

Spiritual Warfare in the City

The Urban Ministry Institute
World Impact
May 2, 2015

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Session #1: Foundations of Spiritual Warfare

Keeping it In Balance: There Are Three Forms of Evil Influence

The Nature of Evil Influence and Its Outcome (Ephesians 2:1-3)

¹As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,

²in which you used to live when you followed

The World

the ways of this world

The Devil

and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air,
the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

The Flesh

³All of us also lived among them at one time,
gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature (our flesh)
and following its desires and thoughts.

Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

We would be in deep error to blame everything on the devil! Note some of the following passages:

Matthew 15:19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.

1 Peter 2:11 Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.

James 4:4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

On the other hand, we are unbiblical and miss a vitally important facet of the reality of evil when we ignore, neglect, or dismiss the role of Satan and his spirits.

Some Thoughts on Praying with People Who May Face Demonic Attack

Orientation

The Scripture is quite clear that believers can face various forms of demonic attack. This is evident in a variety of passages. Here is a brief sampling:

^{NIV} **Ephesians 6:12** 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.

^{NIV} **1 Peter 5:8** Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

^{NIV} **Ephesians 4:26-27** "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,²⁷ and do not give the devil a foothold.

^{NIV} **1 Thessalonians 2:18** For we wanted to come to you--certainly I, Paul, did, again and again--but Satan stopped us.

^{NIV} **1 Thessalonians 3:5** For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith. I was afraid that in some way the tempter might have tempted you and our efforts might have been useless.

^{NIV} **2 Timothy 2:25** Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,²⁶ and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

^{NIV} **1 Timothy 5:14** So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander.

Prayer is the Most Important Weapon for Defeating the Enemy

In the Apostle Paul's teaching on the armor of God in Ephesians 6, prayer is the foundational weapon and most important weapon for standing and resisting. In the list of seven weapons, it is given prominence by (1) being mentioned last (the first in a list is not always the most important!), (2) by being the only weapon that does not have a metaphor attached to it (like a helmet, shield, etc.), (3) by Paul elaborating on it the next few verses, (4) by using the term "all" four times, and (5) by Paul modeling its importance in the example he sets for the Ephesians through the two intercessory prayers he reports praying for them every day (1:15-23; 3:14-21).

^{NIV} **Ephesians 6:18-20**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.¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

An Error People Sometimes Make When They Think About Demonic Influence

For a variety of reasons, it is easy for believers to oversimplify the work of the demonic and think exclusively in terms of two polarized categories: “possessed” or “not possessed.” There are a number of problems in thinking about the work of demons in this way. Here are just a few:

1. The Word “Possessed” Actually Never Appears in Scripture

The word that is often translated in the Gospels as “demon possessed” is the Greek word *daimonizomai*, which literally means, “to be terrorized or afflicted by a demon.”

2. For Most People, “Possession” Means Ownership. For Christians the Ownership Question is Already Settled: You are “Possessed” by God

^{NIV} **Ephesians 1:13** And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory.

^{NIV} **1 Peter 2:9** But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

3. When Ministering to Believers, the Question Should NOT be “Is the Person Possessed?” but “What is the Nature and Degree of the Demonic Influence?”

See the chart on the next page.

4. This Should Lead to the Question, “What Is the Ground or Reason for the Demonic Attack?”

Finding an answer to this question then helps in knowing how to minister and pray for a person that is under some form of demonic attack or torment.

Praying for Deliverance is Not Only About Exorcism and Dramatic Encounters

The Bible reveals a wide variety of ways that Satan and his spirits work. The most extreme form is described in the Bible as “demon possession.” It is much more realistic and helpful to think of a spectrum of ways that spirits work—as represented in the following chart:

Light		Severe		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> temptation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> inability to gain control over an area of life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> night terrors: waking with a pressure on your chest and a sense of evil in the room. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> night manifestations; dreams and visions of figures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sense of “having a demon/spirit”; “demonization”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an incidental and momentary thought 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recurring thoughts of doing something sinful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> obsessive and inescapable thoughts of doing something sinful or hurtful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> hearing and communicating with voices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> powerful voices that will not go away; a sense of constant torment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sometimes sense the presence of evil. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> horrible dream with terrible themes. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> visible manifestations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a sense of losing control
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> deceived in my thinking—believing a lie. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> experience of an altered state of consciousness
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> desire to kill or be killed
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sense of supernatural abilities.

SESSION #2: What Is the Armor of God?

Spiritual Warfare (6:10-20)

¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

¹¹Put on the full armor of God
so that you can **take your stand** against the devil's schemes.

¹²For 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.

¹³Therefore put on the full armor of God,
so that when the day of evil comes,
you may be able **to stand** your ground,
and after you have done everything, **to stand**.

¹⁴**Stand firm** then,

1. with the belt of TRUTH buckled around your waist,
2. with the breastplate of RIGHTEOUSNESS in place,
3. ¹⁵and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from THE GOSPEL OF PEACE.
4. ¹⁶In addition to all this, take up the shield of FAITH, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.
5. ¹⁷Take the helmet of SALVATION
6. and the sword of the SPIRIT, which is THE WORD OF GOD.

¹⁸And 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.

¹⁹Pray also for me,

that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

How To Interpret the Armor

- You cannot succeed on your own. Draw on the strength that Christ promises to supply.
- Realize that you cannot count on life to be a smooth, easy path. There are evil supernatural forces out to re-enslave you.

The Armor of God as...

1. Spiritual Disciplines to Protect Us From Demonic Intruders
2. Spiritual Disciplines to Help Us in Ministering Deliverance to the Oppressed

Who are the opponents that are revealed in Eph. 6:12?

What are "evil day" experiences?

What does it mean to "stand"?

Interpreting the armor....

1. *Put On Your Trousers: Wear **Truth***

- Know the truth of who you are in Christ (for the powers of darkness will try to deceive you).
- Practice honesty and live with moral integrity.

2. *Put On the Breastplate of **Righteousness***

- Realize your status before God as one who has been acquitted of all guilt.
- Acquire personal holiness and develop good character.

3. *Put On Your Boots: Preparation to Share the **Gospel of Peace***

- Prepare yourself for sharing the gospel wherever God calls you.

4. *Take the Shield of **Faith***

- Do not doubt! Believe that God will help you overcome.

5. *Put On the Helmet of **Salvation***

- Be secure in your identity in Christ--as one who has been saved, united with Christ, made alive, co-resurrected and co-exalted.

6. *Take the Sword of the Spirit, **the Word of God***

- Devote your life to aggressively spreading the gospel.
- Know the Scripture and apply it to every difficult situation.

THE BOTTOM LINE: **PRAY!**

- Ask God to strengthen you to resist temptation and share the gospel effectively.
- Ask God to strengthen your fellow believers to resist temptation and share the gospel effectively.

√ This is a very important directive for our prayer ministry at Whittier Hills!

SESSION #3: The Practice of Deliverance Prayer

What follows is a suggested procedure for guiding you in how to pray when a church member calls on an overseer for prayer claiming that they are experiencing some form of demonic attack.

Preparing for the Session

Be in prayer for the session and for the person
Invite one or two others to join you (never do this alone)

Clarify the Purpose of the Session and the Nature of Your Involvement

Clarify that you are not a therapist or a counselor, but an overseer of the church that is here to pray.

Begin With a Brief Time of Prayer

Move into a brief time of prayer. Invite the Lord to be present, that he would shine his light into the darkness to bring illumination, and that he would be present in power to bring help and deliverance.

Conduct a Detailed Interview

Begin with gathering general information about what the person is experiencing and why he or she thinks they are facing a demonic attack.

What have you experienced?

When did it begin?

How often has it occurred?

Pray and Listen

While you are listening to the person share, continue to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give you insight into the situation.

Hear what the person is saying. Do not make assumptions too quickly.

Continue With the Interview: Determining the Reason for the Attack

- The purpose of the interview is to determine the “entry point” or reason for the attack (insofar as this is possible).
- Familiarize yourself with the “Steps to Freedom in Christ” and Doug Hayward’s, “Breaking the Bonds of Our Past” ahead of time. These documents can inform you on the kinds of questions to ask.
- Some of the most common reason for spiritual attack and demonic manifestations are:
 1. *Demonic claim as a result of a spiritual inheritance or covenant.*
 2. *Past compromise with false worship*
 3. *Spiritualistic involvements*
 4. *Early abuse or rejection*

5. *Various patterns of sinful behavior, e.g.*
 - *protracted anger and bitterness*
 - *sexual bonding*
6. *Drug or substance abuse*
7. *Victim of a curse*

Continue With the Interview: Ruling Out Other Possibilities

Ask the person questions about any relevant medical and/or psychological history

1. *Are you on any medications? If so, what?*
2. *Are you being treated for any medical conditions?*
3. *Are you in therapy?*

Remember that not everybody who thinks they are under demonic attack actually is!

Deciding on a Plan of Action

Does there seem to be clear evidence that there is a demonic issue here?

Is the person already convinced that he or she is facing a demonic intrusion of some sort?

Note: You want to be very careful about ever diagnosing this for someone. This could lead to an abuse accusation!

Praying for Deliverance

1. Begin this time with a prayer for the Lord Jesus to be present with his power to strengthen and deliver. Ask the Lord to strengthen the person who has come for prayer.

Note: You want to involve the person in this time as much as possible.

2. Begin to pray through an area where you suspect that there may have been a reason for demonic attack.
 - a. If it has to do with a generational spirit, see the sample prayer patterns in either Anderson or Hayward.
 - b. Ask the person to pray through this sample prayer. Have them read through it first and then ask them to pray the contents of this in their own words. They should try to be as specific as possible.
 - c. After the person has prayed, you pray on their behalf as well. Reaffirm the content of what they have just prayed.

Announce to any spirits who are present and have been responsible for the attack that their time with this person is now over. Command them in the name of the Lord Jesus to leave the person and never return.
- *Note: If there has been some form of emotional trauma or abuse, there will be a significant need for therapeutic help. There could also be a need for a form of "inner healing prayer."*

What To Do If There is (Demonic) "Pushback" or Resistance

1. Immediately and directly address any spirit(s) causing the manifestation. Put them under the authority of Jesus and command them not to manifest their presence in any way. Indicate that you only want to talk to the person and not to them (the demonic spirit)
2. Pray and ask the Lord Jesus to give the person strength to resist.
3. Ask the person to resume his or her prayer once again for deliverance.

Work Through Any Other Areas Where There is a Need for Deliverance Prayer

Pray for the Filling of the Spirit and for God's Blessing Over the Person

- Take this very seriously and pray visually and extensively for God's Spirit and blessing
- For examples of how to pray blessing, see the handout on "Prayers of Blessing"
Note: If in the interview process, you (and the person) reached the conclusion that there is no direct demonic attack underway, then pray for God's blessing.

After Prayer Counsel

- Encourage the person to read through Scripture on their own every day for the next few weeks. Suggest a book like Ephesians and encourage the person to read it over and over (while praying that God would help them understand it, believe it, and practice it).
- Affirm the importance of getting connected with a Life Group or a mentoring relationship
- Affirm the importance of gathering regularly with the people of God to worship, hear the Word proclaimed, and fellowship.

Continue Praying for the Person In Your Private Prayer Times; Follow-Up with a Call or a Visit

Appendix #1

A Basic Procedure for Praying with Someone Who Is Hurting

Begin with a Brief Time of Prayer

Invite the Lord to be present and that he would be present in power to bring clarity, help, and healing.

Invite the Person to Share and *Listen Intently*

- Ask open-ended questions, like
 - So, why do you want prayer? What is going on in your life?
 - Follow-up with questions that probe more deeply into the situation or difficulty they share.
 - Be attentive for things they share that need to be a concern for prayer and further ministry such as woundedness, medical issues, psychological issues, or possible sin issues that need to be addressed (e.g. bitterness, rebellion, inappropriate relationships, etc.)
- Listen prayerfully
 - Continue asking the Spirit of the Lord to help you to see what is going on.
 - Ask the Spirit to show you *how* to pray

Explain to the Person the Connection Between Patterns of Sinful Behavior and Illness (and Demonic Attack). Give the Person an Opportunity to Confess His/Her Sin to the Lord

Be careful not to press this too hard since the sickness may not have anything to do with sin; it may simply be the result of living in a fallen world and living in decaying bodies.

Pray for Healing

- Ask permission from the person to place your hand on his/her shoulder, back, or head.
- Ask God to bring healing. Just as a child comes to his father and asks for a special gift or a special favor, you are approaching your heavenly Father who invites you to ask him.

If an Overseer is Present, He Should Anoint the Person with Oil

- My normal procedure for doing this is to put a little bit of oil on my finger and touch the person's forehead with it.
- I explain how the oil represents the presence of God through his Spirit.

Pray for the Filling of the Spirit and for God's Blessing Over the Person

Take this very seriously and pray visually and extensively for God's Spirit and blessing.

For examples of how to pray blessing, see the handout on "Prayers of Blessing"

Note: If in the interview process, you (and the person) reached the conclusion that there is no direct demonic attack underway, then pray for God's blessing.

Use This Time To Discern If There Are Other Special Needs

- Just as a shepherd closely inspects his sheep when he is tending to them individually, this is a good time to get a feel for the overall well-being of one of our church members. Consider if there are any other kind of referrals that need to be made.
- Does the person need to be checked out by a doctor?
- Does the person need help from a skilled professional counselor?

After Prayer Counsel

1. Encourage the person to read through Scripture on their own every day for the next few weeks. Suggest some passages from the Bible that are relevant to their situation (while praying that God would help them understand it, believe it, and practice it).
2. Affirm the importance of getting connected with a Life Group or a mentoring relationship
3. Affirm the importance of gathering regularly with the people of God to worship, hear the Word proclaimed, and fellowship.

Continue Praying for the Person In Your Private Prayer Times; Follow-Up with a Call or a Visit

Appendix #2

Ten Patterns for Praying Blessing Over a Person

These are adapted from a handout my colleague at Biola University, Dr. Douglas Hayward (Associate Dean of the School for Intercultural Studies and former missionary in Irian Jaya), has put together that reflect ways that he prays God's blessing over people who are hurting and struggling. The first part describes how Satan seeks to bring about harm to an individual in a specific way; the second part indicates how we can pray to counteract the work of the evil one in someone's life. These are not verbatim prayers that are to be recited, but reflect outlines of what to pray that can be expressed in your own words.

I. A PRAYER OF BLESSING OVER THE MIND:

1. Satan loves to play mind games with believers.
 - a. He deceives
 - b. He lies
 - c. He blinds
 - d. He promotes false doctrines

2. God wants to reign in our minds. So pray the following blessing/provisions:
 - a. That God's Spirit will come upon them with light and with truth.
 - b. That God will bless them with knowledge from His Word.
 - c. That God will fill them with discernment and wisdom.
 - d. That God's Spirit will reveal the error of false teaching.
 - e. That God's purposes and will for them will be clearly understood.

2. A PRAYER OF BLESSING FROM THE NEW BIRTH:

1. Satan wants to claim us for His own by the right of our/humanity's rebellion.

2. God wants to redeem us as His own. So, pray the following blessing/provision:
 - a. Bless them with God's gift of life. That he chose to give them life.
 - b. Bless them as the object of God's great love and purpose.
 - c. Bless them with gifting of God upon them for the work of the Kingdom.
 - d. Bless them with God's great redemption that has brought them back into fellowship with Him.
 - e. Bless them with a holy nature, cleansed, purified, made holy.
 - f. Bless them with privilege of now being new spiritual creatures.
 - g. Bless them with the honor of being sons/daughters of God.
 - h. Bless them with the joy of calling upon God as their Father.

3. A PRAYER OF BLESSING THAT CLAIMS GOD'S PURPOSES

1. Satan wants to claim us for his evil purposes.
2. We want to pursue God's. So, pray the following blessing/provision:
 - a. Thank God that in His eternal wisdom he chose this person to be a part of His kingdom purposes.
 - b. Thank God for making this person either a man or a woman as being the most effective way that they can glorify and serve Him.
 - c. Thank God for this person's gift of creativity, their strengths of character, their personalities and God's placing of them in community to enrich others.
 - d. Thank God that God has created this person in the image of God and bless them so that others will indeed see God in them.

4. A PRAYER OF BLESSING OVER ADVERSITY

1. Satan seeks to destroy us with adversities, hardships, sorrow.
2. So pray the following blessing/provision:
 - a. Pray that God will bless them with the fruits of the Spirit:
Love, joy, peace, patience, perseverance, gentleness, goodness and faith.
(Especially in the face of pain, suffering, hardships)
 - b. Pray that God will intercede in times of testing that their faith will not fail.
 - c. Pray that God will sanctify their pain to his glory.
 - d. Claim God's promise that all things will work to their good.
 - e. Pray for the strength to forgive those who afflict them.
 - f. Bless their ability to find healing for painful memories from the past.
 - g. Pray that God will surround them with His protection and love.

5. A PRAYER OF BLESSING OVER THEIR BODIES:

1. Satan wants to use our strength, our bodies our gifting for evil.
2. God wants us to serve His kingdom, so pray as follows:
 - a. As a high priest of old, lift up the person and present him or her to God as a living sacrifice.
 - b. Dedicate their eyes to God--that they may see the beauty of God's creation, that they will see God's handiwork everywhere, that they will see opportunities for ministry and service, that they will see human needs as God sees them and that they will be moved with love, concern and compassion even as Christ was moved.

- c. Dedicate their mouths, their lips their voices to God--that they will be empowered to offer up praise and worship to God, that they will be able to speak truth with boldness and discernment, that they will be able to speak love and mercy.
- d. Dedicate their backs and shoulders to the work of the Kingdom of God--that they will be able to serve as burden bearers along with others.
- e. Dedicate their arms for the task of serving the kingdom of God in a manner that is faithful and enduring.
- f. Dedicate their hands that they may be instruments of healing, of showing love of being able to reach out and touch those who need them.
- g. Dedicate their legs that they will be strong in the journey and faithful in following Christ.
- h. Dedicate their feet that they will be swift to go where ever God leads.
- i. Dedicate their sexuality out of which flows their creative energies, their capacity to give and receive joy, their entire ability to function as a creation of God.
- j. Pray that God will fill them with resurrection power so that physically and spiritually, they will be renewed with fresh energy every day of their lives.

6. A PRAYER OF BLESSING OVER THEIR EMOTIONS

1. Even as Satan wants to discourage us and debilitate our walk with God
2. Pray the following blessings upon the person:
 - a. Pray that the Spirit will enhance the person's ability to:
 - love and be loved
 - experience joy and to bring joy
 - rest in peace and to speak peace to others
 - trust God and to wait upon Him
 - hope in God and surrender to His time and work
 - accept humility for the sake of God's glory
 - b. Pray that God will renew their strength when it is exhausted
 - c. Pray that God will control their attitudes of:
 - impatience
 - unforgiveness
 - anger
 - perfectionism
 - fear, timidity, inadequacy
 - depression
 - loneliness

7. A PRAYER OF EMPOWERMENT FOR SERVICE

1. Satan wants to keep us weak and ineffective.
2. Pray for empowerment:
 - a. Power to triumph over personal sin
 - b. Power to keep our focus on Jesus
 - c. Power in our service to God

8. A PRAYER OF BLESSING FOR LIVING IN COMMUNITY

1. Satan wants to turn us against one another
2. So Pray that God will bless the person with:
 - a. Gentleness
 - b. Sympathy
 - c. Patience
 - d. Grace
 - e. Community mindedness & social adaptability
 - f. Appropriate social bonding

9. A PRAYER OF BLESSING FOR PERSONAL WHOLENESS

1. Satan wants to destroy all that is good in us
2. So pray that God will bless the person with:
 - a. A healthy sense of self-esteem
 - b. A fully internalized realization of God's love for them
 - c. An appreciation for their identity in Christ
 - d. A sense of confidence in the provisions of God (I can do anything in Christ)
 - e. A consuming desire to live for God.

10. A PRAYER OF BLESSING FROM BEING TOTALLY COMMITTED TO JESUS

1. Satan wants to distract us from full allegiance to God
2. So pray that the person will:
 - a. Experience the overwhelming presence of God resting upon them.
 - b. Experience the joy of putting things of the Spirit first in their lives
 - c. Experience the passion to pursue God's purposes upon them.

Appendix #3

Recommendations for Books on the Topic of Spiritual Warfare

Neil T. Anderson, *Victory Over the Darkness. Realizing the Power of Your New Identity in Christ* (Regal, 2000).

Neil T. Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker* (Harvest House, 2006).

Clinton E. Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions About Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997).

Joe Wasmond and Rich Miller, *Battle Plan for Spiritual Warfare. God's Strategy for Overcoming the Enemy* (Harvest House, 2004).

--Joe is a former helicopter pilot in the Vietnam war and subsequently became an Evangelical Free Church missionary in Latin America and Africa. The book is full of practical wisdom on the topic.