him.

**Church discipline.** He refers to two people living in unrepentant sin who have been disciplined by being denied church fellowship (1 Timothy 1:18-20). This is similar to the event in Corinthians (1 Corinthians 5:1-5). The purpose in denying them Christian fellowship and allowing them to be open to the attacks of the world is to remind them of what they had when following Jesus so they will repent and turn from their sin. Eternal salvation isn't in view here, but fellowship with God and other Christians in this life is the issue.

**Satan tempts with pride.** When Paul gives Timothy guidance about whom to choose for church leadership one of the important traits is that the person not be a new believer, “or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil” (1 Timothy 3:6). “Conceited” is the Greek word *tuphoo*, literally “to raise a smoke.” It refers to someone who is self-centered and focused on themselves. Satan fell because of pride (Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28) and it is one of his most successful tools today. Those who are given positions of authority or leadership in church are more susceptible to pride, so Paul warns that anyone who isn't spiritually mature must not be put in positions where they may be tempted to be proud.

Paul continues on to say “He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap” (1 Timothy 3:7). Satan has traps. His plan is to deceive us so destruction comes. Lust for Bathsheba by David was used by Satan to bring destruction to David (1 Samuel 11 – 24).

**Satan and demons use deception.** Paul also warns Timothy that demons have deceptive ‘spiritual’ teachings that seem right to those who aren't spiritually attuned. The purpose is to lead them to abandon the faith (1 Timothy 4:1). Both 1 and 2 Timothy have much to say about false teachers and false teaching. Clearly Satan is behind it all, as he is today..

**If one isn't following God, then they are following Satan.** If believers have any sin in their lives, demons will somehow make sure others become aware of it and use it to slander the person and the name of Jesus (1 Timothy 5:14). When we don't follow God we are following Satan and his forces, whether we realize it or not (1 Timothy 5:15). There is no neutral ground, no middle territory. It is either one or the other.

A couple of years later, about 64 AD, Paul wrote his second and last letter to Timothy. It was the last inspired correspondence he ever wrote. It was Paul's final words to the one who was closer to him than any other human being, his son in the faith Timothy. In it he warns Timothy of the traps Satan and demons use to capture people and trick them into doing his will (2 Timothy 2:26). Most would not willingly do so, but anyone not doing God's will is actually following and serving Satan (1 Timothy 5:15).

### **BLOG 134: PETER WRITES ABOUT SPIRITUAL WARFARE**

Although he wrote most of the letters in the New Testament, Paul isn't the only one whose correspondence was inspired and kept for our benefit in God's Word. Peter wrote two epistles which contain good advice about spiritual warfare. The first was written in 63 AD, about the same time Paul was writing his letters to Timothy.

Satan used Peter to tempt Jesus to avoid the cross (Matthew 16:23; Mark 8:33). Satan asked God for permission to "sift Peter as wheat" (Luke 22:31) by leading him to deny he knew Jesus so he would feel tremendous guilt and remorse. But Jesus said He prayed for Peter, that his faith wouldn't fail and that he could strengthen his fellow Christians (Luke 22:32).

Peter certainly knew from firsthand experience that the battle with Satan and his demons was real! Therefore he knew what he was talking about when he wrote: "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen" (1 Peter 5:8-11).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Peter challenges his readers to be "self-controlled" (sober, paying attention) and "alert" (awake, watchful), both strong commands to prepare themselves for the sure-to-come battle with Satan. Satan is like a "roaring lion" looking for anyone he can "devour" (assault, destroy, make ineffective by severing the vital union between us and God). As with Peter (Luke 22:31-32), Satan tries to destroy our faith so we will be open to fear, sin and discouragement. Therefore we are commanded to "resist him" and remain "firm and steadfast" in faith. God uses these very attacks to strengthen our faith and help us grow (1 Peter 5:10). He does not stop the attacks or make us immune to them, but He provides strength so we can stand up against them (1 Corinthians 0:13).*

A year later Peter wrote IN 2 Peter what seems to be a strange statement. He says God did not spare the angels when they sinned but sent them to hell, putting them in gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment (2 Peter 2:4). Jude said they are kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day (Jude 6). It seems many demons are bound by God in some lower and most terrible 'hell' because they are too evil to be released so God spares the world their influence. They will be judged and condemned to hell for all eternity (Revelation 20:1-3, 10).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan is still more successful through deception and lies than direct attack (John 8:44). Direct attack makes the church stronger, like in China and third world countries today. Deceptions and partial truths weaken the church, like is often true in the USA and Europe today. We must be convinced that Jesus is totally God (Colossians 2:9) and has all wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3).*

## **BLOG 135: JAMES' LESSONS ON SPIRITUAL WARFARE**

Another writer, besides Peter and Paul, was James, the half-brother of Jesus (same mother, different father). Chronologically, his was the first inspired book written in the New Testament and was addressed to Jewish Christians. James taught them about living for God, and spiritual warfare was/is an important part of that life.

James' words are quite interesting because they are the first written words about spiritual warfare in the New Testament. He starts talking about sin which comes from within man (James 4:1-3) then the influence of the world from without (James 4:4). He affirms God's great grace to those who are humble (James 4:5-6). Following this he gives three strong commands and two great promises. Command one is to submit to God (James 4:7), total and complete surrender to the

Lordship of Jesus Christ (Romans 12:1-2). There can be no victory in the Christian life without this first requirement. This means that all sin must be confessed (1 John 1:9; James 5:13-16).

Following this comes the second command: resist the devil (James 4:7). “Resist” means to not give in, compromise or yield but to stand fast. It has the idea of a difficult struggle but remaining firm. How do we resist him? The same way Jesus did – we quote Scripture (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13) and we use God’s armor (Ephesians 6:10-18).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: When we resist the enemy, God promises he will flee (James 4:7). That is God’s first promise to us in this passage. “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). James says he “will” flee – he has to because God makes him. Sometimes God drives him away instantaneously, other times it is more gradual as the person learns and grows in their faith. That is why continued counseling after spiritual warfare deliverance is so important. Demons may fight, stall and do what they can to resist, but ultimately they must obey when God sends them away. The only exception is if God allows them to stay because He wants to use them for our growth and His glory, like with Paul’s “thorn in the flesh” (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). When God doesn’t remove the source of the demonizing He promises to give special grace so we can hold up under it. It becomes His chosen tool to make us more like Jesus.*

Peter concludes this passage with another command and promise. “Draw near to God” (James 4:8) means to keep Him and His greatness in the center of our focus. When we do this His promise is “He will draw near to you” (James 4:8). Don’t sit back and expect Him to come wait on you, move in His direction and He will move in yours!

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Don’t focus on Satan or demons, nor let them keep your main emphasis from being on God and Jesus (Philippians 4:8-9). Too many live in fear of what demons are doing or may do. That gives them the power, attention and worship on which they thrive. We can’t ignore them to the extent we let them do anything they want, but we must make sure God is always foremost in our thoughts and motives. When we move towards God He moves more than half way to move towards us.*

## **BLOG 136: SPIRITUAL WARFARE LESSONS FROM HEBREWS, JUDE & JOHN**

Writing 20 years after James, soon after Paul and Peter wrote their last epistles, the writer of Hebrews states that Satan holds the power of death, but that Jesus became a man so that he could destroy Satan and the consequences of death which sin brings (Hebrews 2:14-15). God has conquered death and Jesus is forever victorious over it (1 Corinthians 15).

Writing about 5 or 6 years after Hebrews and 2 Peter, Jude (Jude 6) writes something similar to what Peter had written (see 2 Peter 2:4 above) about some demons even now being chained awaiting judgment.

A few verses later, when talking about the danger of slandering others, Jude uses the archangel Michael as an example for he did not bring a slanderous accusation against Satan when he was disputing him for Moses’ body. Instead he said, “the Lord rebuke you” (Jude 8-9).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: While we aren’t to fear demons, we must have a healthy respect for their power which is greater than ours. Especially the higher ranking demons who have power to cause much destruction. Our warfare against them must be done carefully, preferably with others praying for us, and always in an attitude of total dependence on God.*

John, the brother of James and close friend of Jesus, wrote the final 4 books in the Bible. 1 John was written about 90 AD, 25 years after Peter and Paul wrote their last works and were

martyred. He complements his readers for “**overcoming the evil one**” (1 John 2:13-14). They didn’t dethrone or destroy Satan, but kept their faith in Christ despite the opposition of the enemy.

John also gives some very helpful advice for us in our warfare today when he tells his readers to “**test the spirits**” (1 John 4:1). When a demon is behind a teaching or philosophy, it will not recognize that Jesus is God who came in the flesh to be the payment for our sins (1 John 4:2-3). We do not have to fear them because God is greater than they are and He lives in us, making us greater than any demon (1 John 4:4-6).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: This verse, 1 John 4:4, is one every believer should memorize and use often. Quoting Scripture is our “sword of the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:10-18) and that is how Jesus had victory over Satan’s temptation (Matthew 4:1-11). This is a great verse to counter fear and remind us of where the real power lies!*

Along the same line of thought, John reassured those he is writing to that believers are free from the condemnation that sin brings (1 John 5:18; Romans 8:1). That doesn’t mean believers don’t sin, they do – but the sin has been paid for so Satan cannot use it to destroy them as long as they confesses the sin and cleans themselves from it. Even if someone doesn’t do so, Satan still doesn’t have free reign to harm them. When someone is a child of God, Satan and his demons can only do what God allows them to do (Job 1, 2). “Harm” is the Greek word meaning “to assault, in order to sever the vital union between Christ and the believer.” Satan cannot separate us from Christ – nothing can do that for the believer (Romans 8:31-39).

## **BLOG 137: SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN REVELATION**

The final book in the Bible, Revelation, written by John 6 years after 1 John, has much to say about spiritual warfare as might be expected. In it the battle between God and Satan, which started before the world was created and which included the human race when Adam sinned (Genesis 3:15), comes to a fitting conclusion.

John uses many terms for Satan. He calls him the “devil” (6 times), “evil one” (6 times), “liar and the father of lies” (3 times), “murderer” (1 time), “thief” (1 time), “wolf” (1 time), “deceiver” (1 time), “ruler of this world” (3 times), and “he who is in the world” (1 time).

In addition, John talks about territorial spirits, high ranking demons who oversee control of certain countries or geographical areas. In Revelation they are referred to as a “synagogue of Satan” (Revelation 2:9; 3:9) and “dwelling place of unclean spirits” (Revelation 18:2). They will be the power behind the rise of the nation called Babylon (Revelation 17-18).

*LESSONS FOR TODAY: Demons influence and control the nations (Daniel 10:13,20; Ephesians 6:12) and mislead them so they can be destroyed (Isaiah 9:14). It must always be kept in mind, however, that God is in sovereign control. They can do nothing without God's permission (Job 1:6-12).*

Because they cannot get at God or Jesus directly, Satan and demons attack those closest to God today – His children. He focuses his power and leads those he influences to hate and harm believers (Revelation 2:10; 13:7, 14-15; Daniel 12:7).

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Satan does all he can to attack God’s people. Sometimes the enemy is permitted to exercise authority over the physical possessions of the child of God (as in Job’s first trial), sometimes over his physical body (as in Job’s second trial and in Paul’s case), and sometimes this authority extends as far as the physical life of the individual is concerned. But usually it is the hand of God which is at work behind the scenes, working to accomplish His own ends, using whatever means He chooses.*

Because Revelation records the final, ultimate defeat of Satan and his forces in their battle against God, it is only natural that the first skirmish in that long-standing battle be remembered and everyone reminded of the results. "Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they were defeated and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world - he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him" (Revelation 12:7-9; see also Daniel 12:1).

This passage clearly details Satan's defeat in heaven, sometime in the very beginning, probably before man was created. He was defeated in heaven and this earth became his domain (Ephesians 6:12; John 14:30; 16:11; 12:31). Now in Revelation his defeat on earth is chronicled. It is accomplished by Satan being defeated under the feet of the church (Romans 16:20) and by God's holy angels (Revelation 20:1-3, 10).

This final defeat will be total and complete. Satan and his forces will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone and will be tormented day and night forever and ever (Revelation 20:10). Their defeat will be swift and final. They won't even be granted the dignity of standing before the throne of God to undergo a personal judgment. His judgment was made complete on the cross. He only awaits the carrying out of that sentence.

With that God's great promise at the start of this battle in Genesis 3:15 to "crush Satan's head" will be complete. He will be the victor, and us with Him!

*LESSON FOR TODAY: Always remember who the ultimate victor in this battle will be. Our faith is based on that, so is our courage and confidence today. We have nothing to fear. There will be total victory someday. Then we will live in that victory forever. Forever!*

## **BLOG 138: USE THE WORD OF GOD**

Knowing and using God's Word, the sword of the Spirit, is key for victory in our daily struggles (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 77:12; I Chronicles 28:9; Matthew 22:37-38; I Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 4:8). That's how Jesus defeated Satan (Matthew 4:1-11). Satan tries to plant doubts about God's word in man's mind. That is how he got to Eve. She misquoted God's Word to Satan and when he added to God's Word (making God seem like He was keeping something good from her) she didn't pick it up. Satan was undermining God's Word, and he won! We must be skillful in the use of our sword for Satan can deceitfully twist and misquote God's truth so as to use it for his benefit.

Here are some good verses to memorize to help you through life.

**THE BIBLE, GOD'S WORD** The Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Hebrews 4:12

**GOD'S TRUTH FREES** "If you hold to my teaching, you are really My disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:32

**SUBMIT TO GOD, RESIST SATAN** God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and He will come near to you. James 4:6-8

**GOD IS GREATER THAN SATAN** The One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. I John 4:4

**GOD WILL MEET ALL OUR NEEDS** My God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19

RENEW YOUR MIND WITH CHRIST Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is -- His good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:2

POWER OF PRAYER The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. James 5:16

AUTHORITY OVER DEMONS Jesus replied: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you." Luke 10:18-19

RESISTING SATAN Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." Matthew 16:23

SIN AS OPENINGS TO DEMONIZING Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23-24

CURSES Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." Galatians 3:13

ANCESTRAL & CHILDHOOD OPENINGS Therefore if anyone is in Christ, He is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! II Corinthians 5:17

OCCULT OPENINGS Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists, for you will be defiled by them. I am the LORD your God. Leviticus 19:31

NEW AGE OPENINGS Such men (who preach a Jesus other than the Jesus I preached) are false prophets, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. II Corinthians 11:13-15

DELIVERANCE FROM DEMONIZING Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God ... This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. I John 4:1-2

## **INDEX 2016-2017**

**A**cts and spiritual warfare: Blog 101: Introduction to Spiritual Warfare in Acts  
Adam & Eve and spiritual battles: Blog 50: Adam & Eve and Spiritual Battles  
Adopted children and demonizing: Blog 37: Can Children Be Demonized?  
Ancestors give opening to attacks: Blog 25: Spiritual Attacks Through Ancestors  
Ancestral attacks: Blog 12: Generational Attacks Through Your Family Line  
Ancestral spiritual warfare: Blog 53: Spiritual Warfare Through Your Family Tree  
Angels: Blog 3: Sp War, The Good Guys - Angels  
Anger and demonizing: Blog 124: Understanding and Overcoming Anger  
Anger opens one to demonizing: Blog 28: Common Sins That Allow Demonic Access  
Anger: Blog 10: The Battle For Our Minds: Fear and Anger  
Armor of God: Blog 125-132  
Assurance of salvation: Blog 45: How Can I Be Sure I Haven't Lost My Salvation?  
Attack Satan's work: Blog 88: Going on the Attack  
Authority & Power over demons: Blog 13: The Cure for Demonizing – How to be Free!  
Authority over demons: Blog 86: We Have Authority over Demons

**B**ackground questions to help with deliverance: Blog 15: Steps to Deliverance 2  
Balance in Spiritual Warfare: Blog 76: Keeping Spiritual Warfare in Balance  
Baptism in the Spirit: Blog 35: Does God Want Us to Speak in Tongues Today?  
Baptism of Jesus: Blog 68: Jesus Commits to the Battle  
Basics of victory in SW: Blog 22: Back to the Basics for Victory  
Believer, Can be Demonized? Blog 7: Demonizing Defined  
Believers can be demonized: Blog 75: Believers Can Be Demonized  
Belt of truth: Blog 128: Put on the Belt of Truth  
Bible promises for Spiritual Warfare: Blog 131: Use the Sword of the Spirit – The Word of God  
Bible verses by topics: Blog 46-48: Topical Indexes of Bible Verses  
Bible, use of: Blog 138: Use the Word of God  
Bible: see Scripture, Word of God  
Binding and loosing: Blog 92: Binding and Loosing  
Birth of Jesus: Blog 67: Jesus, Landing Behind Enemy Lines  
Blinding by Satan: Blog 118: Satan Blinds People to Spiritual Things  
Breastplate of Righteousness: Blog 127: Put on the Breastplate of Righteousness

**C**an a Christian be Demonized? Blog 7: Demonizing Defined  
Causes of demonizing: Blog 23-32: Causes of Demonizing  
Causes of demonizing: Blog 81-83: What Causes Demonizing?  
Childhood access to demonizing: Blog 37-38: Can Children Be Demonized?  
Children & demonizing: Blog 89: Demonizing of Children  
Children and demonizing: Blog 37: Can Children Be Demonized? Blog 38: Children & Demonizing  
Children used to attack families: Blog 40: Families Attacked Through Their Children  
Christian, Can be Demonized? Blog 7: Demonizing Defined  
Christians attacked, demonized: Blog 103-104: Causalities in the War With Satan  
Church attacked by Satan: Blog 103-104: Causalities in the War With Satan  
Church fellowship important: Blog 22: Back to the Basics for Victory  
Church, early, and deliverance: Blog 110: How the Early Disciples Ministered Deliverance  
Church's role in Spiritual Warfare: Blog 41: Church's Role in Spiritual Warfare  
Communication with demons wrong: Blog 17: Steps to Deliverance 4  
Confessing the sins of another: Blog 21: Praying for Spiritual Warfare Victory  
Confession in prayer: Blog 21: Praying for Spiritual Warfare Victory  
Confession of Sin: Blog 15: Steps to Deliverance 2  
Converse with demons, don't: Blog 74: What Not to Do In Spiritual Warfare  
Countries, different, and spiritual warfare: Blog 106: Spiritual Warfare in Different Cultures  
Cultures, different, and spiritual warfare: Blog 106: Spiritual Warfare in Different Cultures  
Cure for Demonizing: Blog 13: The Cure for Demonizing – How to be Free!  
Curses can bring demonizing: Blog 26: Spiritual Attacks Through Our Sin  
Curses: Blog 83: What Causes Demonizing 3

**D**aniel: Spiritual Warfare Prayer: Blog 64: Daniel Spiritual Warfare Prayer  
David and Solomon, subtle ways of Satan: Blog 60: David and Solomon, subtle ways of Satan  
Deception and Lies: Blog 5: SW Lies & Deception  
Deception of Satan: Blog 60: David and Solomon, subtle ways of Satan  
Defeat of Satan, demons: Blog 123: We Fight a Defeated Foe  
Defeated foes (Satan and demons): Blog 99: We Fight a Defeated Foe  
Delayed Deliverance: Blog 17: Steps to Deliverance 4  
Delayed Deliverance: Blog 18: When Deliverance is Delayed  
Deliverance – must be filled with Holy Spirit: Blog 77: When Demons Leave What Happens?  
Deliverance and Peter: Blog 134: Peter Writes About Spiritual Warfare

Deliverance by early church: Blog 110: How the Early Disciples Ministered Deliverance  
Deliverance by Paul: Blog 109: Paul Casting Our Demons  
Deliverance, bringing to others: Blog 43: Helping Others Get Free  
Deliverance, eye contact important: Blog 108: Look Them Right in the Eye  
Deliverance, failure: Blog 91: When Deliverance Fails  
Deliverance, process, not event: Blog 77: When Demons Leave What Happens?  
Deliverance, Steps to it: Blogs 14-17 Steps to Deliverance 1-4  
Demonizing and believers: Blog 75: Believers Can Be Demonized  
Demonizing Cure: Blog 13: The Cure for Demonizing – How to be Free!  
Demonizing defined: Blog 72: Jesus Frees A Captive of Satan  
Demonizing definition: Blog 7: Demonizing Defined  
Demonizing of Paul: Blog 120: Understanding Paul's Demonizing  
Demonizing, causes: Blog 23-32: Causes of Demonizing  
Demonizing, causes: Blog 81-83: What Causes Demonizing?  
Demonizing, helping others get free: Blog 43: Helping Others Get Free  
Demonizing, how to be free: Blog 85: How to be Free From Demonizing  
Demonizing, signs/evidence: Blog 11: Evidence of Demonizing  
Demonizing, stages of: Blog 58-59: Saul: Stages of Demonizing  
Demonizing: Symptoms of: Blog 79-80: Symptoms of Demonizing  
Demons and Satan defeated: Blog 123: We Fight a Defeated Foe  
Demons defeated foes: Blog 99: We Fight a Defeated Foe  
Demons don't talk to: Blog 74: What Not to Do In Spiritual Warfare  
Demons plan and purpose: Blog 110: Satan's Plan and Purpose  
Demons returning: Blog 42: Keeping Demons From Returning  
Demons where do they live? Blog 84: Where Demons Live  
Demons where go when cast out? Blog 77: When Demons Leave What Happens?  
Demons: Blog 5: Sp War, The Bad Guys – Demons  
Deuteronomy 18:9-13 occult openings: Blog 30: Common Sins That Allow Demonic Access  
Discerning of Spirits, Gift of and Spiritual Warfare: Blog 41: Church's Role in Spiritual Warfare  
Disciples, doing deliverance: Blog 110: How the Early Disciples Ministered Deliverance  
Disciples' example in deliverance: Blog 14: Steps to Deliverance 1  
Division as a tool of Satan: Blog 105: Delivered by a Shadow?  
Doubting salvation: Blog 45: How Can I Be Sure I Haven't Lost My Salvation?

**E**den, spiritual battles there: Blog 50: Adam & Eve and Spiritual Battles  
Elijah and spiritual warfare: Blog 61: Elijah, Winning Spiritual Battles  
Elks and demonizing: Blog 31: Secret Societies & Demonizing  
Emotions, controlled by mind: Blog 8: The Battle For Our Minds: Truth  
Ephesus, Paul's demonic encounters there: Blog 114: Lessons from Paul's Encounter in Ephesus  
Eternal security: Blog 45: How Can I Be Sure I Haven't Lost My Salvation?  
Evidence of demonizing: Blog 11: Evidence of Demonizing  
Exorcism, Gift of and Spiritual Warfare: Blog 41: Church's Role in Spiritual Warfare  
Eye contact for deliverance: Blog 108: Look Them Right in the Eye

**F**ailure of deliverance: Blog 91: When Deliverance Fails  
Faith, shield of: Blog 130: Take Up the Shield of Faith  
Families attacked through children: Blog 40: Families Attacked Through Their Children  
Family gives opening to attacks: Blog 25: Spiritual Attacks Through Ancestors  
Family Line attacks: Blog 12: Generational Attacks Through Your Family Line  
Family, spiritual attacks through: Blog 93: Attacked Through Those Closest to Us  
Fasting and Spiritual Warfare: Blog 36: Fasting and Spiritual Warfare

Fear and demonizing: Blog 121: Fear: The Cause and Result of Most Demonizing  
Fear of losing salvation: Blog 45: How Can I Be Sure I Haven't Lost My Salvation?  
Fear, A Top Weapon of Satan: Blog 54: Fear, A Top Weapon of Satan  
Fear: Blog 10: The Battle For Our Minds: Fear and Anger  
Fear: Blog 65: Nothing to Fear But Fear Itself  
Feelings, controlled by mind: Blog 8: The Battle For Our Minds: Truth  
First-born male often attacked: Blog 25: Spiritual Attacks Through Ancestors  
Forgive others for freedom: Blog 15: Steps to Deliverance 2  
Forgiveness and spiritual warfare: Blog 117: Unforgiveness: A Short-cut to Demonizing  
Free will to follow God: Blog 49: The Only Gift You Can Give God  
Freedom from demonizing: Blog 85: How to be Free From Demonizing  
Friends, spiritual attacks through: Blog 93: Attacked Through Those Closest to Us

**G**enerational Attacks: Blog 12: Generational Attacks Through Your Family Line  
Generational spiritual warfare: Blog 53: Spiritual Warfare Through Your Family Tree  
Gift to God, all we can give: Blog 49: The Only Gift You Can Give God  
Gifts, Spiritual and Spiritual Warfare: Blog 41: Church's Role in Spiritual Warfare

**H**ands, laying on: Blog 94: Laying on of Hands  
Healing and deliverance: Blog 33: Physical Affliction and Demonizing  
Healing and spiritual warfare: Blog 95-96: Spiritual Warfare and Healing  
Healing, counterfeit: Blog 33: Physical Affliction and Demonizing  
Healing, for all today: Blog 34: Is It God's Will for Everyone to be Healed Today?  
Healing, gift of today: Blog 34: Is It God's Will for Everyone to be Healed Today?  
Healing, God's will for all to be healed? Blog 97-98: Is It God's Will For Everyone to be Healed?  
Hebrews spiritual warfare lessons: Blog 136: Spiritual Warfare Lessons from Hebrews, Jude, John  
Helmet of Salvation: Blog 126: Put on the Helmet of Salvation  
Helping others get deliverance: Blog 43: Helping Others Get Free  
Hezekiah and spiritual warfare: Blog 62: Hezekiah: Provision and Protection  
Holy Spirit and spiritual warfare: Blog 102: New Soldiers Equipped for Battle  
Home, land as access to demonization: Blog 24: Spiritual Attacks Through Our Property  
Husbands and demonizing: Blog 39: When Demons Attack a Marriage

**I**dolatry opens one to demonizing: Blog 28: Common Sins That Allow Demonic Access  
Illness and demonizing: Blog 33: Physical Affliction and Demonizing  
Immorality opens one to demonizing: Blog 26: Spiritual Attacks Through Our Sin  
Immorality opens one to demonizing: Blog 28: Common Sins That Allow Demonic Access  
Immorality, sexual, and demonizing: Blog 115: Sexual Immorality Leads to Demonizing  
Intercession in prayer: Blog 21: Praying for Spiritual Warfare Victory  
Intercession, Gift of and Spiritual Warfare: Blog 41: Church's Role in Spiritual Warfare

**J**ames and spiritual warfare: Blog 135: James' Lessons on Spiritual Warfare  
Jericho and spiritual warfare: Blog 56: Jericho: Each Battle is Different  
Jerusalem, return to: Blog 66: Old Testament Ends but Spiritual Warfare Continues  
Jesus and Spiritual Warfare: Blogs 67-100  
Jesus Frees a Captive of Satan: Blog 72-75: Capernaum Synagogue Encounter  
Jesus Wilderness Temptation: Blog 69-71: Wilderness Temptation  
Jesus, summary of spiritual warfare lessons: Blog 100: Spiritual Warfare Lessons From Jesus  
Jesus' Baptism: Blog 68: Jesus Commits to the Battle  
Jesus' Birth: Blog 67: Jesus, Landing Behind Enemy Lines  
Jesus' example in deliverance: Blog 14: Steps to Deliverance 1  
Job and Spiritual Battles: Blog 51: Job and Spiritual Battles

John's epistles SW lessons: Blog 136: Spiritual Warfare Lessons from Hebrews, Jude, John  
Joshua and spiritual battles: Blog 57: Joshua: The Battles Never End  
Joshua and spiritual warfare: Blog 55: Joshua: Fighting Spiritual Battles  
Juda and demonizing: Blog 32: Satanism, New Age, Marital Arts & Demonizing  
Judas used by Satan: Blog 93: Attacked Through Those Closest to Us  
Jude spiritual warfare lessons: Blog 136: Spiritual Warfare Lessons from Hebrews, Jude, John

**K**lu Klux Klan and demonizing: Blog 31: Secret Societies & Demonizing

**L**and, home as access to demonization: Blog 24: Spiritual Attacks Through Our Property  
Laying on of hands: Blog 16: Steps to Deliverance 3  
Laying on of hands: Blog 94: Laying on of Hands  
Lies and Deception: Blog 5: SW Lies & Deception  
Listen when pray: Blog 21: Praying for Spiritual Warfare Victory  
Location where we live as access to demonization: Blog 24: Spiritual Attacks Through Our Property  
Loosing and binding: Blog 92: Binding and Loosing

**M**agicians and the demonic: Blog 107: Sorcerers, Magicians and the Demonic  
Male, first-born often attacked: Blog 25: Spiritual Attacks Through Ancestors  
Marriage and demonizing: Blog 39: When Demons Attack a Marriage  
Marriage, spiritual attacks through: Blog 93: Attacked Through Those Closest to Us  
Marriages attacked through children: Blog 40: Families Attacked Through Their Children  
Martial Arts and demonizing: Blog 32: Satanism, New Age, Marital Arts & Demonizing  
Masons and demonizing: Blog 31: Secret Societies & Demonizing  
Memorize Scripture: Blog 19: Use the Sword of the Word of God  
Mental illness and SW: Blog 9: Battle for Our Minds: Thoughts  
Mind over emotions Blog 8: The Battle For Our Minds: Truth  
Mind, Battle for: Blog 8: The Battle For Our Minds:  
Mind, demons mess with: Blog 119: Demons Love to Mess With Your Mind  
Minds, battle for: Blog 78: The Battle For Our Minds  
Miracles today: Blog 34: Is It God's Will for Everyone to be Healed Today?  
Moose club and demonizing: Blog 31: Secret Societies & Demonizing  
Moses and Spiritual Battles: Blog 52: Moses and Spiritual Battles:  
Music and deliverance: Blog 17: Steps to Deliverance 4

**N**ames of Satan: Blog 122: The Names of Satan  
Necessity of Spiritual Warfare: Blog 2: Is Sp War Really Necessary? (Ephesians 6:10-12)  
New Age and demonizing: Blog 32: Satanism, New Age, Marital Arts & Demonizing

**O**ccult openings for demonizing: Blog 30: Common Sins That Allow Demonic Access  
Odd Fellows and demonizing: Blog 31: Secret Societies & Demonizing  
Offensive in spiritual warfare: Blog 88: Going on the Attack  
Organization of demons: Blog 125: Putting on the Armor of God

**P**arents give access to children: Blog 25: Spiritual Attacks Through Ancestors  
Passive, don't be: Blog 88: Going on the Attack  
Paul and deliverance: Blog 109: Paul Casting Our Demons  
Paul's demonic encounters in Ephesus: Blog 114: Lessons from Paul's Encounter in Ephesus  
Paul's power encounter: Blog 111-113: Paul's Power Encounter  
Paul's thorn in flesh: Blog 120: Understanding Paul's Demonizing  
Peace, sandals of: Blog 129: Put on the Sandals of Peace  
Persecution as part of spiritual warfare: Blog 102: New Soldiers Equipped for Battle

Perseverance: Blog 20: Resist and Stand Firm No Matter What  
Personal property as access to demonization: Blog 24: Spiritual Attacks Through Our Property  
Peter and spiritual warfare: Blog 134: Peter Writes About Spiritual Warfare  
Petition in prayer: Blog 21: Praying for Spiritual Warfare Victory  
Physical affliction and demonizing: Blog 33: Physical Affliction and Demonizing  
Possessions as access to demonization: Blog 24: Spiritual Attacks Through Our Property  
Power & Authority over demons: Blog 13: The Cure for Demonizing – How to be Free!  
Power over demons: Blog 87: We Have Power over Demons  
Praise in prayer: Blog 21: Praying for Spiritual Warfare Victory  
Prayer and laying on hands: Blog 94: Laying on of Hands  
Prayer and spiritual warfare: Blog 132: Spiritual Warfare Prayer  
Prayer and spiritual warfare: Blog 64: Daniel Spiritual Warfare Prayer  
Prayer for others, Gift of and Spiritual Warfare: Blog 41: Church's Role in Spiritual Warfare  
Praying for Victory: Blog 21: Praying for Spiritual Warfare Victory  
Pride and spiritual warfare: Blog 103-104: Causalities in the War With Satan  
Process of deliverance: Blog 77: When Demons Leave What Happens?  
Promises for Spiritual Warfare: Blog 131: Use the Sword of the Spirit – The Word of God  
Property as access to demonization: Blog 24: Spiritual Attacks Through Our Property  
Protection in spiritual warfare: Blog 62: Hezekiah: Provision and Protection  
Provision in spiritual warfare: Blog 62: Hezekiah: Provision and Protection

**R**eality of Spiritual Warfare: Blog 1: So You're In A War? (Ephesians 6:10-12; 2 Corinthians 2:11)  
Resist Satan for victory: Blog 135: James' Lessons on Spiritual Warfare  
Resist Satan's forces: Blog 20: Resist and Stand Firm No Matter What  
Returning Demons: Blog 42: Keeping Demons From Returning  
Revelation, spiritual warfare in: Blog 137: Spiritual Warfare in Revelation  
Righteousness: Blog 127: Put on the Breastplate of Righteousness  
Ruler, bind first: Blog 16: Steps to Deliverance 3

**S**alvation, assurance of: Blog 44: How Can I Be Sure I Am a Christian?  
Salvation, how to have it: Blog 44: How Can I Be Sure I Am a Christian?  
Salvation, no doubt: Blog 45: How Can I Be Sure I Haven't Lost My Salvation?  
Salvation, proof not lost: Blog 45: How Can I Be Sure I Haven't Lost My Salvation?  
Salvation, signs of in life: Blog 44: How Can I Be Sure I Am a Christian?  
Salvation: Blog 126: Put on the Helmet of Salvation  
Sandals of Peace: Blog 129: Put on the Sandals of Peace  
Satan and demons defeated: Blog 123: We Fight a Defeated Foe  
Satan attacking the church: Blog 103-104: Causalities in the War With Satan  
Satan, defeated foe: Blog 99: We Fight a Defeated Foe  
Satan, names of: Blog 122: The Names of Satan  
Satan: Blog 4: Sp War, The Bad Guys – Satan  
Satan's plan and purpose: Blog 110: Satan's Plan and Purpose  
Satan's subtle tricks: Blog 60: David and Solomon, subtle ways of Satan  
Satanism and demonizing: Blog 32: Satanism, New Age, Marital Arts & Demonizing  
Saul and spiritual warfare: Blog 58-59: Saul, Stages of Demonizing  
Schizophrenia and SW: Blog 9: Battle for Our Minds: Thoughts  
Scripture memory verses: Blog 19: Use the Sword of the Word of God  
Scripture, importance of: Blog 19: Use the Sword of the Word of God  
Scripture, quote for victory: Blog 16: Steps to Deliverance 3  
Scripture, see Bible, Word of God  
Secret Societies and demonizing: Blog 31: Secret Societies & Demonizing

Self-image, poor, opens to demonizing: Blog 29: Common Sins That Allow Demonic Access  
Sexual Immorality and demonizing: Blog 115: Sexual Immorality Leads to Demonizing  
Sexual sin opens one to demonizing: Blog 26: Spiritual Attacks Through Our Sin  
Sexual sins opens one to demonizing: Blog 28: Common Sins That Allow Demonic Access  
Shield of Faith: Blog 130: Take Up the Shield of Faith  
Shriners and demonizing: Blog 31: Secret Societies & Demonizing  
Sickness and demonizing: Blog 33: Physical Affliction and Demonizing  
Signs and wonders in the early church: Blog 105: Delivered by a Shadow?  
Signs of demonizing: Blog 11: Evidence of Demonizing  
Simon and the demonic: Blog 107: Sorcerers, Magicians and the Demonic  
Sin allowed demonizing: Blog 26: Spiritual Attacks Through Our Sin  
Sin opens one to demons: Blog 103-104: Causalities in the War With Satan  
Solomon and David, subtle ways of Satan: Blog 60: David and Solomon, subtle ways of Satan  
Sorcerers and the demonic: Blog 107: Sorcerers, Magicians and the Demonic  
Souls ties can open one to demonizing: Blog 26: Spiritual Attacks Through Our Sin  
Sovereignty of God over Satan: Blog 63: God Is Still in Control  
Spirit Baptism: Blog 35: Does God Want Us to Speak in Tongues Today?  
Second Blessing: Blog 35: Does God Want Us to Speak in Tongues Today?  
Spiritual attacks despite no sin in life: Blog 27: Spiritual Attacks Because We Follow Jesus  
Spiritual Gifts and Spiritual Warfare: Blog 41: Church's Role in Spiritual Warfare  
Spiritual Warfare and Jesus: Blogs 67-100  
Spiritual Warfare and Peter: Blog 134: Peter Writes About Spiritual Warfare  
Spiritual warfare lessons from Jesus, summary: Blog 100: Spiritual Warfare Lessons From Jesus  
Spiritual warfare prayer: Blog 132: Spiritual Warfare Prayer  
Spiritual Warfare, keep in balance: Blog 76: Keeping Spiritual Warfare in Balance  
Spiritual Warfare, necessity of it: Blog 2: Is Sp War Really Necessary? (Ephesians 6:10-12)  
Spiritual Warfare, reality of it: Blog 1: So You're In A War? (Ephesians 6:10-12; 2 Corinthians 2:11)  
Stages of demonizing: Blog 58-59: Saul: Stages of Demonizing  
Stand firm against Satan's forces: Blog 20: Resist and Stand Firm No Matter What  
Steps to Deliverance: Blogs 14-17 Steps to Deliverance 1-4  
Sword of the Spirit: Blog 131: Use the Sword of the Spirit – The Word of God  
Sword of the Spirit: Blog 19: Use the Sword of the Word of God  
Symptoms of demonizing: Blog 11: Evidence of Demonizing  
Symptoms of Demonizing: Blog 79-80: Symptoms of Demonizing

**T**emptation, Jesus in Wilderness: Blog 69-71: Wilderness Temptation

Test the Spirits: Blog 16: Steps to Deliverance 3

Thanksgiving in prayer: Blog 21: Praying for Spiritual Warfare Victory

Thorn in flesh, Paul's demonizing: Blog 120: Understanding Paul's Demonizing

Thoughts, battle for: Blog 78: The Battle For Our Minds

Thoughts, must control: Blog 9: Battle for Our Minds: Thoughts

Thoughts: demons mess with: Blog 119: Demons Love to Mess With Your Mind

Timothy, 1 and 2, and spiritual warfare: Blog 133: Spiritual Warfare in 1 and 2 Timothy

Tongues and spiritual warfare: Blog 116: Speaking in Tongues & Spiritual Warfare

Tongues today: Blog 35: Does God Want Us to Speak in Tongues Today?

Topics of Bible verses: Blog 46-48: Topical Indexes of Bible Verses

Truth, belt of: Blog 128: Put on the Belt of Truth

Truth, importance of, how to know, deception: Blog 8: The Battle For Our Minds: Truth

Truth; Blog 9: Battle for Our Minds: Thoughts

**U**nforgiveness and spiritual warfare: Blog 117: Unforgiveness: A Short-cut to Demonizing

**V**ictory in SW: Blog 22: Back to the Basics for Victory

**W**hy Spiritual Warfare?: Blog 2: Is Sp War Really Necessary? (Ephesians 6:10-12)

Wisdom, Gift of and Spiritual Warfare: Blog 41: Church's Role in Spiritual Warfare

Witchcraft: Blog 26: Spiritual Attacks Through Our Sin; Blog 30: Occult Activity & Demonizing

Wives and demonizing: Blog 39: When Demons Attack a Marriage

Word of God, use of: Blog 138: Use the Word of God

Word of God: Blog 131: Use the Sword of the Spirit – The Word of God

Word of God: see Bible, Scripture

**Y**oga and demonizing: Blog 32: Satanism, New Age, Marital Arts & Demonizing

## **SCRIPTURE INDEX**

Genesis 3; Blog 50: Adam and Eve and Spiritual Battles

Deuteronomy 18:9-13; Blog 30: Occult Activity and Demonizing

Joshua 5:13 – 6:27; Blog 56: Jericho, Each Battle is Different

Joshua, battles; Blog 55-57: Spiritual Warfare and Joshua

Job 1-2; Blog 51: Job and Spiritual Battles

Daniel 10:2-14; Blog 64: Spiritual Warfare Prayer

Matthew 4:1-11; Blog 69-71: Wilderness Temptations

Matthew 8:28-34; Blog 79-85: Symptoms of Demonizing

Matthew 16:19; Blog 92: Binding and Loosing

Mark 1:21-28; Blog 72-75: Capernaum Synagogue Encounter

Mark 5:1-20; Blog 79-85: Symptoms of Demonizing

Luke 4:31-37; Blog 72-75: Capernaum Synagogue Encounter

Luke 8:26-39; Blog 79-85: Symptoms of Demonizing

Luke 9:1; 10:1, 17-19; Blog 86-88: Authority and Power over Demons

Luke 10:1, 17-19; 9:1; Blog 86-88: Authority and Power over Demons

Luke 13:10-17; Blog 94: Laying on of Hands

Acts – Spiritual Warfare; blog 101: An Introduction to Spiritual Warfare in Acts

Acts 4; Blog 103: Causalities in the War With Satan

Acts 5:1-14; Blog 104: Causalities in the War With Satan

Acts 5:15-16; Blog 105: Delivered by a Shadow?

Acts 8:9; Blog 107: Sorcerers, Magicians and the Demonic

Acts 13:4-12; Blog 108: Look Them Right In The Eye

Acts 13:13 – 14:28; Blog 109-110: Paul Casting Out Demons

Acts 19; Blog 111-114: Paul's Power Encounters in Ephesus

2 Corinthians 2:11; Blog 1: So You're In a War!

2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Blog 118 Satan Blinds People to Spiritual Truth

2 Corinthians 10:3-6; Blog 119: Demons Love to Mess With Your Mind

2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Blog 120: Understanding Paul's Demonizing

Ephesians 6:10-12; Blog 1: So You're In a War!

Ephesians 6:10-18; Blog 125-132: Spiritual Armor

1 Timothy 1:18-20; 3:6-7; 4:1; 5:14-15; Blog 133: Spiritual Warfare in 1 & 2 Timothy

Hebrews 2:14-15; Blog 136: Spiritual Warfare in Hebrews

James 4:5-7; Blog 135: James' Lessons on Spiritual Warfare

1 Peter 5:3-11; Blog 134: Peter Writes About Spiritual Warfare

2 Peter 2:4; Blog 134: Peter Writes About Spiritual Warfare

1 John 4:1-6; Blog 136: Spiritual Warfare in 1 John

1 John 4:4; Blog 24; Spiritual Attacks Through Our Property

1 John 5:1, 4, 18; 2:29; 3:14; Blog 44: How Can I Be Sure I Am a Christian?  
Jude 8-9; Blog 136: Spiritual Warfare in Jude  
Revelation and spiritual warfare; Blog 137: Spiritual Warfare in Revelation

### **SPIRITUAL WARFARE PRAYERS:**

Armor of God Prayer: Blog 132  
Child, son or daughter's deliverance: Blog 38  
Cleanse a Room or Home: Blog 24  
Forgiveness for sin and for deliverance: Blog 29  
Forgiving Others: Blog 15, 28  
Freedom from demonizing: Blog 85  
General Prayer for Victory in Life: Blog 22  
Generational Bondage Broken : Blog 12  
Generational Bondage Broken: Blog 25, Blog 53  
Husband attacked: Blog 39  
Immorality repentance: Blog 28  
Marriage attacked: Blog 39  
Masonic bondage: Blog 31  
New Age deliverance: Blog 32  
Occult activities deliverance: Blog 32  
Occult involvement repentance: Blog 30  
Secret Societies bondage: Blog 31  
Sexual sin repentance: Blog 28  
Soul Ties, how to break: Blog 26  
Submission to the Holy Spirit: Blog 42  
Victory over Fear: Blog 10  
Wife attacked: Blog 39