

ANGELOLOGY: THE DOCTRINE OF ANGELS

I. Angelology

A. Existence of angels:

1. Definition: "Angels are created, spiritual beings with moral judgment and high intelligence, but without physical bodies." –Grudem
2. Angels are found in thirty-four books of the Bible in over three hundred references.
3. Christ taught the existence of angels (Matt 18:10; 26:53). There is a large number of angels (Heb 12:22; Rev 5:1).
4. The angels are a distinct order of creation and have been given a heavenly position, or sphere, above the sphere of man (Ps 8:5; Heb 2:7-9 and Rev 5:11; 7:11). They appear to have been created when God created the universe, perhaps on the first day (Gen 1:1-2; Job 38:6-7).
5. Angel means "messenger." They are always referred to in the masculine gender.
6. They do not possess physical bodies but angels were never said to have been created in the image of God.

B. Creation of Angels – Colossians 1:15-17

Angels are not a race but a host or army (Luke 2:13). They are called the sons of God (Job 1:6), not of other angels. They were created (Neh 9:6) at some point in time before the creation of the physical world. The angels were created in a state of holiness (Mark 8:38; Jude 6). They are innumerable (Rev 5:11).

C. The personality of angels:

1. Intellect (1 Pet 1:12)
2. Emotions (Luke 2:13)
3. Will (Jude 6) – able to leave their first estate

D. The nature of angels

1. They are spirit beings (Heb 1:14), who are capable of taking on physical form (cp. Heb 13:2; Rev 18-19).
2. They do not reproduce or marry (Matt 22:30).
3. They always appear in masculine form except in Zechariah 5:9 (feminine gender used two times).
4. They do not die (Luke 20:36).
5. They are distinct from human beings (Luke 20:36).
–They are not the spirits of the dead.
6. They have great power (2 Pet 2:11).
7. Angels who sinned have not been redeemed (2 Pet 2:4), but they long to look into human redemption (1 Pet 1:12).

E. The ministry of angels

1. To God

- a. Worship (Isa 6:1-3; Rev 4:6-11). Worship seems to be one of the primary ministries of angels.
- b. Ministers (Heb 1:7). The word for “minister” in this text is generally used of a priestly service for God (compare to Psalm 103:20). An example would be Gabriel’s message to Mary (Luke 1:26-33).
- c. Agents of God’s rule (Ps 103:20-21). Angels are at times used to control the elements of nature (Rev 7:1; 16:3, 8, 9). They were used of God to deliver the Law to Moses (Gal 3:19) and to carry out judgment (2 Sam 24:16-17; Rev 16:1; 12:7-8).

2. To Christ

- a. Predicted His birth (Luke 1:26-33).
- b. Announced His birth (Luke 2:13).
- c. Protected Him as a baby (Matt 2:13).

- d. Strengthened him after His temptation (Matt 4:11).
 - e. Prepared to defend Him (Matt 26:53).
 - f. Rolled away the stone and announced His resurrection (Matt 28:2, 6).
 - g. At Christ's ascension (Acts 1:9-11).
 - h. Worshipped Him (Heb 1:6).
 - i. Will return with Him (Matt 16:27; 25:31; 2 Thess 1:7; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26).
3. To believers
- a. Help believers in general (Heb 1:14; cf. Ps 91:11-12).
 - b. Involved in answering prayer (Acts 12:7).
 - c. Give encouragement (Acts 27:23-24).
 - d. Guardian angels (Heb 1:14; Matt 18:10). These texts do not prove personal guardian angels.
 - e. Observe Christians' experiences (1 Cor 4:9; 11:10; 1 Tim 5:21).
 - f. Interested in evangelistic efforts (Luke 15:10; Acts 8:26).
 - g. Care for believers at death (Luke 16:22; Jude 9).
 - h. They are not to be worshipped or prayed to (Col 2:18; Rev 22:8, 9).
 - i. May have contact with humans without their knowledge (Heb 13:2).
 - j. Believers will judge angels (1 Cor 6:3). Either we will condemn evil angels, or we will rule over holy angels.
4. To unbelievers
- a. Michael is Israel's guardian (Dan 12:1).
 - b. Involved in executing the judgments of the tribulation period (Rev 8, 9, 16).
 - c. Bring punishment to unbelievers (Acts 12:23).

d. Involved when the Lord returns to establish His kingdom (Matt 13:39).

F. Classification of angels

1. Archangel – Michael whose name means "who is like unto God" (Jude 9; cf. Rev 12:7-8). Archangel means "chief" or "ruling messenger" (1 Thess 4:16).
2. Elect angels (1 Tim 5:21).
3. Principalities, princes, thrones, dominions and powers – apparently represent different categories of angels, and sometimes of only the fallen angels (Eph 1:21; 3:10; 6:12).
4. Cherubim – or creatures who defend God's holiness from the pollution of sinful beings (they guarded the Garden of Eden after the fall, Gen 3:24); reveal God's greatness (Ezek 1:1-25). Note also the original purpose for which Satan was created (Ezek 28:14). They sit on the mercy seat (Ex 25:17-20), Two cherubim were fashioned from gold for the ends of the mercy seat on top of the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies.
5. Seraphim (Isa 6:2-7) – always worshipping God.
 - They are called the four living creatures in Revelation 4:1-11.
6. The angel of Jehovah – these are appearances of Christ in the Old Testament (Gen 22:12; 31:11, 13; Ex 3:2, 6).
7. Possibly the twenty-four elders (Rev 4:4) who would be rulers in Heaven.
8. Only two angels are given names:
 - Michael – the only one called an archangel. We find him doing battle with Satan (Dan 10:13, 21; Jude 9; Rev 12:7) and being involved in the Second Coming (Dan 12:1; 1 Thess 4:16).
 - Gabriel - found four times in Scripture (Dan 8:16; 9:20-27; Luke 1:5-20; 1:26-38).

G. The last angelic message involves four parts (Rev 22:6-11):

1. An assurance (v. 6)
2. A quotation from Jesus (v. 7)

3. A rebuke (vv. 8-9)
4. An instruction (vv. 10-11)
 - This is in contrast to the instruction to Daniel (Dan 8:26). This instruction points to the urgency of walking with God in light of Christ's soon return.

II. The Doctrine of Satan

A. His existence:

1. Taught in seven Old Testament books and acknowledged by every New Testament writer.
2. Christ acknowledged and taught the existence of Satan (Matt 13:39; Luke 10:18 and 11:18).

B. His personality:

1. Intellect (Matt 4:6; 2 Cor 11:3) – he quotes Scripture.
2. Emotions (Rev 12:12) – anger.
3. Will (2 Tim 2:26; Isa 14; Matt 25:41) – morally responsible.

C. His nature:

1. A created being (Ezek 28:14, 15) – Therefore he must answer to His creator.
2. A spirit being (Eph 6:11, 12).
3. Was a cherub (Ezek 28:14).
4. Highest of all angelic beings (Ezek 28:12).
5. Limitations:
 - a. He is a creature and therefore, not omnipotent, omnipresent or omniscient.
 - b. Can be resisted by the Christian (James 4:7).
 - c. God has placed certain limitations on him (Job 1:12).

6. Personality traits:

- a. He is a murderer (John 8:44).
- b. He is a liar (John 8:44).
- c. He is a confirmed sinner (1 John 3:8).
- d. He is an accuser (Rev 12:10).
- e. He is an adversary (1 Pet 5:8).

D. Principle names:

1. Satan – adversary (2 Cor 11:14)
2. Devil – slanderer (Matt 4:1)
3. Serpent – deceitful (Rev 12:9)
4. Lucifer – star of the morning (Isa 14:12)
5. Evil one (1 John 5:19)
6. Dragon (Rev 12:17)
7. Ruler of this world (John 12:31)
8. God of this age (2 Cor 4:4)
9. Accuser of the brethren (Rev 12:10)
10. Beelzebub – prince of the demons (Matt 12:24)
11. Belial (2 Cor 6:15)

E. Satan's fall: (cp. Ezek 28 and Isa 14)

1. His sin (Isa 14:12-15) – "I wills..."
 - a. I will ascend into heaven (I will take God's place).
 - b. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God (above the angels).
 - c. I will sit on the mount of the assembly in the far north.

- d. I will ascend above...clouds (the glory of God).
 - e. I will be like the most high (Satan wanted to be the possessor of heaven and earth). – His sin was pride (1 Tim 3:6) and it may be characterized as counterfeiting God (like the Most High) (compare Ezek 28:17).
2. His punishments:
- a. Cast out of his original position in heaven (Ezek 28:16).
 - b. In the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:14-15).
 - c. At the cross (John 12:31).
 - d. Barred from all access to heaven during the tribulation period (Rev 12:7-9),
 - e. Eventually confined to the abyss (Rev 20:2).
 - f. Ultimately cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev 20:10).
3. The time:
- Since God declared that all things in the universe was good after the sixth day of creation, Satan's fall had to take place sometime after the creation of the universe and before Adam sinned (compare Gen 1:31 with 3:1ff).
- F. Satan's work as related to:
1. God:
 - a. Tries to thwart the plan of God in every area and by every means possible.
 - b. Seeks to counterfeit God's program (2 Cor 2:11; 11:3, 13-15; Eph 6:11).
 - c. Tempted Christ (Matt 4).
 - d. Possessed the body of Judas to betray Christ (John 13:27).
 2. Unbelievers:
 - a. Blinds their minds (2 Cor 4:4).
 - b. Snatches the Word out of their hearts (Luke 8:12).

- c. Uses unbelievers to oppose the work of God (Rev 2:13).
- d. He will gather them to the battle of Armageddon (Rev 16:13-14).
- e. He deceives them now (Rev 20:3).

3. Believers:

- a. Tempts believers to lie (Acts 5:3), and sin (Eph 4:26-27).
- b. Accuses and slanders believers (Rev 12:10).
- c. Can hinder the work of a Christian (1 Thess 2:18).
- d. Tries to defeat us (Eph 6:12; 1 Pet 5:8).
- e. Tempts us to immorality (1 Cor 7:5).
- f. Sows counterfeits among believers (Matt 13:38, 39).
- g. Incites persecutions against believers (Rev 2:10).

G. Defense of the believers against Satan:

- 1. Have proper attitude toward Satan (1 Pet 5:8 and Jude 8, 9).
- 2. Be on guard against Satan (1 Pet 5:8).
- 3. Take a stand against Satan, and resist him (1 Pet 5:9; James 4:7; 2 Tim 2:22).
- 4. Use the spiritual armor (Eph 6:11-18).

III. The doctrine of demons

A. Views on origin of demons:

- 1. The souls of wicked men who have died (Greeks).
- 2. Spirits of a pre-Adamic race.
- 3. Offspring of the fallen angels and the women before the flood (Gen 6:1-4).
- 4. Those angels who followed Satan at his fall (biblical position).

B. Characteristics of demons:

1. Spirit beings (Matt 17:18, cp to Mark 9:25).
2. Know Jesus Christ (Mark 1:24).
3. Know their own end (Matt 8:29).
4. They are theists (James 2:19).
5. Have a system of doctrine (1 Tim 4:1-3).
6. Immoral, wicked, unclean (1 Tim 4:1-3).

C. Activities of demons:

1. In general:
 - a. Attempt to thwart the work of God (Rev 16:13-16; Dan 10:11-14).
 - b. Extend the authority of Satan (Eph 6:11, 12).
 - c. Demons may be used by God in carrying out His purpose (2 Cor 12:7; 1 Cor 5:5; 1 Sam 16:14).
2. Some particulars:
 - a. Can inflict physical harm (Matt 9:33).
 - b. Can possess humans (Matt 4:24).
 - c. Can possess animals (Mark 5:13).
 - d. Spread false doctrine (1 Tim 4:1; Ps 106:35-38; 1 Cor 10:19, 20).
 - e. Oppose the spiritual growth of God's children (Eph 6:12).

D. Demon possession:

1. Definition: A demon residing within a person, exerting direct control of that person's mind and/or body.
2. Result: Physical disease or handicaps (Matt 9:32, 33), mental derangement (Matt 7:15).

3. Marks of demon possession from Mark 5 (the demoniac of Gadarene):
 - a. Indwelling of an unclean spirit (v. 2).
 - b. Unusual physical strength (v. 3).
 - c. Fits of rage (v. 4).
 - d. Disintegration of splitting of the personality (vv. 6-7). The demoniac ran to Jesus for help, yet cried out in fear.
 - e. Resistance to spiritual things (v. 7).
 - f. Clairvoyant powers (v. 7) – knew immediately who Jesus was.
 - g. Alteration of voice (v. 9).
 - h. Occult transference (v. 13) – the demons left the man and entered the swine.

E. Destiny of demons

1. Temporarily some are confined. For instance, some who were free during the lifetime of Christ were cast into the abyss (Luke 8:31) and will be loosed to do their work during the coming tribulation days (Rev 9:1-11; 16:13-14).
2. Eventually all demons will be cast with Satan into the Lake of Fire forever (Matt 25:41; Rev 20:10).

Spiritual Warfare, Part 1

It seems that Christians never tire of trying to come up with new ways of dealing with life. We are reminded of the Athenians at the Areopagus who, "used to spend their time in nothing other than telling or hearing something new" (Acts 17:21). Within evangelical Christianity today there is a constant parade of novel approaches for dealing with our sins and problems. One of these is what some call "spiritual warfare." Spiritual warfare has become quite the rage in many Christian circles, despite the lack of biblical support. This is due to several factors: the mystical and experience orientation of the modern church, the influence of charismatic elements, pragmatism, the church's surrender to psychology during the last twenty years, and endorsement by respected theologians. But the question is, as always, does this new movement square with the Word of God? We will discover that it not only does not line up with Scripture but that the Spiritual Warfare Movement is anti-Scriptural.

THE CHRISTIAN AND DEMON POSSESSION

Definition of demonized: The Spiritual Warfare (SW) teachers make a big deal out of the Greek word often translated, "demon possessed" in the New Testament. ***Daimonizomai*** simply means "to be demonized." Somehow this definition is supposed to soften the concept of a Christian being possessed by a demon. For example, Neil Anderson says that it means to be controlled by a demon and is a matter of degrees. But the New Testament never uses the term for anything less than to be indwelt by a demon. It is never used to describe Satan's activity of accusing the brethren, temptation, deception, or persecution. So, no matter how we translate the word ***daimonizomai***, it is always used exclusively of those indwelt by demons.

Can a Christian be demon possessed? C.F. Dickason in his book, *Demon Possession and the Christian* devotes serious study to this question. He deals with every major portion of Scripture on the subject and then concludes: "We have found that though there is a great deal of information to consider, and though men adduce evidence of varying weight, yet we could not come to a definite conclusion...We have sought evidence from biblical and theological considerations on whether Christians can be demonized" (p. 149).

In other words, according to Dr. Dickason, the same Scriptures that claim to provide everything we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3), are inadequate to deal with this important subject. What's a Christian to do? According to Dickason, God neglected to include in His Word, instructions for victory over one of the Christian's most powerful enemies. So, where are we to turn? Dickason assures us that we can look to experience with confidence. He admits, "The danger of basing our theology on experience is evident." Yet, since God's Word does not address the subject of the demonization of

Christians, the SW teachers have felt free to develop a whole system of demonic warfare based on the supposed experiences of people.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Before we examine the faulty SW structure we should examine whether the Bible gives us any clue as to the demonization of believers. The following passages need to be studied:

Colossians 1:13-14: When individuals are saved, they are delivered from the domain of darkness.

Romans 8:37: While in the context of the security of the believer, nevertheless, we find that Christians are promised victory through Christ.

1 Corinthians 6:19: The Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. It is inconceivable that the Holy Spirit would share our bodies with a demon. During Jesus' ministry on earth demons feared Him, and usually avoided Him if possible. Why wouldn't the same be true of the Holy Spirit?

1 John 4:4: The Christian has the Holy Spirit within him. Demons on the other hand inhabit the world and those of the world.

1 John 5:18: The evil one cannot even touch God's child.

2 Thessalonians 3:3: Because of the Lord's faithfulness (not ours) we are protected from the evil one.

1 Corinthians 5:5: In the NT we never find any indication that a believer can be indwelt by a demon, nor are we ever given any command or instruction concerning the casting out of demons. This passage speaks of delivering a believer to Satan for the destruction of his flesh. Nothing is ever said about delivering a believer from the possession of the devil.

TEACHINGS OF THE SPIRITUAL WARFARE LEADERS

There are two main branches among non-charismatic SW leaders. There are those who advocate "power encounters," and those who advocate "truth encounters." In what remains of this first part of the study we will deal with those who teach that both believers and nonbelievers are freed from demonic control through the use of "power encounters." In part two we will examine the "truth encounter" viewpoint.

Many strange and bizarre things are happening in the "power encounter" branch of the SWM. But rather than dwell on the radical fringe elements we want to discuss the teachings of those who would be considered solidly conservative, and non-charismatic in their theology. Perhaps the two main spokesmen for this camp would be Mark Bubeck, author of *The Adversary*, and C. Fred Dickason, former chairman of the Theology Department at Moody Bible Institute, and author of *Demon Possession and the Christian: A New Perspective*. While both men believe that it is often necessary to

exorcize demons (that is, forcibly expel demons; i.e. power encounter) from believers, they differ somewhat on their terminology. Dickason believes, based upon experience and what he terms clinical evidence, not on the Scriptures (see p. 149), that a believer can be physically indwelt by a demon(s). Bubeck rejects this notion (p. 87). However he believes that a Christian can be so dominated and controlled by demons as to have a need for those demons to be bound and expelled from the Christian. I personally cannot see any real difference between the two views, and in fact, Bubeck (as well as Anderson, who we will study later) have come up with new categories of demonic oppression that are not addressed in Scripture. No place in the NT is it implied that a demon can take control of an individual and yet not actually invade a human body. Every case of demonization found in Scripture is an instance of demonic indwelling of a physical body. And so, while disagreeing that a believer can be demonized, we at least find Dickason to be more consistent with the biblical data here.

Both men would teach that the traditional methods of spiritual growth, as found in the Bible, are adequate for most Christians, and most situations. But occasionally we may be faced with something beyond the norm: demonic oppression or bondage. Bubeck says, "There comes a time where the practice of a particular fleshly sin may move from a sin of the flesh into a sin controlled and dictated by satanic, demonic activity" (p. 35). How do we know when this has happened? Bubeck assures us that if we have been unable to handle a particular sin through the normal biblical methods we, "Must now consider the fact that the problem well may be some demonic hold...which must be broken" (p. 101). What are some of the "tools," as Bubeck calls them, that we must employ in order to defeat the demons? Based upon no properly interpreted passage of scripture, Bubeck claims that all believers have authority over the demons (p. 90), so that we can bind them (p. 91), pull down their strongholds (p. 106) and command them to obey us (p. 121). How is all of this done? Bubeck advocates a thorough understanding of the truths of the Word, which we are in complete agreement. He also is a strong believer in prayer — who can argue with that? But his prayers have some interesting features. For example, he has numerous written prescribed prayers that are to be recited based upon the particular need of the person. In addition to reminding us too much of Roman Catholic rituals, we find no examples of his type of prayer in the NT. His most well-known prayer, "The Warfare Prayer," is a case in point. This prayer (p. 140), which is borrowed from another man, is prayed by many believers every morning in an attempt to ward off Satan for that day. The highlighted statement in the prayer is this sentence: "Satan, I command you, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to leave my presence with all your demons, and I bring the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ between us." Since when are we to address Satan in prayer? Bubeck tell us, "It is not improper but very biblical to address yourself against Satan. ...Address him like this, 'Satan, I resist you'" (p. 100). This concept is not drawn from the Scriptures. And when did we get the authority to command demons to do anything? Even Michael would only say to Satan, "The Lord rebuke you" (Jude 9). And where in Scripture are we taught to pray for the Lord's blood to come between us and Satan? The blood

of Christ cleanses us from sin, it is not a talisman for warding off evil. This is not a biblical prayer, but a humanly contrived prayer.

Another interesting teaching of this branch of the SWM is the belief that demons have names that correspond with their area of oppression. The fictional writings of Frank Peretti have done much to popularize this concept. Demons that Bubeck cast out of his daughter had the names: "Fear," "Nausea," "Colon," "Destroyer," and "Deceiver." These demons, we are assured, were the cause for these exact problems in his daughter's life (p. 121).

We believe that the SW teachers have made a fatal error, one which Bubeck even recognizes: "If I seek some experience which does not have a sound biblical foundation, I am opening my life to some deceiving spirit to come as an angel of light" (p. 130). Oh, that he would listen to his own counsel.

Spiritual Warfare, Part 2

We quickly examined, in part one, the branch of the Spiritual Warfare Movement known by some as "power encounter." Representing this group are men such as Mark Bubeck and C. Fred Dickason who believe that we must forcibly confront, bind, and expel demons from the lives of some people if they are to find spiritual freedom. This time we will turn our attention to the "truth encounter" branch of the SWM. This branch is well represented by Neil Anderson who, while in general agreement with Dickason and Bubeck, believes that power encounters are not necessary, in fact may be dangerous. He teaches instead, a more clinical approach which directs the demonized to take certain steps based on truth. When those steps are taken, the demons will release their victim from bondage. We want to carefully study this aspect of the SWM principally through the teachings of Anderson.

Neil Anderson is the most popular teacher of the SWM. Anderson was the chairman of the Practical Theology Department at Talbot School of Theology of Biola University. He has written several books on this subject including, *The Bondage Breaker; The Seduction of Our Children; Victory Over the Darkness; Released from Bondage; and Walking Through the Darkness*. He also travels the country giving "Freedom in Christ" seminars. We will deal with Anderson's teachings as representative of the whole group.

Biblical Teachings: Many of Dr. Anderson's concepts are in line with the Scriptures, for which we give God praise. Anderson would be in agreement with the essential doctrines of the faith. In addition he places special emphasis on:

- Right thinking will produce right emotions.

- The greatest deterrent of mental and emotional health is a true knowledge of God.
- The believer must understand their identity in Christ.
- Forgiveness is extremely important in the Christian life.

However, Anderson also teaches *Christians can be demonized or demon possessed*: Anderson makes the following statements: "It is my observation that no more than 15% of the evangelical Christian community is completely free from Satan's bondage" (*The Bondage Breaker*, p. 107). "Demonic influence is not an external force in the physical realm; it is the internal manipulation of the central nervous system" (p. 111). "Anything bad which you cannot stop doing, or anything good which you cannot make yourself do, could be an area of demonic control" (p. 179).

To Anderson 85% of evangelical Christians are controlled to some degree by Satan. It would be quite an interesting search to attempt to find scriptural support for Anderson's assertions.

Christians can be delivered from demonization: Anderson believes he has discovered a means of deliverance for the demon-controlled Christian. Where did he find his program? Certainly not in Scripture — remember the Bible apparently is unfamiliar with this problem according to Dickason. He did not find it even in the traditions of the great saints of the past. As a matter of fact, no one in the history of the church has ever taught the methods developed by Anderson — which tells us a couple of things. **First**, since this program is not based upon Scripture, and since it is brand new to the church, great caution is in order. **Secondly**, if Anderson is correct, then most of the saints of the past, who only had God's Word to guide them, have been hopelessly enslaved to demons — apparently without realizing it. What a sad thought!

What does Anderson teach that the believer must do in order to be free from demonization? *His primary focus is to be contained within the following four concepts:*

1. Understanding Our Identity in Christ

Much of what Anderson teaches in this section is biblical, however he deviates in two important areas.

a) The authority of the believer.

The argument runs like this: I am seated in the heavenlies in Christ. Christ has all power and authority. Therefore, I have Christ's power and authority. As a result, all Christians have authority over Satan and his demons.

It should be obvious that the third premise above is not true. Anderson gives Luke 9 and 10 as proof texts. But not only are these references to the pre-Pentecostal believer (who were not in Christ), but they are specific instructions to a specific group of people for a specific act. These passages have no reference to the church.

b) Binding, loosing, commanding Satan and his demons.

Anderson admits that there are no instructions in the epistles to cast out demons because (he says) it is the responsibility of every Christian to put on the armor of God, stand firm, and resist the devil. Scripture used as support is Matthew 12:29. But it is wrong to conclude that Christ was establishing a universal principal for binding evil spirits. And by the way, who keeps letting them loose?

2. Freedom from Our Past

Anderson suggests a 3-prong approach:

- a) The "integration of psychology with theology.
- b) Freeing the Christian of "generational demonic bondage."
- c) Forgive yourself. Nothing in all the Word of God gives us the authority to forgive ourselves.

3. Freedom from scriptural Conflicts Caused by Demons

Demonic confrontation is the crux of Anderson's ministry. Note three unhealthy and/or unscriptural presumptions:

- a) Demons (not the flesh) are the primary source of scriptural failure for the Christian.
- b) Christians can become demon possessed.
- c) Spiritual warfare is an offensive, rather than defensive, campaign including verbal assaults on Satan. "We must learn to bind the strong man before we will be able to rescue his prisoners." (*The Bondage Breaker*, p. 91)

4. Steps to Freedom in Christ

Satan will be defeated only if we confront him verbally (p. 84).

Step #1 - Renounce involvement with satanically inspired occultic practices (This would include any activity that a family member may have participated in.).

Step #2 - Choose to live by truth rather than deception.

Step #3 - Choose forgiveness rather than being bitter (this includes forgiving ourselves p. 196).

Step #4 - We must choose to be submissive rather than rebellious.

Step #5 - Live humbly instead of proudly.

Step #6 - Choose freedom rather than bondage to sin.

Step #7 - Renounce the sins and curses which may have been placed on your ancestors (*The Bondage Breaker*, pp. 186ff, esp. p. 201).

EVALUATION OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE

The Scriptures claim to provide everything we need for salvation and sanctification (2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:3). *Yet, by the SWM teachers' own admission there exists no biblical evidence that a child of God can be demonized.* If that is the case, then obviously the Scripture provides no steps to freedom from demon possession. But we are now being told that Neil Anderson and C. Fred Dickason are providing for us what God's Word never does. Where are these men getting this information? From experience — the same source that cults and many false religions get their unbiblical teachings.

Not only is the SWM derived from extrabiblical sources but it contradicts much of what the NT does tell us about demons. Some examples:

1) In the epistles there are ten references to demons (mostly relating certain facts), but there are over fifty references to "the flesh" as the primary enemy of the Christian. The New Testament perspective is that the major area of conflict is in the arena of the flesh, not demonic influence.

2) Some are claiming that demons have names that reflect their influence. Names such as, "lust," "murder," "envy," "gossip," etc. Yet, nowhere in the Bible do we find any support for this teaching. Scripture explicitly says that these actions are a product of the flesh (e.g. Galatians 5:19-21).

3) Anderson claims that when we deal with demons it is a "truth encounter," not a "power encounter." But in the Scripture when Jesus or the apostles cast out demons it was always a power encounter. Never once did Jesus attempt to reason with a demonized individual. Never once did He call on them to believe the truth. He always forcibly cast demons out of such people. In addition, not a single person in the Gospels ever came to Jesus for deliverance from demons. The obvious reason being that when a demon controls someone, that person has lost his ability to choose right. Yet the SWM teachers claim that demonized believers are coming to them for deliverance in great droves.

4) The SWM leaders do not understand the distinction between Jesus and the apostles, and the average Christian. Jesus' encounters with the demons were directly related to His claim to be the Messiah and His offer of the Kingdom. As for the apostles, there are three occasions in which they cast out demons after Christ's ascension (Acts 8:5-8; 16:16-18; 19:11-12). *The ability to do this was*

given to verify their appointments as apostles (Mark 16:17; 2 Corinthians 12:12). In the New Testament we do not find Christians casting out demons unless they were apostles. However, even with the apostles we do not find the casting out of demons to be a major part of their ministry. Instead, the norm for dealing with the demon-possessed was the presentation of the gospel.

5) It is interesting to realize that it is these very areas — the ones the charismatics and the SWM people emphasize so heavily — that Jesus singles out as proving nothing concerning our relationship to God (Matthew 7:21-23). And later Paul would teach that even satanically inspired people can produce miracles (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12).

6) The bottom line is that this method of sanctification is taught nowhere in the Bible. *We surely can trust our Lord to have included a means of demonic deliverance if it had been needed.*

Spiritual Warfare, Part 3

We have spent considerable space so far evaluating and criticizing the Spiritual Warfare Movement. In this final part we would like to devote the bulk of our attention to the biblical instructions that our Lord gives us concerning our battle with Satan and his demons. But first, we would like to elaborate a little on four of the major unbiblical teachings of the SWM leaders.

MAJOR UNBIBLICAL TEACHINGS:

Christians must learn to bind Satan.

This idea is based on the misinterpretation of three passages: Matthew 12:29; 16:19; and 18:18. The context reveals that Matthew 12:29 was an illustration of Christ's personal power over Satan — not ours. And Matthew 16:19; 18:18 are in the context of fulfilling God's will on earth, including church discipline.

Rebuking the devil.

Believers are never instructed to rebuke the devil or his demons. The New Testament views rebuking as the sole prerogative of Jesus (Jude 9). As a matter of fact, this is a mark of false prophets (2 Peter 2:4-12; Jude 8, 9). Why do people rebuke the devil then? Second Peter 2:12 and Jude 10 say they do so because they do not understand what they are doing. Second Peter 2:10 suggests that they do so because of arrogance.

Praying the blood.

This phrase or idea is found nowhere in the New Testament. Christ's blood delivers us from sin, it is not a talisman to ward off demons.

Inherited curses.

There are **four reasons why this is not accurate:**

- 1) Salvation delivers us from all sin — including occultic sins. The Bible does not recognize occult sin as a special category that has not been dealt with at the cross.
- 2) Exodus 20:5 refers to the choice of each successive generation to follow after the sins of their ancestors. Ezekiel 18:10-20 says that we will each be dealt with according to our own sin.
- 3) Exodus 20:5-6; Deuteronomy 5:9-10 deals with Israel — not the church.
- 4) There is not one example in the Bible of a saved person being under a satanic curse which had to be "broken" by Christian exorcism or distinct confession.

BIBLICAL INSTRUCTION CONCERNING DEALING WITH DEMONS

That Satan and his demons are actively involved in attempting to destroy our lives is evident throughout Scripture. First Peter 5:8 perhaps sums up Satan's efforts and goals better than any other place in the Bible. The big question is how are we to deal with his onslaughts? Some are teaching today that we are to rebuke or bind Satan. Others tell us that we are to cast demons out of people by claiming the blood of Christ (*The Bondage Breaker*, pp. 69, 84-88, 107, 111). Yet in the New Testament we are never instructed or commanded to cast out or bind demons.

When it comes to Satan we are taught to play a defensive role. When believers go on the offensive against Satan they are stepping out of their legitimate bounds by becoming involved in situations which the Lord has never intended for them. Rather than instruction concerning exorcism, binding, rebuking, etc., we are taught (in the only three places in the New Testament where instruction concerning dealing with Satan is found) to resist the devil (1 Peter 5:6-9; James 4:7; Ephesians 6:10-18).

EPHESIANS 6

Only the Ephesians 6 passage teaches us how to resist by putting on the armor of God. Paul as a prisoner at the time he wrote the epistle of Ephesians, observed daily the protective armor of the soldiers that guarded him. Using the armor as an illustration, Paul explained to us how we can stand firm against the schemes of the Devil. Six pieces of armor are needed to fully protect the believer against Satan's attacks.

1) Belt of Truth (6:14)

The belt was essential to keep the other pieces of armor in place and to secure freedom of movement by tying back the long tunic that the soldiers wore. The truth spoken of here is the objective truth of God's Word. God wants us to be completely dominated and controlled by the truth of the Bible. It is because many Christians are not committed to the absolute truth and final authority of the Word of God that they are ineffective in their spiritual warfare. We must take 2 Timothy 3:16, 17 and 2 Peter 1:3 seriously. This must be our presupposition.

2) Breastplate of Righteousness (6:14)

The vital organs of the Roman soldier were protected by his breastplate. People are in need of two types of righteousness that protects our thoughts, emotions and wills. First, there is "saving righteousness" that is given to us at the moment of conversion (Romans 4:5). This is the righteousness of Christ and is credited to us without merit on our part when we trust in Christ for the forgiveness of sin. Secondly, there is personal righteousness which refers to the righteousness produced in our lives by the Holy Spirit. This takes place in a believer's life as he recognizes his sin and turns to Christ. To choose to live "rightly" is a great safeguard.

3) Shoes of the Gospel of Peace (6:15)

You will note that we are to have our feet shod with the "preparation" of the gospel of peace. This speaks of a readiness, firm footing, mobility and protection that comes from having the gospel of peace. The thing that assures us of ultimate victory against Satan is that we have peace with God (Romans 5:1, 2). Therefore, we can remain steadfast and immovable because our feet are firmly grounded on our immovable relationship with God.

4) Shield of Faith (6:16)

This speaks not of "saving faith," for these people were already saved, but of a "living faith," a trust in the promises and the power of God. Satan's primary weapon is to get us to distrust God's Word. By faith in God and His Word, we are able to handle anything Satan throws our way. Only by looking away from self to God, placing our trust in Him for life, death, and eternity, relying on His Word of revelation and promise, is it possible to repel Satan's shower of flaming missiles.

5) Helmet of Salvation (6:17)

First Thessalonians 5:8 clarifies the meaning here. He is speaking not of becoming saved but of the "hope of salvation." That is, we have absolute assurance of our salvation no matter how fierce the battle becomes. Were it not for the fact that in the midst of hardship and persecution the assurance of salvation dwells in our hearts we might easily give up the fight. The helmet of salvation enables us to go into battle with complete confidence, not in ourselves but in our God (Philippians 1:6).

6) Sword of the Spirit (6:17)

This refers to the short dagger-like sword that was used primarily for defense — not the broad sword which was an offensive weapon. "The sword which the Christian carries is described here as the Word of God. But this is not the Greek 'logos' but 'rhema'. 'Rhema' refers to a specific word or utterance. In spiritual warfare it is not enough to have merely a general knowledge of the Scriptures; we must also have a specific knowledge of the Scriptures and use this knowledge correctly." (*A Holy Rebellion*, p. 145) Note 6:18, 19 where this armor is to be bathed in prayer.

CONCLUSION

The leadership within the SWM would claim that the above biblical teachings on dealing with Satan are too simplistic. They would have us add to the Scriptures their experiences and "clinical evidence." Yet this is the same error made by all who eventually go astray from God's truth. We maintain that God has given us everything that we need to know about true spiritual warfare in the Word. Any addition from man is unnecessary and ultimately destructive.

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