

4.7 Dealing with the powers of darkness [\(Next section\)](#)

Whenever we are involved in spiritual battle it is important to remember to focus on God and not on the powers of darkness. Focusing on what the enemy is doing in order to see him defeated can sometimes consume our attention and become an unhealthy focus. It's almost as though we become more excited by the enemy and his work and are not so excited by God. If this becomes the case we must repent and make sure that we are focusing primarily on God's glory.

In everything we do we must make sure that we are following the leading of the Holy Spirit as closely as we can. It is the Spirit who will lead us into battle just as He led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted (Matt 4:1). Doing things out of our initiative is extremely dangerous.

Before we enter into the battle we also need to make sure that we have no doors of sin open in our lives. Otherwise we endanger ourselves and those around us like Achan did (Josh 7).

Before we enter into a specific time of warfare we must also count the cost. Are we prepared to finish it whatever the cost? Once we start we need to finish.

There are two aspects of spiritual warfare: a 'positive' building up and a 'negative' tearing down.

4.7.a Building up

We do this through proclamation, blessing and living in the opposite spirit

- Proclaiming truth through Evangelism
As we declare the Good News to people we are counteracting the enemy's lies and deceit. This is a very important and practical part of spiritual warfare. Entering into Strategic Prayer is never an excuse for stopping evangelism. We need to constantly speaking out the Good News.

- Proclamation in prayer
This is proclaiming the Good News but directed into the spiritual realm. We need to speak out truth into the heavenlies. Using scripture is obviously a great way to do this. When we speak out the truth of God's word then obviously demonic powers also hear – and hate it!

We can also speak the words out over a people group or nation if though they are not present. The prophets in the Old Testament often spoke out prophetically over nations not present with them.

- Blessing people
As a royal priesthood we can speak out blessing on people. Blessing and cursing are prominent themes in the Bible and we need to be careful to speak positive blessing and not to curse.

We can also call down God's blessing on people and ask the He would bless them. This is of course a key part of our intercessory prayer.

- Living in the opposite spirit
We are called to be the sweet aroma of Christ against the stench of death that comes from the enemy's reign (2 Cor 2:15-16). We are known in the heavenlies, and our presence, when we are walking in godliness and uprightness, is felt by other spiritual beings. So, as we live our lives our choices either bring the Lord's glory into what we are doing or they give the enemy more right to rule.

Also, as we begin to discern the presence and hold of certain spirits, one of the ways to come against these spirits is to purposefully live in the opposite spirit to them. For example, if we discern a spirit of impurity, we guard our heart against it and live in purity; if a spirit of fear, live in a spirit of boldness in Christ; if a spirit of depression and sadness, live in the joy in Christ. We actively seek to nurture these opposites in a very intentional way. This subverts and undermines the power of the kingdom of darkness

4.7.b Tearing down the work of the enemy

This may come about either directly or indirectly

- Prayer to the Father to confront the enemy and strip him of his power
Dealing with the powers of darkness does not necessarily involve direct confrontation with powers of darkness. Often we are praying that God our Father will deal with specific powers of darkness, principalities, demons, etc.
- Confronting the powers of Darkness through prayers of breaking and binding
However, God may lead us at times to direct confrontation with demonic powers. It is wise to only do this:
 - With others and not alone
 - When 2 or 3 people with a track record of hearing God confirm this independently

- In humility with a child-like dependence on our Father
- Without ‘demon chasing’. We must wait on God to reveal what and why.

Knowing our place of authority in the spiritual realm allows us to enter in with confidence. The powers of darkness will know all about us and what authority we have as the story of the Sons of Sceva shows (Acts 19:13-16). The only authority that we have is that of Jesus Christ who has been given all authority (Matt 28:18). It is only in His name (i.e. representing His authority) that we dare to enter into spiritual battle.

We have been given the place of authority to bind and loose and to overcome all the power of the enemy (Lk 10:19-20). Notice that this should not cause us to rejoice. This is no fun hobby. The thing that we rejoice in is our salvation in Christ.

However our authority is limited. The powers in the heavenly realms also have rights and authority in certain areas. We need to know what rights the powers of darkness have been given in a specific situation before we can address them. If they have been invited in through sin or an ‘official’ invocation there must be repentance and cleansing before they can be dealt with.

Story: Jesus said, “How can you possibly spoil the goods unless you first bind the strong man who is guarding the goods?” You can’t “Do the Stuff” until you bind the strong man who is making sure the stuff doesn’t even reach earth. Just as there are evil spirits who inhabit people and cause them some sort of suffering there are also evil spirits who have been assigned to whole nations and people groups. They are in a different world or dimension than the one which we perceive with our five senses. So we need to ask the Lord for the gift of discerning of spirits.

As we began to pray for Colombia in the 80’s the Lord would show us a big fat evil spirit. We called him, “El Hombre Gordo”. He was fattened by all the incredible sinning that the Colombians had been doing for several hundred years. So as we prayed the Lord showed us that He would have to deal with this strong man over Colombia before we could know revival in the land.

In Revelation 12 it was the devil and his angels that were fighting against the Lamb and his angels. What are we to do in prayer then? Why would the Lord show you an evil spirit if you weren’t somehow to be involved in it’s demise? So the Lord would say one day that we were to do some serious spiritual warfare that day. So we would get all geared up for it only for him to tell us that our part in the battle was just to love and worship Him for then next three hours. Another time He said the strategy for that day was to just play games in the Presence of the Lord. We got some balloons out and had a riotous time of loving the Lord with all our hearts. It was crazy, but somehow acting like little children in His presence gave Him what He needed to defeat the enemy.

I believe the secret of all of this is simply to obey the Lord. One day he told us to go up to a specific mountain that overlooked all of Bogotá and pray. Then He took us to Medellin and up another mountain there. Why? I don’t know why. Why did David have to wait around for the wind to stir up the trees before he could go into Battle? Because that’s what the Lord required of David to know the victory.

The secret to overcoming the strong man is to simply obey what the Lord tells you to do. If you are in doubt as to what he meant you can ask Him to confirm what He has said. He will! But I remember the very moment it happened. It was at three minutes to eight one evening and it came after many months where most of our days were spent in warfare type praying. We were so happy that for two weeks we didn’t ask the Lord for one single thing. All we did was worship Him and celebrate His presence among us. It was after this that He began to reveal to us a white book that was written over Colombia. In it were all the things that He was wanting to bring to Colombia and that we were in Christ Jesus “to win” through Strategic Prayer.

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