The Secrets of Spiritual Warfare:

How to destroy the flesh, defeat the world, and cast out demons!
Some Introductory Questions

1. How much awareness do you have of spiritual warfare?
2. Does spiritual warfare feature in the teaching of your church?
3. What do you understand by spiritual warfare?
4. Do you have any spiritual enemies?
5. Are you winning or losing?
What is Spiritual Warfare?

“The phrase ‘spiritual warfare’ never appears in the Bible. It is a pastoral, theological term for describing the moral conflict of the Christian life. It is a metaphor for our lifelong struggle with our lies and other liars, our lusts and other tempters, our sins and other evildoers, the present darkness that continually unsettles us. Our sufferings, whatever their form or cause, provide occasions either to stumble or to stand. Our warfare is over which it will be.” (David Powlison, in Beilby and Eddy, Understanding Spiritual Warfare, 2012, p92)
Warfare terminology in the Bible

Gen 1:2-5; 3:1-8; 4; 6:1-7; 11.
Dan 10:1; Rev 12:7,17

Ex 15:3; Dt 20:1-4; Josh 9:2; 14:11
Ps 18:34; 144:1

Lk 14:31; Rom 7:23; 2 Cor 10:3;
1 Pet 2:11; James 4:1
Worldviews

- Animism
Modernism
• Cosmic Dualism

Figure 4
The Myth of Cosmic Dualism

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<tr>
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<th>GOOD</th>
<th>EVIL</th>
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<td>Heavens</td>
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<td>central battle of power</td>
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• The Biblical View

Figure 5

Biblical Worldview

GOD
(Creator, Omnipotent, Perfect Love)

CREATION

Loyal - Good
Angels

Rebellious - Evil
Satan and Demons

Enlighten, Enliven,
Entreat, Empower

Battle ground
Human Structures and Systems
Human Individuals
Human Spirit (old and new selves)
The Theme of the Bible

Note the theme or plot of the Bible.

The Bible records God’s plan: God is restoring His kingdom peace through the cross and resurrection of Jesus, for and with His covenant people.

Genesis 1-2  
Gen 3  
The FALL  
the CROSS and RESURRECTION  
Revelation 21-22
The Coming of the Gospel/Kingdom

The coming of Jesus and the kingdom

Return of Jesus

The consumation of God's kingdom

Perfection: New Heaven and New Earth

eternity

now, but not yet

creation and the fall

The old age or this evil age

The arrival of God's kingdom

Mk 3:27 (Mt 12:27-28)
Mk 9:1
Jn 12:31
Eph 1:15-23
Col 2:15
Current Approaches

1) Approaches emphasising “the flesh”, also referred to as the classic model of spiritual warfare. This approach focuses on fighting the temptations to sin that arise from the sinful nature.

2) Approaches emphasising “the world”, also referred to as the world systems model of spiritual warfare. This approach focuses on resisting systems such as racism, sexism, class-ism, exploitation of the poor, violence, legalism, etc.

3) Approaches emphasising the “the devil”, also referred to as the deliverance model of spiritual warfare. This approach focuses on personal demonic agents.
Engaging in the Battle from Ephesians

- **Presupposition:** The Bible is our authority and model, and the Bible is sufficient.

- **Theme of Ephesians:** In Ephesians Paul reveals the mystery of God’s plan that both Jew and Gentile should be one in the church through the cross and resurrection of Jesus, so that Christians may be filled with all the fullness of God becoming light in the church, the world, the family and the workplace.

- **Key verses:** Eph 1:10; 2:14-18; 3:6
Spiritual Warfare in Ephesians

We have three principal enemies:
(In warfare you need to know your enemies!)

1) the flesh
2) the world
3) the devil
Ephesians 2:1-3

1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you used to live when you followed ①the ways of this world and of ②the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying ③the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.
The three enemies are always there, all of the time!

- the flesh
- the world
- the devil
Spiritual Warfare
How to destroying the flesh:

**Solution:**

- Ask God for what we lack (but do not ask amiss, Jm 4:4)
- Repent and be humble, Jm 4:10
- Make no provision for the flesh, Rom 13:14
- Walk in the Spirit, Gal 5:16
- Crucify the flesh and its passions, Gal 5:24
- Put on the new man, Eph 4: 17-24
- Trust wholly in God, Phil 3:3-10
- Be joyful, patient, and prayerful, Jm 1:2-18
Questionnaire
The Flesh

- Lust of the flesh, desires for pleasure, I Jn 2:15-17; Gal 5:16; Eph 2:3; II Pet 2:18
- Many walk according to the flesh, Rom 8:1-13; II Cor 10:2

Signs or symptoms:

- wars and fights, covetousness (Jm 4:1)
- Sectarianism (I Cor 3; cf. Eph 2:15), seeking our own desires, desire for power, recognition, etc.
- "The flesh is weak", desire for comfort keeps us back from prayer Mt 26:41,
- making of personal plans or agendas without God, Jn 1:13
- religion only consisting in outward acts, Rom 2:28
- seeking to please God, or be justified by our own deeds or righteousness
- making provision for the flesh, Rom 13:14, allowing or exposing yourself to be in the place of temptation.
- the world's wisdom, way of seeing and doing things, I Cor 1:26
- following after worldly pursuits, Jm 4:4
- warring according to the flesh, II Cor 10:3
- glorying or boasting in fleshly achievements, II Cor 11:18; Gal 6:12-13
- the works of the flesh: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revels, and the like, Gal 5:19-21 (17 things mentioned here).
- pride, Col 2:18
- temptations, Jm 2:12
The World

Lust of the eyes, wanting to have things, I Jn 2:15-17
Friendship with the world, joining worldly associations, allegiances and pursuits that are at odds with God (Ps 1)

Signs or symptoms:
- various trails and troubles, Jm 1:2; Jn 16:33
- gaining worldly things at expense of the kingdom, Mt 16:26
- not recognising Jesus, Jn 1:10; 14:19; 17:25
- not receiving the Spirit, Jn 14:17
- receiving the hatred of the world, Jn 15:18-19; 17:14; I Jn 3:13
- the world rejoicing over you, Jn 16:20
- the spirit of the world does not recognising the cross, I Cor 2:12
- the spirit of the world does not perceive spiritual things, I Cor 2-4.
- anxious about worldly things (wife and husband), I Cor 7:33-34
- hopeless sorrow, II Cor 7:10
- the elements of the world, Gal 4:3, bondage under this world's systems
- in bondage to laws, financial systems, educational systems, etc. At expense of kingdom matters
- the cares of life and deceitfulness of riches, Mt 13:22
How to defeating the world:

Solution:
- Be joyful, patient, and prayerful, Jm 1:2-18
- Have holiness (separation) of life, Jm 4:8b
- Hate your life in this world, Jn 12:25
- Rejoice, because Jesus has overcome the world! Jn 16:33
- Consider the cross, Gal 6:14
- Keep yourself unspotted from the world, Jm 1:27
- Sell your possessions, have treasure in heaven, Lk 12:33, the poor of this world are rich in faith, Jm 2:5
- Control your tongue, Jm 3:6
- Do not love the world, I Jn 2:15
- Hear the Word, Mt 13:18
The Devil

The pride of life (the devil is the author of pride)
Independence from God

Signs or symptoms

- The devil comes to destroy and kill, Jn 10:10
- Persecution, Lk 22:31; Rev 2:10; 12
- Temptation may come from the devil, Mt 4:1; I Cor 7:5
- Enemies in the church, Mt 13:39; Jn 6:70 (Judas);
- Betraying Jesus or Christians, Jn 13:2; Lk 22:3
- The wiles of the devil, Eph 6:11; II Cor 2:11
- Accusations and adversaries, I Pet 5:8
- Denying and rejecting the cross, Mt 16:22-23
- To worship other things including Satan, Mt 4:10
- Lying, Acts 5:3; Gen 3
- Deceiving, Rev 12:9, Gen 3
- Appearing as an angel of light, II Cor 11:14; II Thes 2:9
- Hindering the work of the gospel, I Thes 2:18

OT

- Numbering the people to glory, I Chr 21:1
- Accuser and destroyer, Job,
- Opposing God's priest, Zech 3:1
How to casting out the Devil:

Solution:

- Resist the devil and he will flee, Jm 4
- Draw near to God, Jm 4
- Do not give place to the devil, Eph 4:27
- Stand against the wiles of the devil, Eph 6:11
- Be sober and vigilant, I Pet 5:8
- Prayer and fasting, Mt 17:21
Some Notes on Demonology

- Do not give the devil more credit than he deserves!
- Demons and evil spirits are comparatively rare in OT (Judg 9:22-25; I Sam 16:44; I Kngs 22:21-23; II Chron 11:15; Ps 106:37). Only three passages mention Satan by name (Job 1-2; Zech 3:1-10; I Chron 21:1).
- In NT references to demons are mostly in the Synoptic Gospels. Presence of demonic activity in gospels is pronounced.
- Exorcisms in the Gospels are not isolated events, but connected with the coming of the kingdom; “...the exorcisms of Jesus show that the eschatological rule of God is present among men in and through Jesus...” (Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the kingdom of God, 1986, p. 75)
- Mk 3: 27; Mt 12:28; Lk 11:20
- Jn 12:31; I Jn 3:8 - Jesus came to destroy the devil and his demons! Christians should not live with fear.
- I Pet 5:7
Some Notes on Demonology (continuing)

- A Christian cannot be demon possessed (Jn 10:28; I Cor 6:20; 12:3; II Cor 5:17; I Jn 4:4; etc.).
- There is a clear distinction between demonic possession and physical and mental sickness. Most psychological and physical illnesses are not the result of demon possession.
- In the Bible demon possession is easily recognisable. The diagnoses of demon possession was not a matter for experts.
- Jesus exorcised demons with a simple authoritative command, there was no ritual or incantation. There is no use of crucifixes, holy water, bible, laying on of hands, candles, etc. Also, no confession of sin is associated with exorcism; Jesus did not held the person responsible for some sin, etc.

1) controlled by a force other than themselves
2) Speaking in strange voices
3) bizarre anti-social behaviour
4) superhuman strength
5) superhuman knowledge
6) seizures, convulsions, self-injury
7) a recognition and resistance to the Person of Jesus
Territorial Spirits and Spiritual Mapping (Peter Wagner). According to this view, there are angelic authorities over regions and cities. There are three levels of spiritual warfare: 1) ground level; 2) occult level; and 3) strategic level.

In spiritual mapping (strategic level warfare) specific territorial spirits of an area is discerned and named and then exorcised through identification repentance, some form of ritual, authoritative commands and prayer. The indentifying of past sins serves to break the hold of these spirits over an area.
Three Fundamental Principles

1) Sit (Eph 2:6)

2) Walk (Eph 4:1)

3) Stand (Eph 6:11)
11 Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.
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.
13 Therefore put on the full armour 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, 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.
Our Weapons

- Helmet of Salvation
- Breastplate of Righteousness
- Belt of Truth
- Sword of the Spirit
- Shield of Faith
- Sandals of Peace
Seven Effective Weapons

1) The Belt of Truth (Is 11:5)
   - The facts about the Lord Jesus - the cross and the resurrection
   - Watch out for a different Jesus.
   - (The devil wants to deceive us about the truth of Jesus.)

2) The Breastplate of Righteousness (Is 59:17)
   - Jesus is our Righteousness (Jer 23:6, I Cor 1:30)
   - Righteousness refers to our relationship with God and one another.
   - (The devil wants to destroy relationships.)

3) The Gospel of Peace (Is 52:6-10)
   - Jesus is our Peace and brings the good news.
   - Always ready to witness for the gospel
   - (Peace is about unity and harmony; the devil wants to cause division and discord)
4) The Shield of Faith (Is 40:38; Ps 18:1-3)
- (Faith trusts in God’s promises; the devil wants us to lose faith in God’s word, and doubt God’s care.)
- The Lord Jesus is our protection and shield.
- Do not doubt God’s Word/Promise.

5) The Helmet of Salvation (Is 49:6; 51:8; Jer 3:23)
- Jesus brings us our salvation.
- Salvation refers to the Christian life, becoming holy.
- (The devil wants to derail our Christian walk.)

6) The Sword of the Spirit (Is 11:4; 49:2)
- God Word is centred in Jesus (Jn 1:1)
- The Sword of the Spirit is the Word of God.

7) Prayer
- Jesus is our High priest praying for us and our model of prayer.
Ephesians 1

“In the first chapter of Ephesians, Paul mentions the will of God seven times. God clearly has a plan and that plan involves us. He bestows his power on us to live according to his will and to fulfil the mission he has given to us. This involves above all:

- Getting rid of sinful thoughts and practices and acquiring virtue
- Tangibly demonstrating love according to the ultimate pattern laid by Christ, who willingly sacrificed his own life for others
- Coming alongside others and helping them grow in the Christian life
- Using one’s own giftedness to give to others in the Christian community
- Creating and maintaining unity in the Christian community
- Developing healthier family relationships
- Spreading the good news of Christ to others

(Arnold, Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare, 1997, page 41)
The Secrets of Spiritual Warfare

1 Secret One
→ You have three enemies: the flesh, the world, and the devil.

2 Secret Two
→ The victory has already been won! Jesus came and conquered!

3 Secret Three
→ You have seven effective weapons: the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the gospel shoes of peace, the shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the Spirit, and prayer.
Three Critical Questions

- What happened?
- What is happening now?
- What will happen?
To win in spiritual warfare is:

- For Christ to dwell in our hearts through faith, and to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to be filled with all the fullness of God.
- To live a life worthy of the calling we have received, to be completely humble and gentle, to be patient, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.
- For all to reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, and no longer be infants, blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.
- To put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.
- To speak truthfully to our neighbor, to get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, and be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave us.
To win in spiritual warfare is:

- To be imitators of God and to live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.
- It is not to get drunk on wine, but to be filled with the Spirit, always giving thanks to God for everything, and to submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.
- For wives, submit to their husbands as to the Lord.
- For husband to love their wives just as Christ loved the church.
- For children to obey their parents in the Lord.
- For fathers not to exasperate their children but to bring them up in the instruction of the Lord.
- For employees to obey their bosses with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as they would obey Christ.
- For employers to treat their employees well, not threatening them.
- To pray on all occasions for all Christians, and especially for pastors and missionaries, with all kinds of prayers and requests.
Selected Bibliography

Watchman Nee, *Sit, Walk, Stand*.
Hiebert, P. “Spiritual Warfare and Worldview”