

Lesson 5 & 6

Ministering to the Oppressed

I. Is there a biblical case for Spiritual Warfare?

A. You have to take an active stand.

Ephesians 6:10 -13

Finally, my brethren, **be strong in the Lord** and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be **able to stand** against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the **whole armour of God** that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. **NKJV**

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

B. There is no neutral ground.

"He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad."
Matthew 12:30

C. Jesus taught and modelled warfare.

The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. 1 John 3:8

Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours."

And Jesus answered and said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan![a] For[b] it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'" Luke 4:7-8

37 He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. 38 The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, 39 and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. Matthew 13:37-39

D. The enemy has a ruthless agenda.

The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." John 10:10

Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

1 Peter 5:8 NKJV

Be sober, be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour,

1 Peter 5:8 ASV

E. We see warfare explained in the Paul's Letters.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

*We are human, but we don't wage war with human plans and methods. We use God's mighty weapons, not mere worldly weapons, to knock down the Devil's strongholds... break down every proud argument that keeps people from knowing God... conquer their rebellious ideas, and we teach them to obey Christ. **NLT***

³*For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. **NIV***

F. Ignorance is not bliss in warfare.

³¹*To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³² Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."* John 8:31-32

In order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

2 Corinthians 2:11

G. Warfare is a sign of a believer.

And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; Mark 16:17

II. Those who minister to the oppressed must know the authority of the believer?

- A. The word authority [*exousia*] in scripture means "ability, privilege, force, capacity, delegated influence, jurisdiction."

A traffic policeman does not pray, "Oh Lord, in the name of the city fathers please make this traffic stop." No, he exercises the authority he knows he has. In the same way, believers need to learn what authority is and use it boldly.

- B. Authority is often confused with other things in scripture (Luke 10:19).

¹⁹ I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.

Exousia in the Greek means:

- i. power of choice, liberty of doing as one pleases
- ii. leave or permission
- iii. the power of authority (influence) and of right (privilege)
- iv. the power of rule or government (the power of him whose will and commands must be submitted to by others and obeyed) universally
- v. the power of judicial decisions
- vi. jurisdiction
- vii. a ruler, a human magistrate
- viii. the sign of regal authority, a crown

1. Authority is not the same as power.

In Luke 10:19 many Bible translations use the word power twice but two different words are used in the Greek. The first one speaks of authority while the second speaks of power. A traffic policeman often faces large crowds and fast moving vehicles. They are all more powerful than he is, but they stop at the raising of his hand. This is because he has authority and they are compelled to recognize it.

2. Authority is not the same as being filled with the Spirit.

3. Authority is not the same as exercising spiritual gifts.

4. Authority is not the same as prevailing prayer.

C. The believer's authority is the inherent right of the believer because of his position with Christ in the heavenly realms (Eph 2:6).

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
Ephesians 2:4-7

We experience spiritual authority as believers because we were raised with Christ at His resurrection. This position and authority is not something that we have earned or deserve by virtue of our own works.

A summary of God's redemption plan**1. Delivered us by His Blood.****Colossians 1:13-14 NKJV**

He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

2. Raised us up with Christ.

Philippians 2:9-11

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Ephesians 1:18-22

¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people,¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength²⁰ he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,

James 4:7

⁶But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble."^[a] ⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

- i. **Resist (498)** = To range in battle against, to oppose yourself.
- ii. **Warfare (4752)** = military expedition of campaign.
- iii. **Stronghold (3794)** = castle, fortress, anything on which one relies...fortifying your opinion against an opponent.
- iv. **Stand (2476)** = holding your position in the midst of a fight. One who vanquishes adversaries and holds the ground.

Key points to note

- We need to put the devil back in his place in our minds.
- Powers of darkness are powerful in their own kingdom rankings.
- Powers of darkness only have power over us to the degree to which we yield to their tricks and lies.
- This can be likened to a powerful army defeating a small obscure island. The defeated general might still boast to you that he is ranked general (a power) in his army. He might have people under his authority. This does not affect you because you are from another kingdom that has already won the war.
- We do not fight for victory but FROM victory.

III. What are some common signs of demonic activity in a person's life?

POSSIBLE EVIDENCE OF SPIRITUAL OPPRESSION

COMPULSIVE THOUGHTS

- Extremely low self-image (unworthy, a failure, no good - a constant undermining of the self- identity.)
- Constant confusion in thinking (sometimes great difficulty in remembering things)
- Inability to believe (even when the person wants to)
- Mocking and blasphemous thoughts against preaching/teaching of the Word of God
- Perceptual distortions - perceiving anger, hostility, in others when it doesn't really exist – seeing only judgment in the scriptures.
- Horrible nightmares causing fear (often having demonic images)
- Violent thoughts (suicidal, homicidal, encouraging self-abuse, etc.)

COMPULSIVE FEELINGS

- Hatred and bitterness toward others for no justifiable reason
- Tremendous hostility or fear when encountering someone involved in deliverance work
- Deep depression and despondency (frequently and timely)
- Irrational fears - panic attacks - phobias
- Irrational anger - rage
- Irrational guilt - self-condemnation to the extreme

COMPULSIVE BEHAVIOUR

- Desire to do what is right (inability to carry it out)
- Sudden personality and attitude changes (severe contrasts - appears schizophrenic)
- A strong aversion toward scripture reading and prayer (especially one on one)
- A dark countenance (steely or hollow look in eyes - contraction of the pupils - sometimes facial features contort or change - often an inability to look at you directly)
- Lying, exaggerating, or stealing compulsively (often wondering why)
- Drug abuse (especially when there is demonic hallucinations)
- Eating obsessions - bulimia, anorexia nervosa
- Compulsive sexual sins (especially perversions)
- Irrational laughter or crying
- Irrational violence - compulsion to hurt self and/or someone else
- Sudden speaking of a language not previously known (often an ethnic language of ancestors)
- Reactions to the name and blood of Jesus Christ (verbally or through body language)
- Extreme restlessness (especially in a spiritual environment)
- Uncontrollable cutting and mocking tongue
- Vulgar language and actions

CONSCIOUSNESS PROBLEMS

- Loss of time (from minutes to hours - ending up someplace, not knowing how you got there-regularly doing things of which there is no memory)
- Extreme sleepiness around spiritual things
- Demonstration of extraordinary abilities (either ESP or Telekinesis)
- Voices are heard in the mind (they mock, intimidate, accuse, threaten or bargain)
- Voice speaking from subject - refers to him/her in the third person

- Supernatural experiences - hauntings, movement or disappearance of objects, and other strange manifestations

ABNORMAL MEDICAL PROBLEMS

- Seizures (too long and/or too regular)
- Pain (without justifiable explanation - especially in head and/or stomach)
- Blackouts
- Physical ailments can often be alleviated immediately by a command of spiritual authority (i.e. epileptic seizure, asthma attacks, various pains)
- Sudden interference with bodily functions (temporary) - buzzing in ears, inability to speak or hear, sudden severe headache, hypersensitivity in hearing or touch, sudden chills or overwhelming heat in body, numbness in arms or legs, temporary paralysis

NOTE:

If a person has only a few of the above symptoms which have no apparent demonic connections, then there is probably nothing much to worry about. But if a large number of these symptoms can be checked, there is a likelihood that there is a measure of spiritual oppression that is in place. This should be checked out. After all there is really nothing to lose by doing so, except one's pride.

This section III was adapted from Copyright by Don Rogers, Spiritual Warfare Ministries, Inc.

IV. What are some guidelines in ministering to the oppressed?

- Remain scriptural.** The bible states in 1 Corinthians 4:6 "Do not go beyond what is written." There is a way in which doctrine is established.
- You can't separate deliverance** from discipleship.
- Beware of animism.**
Sacred formulas, sacred places and gadgets, sacred actions. We memorize scripture because it is powerful NOT as a magical incantation to control.
- Emphasize what God emphasises.** The issue of volume e.g. look at scripture and see how much talking to the devil happens. There is more standing than wrestling.
- Know who to blame.** Not everything should be blamed on the devil yet many people only have naturalistic explanations. How you define a problem affects how you solve it.
- Involve the person's will in the process**
Remember that they have authority over their own lives. You can cast out a demon from them but more will return if the person wants them there.

V. How do you minister to those who are oppressed or harassed by demons?

Here are some guidelines for ministering to those in need of deliverance:

1. Inquire regarding salvation:

If you do not know if the person is a Christian, inquire regarding their salvation. Salvation is necessary for true deliverance.

2. Determine the specific problem:

Ask the person, "What is the problem?" Their request is in itself an act of faith that can set in motion the deliverance processes (James 5:14-15). Ask for a specific statement of brief facts.

James 5:14-15 ¹⁴ *Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.* ¹⁵ *And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven.*

Do not try to psychoanalyze the information you are given. Your function is to minister deliverance. Some unique cases may require privacy and more time for counselling. These should be referred to the pastoral staff.

Ask the person who is to be prayed for, "Do you believe Jesus can deliver you?" If they answer positively, then ask, "Do you believe Jesus will do it now?" If the answer is "no" to either of these questions, further instruction from God's Word is needed.

This is the power of agreement.

Use the information from the interview and/or the wisdom God has given to you to determine if the problem is in the:

- Spiritual Realm: Problems related to sin.
- Physical Realm: Bodily sickness caused by demonic spirits of infirmity.
- Emotional Realm: Problems concerning anxiety, fear, anger, bitterness, resentment, guilt, doubt, failure, jealousy, selfishness, confusion, frustration, perfectionism in the energy of the flesh, unforgiveness, and past situations.
- Mental Realm: Problems stemming from negative thinking, attacks of Satan on the mind, mental retardation.

Remember: Because man is a triune being, problems in one realm affect the whole person. As you minister, deal with the whole person, not just one area. Man is body, soul, and spirit: **Wholeness implies dealing with all of these.**

3. Pray the prayer of deliverance:

Pray a prayer of deliverance which focuses on the specific problem of demonic influence which you have identified.

You do not have to persuade God to deliver by your prayer. Just as salvation is already available, the same is true of deliverance. Just as salvation is based on the condition of faith, so is deliverance.

God wants to deliver, just as He wants to save, so close any doors that are open to the enemy. Why did the devil have a right to touch them?

Although the power of God is sometimes present in a special way for deliverance (Luke 5:17), you can still pray without a special anointing because Jesus commanded you to do so just as He told you to spread the Gospel.

Luke 5:17 *"One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick.*

If demonic powers are binding in *oppression* from the outside, pray for their hold to be loosed and their powers to be bound. For example, Jesus loosed the woman in the synagogue from the spirit of infirmity.

Yelling and screaming is not necessary. It is your authority in the name of Jesus that brings deliverance, not the volume of your voice during the prayer of deliverance.

Do not spend time talking with a demon, should it manifest itself through spoken words. Jesus rebuked demons and told them to be quiet (Luke 4:34-35). Remember that any conversation with demons is dangerous because they are lying spirits. Forbid the demons to re-enter. This is an important part of the prayer of deliverance:

When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee come out of him, and enter no more into him.

Mark 9:25

Luke 4:34-35 ³⁴ *“Go away! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”* ³⁵ *“Be quiet!” Jesus said sternly. “Come out of him!” Then the demon threw the man down before them all and came out without injuring him.*

Do not permit the demons to make a show. When Jesus saw the actions of a demon attracting a crowd, He immediately stopped the performance being staged by the evil spirit and cast it out (Mark 9:25).

Do not attempt to cast demons into Hell. Jesus and His disciples did not do this. We have authority only to bind, loose, and cast out (Matthew 8:29).

Matthew 8:29 *“What do you want with us, Son of God?” they shouted. “Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?”*

In cases of demonic possession, sometimes the demons come out with a struggle, such as crying out or throwing the person on the floor. When demons have departed, **there will be a sense of release, joy, like the lifting of a weight.**

Remember the ultimate fate of demons so don't be afraid of them.

Rev 20:20; Job 30:3-8

The legal ground that gave them a right to be there must be destroyed.

Rebuking the demons by name or function often helps.

Receive the Gifts of the Spirit that you might need for the deliverance.

4. Deal with hindrances to receiving deliverance.

John Eckhardt lists a number of hindrances to deliverance:

- Curses
- Pride
- Ungodly soul ties
- Fear
- Unbelief
- Unforgiveness
- Sin
- Passivity
- Occultism
- Embarrassment

- Lack of desire
- Lack of knowledge

5. Provide follow-up instructions:

After deliverance from demonic forces, the counselee should be led in a prayer of confession, repentance, and renouncing of any sins or involvements connected with the demonic activities. If the person has any occult items (for example idols, voodoo items, witchcraft equipment, etc.), these should be destroyed.

When a demon is cast out, he will seek another body through which to operate. Jesus taught that the departure of evil spirits leaves an empty place. There is danger of a demon returning to his former victim accompanied by worse spirits (Luke 11:24-26). When a demon is cast out it is restless and discontent outside of a human body. It is only by indwelling and controlling a human life that a demon is able to fulfil Satan's evil purposes.

This is why casting the spiritual "house" must be filled by the new birth experience and the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Follow-up counselling and ministry is necessary. The person should be immersed in the Word of God and prayer and become part of a community of believers.

Luke 11:24-26

²⁴ "When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.'²⁵ When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. ²⁶ Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first."

Some of these steps are taken from 8 Steps to freedom by Healing Streams Ministry.

VI. How do you know when a demon has left?

It's important to determine that a demon has left. Some spirits leave quietly and non-violently so we need to know the signs of their exit, either through observation or by asking the person a few questions about how they are feeling. Be careful here because sometimes spirits will say something they think we want to hear so that we leave them alone.

1. Often when demons depart we can observe the following:
 - Oppressive force goes
 - Heaviness lifts
 - Uneasiness goes
 - Burden or load lightens
 - The person feels satisfied and peaceful
 - Joy comes (Mt 12:28; Rom 14:17)
2. Demons usually exit through the mouth or nose (breath)
 - Coughing, vomiting, foaming, screaming, roaring, yawning, drooling, spitting, crying, sighing, belching, exhaling.
3. Sometimes the manifestation involves shaking and trembling.