

Send questions to: pastornick@htchurch.com

On YouTube: @htchurch

Welcome!

- Please make note of our Saturday seminar on the morning of November 8.
- All our sessions can be viewed on our YouTube channel, at @htchurch. You can also hear them on our audio podcast.
- Please feel free to send in questions and we'll do our best to respond.

Why a course on spiritual warfare?

Modern people don't often recognize the true nature of the world we're living in.

- God's Word teaches us the existence of a *spiritual realm* in addition to the natural/physical realm that we inhabit.
- Christians not only face struggles with the flesh and with the world, but we also have enemies in the realm of the spirit.
- Have you ever considered that your battles in life are spiritual, at least in part? God has given us divinely powerful weapons, and Christ's victory makes it possible for US to have victory.

Three sections to this course: We'll examine the *theology* of spiritual warfare, *practicalities* of spiritual warfare, and *prevailing* in spiritual warfare.

1. Reality: it's not all it's cracked up to be.

1.1. *Coming to grips with the biblical view of reality.*

The Bible's view of reality is different from the view held by materialistic societies.

- God's Word is truth, so we need to accept what the Bible reveals to us about the nature of reality. The truth of the Bible is **revelation**: it's truth we couldn't know unless someone revealed it to us.
- We can't simply wish away what the Bible reveals about our universe.

1.2. *The reality of good and evil supernatural beings.*

The Bible presents a universe in which there is not only a Supreme Being but many other kinds of beings who are not like us.

- The Bible shows us a universe in which there is evil at work. "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy" (John 10:10).
- Evil may be structural: (e.g., an oppressive government).
- Secondly, evil can be an influence.
- Third, evil can be personal.

1.3. *There are evil supernatural beings, not merely evil systems and structures.*

These are not just "influences," but actual creatures who have a will, intellect, and emotions. We use the term "spiritual warfare" to describe how we defend against these spirits, and how we can free people from their dominion and their influence.

2. The Worldview Problem

2.1. Human beings interpret life through the grid of their beliefs, ideas, biases, and experiences. We call this their “worldview.”

We all have cultural norms and experiences that can interfere with how we perceive reality or influence our behavior.

2.2. Western societies have an anti-supernatural bias. This keeps people from considering supernatural causes and influences.

Materialism says that only what is physical is real and nothing supernatural can exist. Even Christians can fall prey to “Deistic” thinking. Deism is a belief in a personal God who is not actively engaged in Creation.

2.3. The Bible also deals extensively with the “excluded middle” of reality.

The “excluded middle” is a middle tier of reality that people tend to ignore. Materialists may ignore it, but the dechristianization of Western society is allowing a *repaganization* in our day. Human beings seem to be “hard-wired” for the supernatural.

3. Basic Angelology

3.1. The nature of the angels.

“Angel” describes a class of beings who were created to have a close relationship with God. They appear to have been created as His servants and companions.

- The word for angel in Hebrew and Greek means “messenger.”
- Angels are described as ***spirits***, meaning that ordinarily they are not tangible, audible, or visible (Heb. 1:14).
- They are dispatched by God to execute His Will. “Bless the LORD, you His angels, who excel in strength, who do His word, heeding the voice of His word” (Psalms 103:20).
- Compared to human beings, they have tremendous power and glory. Jesus said, “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels” (Luke 9:26).
- Angels were created before us. “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” (Job 38:4-7).
- Angels do not procreate, and they always present themselves as masculine. “For in the resurrection [humans will not] marry nor are [we] given in marriage, but [we will be] like angels of God in heaven” (Matt. 22:30).
- The number of angels is exceedingly large: “A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him” (Dan. 7:10a).

3.2. The fall of Satan.

It appears that evil originated when a high-ranking angel rebelled against God.

- The name *Satan* means “adversary,” or “enemy.”
- The word *devil* comes from *diabolos*, meaning “accuser.”
- Isaiah 14 suggests his real name was *Helel*, which is Hebrew for “daystar.”

How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.” Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit. (Isa. 14:12-15)

This indicates that Satan’s fall was due to pride and a desire to exalt himself to the level of God. A similar passage (Ezekiel 28) may reveal that Satan is a cherub:

Thus says the Lord GOD: “You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created. You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you.” (Ezek. 28:12b-15)

3.3. Fallen angels and demonic spirits

One passage has led people to suggest that as many as a third of the angels fell away: “And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth” (Rev. 12:3-4a).

Satan will eventually lose whatever access he has to the heavenlies: “And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ‘Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down’” (Rev. 12:7-10).

Aside from the angels who fell with Satan, there is a host of evil spirits who are commonly called demons. Their origin is unknown.

3.4. Types of angelic creatures and their hierarchies.

Angels differ in their authority, glory, ability, strength, and in their assignments. Satan also seems to have a hierarchy. In Ephesians 6:12, Paul says: “...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.”

The heavenly host is different: “For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him” (Col. 1:16).

We can add to these categories the additional categories of *cherubs* and *seraphs*, awesome beings that are intimately connected with the heavenly worship. In addition to this, there’s probably an uncountable host of ordinary angels. Almost no angels are named in the Bible except for Michael the Archangel and Gabriel.

3.5. Functions of angelic creatures.

The holy angels are engaged in worshiping God, attending upon God, administering different spheres of authority in the heavenly realms, executing God’s decrees, observing and recording events, ministering to the saints, and making war.

3.6. Human interactions with angels.

An angel’s appearance and presence seem to startle and frighten people. They minister to us as God commands them.

- The angels take pains to urge us not to worship them.
- The Bible never urges us to initiate contact with them, or pray to them, etc.
- Some “people” who appear seeking hospitality are actually angels (Heb. 13:2)!
- The angels (both holy and evil) are apparently learning things about God that they didn’t know through God’s dealings with Man (Ephesians 3:10).

3.7. *Human interactions with demons*

Demonic spirits seem to be the “shock troops” of the Devil as he executes his plan to “steal, kill and destroy.” They have frequent interactions with people:

- *Deception*, particularly keeping people blind to the truth of the Gospel.
- *Temptation*, seeking to cause people to sin.
- *Affliction*, harming people more directly by causing or aggravating physical and/or psychological suffering.
- The Bible is clear that people can “have” demons or be inhabited by them.
- The princes and principalities of Ephesians 6 are likely higher-level beings involved in administering Satan’s kingdom with him.
- The arrangement of the angelic/fallen angelic kingdoms may mirror what is in Heaven, in God’s heavenly court. The Book of Daniel reveals to us the fallen angelic princes of Persia and Greece as well as Michael, the prince over Israel.
- The Bible teaches that the things Gentiles sacrifice they are actually sacrificing to demons, whether they understand that or not (1 Cor. 10:20).
- God warns us most strongly against witchcraft and occult activity, which involve communication and partnership with demons.
- Later in the course we will discuss how people who are demonized can be delivered through the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.

3.8. *The destiny of the angels*

Holy angels will enjoy God’s Kingdom along with redeemed humanity. Hell was created to punish the wicked angels (Matt. 25:41). Paul says we will judge angels (1 Cor. 6:3)!

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