

SPIRITUAL WARFARE & DELIVERANCE

There's a conflict that is actively taking place all around us that originates in a dimension outside of our natural understanding. The Bible is clear that we are in a spiritual war with an enemy whose goal is to destroy us. This battle is with spiritual forces and its outcome will affect not only our lives on earth but possibly where we spend eternity. **Ephesians 6:12 (TPT)** tells us that we are not battling human beings, but **"the highest principalities and authorities operating in rebellion under the heavenly realms. They are a powerful class of demon-gods and evil spirits that hold this world in bondage."**

WHERE DID SATAN & DEMONS COME FROM?

Satan used to be a high-ranking angel who was created by God, but he chose to rebel against God (**Ezekiel. 28, Isa. 14**). Demons are **FALLEN ANGELS** who joined Satan in his rebellion against God (**Rev. 12:7-9**). A war erupted in Heaven in which the archangel Michael and his angels fought against Satan and his angels. Satan and the other fallen angels were defeated and were cast out of heaven. Despite being thrown out of heaven, Satan's demons continue to serve him in his plot to control the earth by luring people into sin. **John 10:10** tells us that Satan has come to **"kill, steal and destroy"**. Satan is trying to destroy us and populate hell; God is trying to rescue us and populate heaven! God has already determined Satan's final destiny. Satan and his demons will ultimately be sent to the eternal lake of fire in hell (**Rev. 20:10**).

HOW DOES SATAN TRY TO ATTACK US?

The primary way that Satan tries to attack us is in our **THOUGHTS**. Satan frequently uses **LIES** about God to try to separate us from God. He tries to convince us that God does not love us, that He doesn't hear us, and He doesn't want what is best for us. **John 8:44** calls him **"the father of lies"**! Satan also tries to tell us lies about ourselves. He is constantly bombarding us with lies of self-doubt, discouragement, rejection, insecurity and weakness. Another frequent strategy the enemy uses against us is **FEAR**. He tries to intimidate us and convince us that he is stronger than God! God knows that this is one of Satan's favorite tactics and so we are instructed 365 times in the Bible not to be afraid. God is in **NO** way threatened or intimidated by Satan, and Satan is absolutely no match for God! Jesus will ultimately overthrow Satan by **"the breath of His mouth and destroy him by the splendor of His appearing!"** (**2 Thes. 2:8**).

WHAT WEAPONS CAN WE USE TO FIGHT THIS BATTLE?

God has given Christians many supernatural weapons to use in our spiritual battle against Satan and his demons. All of these weapons are only effective because of the delegated power and authority that we have been given as God's children. If we are not intimately connected to God, by Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, we will have absolutely **NO** authority over the enemy. Jesus said that we must remain in life-union with Him or else we would be powerless (**John 15:5**). Some of the powerful spiritual weapons that God has given us to defeat the enemy are: the **WORD** of God, the **NAME** of Jesus, the **BLOOD** of Jesus, **PRAISE** and worship, **PRAYER** and praying in **TONGUES**.

WHAT IS DELIVERANCE?

Deliverance is **SETTING PEOPLE FREE** from demonic influences that are oppressing them. Satan and his demons are constantly looking for ways to destroy people (**1 Peter 5:8**). They are looking for any opportunity or “open door” through which they can gain access into our lives. Deliverance is the ministry, through the power of the Holy Spirit, that takes authority over, and casts out, demonic influences in people's lives so that they can be free. Jesus said that He came “**to set the captives free**” (**Luke 4:18**), and “**to destroy the works of the devil**” (**John 3:8**). Christians have been given authority over Satan and his demonic forces, and we are to continue Jesus's ministry of setting people free from the bondage of the enemy. Jesus not only gave His followers the authority, but He commanded His disciples on numerous occasions to cast out demons (**Luke 10:18-19; Matthew 10:1; Matthew 10:8; Mark 6:7**).

HOW DOES THE DEVIL GAIN ACCESS?

There are a number of different ways that the enemy can gain access into a person's life through “open doors”. Some of the primary access points are:

- **HABITUAL SIN** (involvement in drugs, pornography, addictions)
- **Wrong REACTIONS** to hurts and offenses (anger, unforgiveness, bitterness)
- **GENERATIONAL Inheritance** (family involvement in occult, witchcraft, curses)
- **INVITING** a demon in, or someone in authority over the person inviting a demon in.

Sometimes the “open door” is due to sins the individual committed, and in other cases the individual is a victim of sins that have been committed against them.

HOW DO WE GET THE ENEMY OUT?

If any unconfessed sin is connected to demonic activity in a person's life, the demon will not leave until that sin is confessed and repented of, or the person who sinned against them is forgiven. If a person is not ready to **REPENT** of any sin in their life, or **FORGIVE** the person who sinned against them, they will not be able to take authority over the enemy! When an individual chooses to yield to the revelation and conviction of the Holy Spirit about what the “open doors” of the enemy are into their life, and they repent and have forgiven where necessary, casting the demon out can be a very quick and easy process. However, if the level of access that the enemy has is very deep or if the doors have been open for a long time through habitual sin, occult involvement, etc, the deliverance process may take longer and could include some demonic manifestations. The Bible is clear that the enemy does not want to be evicted and will often try to resist! (**Matthew 8:28-34**)

WE MUST CHOOSE TO YIELD OUR LIVES

The Bible tells us in **James 4:7** that the enemy will flee from us if we **SUBMIT** ourselves to God, and **RESIST** the devil. God has given Christians authority over all the works of the enemy. However, the one thing that we do not have authority over is the will of another individual. Unfortunately, there are times when a person does not want to be free from the power of the enemy! So, if they choose to continue to allow a demon access to their life, we do not have the authority to override their decision and cast the demon out. Our freedom to **CHOOSE** God -or not - is something that God will never violate. We get to choose to love and obey God and live a life of freedom and fulfillment, or allow the enemy to keep us in bondage separated from the love and blessings of God.

“Choose this day whom you will serve...

As for me and my household, we will serve the **LORD!**”

Joshua 24:15

