

**Omega Course:
Practical Church Planter Training**

Published by
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Printed in the United States of America

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We extend heartfelt thanks and grateful acknowledgment to all who have contributed to the preparation of these training manuals. The following persons have given so very much to the process of writing and editing these materials. Lord, plant your Church...to the ends of the earth!

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WITH SPECIAL THANKS FOR THEIR ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

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ABOUT THE ALLIANCE

This curriculum has been prepared by *The Alliance for Saturation Church Planting* in cooperation with Project 250 of Peter Deyneka Russian Ministries. *The Alliance* is a partnership of churches and mission agencies committed to mobilizing believers to saturate each country in Central/Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union with evangelical churches. Saturation Church Planting is a strategy that seeks to establish local churches in every town, village and neighborhood so that those who accept Christ will have a local fellowship in which to grow in Christ and be equipped for ministry. *The Alliance* is built on the premise that joining forces will increase effectiveness, reduce duplication, and demonstrate unity within the body of Christ.

WHAT WE BELIEVE:

- The local church is God's primary tool for evangelism and discipleship.
- Partnership with churches and mission organizations is crucial for the multiplication of local churches and the development of saturation church planting movements.
- Training leaders is essential to church planting and church growth.
- The Lausanne Covenant is the statement of faith for *The Alliance*.

WHAT WE DO:

Church Planter Training and Mentoring

The Alliance provides skill-based training in seminar fashion with practical ministry assignments geared towards starting reproducing churches.

Information Gathering

Accurate information leads to good decisions in the church planting task. *The Alliance* can help with training and consultation for your information gathering needs in the areas of church planting and church growth.

Prayer Movement Consulting

A church planting movement starts with vision, which is discovered and refined through seeking God's heart in prayer. *The Alliance* can help you better understand the role of prayer movements in the church planting task, and how you can facilitate a prayer movement in your region.

Vision Casting

What does God want for your country? He wants churches everywhere! *The Alliance* can help foster a vision for new churches with conceptual seminars on the principles of saturation church planting.

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Understanding Worldview

☛ Lesson Purpose

To help the church planter understand the concept of worldview and to show how deeply one's view of the world affects his own Christian life, how he does ministry, and how he interprets his ministry situation.

☛ Main Points

- Commonly held worldviews contrast with a biblical worldview.
- Worldview effects church planting.

☛ Desired Outcomes

When the content of this lesson has been mastered, each participant should . . .

- Be aware of the importance of having a proper worldview.
- Know the scriptural basics about the realms of God, angels, man and nature.
- The church planter will be able to examine his ministry situation in the light of a biblical worldview.

INTRODUCTION

When we speak of worldview we are speaking of the core beliefs and understandings that a person has about the world. Each person, whether he knows it or not, has beliefs deep in his soul which determine his actions and behavior and help him explain the world around him. Worldview helps people understand nature, other people and the supernatural world. As people grow, their experiences result in the formation of a worldview which may or may not accurately interpret reality.

When we speak of a biblical worldview, we are speaking of what the Scriptures say about the universe, what is real, what is true, what IS. Logically there can be ONLY one reality, one truth or explanation of what IS. We believe that Scriptures present this explanation of the world. And it is by this truth that we seek to measure or check our understanding of the world.

It is very important that church planters have a biblical worldview in order to properly interpret the circumstances of their ministry. This is especially true concerning spiritual warfare. If a person does not have a biblical worldview, he may not recognize attacks from Satan, or he may not know how to respond to the attacks. In this lesson we will explore common worldviews and how the biblical worldview is foundational to understanding spiritual warfare.

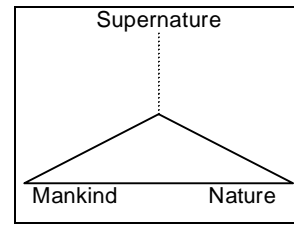
I. Common Worldviews

One way to understand worldviews is to look at three components of the universe: supernature, nature and mankind. We will use these three components to explain three common worldviews below.

Let's say that a person is sick. How do we interpret that event? It all depends on worldview. As we describe the worldviews below we will see how each explains this sickness.

A. Secular Worldview

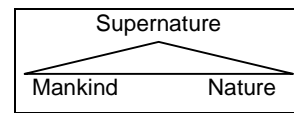
In the secular worldview, the natural world and the realm of mankind are controlled by “natural laws”, which perhaps a creator god established, but which today operate without any supernatural involvement. The existence of the supernatural world, including God and spirit beings, may be denied completely by secular people. Or, if the supernatural exists, secular people assume that it is separate from the natural/mankind world. Whatever connection there may be, it is believed to be a very distant one.



Secular people accept the premise that every phenomenon has a natural or human cause. For the one who is sick, a germ, or mosquito, or other illness infected the body. Everything can be explained scientifically. The person should seek medical treatment to get better, according to this worldview.

B. Animistic Worldview

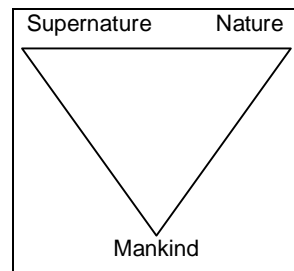
The animistic worldview is nearly the opposite of the secular worldview. In this worldview the supernatural world is extremely close to the natural and mankind realms. Spirits from the supernatural realm may live in natural objects and people and these spiritual beings have power to control things. If a person pleases these spirits he can gain merit, including protection or healing. If a spirit is angry it can cause great harm.



The sick man, according to this worldview, has upset the spirits or a spell has been put on him. In order to be well again this person will need to do something to please the spirits or break the spell. The treatment in this case may even defy medical knowledge, which is not to be trusted in the animistic worldview.

C. Fatalistic Worldview

The fatalistic worldview is based on the belief that man has no control over the world around him. Supernatural and natural forces direct the track of history, and man lives as best he can in that predestined fate. One Shinto writer put it so well: *“Life is like a leaf floating in a river. The leaf can get stuck in a little whirlpool, or it may flow along peacefully in a quiet stream, or it may come upon rapids, water of great turmoil. The leaf has no control over where it goes. So humans are trapped in their fate.”*



The treatment then for the sick man may be to do nothing. There may be no attempt to treat him as well as no attempt to determine the reason for the sickness.

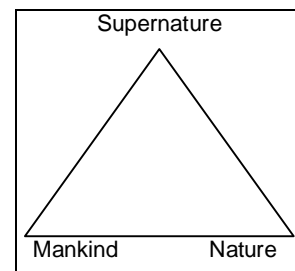
II. A Biblical Worldview

The biblical worldview, as we have already said, teaches the proper worldview. The proper worldview sees the three components as they actually interact with one another.

A. Supernature

1. God the Creator

The book of Genesis opens with the words, “In the beginning God...” This is our natural foundation for building a worldview. God Almighty, existing out of time, eternal, self sustaining, Creator of heaven and earth, without equal or rival, in His sovereignty controls the happenings of history. In contrast to the secular worldview, Scripture teaches that God is involved in history. For instance



- He directed the history of Israel in preparation for the Messiah.
- Christ came into the world and lived among mankind.
- Christ ascended into heaven and sent the Holy Spirit upon His church.

The Bible affirms the active work of the Holy Spirit in and through the lives of believers. The Holy Spirit is active today. He convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment (Jn 16:8-11). He gives the believer new life (Ro 8:11). He testifies that we are God's children (Ro 8:16). The Holy Spirit helps us to pray (Ro 8:26) and He teaches (Jn 14:26, 1Jn 2:27).

Scripture does not teach that God and Satan are equal yet opposite forces. According to the biblical worldview, God is self-existent and Satan is created. Satan does not have power equal to God's. God controls Satan as seen in Job chapter 1. Before Satan could do anything to Job, he had to receive God's permission.

2. Created Spirit Beings (Satan and Angels)

The story of creation continues. Though the Genesis account does not include the creation of angels, we read in Colossians 1:16 that God (in Christ) created all things, in heaven and on earth, visible and **invisible**. Though the New Testament records very little about angels, it is clear that they are active in our world today (Heb 13:2). Many evangelicals believe that Revelation 12:4 refers to the fact that when Satan fell he took one third of the angels with him. These "bad angels" are also known as demons. We know that demons also are active in our world (Jas 3:15, 1Ti 4:1). Again, this is in contrast to the secular worldview but closer to the animistic worldview in that both recognize that there is a battle between God and Satan. In the animistic worldview, the victory in battle depends on whose "god" is stronger. If two tribes war against each other, the tribe with the greater god will be victorious. In contrast, Scripture teaches that God is the victor. A seeming contradiction is found in Joshua 7. There God's people were defeated in battle. A careful look at the text shows that this was not because some other god or spirits defeated God, but because His people suffered the consequence of their sin. God was not defeated. He permitted Israel to be defeated because of disobedience.

Consider your own understanding of angels and demons. To what extent can they act in your daily activities? Are they limited to the level of the intellect and mind? Can they be involved in physical activity? Can we be sure of victory over Satan? We will discuss these ideas in more depth in the following lessons on Spiritual Warfare.

B. Nature

The creation account continues with how God created the material world. Here also there are many different worldviews or perceptions of the material world. Some say it does not matter - it is just an appearance (fatalistic); some identify with the earth as "mother nature" and maintain a reverent respect for it (animistic); others hold it is something man must conquer and rule over (secular).

According to the Bible, God's creation was designed to declare the glory of God (Psalm 19). Nothing is more awesome, impressive, or beautiful than the world itself - high mountains, crashing waves, waterfalls, underground caves, green fields, frost covered trees, fields of flowers, sunrises and sunsets; God's creation does declare His glory! Satan's goal is to destroy or mar God's creation. If Satan cannot destroy God then he will attempt to destroy that which glorifies God. It is interesting that God's assignment to Adam was to cultivate and keep the garden (Ge 2:15). Our worldview should reflect God's intention for His creation - that it might glorify Him. Do our activities in the material world glorify God?

C. Mankind

Finally, we come to the creation of man in the Genesis account. Man was created out of the natural world (that is, the dust) but God also breathed the breath of life into him and created man in His own image. Thus man is a complex being; he is both material and spiritual. This is the teaching of Scripture. Man is not just physical - a mix of chemicals and cells as some hold (secular). Man is not just spiritual, as some fatalistic Eastern worldviews hold. Man has a spirit

and a physical body (Ge 3:7). Part of the great mystery of man is that he has a free will. God does not force man into behavior or thinking or program him as a robot. In contrast to the fatalistic worldview, man is not trapped in some "river" of life called fate. He has a will and makes choices. He may choose to love God, and he may choose to reject God (Jos 24:15).

III. Worldview And Church Planting

The Scriptures show us that God is not battling Satan. Satan has already been conquered (1Jn 3:8, Col 2:15, Heb 2:14-15). Through the Gospel as it is declared by the Church, God seeks to reconcile man to Himself, while Satan seeks to deceive man (Rev 12:9), devour him (1Pe 5:8), tempt him (1Th 3:5), and accuse him (Rev 12:10).

Spiritual warfare takes place within the realm of man. As the apostle Paul states in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, this war is for our minds - our worldview:

"For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 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."

Note how the apostle Paul makes a connection between destroying strongholds and arguments and taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. Finally, consider John 8:32, "*You will know the truth and the truth will set you free.*" The more we know the truth and act on it, the more we will be victorious. This will be explained in more detail in the next lesson, "Relationships in Spiritual Warfare."

It is extremely important that we as church planters have an understanding of the world as it actually is - that is, as explained in Scripture. Church planting is spiritual warfare. Satan will attack in any way he can as churches are planted. If we do not have a proper worldview then Satan may attack (for example, through sending sickness) and we may not even recognize it! A correct understanding of biblical worldview helps the church planter to correctly discern what is happening in his life and ministry.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION, REVIEW AND APPLICATION

- As you have been exposed to the truth of this lesson, have you identified any practices in your own life that are inconsistent with the biblical worldview? What about practices of those who are in your target area?
- How do these inconsistencies in your life affect your relationship with God, your spouse, your children or the lost?
- If a church planter becomes very ill, does this mean that Satan is attacking him through sickness? When might this be the case?

ACTION PLAN

- Meet with another believer and explain the main ideas of this lesson. Share how your behavior is going to change in response to the new truths you have learned.
- Think about the worldview of the people who are in your target area. In what way is their worldview the same as the biblical worldview? In what way is it different? How will this effect your strategy for evangelism? How and what will you teach new converts in order to bring their worldview more in line with the biblical worldview?

SOURCES

- Warner, Timothy M. *Spiritual Warfare: Victory over the Powers of This Dark World*. Good News Pub. 1991.
- *Demon Possession*. Edited by John W. Montgomery. Minneapolis, MI: Bethany House, 1976.

Dynamics of Spiritual Warfare

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help the church planter understand the dynamics of relationships between God, man and spirit beings in spiritual warfare, and the position and authority of the believer over Satan in Christ.

☞ Main Points

- A correct understanding of the relationship between God, man and spirit beings is essential for victory in spiritual warfare.
- The battle for the mind is won by applying God's truth to Satan's lies.

☞ Desired Outcomes

When the contents of this lesson have been mastered, each participant should...

- Know that church planting is spiritual war.
- Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might by knowing his identity in Christ.
- Be able to defend himself against demonic attacks.

☞ Appendix

2A Inductive Bible Study: Ephesians 4:17- 5:21

☞ Suggestions to Trainers

This lesson contains many doctrinal concepts with many verses cited. Please study it carefully before presenting it to the trainees. Select the main points and verses which you might have them look up during the training.

Included in this lesson is a diagram (figure 2.1) showing these relationships. You may want to put this on a transparency or poster to accompany your teaching.

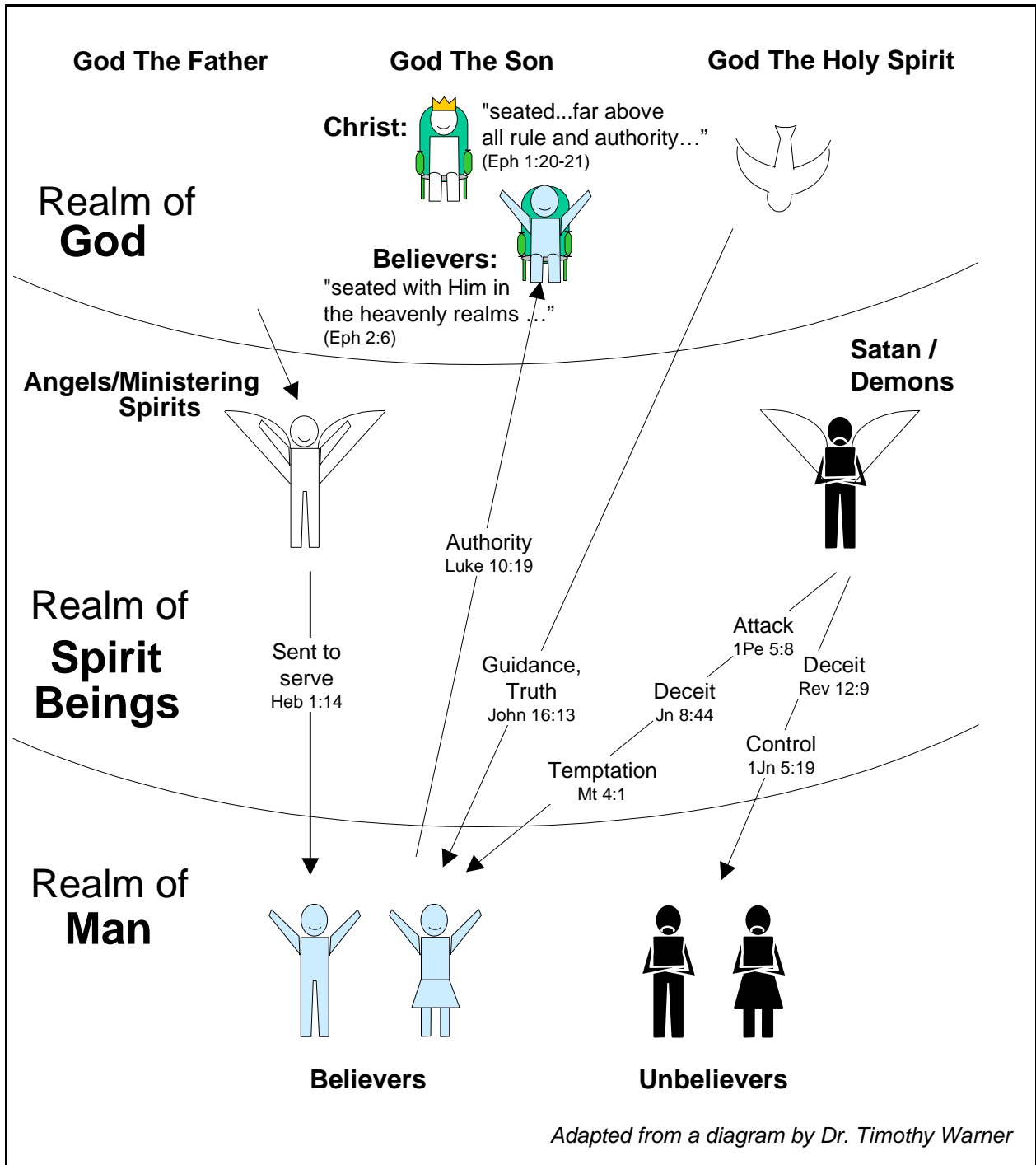
INTRODUCTION

Church planters who are in the process of building up new congregations of believers find themselves invading enemy territory. Satan, the "prince of this world" (Jn 16:11), does not want the church planter to open the eyes of unbelievers so that they might turn from darkness to light and find forgiveness for their sins (Acts 26:18). There is a real spiritual battle going on, and church planters who do not realize this will find themselves woefully unprepared to deal with the attacks that come their way. Not only must they be personally prepared for spiritual warfare, they must also know how to help the new believers and emerging church stand firm against the enemy.

Every competent general who plans his tactics for battle knows his own strategies, strengths and weaknesses, as well as those of his opponent. He understands how his opponent thinks and acts. The church planter must also know his own strengths and weaknesses, and he must understand the strategies that Satan will attempt to use to attack him. In order to grasp the dynamics of the spiritual battle in which he finds himself, the church planter needs to understand the realm of God, the realm of man, and the realm of spirit beings in this world, and how they interrelate one with another. He must understand and believe the truth of who he is in Christ, as that truth will be the most important weapon he has in the spiritual battles that he will face.

Figure 2.1 shows the interrelationships between the realms of God, spirit beings and man. This diagram will visually help to explain some of the concepts presented in this lesson.

Figure 2.1. Relationships in Spiritual Warfare: The Realms of God, Spirit Beings, and Man



I. The Realm Of God

God is the Great "I AM", the eternal, self-sustaining, self-sufficient, non-created Creator of all things and supreme Ruler of the Universe. He is all-powerful, all-knowing, everywhere-present and always Holy, Righteous, Mercy, Love, Truth and Faithful. HE HAS NO EQUAL.

God is a triune God, a unity in diversity. The three members of the Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - all share the moral attributes of the Godhead. They differ only in their role, but even that is sometimes hard to distinguish. For example, the Father is said to be the Creator (Dt 32:6). But in John 1:3, all things are said to have been created through the Word (the Son).

A. God the Father

For this study, the most important role of God the Father is centered around redemption: He loved the world and sent the Son to be the Savior (Jn 3:16; 1Jn 4:10). He raised Jesus from the dead (Col 2:12). He has "rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves" (Col 1:13) and He protects His children by the power of His name (Jn 17:11).

B. God the Son

The role of God the Son, Jesus Christ, is focused primarily on His entrance into time and space. He was one with the Father (Jn 10:30) who shared in His attributes from all eternity (Jn 1:1,2). He was "the fullness of the Deity in bodily form" (Col 2:9). He came into the world to be "God with us" (Mt 1:23). But when He came into the world, he took on the form of a servant (Php 2:6,7). He always did the Father's will (Jn 6:38). He died on the cross as a sin offering for us (Ro 8:3) and was raised on the third day (1Co. 15:4).

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father, where He makes intercession for us (Ro 8:34). He is the giver of eternal life (Jn 17:3). Now in His glory (Jn. 17:24), He has all power (authority) in heaven and on earth (Mt 28:18-20). He is the "head over everything for the church" (Eph 1:22).

With regard to the spirit world, He is greater than angels (Heb 1:5-2:9). He is the head over every power and authority (Col 2:10). Someday, every knee in heaven and on earth and under the earth shall bow before Him (Php 2:10).

C. God the Holy Spirit

The role of God the Holy Spirit is mentioned primarily in relationship to the believer. He is most often called the Holy Spirit, but also the Spirit of truth (Jn 16:13), the Spirit of life (Ro 8:2), and the Spirit of the living God (2Co 3:3).

It is He who gives new life to the believer (Ro 8:11), who controls the believer (Ro 8:9), who testifies that we are God's children (Ro 8:16), who helps us to pray (Ro 8:26-27), and who convicts the world of guilt in regard to sin (Jn 16:8-11). He is our Counselor/Helper (Jn 14:16), and our Teacher (Jn 14:26). He lives in God's children (Ro 8:9), He testifies about Jesus (Jn 15:27), and brings glory to Him. He is greater than the "world" (1Jn 4:4).

II. The Realm Of Man

When God created Man, he made Him male and female in His image: two individuals that would be one, thus reflecting the unity in diversity of the Godhead (Ge 1:26,27). With regard to spirit beings, Man was made "a little lower than the heavenly beings" but was "crowned with glory and honor" (Ps 8:5). He was made ruler over the works of God's hands, and everything was put under his feet (Ps 8:6).

However, Man chose to listen to the lies of the devil, sinned against God and fell into sin. So all mankind became sinners (Ro 3:23), dead in trespasses and sin (Eph 2:1), without hope and without God in the world (Eph 2:12) and condemned to death (Jn 3:17; Ro 6:23). Man's right to rule was usurped by the devil, so that now he lives in a world ruled by Satan (Mt 4:8,9).

When a person becomes a believer in Jesus Christ, he continues to live in the world but no longer belongs to it (Jn 15:19). He is delivered by Christ from the power of darkness and translated into the

kingdom of His dear Son (Col 1:13). He is hated and persecuted by the world (Jn 16:18-21) and also by Satan and his demons (Eph 6:11). The believer is part of a spiritual war between God and His forces and Satan and His forces (2Co 10:3-5).

III. The Realm Of Spirit Beings

A. Angels/Ministering Spirits

Although the Bible speaks frequently of angels, there is no systematic description of them. We do know that they are created beings (Ps 148:2,5; Col 1:16) who are inferior to God (Heb 1:4), but superior to man (Ps 8:5). They have great knowledge, but are not omniscient (1Pe 1:12). They have great power, but are not omnipotent (Ac 12:7-11). Although usually not seen, when they were seen they were described as “shining” and “white as snow” (Eze 1:13,14; Mt 28:3). They are messengers of God (Ac 7:38) who “always carry out the Father’s will perfectly” (Mt 6:10). In relation to man, they are “ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation” (Heb 1:14).

B. Demons/Fallen Angels

Although nowhere explicitly stated, it is accepted by evangelicals that demons are fallen angels (2Pe 2:4). Evangelicals believe that Revelation 12:7-9 speaks of Satan and his angels being hurled from heaven to the earth. Jude 1:6 speaks of angels who did not keep their positions of authority.

Throughout the gospels we see that one of their weapons is to afflict people with various sicknesses such as blindness, deafness, dumbness, and epilepsy. Satan is their ruler (Mt 12:24). They are so united in their evil purposes that when the disciples reported that they had cast out demons, Jesus said “I saw Satan fall like lightening from heaven” (Lk 10:17,18).

C. Satan

Who is Satan? He is a created being, probably a fallen angel. He is a sinner whose work Jesus came to destroy (1Jn 3:8). He is called the prince of this world (Jn 16:11) and the “god of this world” (2Co 4:4). Other titles given to him are murderer and liar (Jn 8:44); a roaring lion who goes about trying to devour people (1Pe 5:8; 2Ti 4:17); deceiver of nations (Rev 12:9; 20:3,10); accuser of the brethren (Zec 3:1; Rev 12:10); angel of light (2Co 11:14); ancient serpent, devil, dragon (Rev 12:7,9; 20:2); prince of demons, Beelzebub (Mt 12:24; Lk 11:15).

What does Satan do? He leads the whole world astray (Rev 12:9). Satan has the whole world under his control (1Jn 5:19). He performs counterfeit signs and miracles (2Th 2:9). He roams the whole earth looking for prey to devour (Job 1:7; 1Pe 5:8). He wages war against God’s people (Rev 12:17). He holds the power of death (Heb 2:14).

What are Satan’s limits? He can go no further than God permits (Job 1:12). He is a defeated foe! (Rev 12:7-9). What is Satan’s final destiny? He will be crushed by God (Ro 16:20). God will destroy Satan (Heb 2:14) and will throw Him into the lake of burning sulfur (Rev 20:10).

IV. The Realm Of The Battle

When we became Christians we were transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light (Col 1:13). Although we continue to live in the physical world, as citizens of the kingdom of God we are seated with Christ in the heavenlies (Eph 2:6). We are aliens and strangers in the world (1Pe 2:11). As a result, we no longer live by the standards of the world (2Co 10:12). Therefore, the world and its ruler, Satan, hate us (Jn 17:14) and war against us.

In the next Spiritual Warfare lesson “Spiritual Battles” we will look at different arenas where Satan attacks the believer. Here we look at the primary arena; the mind.

“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish

strongholds. 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" (2Co 10:3-5).

Notice that we are to use supernatural power against arguments and thoughts. Satan's first arena of attack is the mind.

Satan is a liar and the father of lies (Jn 8:44). One of his tactics against believers is to deceive them into believing that lies are really true. The lie may be against the nature of God and His Word, as it was with Eve (Ge 3:1-4; 2Co 11:13). Jesus himself is the truth (Jn 14:6). In His prayer to the Father in John 17, He prayed "Sanctify them by the truth. Your word is truth" (Jn 17:17). We must stand firm on the truths of God's Word.

Satan's lie is often to make us believe that we are not saints saved by grace but sinners who are powerless to overcome our sinful condition. Our defense against this lie is also the truth. Jesus said "And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." When Satan tempts us to think we are nothing, we are helpless, we have no power, etc. We must fight back with truth. In Christ, we have authority over Satan and his demons. The Church, the Body of Christ, already has ultimate victory over the powers of darkness. This is a truth that church planters must live and teach. Below are some verses that tell who the believer is in Christ. Memorize these verses and when Satan tempts you to believe a lie, use these truths against him.

Figure 2.1 Who I am in Christ

As a believer in Christ, I am...

- **not under condemnation, but have passed from death to life** (Jn 3:18, Ro 8:1)
- **a new creation** (2Co 5:17)
- **set free from law of sin and death** (Ro 8:2)
- **chosen by God** (Eph 1:4)
- **adopted by God. He is my Father** (Eph 1:5)
- **accepted by God** (Eph 1:6)
- **redeemed, purchased, and valued by God** (Eph 1:7)
- **a joint heir with Christ** (Eph 1:11; Ro 8:17)
- **sealed with the Holy Spirit** (Eph 1:13)
- **spiritually alive** (Eph 2:1-7)
- **a recipient of God's grace** (Eph 2:8)
- **His workmanship** (Eph. 2:10)
- **delivered by Christ from the power of darkness and placed in the kingdom of His Son** (Col. 1:13)
- **a temple of the Living God** (2Co 6:16)
- **complete in Him** (Col 2:10)
- **salt and light in the world** (Mt 5:13,14)
- **going to be like Christ when He returns** (1Jn 3:1,2)

CONCLUSION

The triune God is Creator and Ruler of all things, including mankind and spirit-beings (angels, Satan and demons). He is superior to all of His creation.

When God raised “Christ from the dead, he seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church ... And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms” (Eph 1:20-22; 2:6).

Our identity in Christ is the basis for our authority over those in the realm of spirit beings (Satan and his demons). We are partakers of the divine nature, saints who sometimes sin. We must resist the battle for our mind and hold fast to the truth of the victory that is already ours in Christ. As church planters, we must remember what Jesus said, **“I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.”**

ACTION PLAN:

- Take time to review this lesson and look up all of the verses cited. Note in your spiritual journal any new truths you learned or ideas that have taken on a deeper meaning for you.
- Read aloud the list “Who I am in Christ” and thank God for what He has done for you. Memorize Scripture verses for areas of your identity in Christ about which you have doubts or fears. As you memorize these Scriptures, the Holy Spirit will make those truths become real in your life.
- Do the inductive Bible study of Ephesians 4:17-5:21 found in Appendix 2A.

SOURCES

- Moreau, A. Scott. *Essentials of Spiritual Warfare*. Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1997.
- Anderson, Neil T. *Victory over the Darkness*. California: Regal Books, 1990.

Inductive Bible Study: Ephesians 4:17 - 5:21

This inductive study in Ephesians has been started for you. Carefully study what has already been done. Then complete the study, answering all questions, writing summaries when that is indicated, and filling in all spots left blank. Be sure to write out the application.

I. OBSERVATION

Study Ephesians 4:17-24. Write out the following observations:

A. Describe how the Gentiles live (17-19)

- v.17 futility of their thinking
- v.18 darkened understanding
- v.18 separated from the life of God
- v.18 ignorance caused by hardened heart
- v.19 lost sensitivity
- v.19 given themselves over to sensuality
- v.19 indulge in every kind of impurity
- v.19 continually lust for more (impurity)

In a brief paragraph, summarize in your own words how the Gentiles live.

B. Describe how you (the Ephesians) have come to know Christ (20 - 23)

- v.21 you were taught in Him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus
- v.22 to put off your old self
- v.23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds
- v.23 to put on the new self created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness

In a brief paragraph, summarize in your own words how the Ephesians came to know Christ.

II. INTERPRETATION

Answer the following interpretative questions:

- How are a person's actions determined by his thinking (mind)? (vs.17, 22, 23).
- What place did truth play in changing the Ephesian's actions? (21).
- Describe the "new self" (22). How is this new creation like God's original creation of man? (Compare Ge 1:27).

III. APPLICATION

Ephesians 4:25-5:21 is Paul's application. List the things he includes in his application. Then write a statement saying how you will apply these things to your life and ministry.

Verse	Application
4:25	Put off falsehood
4:25	
4:26	
4:26	
4:27	How does anger give the devil a foothold?
4:28	
4:28	
4:29	
4:30	Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God (How do we grieve Him?)
4:31	
4:32	
5:1	
5:2	
5:3	
5:4	
5:5	
5:6	
5:7	

5:8	
5:9	
5:10	
5:11	
5:12	

Application in my life and ministry:

Spiritual Battles

CHURCH PLANTERS UNDER ATTACK

☞ Lesson Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help church planters discern and defend against satanic attacks and be able to help people who are suffering from demonic affliction.

☞ Main Points

- Satan's attacks may be in the physical, material, mental/emotional or spiritual realm.
- Defending one's self against Satan requires a knowledge of Scripture and spiritual maturity.

☞ Desired Outcomes

When they have mastered the content of this lesson, trainees will ...

- Know how to discern when they're under satanic attack.
- Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might.
- Begin learning how to defend against satanic attack and to take steps in offensive warfare.

☞ Appendices

3A Bible Study: How Did Jesus Deal With Demonized People?

3B Case Studies From Around the World

INTRODUCTION

Spiritual warfare is a reality for every believer in Christ. When a person becomes a believer in Christ, his relationship to everything in the emotional, mental, spiritual and physical realms dramatically changes. The believer is a new creation in Christ (2Co 5:17), a citizen of heaven (Php 3:20), and God's child (Jn 1:12). Because of his new relationship with God, the believer becomes the target of attack by the enemies of God - Satan and his forces who oppose God's person, plans and purposes.

This lesson contains information which is foundational to understanding how church planters can come under spiritual attack, how to defend themselves, and how to help others who have been afflicted by demonic forces. In the ongoing battle between Satan and the forces of God, any time a new church is started Satan realizes that he is losing territory in a world that he desires to control. Because of this, he will viciously attack new churches and new believers, and do all that he can to destroy them.

Church planters must not only be prepared for spiritual battle themselves (both defensively and offensively), but they must also teach the new believers in cell groups and churches about the battle that they are a part of, whether they know it or not. Without a solid biblical understanding of the spiritual warfare that is going on around them, new churches will be more vulnerable to satanic attack that can weaken and even destroy them. Church planters have a responsibility to help prepare God's "army" of believers for the spiritual battles that lie ahead of them.

I. Arenas Of Satanic Attack

Satan and his host of demons are in the world, fighting against God's plans and purposes. People may experience satanic attacks in the mental, physical and spiritual realms. In the previous Spiritual Warfare lesson "Dynamics of Spiritual Warfare" we saw that the primary arena is that of the mind. In this session, we will discuss the other realms. Satan and his demons may attack directly, or may use others. An example of the latter is through persecution from the world. This indirect attack from Satan should

come as no surprise to believers, since the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy "...Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2Ti 3:12). Peter wrote his first epistle to tell believers how to live under persecution. Jesus said the world would hate His followers (Jn 15:18-19). Therefore, believers should not be surprised by persecution, but should realize that is an indirect attack from Satan.

A. Attacks In The Physical Arena

1. Physical Health

Not every sickness is a result of satanic attack. However, we do see in the Gospels that there were cases where this was true (Mt 9:32-33; Lk 13:16; Mk 5:1-13). See Appendix 3A, "How Did Jesus Deal With Demonized People?".

2. Physical Desires Like Food And Sex

God created humans with physical needs and desires. When rightly fulfilled, these are good. However, Satan likes to take that which is good and tempt man to use it in ways that are harmful. In the temptation of Adam and Eve, Satan used something that appealed to the eyes (food) to cause them to sin. The sin was not because they wanted or needed food, but because they misused food - in this case food that had been forbidden by God (Ge 3:1-6). Likewise, after Jesus had been fasting for forty days and nights, Satan tempted Him to relieve His hunger by exercising supernatural power independently of His father (Mt 4:2-4).

Satan tempts people to misuse that which God created to be good. John described as part of the world (controlled by Satan) the lust of the eyes (1Jn 2:15-16). Many recent stories tell about Christian leaders around the world who have fallen into sexual sins. Church planters are on the "front lines" of ministry and as such need to guard themselves carefully against the temptations that Satan will most certainly offer them.

B. Attacks In The Material Arena

Another arena in which Satan attacks is in creating an unhealthy desire for the good things that God has given us. Satan tempted Jesus in this arena by offering Him all of the kingdoms of the world with their splendor if He would worship him (Mt 4:8).

Closely related to this is the desire for power. In Genesis 1:28-29, God told Adam and Eve that they should rule over all living creatures. But a result of their sin was that the man would rule over the woman (Ge 3:15). Thus began the struggle for power over other humans.

Church planters need to be careful that an unhealthy desire for possessions and power does not cause them to take their eyes off Jesus.

C. Attacks In The Mental/Emotional Arena

The temptation to be discouraged or to despair may be a direct attack from the enemy. See Mk 5:1-10 and Lk 9:37-42.

D. Attacks In The Spiritual Arena

Today there is an increasing interest in the occult. Many people are seeking spiritists, mediums, psychic healers, palm-readers, psychic counselors or guides, horoscopes, etc. Through these occult practices, Satan can get a hold on peoples' lives.

Church planters must be careful to avoid these occult practices, and they must teach others in their cell groups and churches the dangers that are involved with these practices. It is very common for new believers to not fully understand the severity of these types of occult practices. They may have visited a fortune teller, a spiritual healer, or someone else involved in occult activity before they became a believer, and do not see the danger of returning to them.

II. How To Know If A Problem Is From Natural Causes Or Is A Satanic Attack

It is not always easy to distinguish the source of problems. For example, it is not uncommon to hear Christian workers relate stories like the following:

"I was alone in my room, sleeping soundly. Suddenly I was awakened for no apparent reason. The darkness in the room seemed oppressive and I found my heart racing, my breath coming in gasps and my body covered with sweat. Sensing that this was a satanic attack, I sat up in bed, turned on the light and in a loud voice started acknowledging Jesus Christ as LORD and asking for His protection from any evil spirits that might be trying to harm me. As I prayed, the oppression lifted and I lay down and again slept soundly."

The person relating this story suspected that he was being attacked by Satan and immediately went on a counterattack. Should you suspect you are under satanic attack, here are some biblical principles to consider. They are not listed in any particular order:

- Test the spirits to see whether they are from God (1Jn 4:1-3).
- Seek help from someone in the Body with the gift of distinguishing between spirits (1Co 12:10).
- Trials may be from the Lord to make us mature and complete (Jas 1:2-4).
- Temptations are from the devil; if we allow our own evil desire to cause us to yield, sin results (Jas 1:13-14).
- Satan attacks to cause us to sin, but God brings about good (Ge 50:19-20).
- Satan sends things into our lives which God uses to show His power in our weakness (2Co 12:7-9).

III. How To Defend Yourself Against Satanic Attacks

A. Take Every Thought Captive To The Mind Of Christ (2Co 10:3-5)

Memorizing and meditating on Scripture allows us to evaluate thoughts and ideas which come into our minds and reject those which are against the truths of Scripture. Scripture memorization also helps to train our thinking patterns so that we become disciplined to think and act more like Christ.

B. Renew Your Mind (Ro 12:1-2)

Ask God to search your thoughts and reveal to you any which are wicked or impure. Confess those to the Lord and turn away from them (Ps 139:23-24). Think about things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy (Php. 4:8).

Beware of the deluge of sexual lies and temptations that would fill your mind with godless thoughts. *"Satan has no power over you except what you give him by failing to take every thought captive and thus being deceived into believing lies"* (N. Anderson, *Victory over the Darkness*, pg. 169 & 170).

C. Put On All The Armor Of God (Eph 6:10-18)

Acknowledge your salvation by faith in Christ, your righteousness before God by the blood of Christ, and the peace that you have with God because you are His child. Take time to praise the Father for His victory over the evil one and the fact that through Christ you have victory over the evil one.

The one offensive weapon which a believer has is the Word of the God - "the sword of the Spirit" (Eph 6:17). Believers are admonished throughout the Scriptures to stand firm in the truth of the Word of God (Jn 8:32, 1Pe 5:9).

D. Acknowledge The Covering Of The Blood Of The Lamb (Rev 12:11)

The only basis of victory over the flesh, the world and Satan is the shed blood of Jesus Christ on the cross. His sacrifice broke the power of Satan and allowed man to enter into fellowship with

God. It is important that believers realize that they cannot overcome Satan in their own power, but only through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

E. Do Not Let Sin Reign In You (Ro 6:12)

Believers are admonished to physically remove themselves from situations which can result in their yielding to sin (2Ti 2:22). Also, believers should “avoid any appearance of evil” (1Th 5:22; Eph 5:3).

IV. Guidelines For Dealing With Demonic Affliction

Throughout the New Testament and in examples from around the world (see Appendix 3B, “Case Studies From Around The World”), we see people who are demon-possessed. Demonic possession is a reality in the world in which we live.

It is also very clear from Scripture that believers can open themselves to demonic oppression, or demonic influence. Ephesians 4:27 speaks of believers not giving Satan a “foothold” in their life. 1 Peter 5:8 was written to believers and tells us that we have an enemy who prowls around looking for someone to devour. In 2 Corinthians 2:11 Paul tells us that Satan is scheming against us, and that he wants us to fall into his trap so that he can obtain the right to afflict us with his demons.

Every Christian should be able to defend himself from satanic attack, since God has given us clear guidelines from Scripture how to live and how to wear His armor as defense. Obviously, unbelievers do not understand how to defend themselves, and they do not have the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives to give them the strength to do it. Unfortunately, there are also some believers who for various reasons choose to open themselves up to demonic influence in their lives.

Because of this, the essence of working with people who are suffering from demonic oppression and possession is a **truth** encounter, not a **power** encounter. Some Christians incorrectly believe since God is more powerful than Satan, that in Jesus’ name they can remove all demonic influences in the life of someone who is suffering. While God is all-powerful and Satan is not, God has given man a free will to choose whether or not he will allow the “prince of this world” (Jn 16:11) to have influence in his life. God has given us all that we need to defend ourselves against the schemes of the Devil, but we can still choose to ignore these things and allow Satan to have some amount of control in our lives. It is the realization of the truth of the believer’s identity in Christ that gives him the ability to choose to refuse the sinful activities that would otherwise give Satan the right to torment him.

The following guidelines can be used to minister to those who are suffering from some type of demonic influence in their lives.

A. Pray And Seek Wisdom From The Holy Spirit

Dealing with demonic influences requires great spiritual wisdom and dependency on the Holy Spirit. Satan is a powerful foe and confrontation with him or his forces should not be entered into lightly. The need for guidance and leading from the Holy Spirit cannot be overemphasized, since there is not a “formula” for working with people who are suffering from demonic activity in their lives. Every person is unique, every situation is different, and although there are general principles involved, each situation requires dependence on and wisdom from the Holy Spirit. Time in prayer should be spent before any type of ministry involving demonic affliction.

B. Work With Others

This type of ministry should always be done with at least one or more mature believer in Christ. If possible, have people present who have the gift of discernment and who have had prior experience with demonic oppression/possession. Take time together as a group to pray (and fast, if necessary) as you deal with the person who is suffering. If at all possible, church planters and other Christian workers should avoid doing this type of ministry by themselves.

C. Determine The Cause

Sometimes demonic manifestation will occur unexpectedly in public places such as a worship service, Bible study, cell group meeting, or other corporate setting. In these cases the Christian

leaders who are present may have no choice but to deal immediately with the situation, relying on the power and presence of the Holy Spirit to guide them.

However, it is much more common that demonic influence manifests itself over the course of time in the life of a person, and in such a way that the problem is evident to them and others around them. In these instances, it is necessary to set up a meeting between this person and those in the church who are able to help him become free from the demonic influences in his life. The purpose of the meeting is to try and understand what has happened in this person's life that may have given Satan the right to afflict him. It is also a time to determine whether the problem is demonic, or if there are other natural causes involved.

There are many ways that people can open themselves up to Satan and give him the opportunity to torment them. Some of the more common areas include:

- Occult activity: idolatry, Eastern religious practices (such as transcendental meditation), spiritism, secret "blood" pledges, participation in cults, astrology, fortune telling, some types of hypnosis, psychic healing, out-of-body experiences.
- Witchcraft and Satanism: incantations, spells, satanic rituals, dedication of children to Satan, ritual abuse, magic (white and black).
- Willful, ongoing and unconfessed sin: drugs, addictions, anger, sexual sins, hatred, an unforgiving spirit, etc.

It is vitally important that people who are suffering be completely honest with the believers who wish to help them. Are they currently, or have they in the past, been involved in the occult? How about their parents or other relatives? If they are believers, do they have some "hidden" sin in their lives that they do not want to confess? As much as possible, determine everything that could contribute to the demonic manifestation in their life.

D. Deal With Sin Issues

Whether or not the person being afflicted is a believer, he must want to be free from the demonic influence. Based on what was learned about previous or current occult activity, unconfessed sins, etc., this person must repent of these sins and each activity that may have given Satan a foothold in his life. Each item should be confessed out loud, and forgiveness asked for from God. The person should refute any past satanic practices and the stronghold(s) that these gave Satan in his life.

It is important to understand that this person does not need to be a Christian in order to be freed from the demonic forces in his life. However, without the protection and position that a believer has in Christ over Satan, this person is open to renewed demonic activity in his life, sometimes with even greater intensity (see Mt 12:43-45). As sin issues are dealt with, the Gospel should be clearly presented and the opportunity given for this person to accept Christ as Savior.

Regardless of the spiritual condition of the person, he must understand that if he returns to occult practices or willful sin, he opens himself up again to Satan's demonic activity in his life.

E. Deliverance

At this point, the believers involved should pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show them how He wants to deal with the demonic activity in this person's life. This may be as simple as casting out the demon(s) in the name of and by the authority of Jesus Christ. Other times, extended prayer and fasting may be required to break through the spiritual resistance of the demonic forces involved. Sometimes in cases where the person being afflicted is a believer, the Holy Spirit will lead them to acknowledge their position in Christ, repent of the sins that resulted in demonic oppression, and refute Satan themselves.

Note that during the process of freeing someone from demonic affliction, it is best not to communicate in any way directly with the demon(s) involved. John 8:44 tells us that the devil is a liar and the father of lies, and there is no reason for the demons to say anything less than half-truths. Many Christians in ministry with oppressed people have found that talking with demons and

asking them to manifest themselves causes much more profanity, physical aggression, violence, and greatly prolongs and complicates the process of freedom from the demons involved.

In the same way that there is no “magic formula” for releasing someone from demonic influences in his life, there are also no guaranteed results from a time of intercession and deliverance ministry. Sometimes an afflicted person will be completely and totally delivered from all demonic activity. Other times there will be little or no deliverance. Sometimes the Holy Spirit desires that several problem areas in the life of the afflicted person be resolved one by one over a period of time. Sometimes more prayer and fasting is needed. In all cases, the believers should pray and ask for continued leading and direction from the Holy Spirit.

F. Follow-up

If possible, one mature believer should be assigned as a counselor for this person to answer questions that he might have and to “watch over” him for several months. In instances where complete deliverance was not obtained, the counselor can continue to work with this person to look at areas in his life where there might still be unconfessed sin, occult practices, etc. Although demonic manifestation may decrease for a time after intercession or casting out of demons, if all the areas which gave Satan a foothold in the first place are not dealt with, sooner or later the demonic oppression will continue and make itself known again.

If the person received Christ as Savior during the deliverance process, the counselor can also help with discipling this new believer and reminding him of the truth of his identity in Christ. If other signs of demonic activity are noticed, the deliverance process should be repeated, looking for other “ground” that this person has given to Satan in his life. Ultimate freedom will be obtained when all of the footholds have been given up, when the person understands who he is in Christ, and when Christ has been given complete control over every area of his life.

ACTION PLAN:

- In your life and ministry as a church planter, are you experiencing anything that you think might be a direct attack of the evil one? If so, list ways from this study that indicate what you should do to stand against these attacks. Share this with a mature Christian who will pray with you.
- Read the case studies in Appendix 3B.

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Bible Study

HOW DID JESUS DEAL WITH DEMONIZED PEOPLE?

The following chart lists the places in the Gospels where Jesus dealt with demonized people. Complete the chart, and then write down how these truths apply to your life and ministry. Some of the work has been done for you.

Reference	Background & Demonized person	How did Jesus respond?	What were the results?	Interpretation:
Mt 4:24-25	From "...all over Syria people brought to him...the demon possessed."	He healed them	Large crowds followed Him.	
Mk 1:21-28	In Capernaum on Sabbath. In synagogue man – "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"	Ordered demon to "Be quiet! Come out of him!"	Evil spirit shook the man violently and came out.	Jesus gives orders to evil spirits & they obey Him. Demons know Jesus is God and that He has power to destroy them. When He spoke, the demons obeyed. When His children speak under His authority, the demons also obey.
Mk 1:32-39 (Lk 4:40 – 41)	Same day as above. Evening; home of Simon & Andrew. People brought demon possessed to Jesus	Drove out many demons but would not let them speak because they knew who He was		Jesus did not want people to follow Him as Messiah without first accepting Him as Savior.
Mk 3:15; 6:7 (Mt 10:2-4) (Lk 6:14-16)		Jesus chose 12 apostles; gave them authority to drive out demons		
Mt 8:16-17		He drove out the spirits with a word.		
Mt 8:28-34	2 demon -possessed men came from tombs were violent and shouted to Jesus, "What do you want with us, Son of God?"...Have you come to torture us before the appointed time?"			Jesus will judge demons. They will be cast into hell.
	Begged Jesus, "If you drive us out, send us into the heard of pigs	Said, "Go"	Demons entered pigs; whole town went out to meet Jesus; pleaded with Him to leave their region.	

Reference	Background & Demonized person	How did Jesus respond?	What were the results?	Interpretation:
Mk 5:1-17	One demon possessed man broke chains & ankle irons No one strong enough to subdue him Night and day cried out & cut himself			
	Demons begged Jesus not to torture him.	"Come out of this man, you evil spirit"		
	"Legion, for we are many"	What is your name?"		
	Begged to be sent into pigs	Gave them permission to go into pigs	Pigs ran into lake and were drowned	
	Man begged to go with Jesus	"Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how He has had mercy on you.		
Lk 8:26-37	For a long time had not worn clothes or lived in a house		After demons driven out, man was dressed and in his right mind	
	Begged Him repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss.			Demons realize that Jesus has power to send them to the Abyss.
Mt 12:22-28	Mute & blind	Jesus healed him so that he could both see & talk	People astonished "Could this be the Son of David?" Pharisees: He does this by power of Beelzebub. Jesus' teaching followed: Mt 12:25-29 Mk 3:23-30 Lk 11:14-26	
Mt 15:21-28	Jesus withdrew to Tyre & Sidon; Canaanite woman: "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon possession"	"I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."		
Mk 7:24-30	Lord, help me.	"It is not right to take the children's bread & toss it to their dogs."		

Application in my life and ministry:

Case Studies From Around The World

The following are case studies showing how some missionaries have dealt with demons in ministries. Except for the missionary in study one, all names have been changed. These can help you face similar situations that you might encounter as you are engaged in the advance of the Church.

I. CASE STUDY ONE: DICK HILLIS RECOUNTS THE FOLLOWING STORY FROM CHINA

A young soldier brought his wife to me to cast out a demon, saying, "My wife is in the courtyard, and she is demon possessed. Twice the demon has ordered her to kill herself, once by hanging and once by jumping in the moat. Both times she obeyed him, but I was able to rescue her."

"We went to the compound to pray that the woman would be delivered. I confess that I prayed in doubt, wondering if I would need some special gift of healing. As we prayed, the demon-possessed woman would take words from our prayers and make ridiculous poems out of them. She would scream and yell and make fun of what we were doing. Apparently, our prayers were of no avail."

This continued for three days. We told the soldier to destroy any idols in their home, which he did. Still the demon did not leave. Then God showed my wife that we needed to acknowledge our position in Christ and command the demon to leave. When we did this, she was instantly delivered.

His conclusion was, "We learned further that it is not enough to pray or sing, though I believe that Satan hates both prayer and song. We must resist the devil and command that he depart" (from *Demon Experiences in Many Lands*, p 37-39).

II. CASE STUDY TWO: A MISSIONARY COUPLE TELLS THE FOLLOWING STORY FROM A COUNTRY IN CENTRAL/EASTERN EUROPE

Fatima, a mother of four, came from a family with many problems, the majority of which seem to have their roots in demonic activity.

At 15 she married Hysen, a man whose father was mentally ill. After several years of marriage, he also became mentally sick. He could be kept calm only with medication. Although still a Muslim, he requested prayer in the name of Jesus for deliverance from curses his family had put on him.

Fatima's mother-in-law had put a curse on her "that she would die before her time." Now at 39, she was dying of cancer. The missionary said, "When I went to see her, she told me that she had been having unbearable pain all day. When the pain gets very bad she sees her now-dead mother-in-law dressed up like a witch with a rod in her hand." Although now a Christian, she was terrified. The missionary decided he should take authority in the name of Jesus, which he did. Fatima was instructed to pray likewise. She improved spiritually, but the physical pain continued.

In spite of the prayers, Fatima died. At her funeral, Hysen's brother took charge. This brother is involved in occult practices (fortune telling, making magic charms, etc.). He brought in a Muslim priest who is somewhat of a magician to perform rituals.

A week after the funeral, the missionary's wife went with other women to visit the grave. Afterwards, she was invited to the family's home for dinner. Fatima's older daughter, a believer, asked her to pray because she had seen some relatives putting soil from the grave in the family's food. According to tradition, this will cause the same curse that fell on Fatima to fall on her family.

If you had been the missionary in this study, how would you have helped this family as they went through this crisis?

III. CASE STUDY THREE: A MISSIONARY COUPLE TELL THE FOLLOWING STORY FROM ROMANIA

A couple in their late thirties told the missionaries how they had been placed under a curse. When they were married, the husband's sister (a white witch) had sewn small slips of paper with curses on them into their clothing. The curse was that they would never be able to have children. Although they had destroyed all of the paper, they still were childless. Now nearing the end of their child-bearing years, the couple sought help. They reported that they were not able to have normal relations because every time they began to do so they heard mocking voices telling them they could not.

The missionaries read with them verses showing them that they could be free from this curse by the power of Christ. Claiming their authority in Christ, they denounced the work and power of Satan in their lives and asked God for deliverance. The next time they talked with the missionaries, they said they had been claiming this authority and had heard no more voices. Their marriage was much stronger. They thought the woman was pregnant, which proved to be incorrect.

If you had been the missionaries in this story, would you have done anything differently? What would you have said when they reported that they could still not have children?

IV. CASE STUDY FOUR: A YOUNG MISSIONARY IN AFRICA HAD THIS EXPERIENCE OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE

In 1986, I went on a short term missions trip to Senegal, West Africa. My second night in the country was enough to teach me that we indeed are in a battle against the powers of darkness.

I was staying with missionaries who lived in Ouakam, a village known for its spiritual darkness. After the morning service in another city the day after I arrived, we decided to hold the first-ever worship service in Ouakam that same night. It was a blessed time, and afterwards, we talked late into the night. The rest of the family went upstairs to bed, and I prepared for bed downstairs.

I tossed and turned until 3:00 a.m., then finally fell into a deep sleep. It was hot and muggy and I had a fan blowing across the bed. After a short time, I became extremely cold. But when I tried to get up to shut off the fan, I couldn't move. My mind was very alert, but my body was paralyzed. I tried to cry out for help, but my tongue was swollen in my mouth.

Since this was during the Muslim fast of Ramadan, it was noisy outside. Witch doctors were casting curses and shamans were praying to evil spirits. It was known that the house where we lived had been visited by a witch doctor who had tried to put curses on it to make the missionaries leave the village.

I heard the footsteps of someone coming down the stairs, but no one ever came around the corner. I saw a shadow coming toward me from the far side of the room. It looked like the outline of a man wearing a dark cloak. Then I heard the sound of an animal ripping apart flesh with its teeth.

The fear that was growing in my heart was settled by one thought: "This is the work of the evil one and Jesus is my protection." So I tried to cry out the name of Jesus. I said it once, twice, and on the third time, my mouth was loosened, the shadow disappeared, the noise stopped, and I sat up in bed free from the invisible power that held me. I bolted upstairs, awakened the older missionary and explained what had happened. She asked if I had been dreaming. I assured her that it was not a dream. We prayed for 30 minutes before I was ready to rest.

From that night on, I could sense evil in the room on many occasions, but when I would put on the armor of God and tell the spirits to go away in Jesus' name and by His authority, I could sleep in peace.

I now understand God's power in the midst of darkness. I know we are in a spiritual battle for the souls of men and women, but I am assured that He who is in us is greater than any spirit. Jesus in us is the hope of glory.

If this experience had happened to you, would you have known about the authority you have to rebuke demons? What does this say about the power of prayer?