

SPIRITUAL WARFARE 101

JUDITH MACNUTT

There is an unseen world all around us—the realm of demons, angels and the saints who have gone before us and are interceding for us. In this invisible world there is a battle raging.

When Jesus trained his disciples and then sent them out to preach the Kingdom of God, imbued with his power and authority, they came back with great excitement.

The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." [Jesus] replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

—Luke 10:17-20

When Jesus said, *I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven*, he was looking back through the eyes of time. He was referring to when the angel Lucifer fell from heaven and took one third of the angelic realm with him.

Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

—Revelation 12:7-9

Before he fell from heaven, Satan was an angel of God and he reflected the glory of God. He was beautiful. This is why the things he tempts and entices us with often seem beautiful and right in the beginning. If they didn't, many of us would not be fooled and fall into temptation and sin. When things start



falling apart later, we realize it was all deception.

It helps to know our true enemy. Your enemy is not your spouse, your co-worker, or a person from a different religion or political party. When we look through names used for Satan in the scriptures, we can understand better his nature and his tactics.

The first reference to Satan in the Bible is in Genesis, where he is called a *serpent* (Genesis 3). In the Lord's prayer, he is called the *evil one* (Matthew 6). Other names include: *Satan* (adversary—Zechariah 3), *devil* (slanderer), *Lucifer* (son of the morning or shining one—Isaiah 14), *Beelezebub* (Lord of the flies, or god of

filth—Matthew 12), *tempter* (Matthew 4), *prince of this world* (John 14), *accuser of the brethren* (Revelation 12), and *father of lies* (John 8).

You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

—John 8:44

How can we stand against such an enemy?!

Satan wants to defeat as many people as possible, but we know he is a vanquished foe. The war has been won! We are going to be in some skirmishes, but we are on the side of victory!

Satan hates the cross and the blood of Jesus Christ. He is defeated by our testimony and as we lay down our lives for the gospel. When we testify to the power of God his schemes are crippled because it proves God is at work in our lives!

They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

—Revelation 12:11

The broad strokes of the believer's response to spiritual warfare lie in the areas of faith, recognizing the devil's schemes, binding and loosing, resistance and being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 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. —Ephesians 6:10-12

This passage does not describe deliverance or exorcism, but an ongoing war, a battle for our minds and hearts that takes place every day of our lives. We need revelation, knowledge and wisdom to understand our enemy and the deeper areas of

spiritual battle. We need to pray daily for protection from the enemy's destructive plans over our lives and those of our loved ones. We need to understand and "put on" the full armor of God (Ephesians 6).

BE STRONG IN THE LORD AND IN HIS MIGHTY POWER

Being strong in HIS mighty power is the key, not living in our own strength. Living in our own strength means we wake up in the morning and as we rush out the door we say, "Lord, bless what I am doing today."

Being strengthened by the Holy Spirit means before we put our feet on the floor we say, "Lord, I am yours today. What are we going to do today? Strengthen me for whatever you have planned for me."

The "god of this world" has so blinded us that people cannot see God's Kingdom at work. Pray in faith for those who have fallen prey to his schemes. Especially pray in your prayer language. Our prayer language is the Spirit of God praying directly to God the Father, and the enemy cannot stand in the face of this resistance.

SUBMIT YOURSELVES, THEN, TO GOD. RESIST THE DEVIL, AND HE WILL FLEE FROM YOU. (JAMES 4:7)

Know your identity as a child of God and learn to exercise your authority in Christ. Every time we pray in faith and exercise our authority in things of the Spirit, the Kingdom of darkness is pushed back.

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

—Matthew 16:19

Spiritual warfare does not have to create fear in us. Jesus didn't fear Satan or belittle him, he just dealt with him in wisdom and with the Word of God. We can do the same. Remember that he is a defeated foe!

You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. —1 John 4:4





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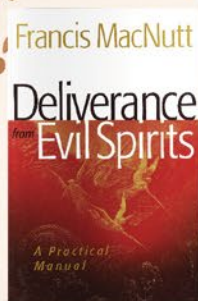
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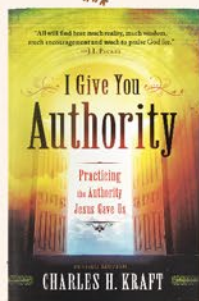
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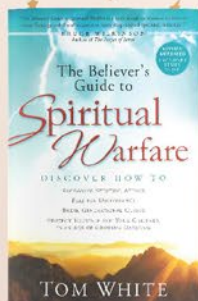
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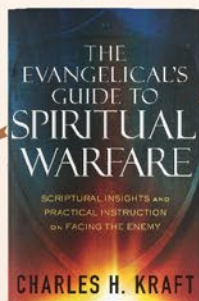
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