



*A Biblical View of
Spiritual Warfare*

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CENTERVILLE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

What is Spiritual Warfare?

Session 1

“we are not unaware of his schemes” (2 Cor. 2:11)

1. “Spiritual Warfare” is not a biblical term.
2. Most books on spiritual warfare are fiction.
3. Different “models” of spiritual warfare result from different “models” of the Bible.

“Spiritual Warfare” is not a biblical term.

- Spiritual Warfare is an idea that originates in the late 20th century.
- The Bible never describes ‘deliverance ministry’ or ‘spiritual warfare.’
- The Bible gives no instructions on exorcism, and exorcism is not a spiritual gift.
- The Bible never says anything of significance about personal struggles with demons.
- ✓ The Bible does say that Christians should resist the spiritual forces of darkness (Eph. 6:10-18; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8-9).
- ✓ The Bible says that the power for resistance against sin, the world, and the enemy is the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 10:3-4), not superadded gifting, techniques, or knowledge of demons.
- ✓ The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the only remedy that you need, not magic or occult power.

Most books on spiritual warfare are fiction.

- Anecdotes are not a source for theology because experience is not self-interpreting.
- ✓ Some diagnostic questions:
 1. Where does the Bible say x ?
 2. What pattern in Scripture is consistent with x ?
 3. Does believing x mean denying the sufficiency of Scripture?

Different “models” of spiritual warfare result from different “models” of the Bible.

➤ **Model 1: World-Systems Model**

- Angels and demons are a kind of psychological metaphor for the “interiority” of institutions and power structures in society.
- Denies the truth of Scripture.

➤ **Model 2: Strategic-Level Deliverance Model**

- Spiritual warfare requires engaging and subduing high-level territorial spirits, demons who control cities or regions.
- Denies the sufficiency of Scripture.

✓ **Model 3: War with the Flesh Model**

- ✓ Spiritual warfare is, at root, believing the Gospel, clinging to one’s identity in Christ, and resisting sin and temptation.
- ✓ Is the historic and orthodox picture of Christian living.

The Whole Armor of God

Session 2

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

The Whole Armor of God is Jesus Christ.

1. Union with Christ in Ephesians
2. Isaiah 59
3. “Put on” in Paul’s writings

Union with Christ in Ephesians

- 1:3 (blessing)
- 1:4 (election)
- 1:7 (redemption)
- 1:9 (plan of God)
- 1:11 (inheritance)
- 1:12 (hope)
- 1:15 (Holy Spirit)
- 2:6 (session)
- 2:7 (grace)
- 2:10 (good works)
- 2:13 (closeness to God)
- 2:21 (unity of believers)
- 2:22 (church)
- 3:6 (indiscriminate promise)
- 3:11 (plan of God)
- 3:12 (boldness and access)
- 4:1 (service and calling)
- 4:17 (gospel calling)
- 4:32 (forgiveness of sins)
- 5:8 (holiness and light)
- 6:10 (strength)

Isaiah 59

He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no one to intercede; then his own arm brought him salvation, and his righteousness upheld him.

He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on his head; he put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and wrapped himself in zeal as a cloak.

“Put on” in Paul’s Writings

Romans 13:12, 14 – The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light ... Put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to satisfy its desires.

Galatians 3:27 – For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Colossians 3:10,12 – ...put on the new self which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator ... put on then, as God’s chosen ones, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience

1 Thessalonians 5:8 – Since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

Tactics in Ephesians 6



Tactics in Ephesians 6



**Believe the
Gospel**

Or the Devil Will Get You!

Tactics in Ephesians 6



Angels and Demons

Session 3

Angels

1. The word angel is produced from the translation of the Bible.
2. They only serve a handful of functions in Scripture.
3. They are created, moral beings.

The word “angel”

- Hebrew/Aramaic = mal'akh (1 Kings 19:2)
- Greek = angelos
- Latin = *angelus* (angel) v. *nuntius* (messenger)
- Genesis 18-19

What angels do

1. Protection/Rescue of a Key Figure
2. Execution of Divine Judgment
3. Announcement of a Significant Birth
4. Delivery/Interpretation of a Key Message to a Prophet

Protection/Rescue of a Key Figure

- Genesis 18-19
- Daniel 3, 6
- Acts 12

Execution of Divine Judgment

- Exodus 12:23 (Ps. 78)
- Matthew 16:27

Announcement of a Significant Birth

- Genesis 16
- Judges 13:3
- Matthew 1:20-21

Delivery/Interpretation of a Key Message to a Prophet

- Exodus 3
- Numbers 22-23
- Deuteronomy 33
- Daniel 7-8
- Acts 1:10; 5:19; 8:26; 12:7-9
- Revelation

Created, Moral Beings

- Men are made from dirt (Gen. 2:7).
- Angels are not: they are spirits (Psalm 104:4; Hebrews 1:7,14)
- Men and angels occupy distinct parts of creation (Psalm 8:4-6; Hebrews 2:6-8)
- Though angels can appear indistinguishable from men (Hebrews 13:2), they differ from men in nature (Hebrews 1:14) and in salvation (Hebrews 2:17)

Demons

1. Demons are evil angels: they differ morally but not in nature.
2. Demons make very limited appearances in Scripture.
3. Demons exist and they want to destroy God's people.

Demons are evil angels.

- There is no narrative description of the primal sin in Scripture.
 - Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28 are not about the Devil.
- John 8:44, Jude 6; Matthew 25:41

The word “demon”

- There is no Hebrew word for demon.
 - Elohim = “gods”
 - Sa’iyir = “goat” or “hairy thing” (Leviticus 17:7; 2 Chronicles 11:15)
 - Shed = “false god” (Deuteronomy 32:17; Psalm 106:37)
- Greek = daimon
 - 1 Corinthians 10:20
- Greek = pneuma akatharton (unclean spirit), poneron (evil), angelos

What demons do

- Daimonizomai = “demonized”
- Illness (Matthew 9:32-33), blindness (Matthew 12:22), deformity (Luke 13:11), control (Luke 8:27-29)
- Clearly distinguished from ‘typical’ bodily ailments (Mark 1:34; Matthew 4:24)
- There is no “secret” or “hidden” possession/demonization.

What demons do

- False Teaching - 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 2:25-26; James 3:15
- Hence, Ephesians 6:10-20; 1 John 4:1
- Christ is our comfort (Luke 10:20)

Q&A

Session 4

Spiritual Warfare Practices

Session 5

“Tearing Down Strongholds”

1. 2 Corinthians 10:1-6
2. 2 Corinthians 11:3-15
3. Warfare is not easy, but is simple:
 - ✓ Study God’s Word
 - ✓ Pray
 - ✓ Participate meaningfully with God’s people
 - ✓ Hebrews 3:12-13

“Binding the Strong Man”

- Mark 3:22-30 (Luke 11:14-22)
- Jesus came to destroy the works of the Devil (1 John 3:8) because Jesus is the stronger man (Luke 3:16). By the cross, he showed his power over all authority (Colossians 2:15).

“Spiritual Mapping”

- No

Exorcism

- Exorcism (ekballistic) is never ritualized in the Bible, and there are no instructions for performing exorcisms.
- Mark 9:14-29