

# EXPANDING OUR VISION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

## Powers and Principalities

Vern & Carla Sterk - March 28, 2009

### Scriptural Basis

For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. (*Eph. 6:12-13 NRSV*)

**This is no afternoon athletic contest that we'll walk away from and forget about in a couple of hours. This is for keeps, a life-or-death fight to the finish against the Devil and all his angels.** (*Eph. 6:12-13 The Message*)

### The Kingdom of Satan

*Job 1:7* Satan roaming the earth. . . . .

*Peter 5:8* Your enemy prowls around like a lion . . . . .

*Mk 4:15* Satan takes away the Word. . . . .

*2 Cor 11:14* Satan disguises as light. . . . .

*2 Thes 2:9* Satan performs signs and wonders. . . . .

*Rom 16:20* God will crush Satan. . . . .

*Acts 26:18*: Satan = Darkness. . . . .

### The Kingdom of God

*Psa 24:1* The Earth is the Lords...

*1 Cor 10:26* The earth and its fullness are the Lords

*Mk 4:26* God sows the seed/Word

*Jn 8:12* I am the light of the world

*Rom 15:19* God works through signs and wonders

*Rev 11:15* Christ will reign forever...

*Acts 26:18* God = Light

### The Crafty Deceiver

*2 Cor 4.4*: “the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel”

*Gen 3.1*: “now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals”

### Two Errors

There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors, and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight. -C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*

### Disbelief

“I didn’t see Spiritual Warfare because I wasn’t aware...”

(Warner, The Beginner’s Guide to Spiritual Warfare, p 58)

“The Bible says: ‘Resist the devil’ [*James 4.7*], not ignore him.”

(Ibid, p 59)

### Jesus Christ, the Power Greater Than All Supernatural Power

For in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. (*Col. 1:15*)

He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

(*Col. 2:15*)

He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets.

(*Col 2: 15 The Message*)

The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. (*1 John 4:4*)

## **The Power of Prayer**

"Prayer is neither black magic nor is it a form of demand note. Prayer is a relationship." *John Heuss*

*Acts 1.8a*: But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you...

*John 15.7*: If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. (NRSV)

## **Our Spiritual Weapons**

1. **The name of Jesus** (*John 14:14*) "ask in my name"
2. **Taking authority over powers** and principalities in the name of Jesus (*Luke 9.1*) "He gave them power and authority..."
3. **The blood of Jesus** (*Rev 12:11*) "they overcame the accuser by the blood of the lamb"
4. **Agreement in prayer** (*Mat 18:19*) "if two of you agree"
5. **Faith & prayer with fasting** (*Mat 17:21*) "if you have faith as small as a mustard seed"
6. **Praise** (*Psa 145:2*) "Every day I will praise you"
7. **Word of God** (*Ef 6:17*) sword of spirit = word of God

## **Does Prayer Make a Difference?**

- 1. Hezekiah's illness healed (*2 Kings 20:1-11*)
- 2. Moises pleading for Israel (*Ex*)
- 3. Abraham pleading for Sodom (*Gen 18*)
- 4. Sun stood still for Joshua (*Jos 10:13*)
- 5. Prayer of persistent widow (*Luke 18:1-8*)
- 6. Asking for bread at midnight (*Luke 11:5-8*)

## **Dangers/Pitfalls**

- 1. Make Christianity a new kind of magic to manipulate God
- 2. Lack of discernment (shamans perform miracles, etc.; Satan counterfeits the work of God).
- 3. Wrong priorities - The Gospel tells that God cares for our everyday needs, but, salvation is still the focus and the greatest miracle.
- 4. Sin causes sickness and problems (much sin = much sickness).
- 5. The amount of faith determines if we will be helped by God.

## **Does Scripture indicate that demonstrations of God's power are dependent on our faith in God's promises and expectation of His mighty acts?**

- **Expectant faith**: The woman who touched Jesus' robe (*Mk 5:34*); blind Bartimaeus (*Mk 10:52*); lame man who came to Paul (*Acts 14:9*); centurion (*Matt 8:5-10*), etc.
- **Non-expectant faith**: manna in wilderness (*Ex 16:31*); Jairus' daughter (*Mk 5:42*); 5,000 fed (*Jn 6:9*); Lazarus raised (*Jn 11:40*)
- "When I try to suppress my doubts – to have faith in my faith – I become centered on myself rather than on God" (*Healing, MacNutt, p 96*)
- Biblically, we see that our faith is important, but not a tool to coerce God. The emphasis is on God's part, not ours.
- Our Faith is in God Not in our Faith.

## **The Life of One Who Ministers**

- Life controlled by Holy Spirit “you shall receive power” (*Acts 1.8*)
- Give our failures & problems to Him “Be fit for service” (*1 Pet 5.7*)
- Total intimacy with God through devotional life & prayer “the son only does what he sees the Father doing” (*John 5.19*)
- Don’t be fearful “Put on all the armor” (*Eph 6.10-13*)
- We’re children of the King. “come boldly before the throne of God” (*Heb 4.16*)
- He trusts us with big things. “he who has faith...will do greater things” (*John 14.12*)
- Seek prayer support. We need all of the prayer possible.
- Find a spiritual mentor. We need accountability.
- Deal with skepticism; have discernment “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief” (*Mar 9.24*)
- Learn to listen to God.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Anderson, Neil. Victory Over the Darkness: Realizing the Power of Your Identity in Christ; Steps to Freedom in Christ: Booklet Revision (Paperback); Walking in Freedom, The Bondage Breaker, (...and other books on Freedom in Christ by Neil Anderson)

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An outline of this book can be found at: <http://www.alisonmorgan.co.uk/Wimber%2096.htm>
- Wimber, John. Power Evangelism. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, c1986.