



Lecture Notes – Week 5

PT626 Spiritual Warfare

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Spiritual Warfare in The Book of Acts, The Pauline Epistles, Revelation & How To Cast Out Demons

Spiritual Warfare in the Book of Acts and Pauline Epistles

The New Testament continues the theme of spiritual warfare, showing that the early church and believers are engaged in a battle against **cosmic powers, demonic forces, and human opposition**. Spiritual warfare is both **cosmic and practical**, emphasizing reliance on God's power, faith, and prayer.

I. Key Themes in Acts

1. Demonic Opposition to the Gospel

- False prophets and occult powers confront the apostles (Acts 8:9–24; 16:16–18).
- Exorcisms demonstrate the authority of Jesus over evil spirits.

2. Cosmic and Cultural Resistance

- Persecution by authorities often accompanies spiritual opposition (Acts 4:23–31; 5:17–42).
- Human and spiritual powers often work together to resist God's purposes.

3. Holy Spirit Empowerment

- The apostles rely on the Holy Spirit for boldness and authority (Acts 1:8; 13:9–12).
- Spiritual warfare is waged through prayer, proclamation, and the Spirit's power.

II. Table 1: Spiritual Warfare in Acts

Event / Passage	Spiritual Opponent	Action / Response	Outcome / Significance	Scripture Reference
Simon the Sorcerer	Occult power / deception	Peter rebukes, calls for repentance	Shows God's authority over false spiritual powers	Acts 8:9–24
Slave girl with spirit of divination	Demonic spirit	Paul commands spirit to leave	Deliverance demonstrates kingdom authority	Acts 16:16–18
Opposition by religious authorities	Human + spiritual opposition	Apostles continue preaching, pray	Boldness through Spirit; Gospel advances	Acts 4:23–31
Elymas the magician	Sorcery / opposition to God	Paul rebukes, temporarily blinds him	God's power prevails over deception	Acts 13:6–12
Persecution by rulers	Human + spiritual	Apostles respond with prayer and bold witness	Spiritual warfare includes perseverance	Acts 5:17–42

III. Key Themes in Pauline Epistles

1. Believers Equipped for Warfare

- Christians are called to spiritual vigilance (Eph. 6:10–18; 2 Cor. 10:3–5).
- The “armor of God” is spiritual, not physical.

2. Cosmic Conflict

- Principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, and spiritual wickedness are real (Eph. 6:12; Col. 2:15).
- Victory is in Christ, not human effort.

3. Prayer and Spiritual Authority

- Spiritual warfare involves prayer, intercession, and reliance on God (Eph. 6:18; 1 Thess. 5:17–18).

4. Resisting Sin and Temptation

- The flesh, worldly systems, and spiritual forces oppose believers (Gal. 5:16–17; Rom. 13:12–14).

IV. Table 2: Spiritual Warfare in Pauline Epistles

Passage / Theme	Spiritual Opponent	Believer's Response	Outcome / Significance	Scripture Reference
Armor of God	Principalities, powers, spiritual forces	Put on truth, righteousness, gospel readiness, faith, salvation, Word, prayer	Victory through Christ; spiritual preparedness	Eph. 6:10–18
Cosmic conflict	Rulers of darkness, spiritual wickedness	Stand firm in faith	Recognizes reality of unseen battle	Eph. 6:12
Spiritual authority / thoughts	Strongholds of thought, false reasoning	Take every thought captive to Christ	Mind as battleground for obedience	2 Cor. 10:3–5
Resist temptation	Flesh, world	Walk in Spirit, put on Christ, resist deeds of darkness	Personal holiness strengthens against evil	Rom. 13:12–14; Gal. 5:16–17
Prayer and vigilance	Satan's schemes	Pray without ceasing, give thanks	Persistent prayer counters spiritual attack	1 Thess. 5:17–18; Eph. 6:18

V. Summary Insight

1. Spiritual Warfare is Real and Multifaceted

- Believers face opposition from both supernatural forces and human agents.

2. Victory is in Christ, not Human Effort

- Deliverance, boldness, and success in ministry come through the Spirit.

3. Tools for Warfare

- Prayer, the Word of God, faith, obedience, and righteousness are key weapons.

4. Kingdom Focus

- Spiritual warfare advances God's kingdom, liberates captives, and resists the powers of darkness

VI. Spiritual Warfare in the Book of Revelation

Event / Theme	Spiritual Opponent	Action / Response	Outcome / Significance	Scripture Reference
Vision of the Throne	Satan and cosmic powers	God's sovereignty revealed over heaven and earth	Establishes ultimate authority of God in spiritual warfare	Rev. 4–5
Seals, Trumpets, and Bowls	Demonic forces, unrepentant humanity	God unleashes judgment on evil powers and rebellion	Spiritual conflict includes judgment and cosmic consequences	Rev. 6–16
The Dragon and the Woman	Satan / Dragon	Dragon tries to devour child; war against the woman's offspring	Highlights Satan's opposition to God's plan and people of God	Rev. 12:1–17
War in Heaven	Michael and angels vs. Dragon (Satan)	Michael defeats Satan	Cosmic victory demonstrates God's supremacy and finality of spiritual warfare	Rev. 12:7–9
Beast and False Prophet	Antichrist forces / demonic deception	War against saints; persecution of believers	Spiritual warfare involves deception, coercion, and persecution	Rev. 13:1–18

Event / Theme	Spiritual Opponent	Action / Response	Outcome / Significance	Scripture Reference
Saints Overcome Evil	Satanic powers	Saints conquer through the blood of the Lamb and testimony	Spiritual victory is achieved through Christ's authority	Rev. 12:10–11
Final Judgment	Satan, death, Hades	Cast into lake of fire	Ultimate defeat of evil; God's kingdom fully established	Rev. 20:10–15
New Heaven and New Earth	No opposition remains	God dwells with humanity; evil removed	Complete resolution of spiritual warfare; eternal victory	Rev. 21–22

Summary Insight

- Cosmic Scope:** Revelation portrays spiritual warfare as a **cosmic battle between God and Satan**, extending through history and culminating in at the Return of Jesus Christ.
- Divine Sovereignty:** God remains in control; His judgments reveal His power over all spiritual and earthly forces.
- Believers' Participation:** Saints are active participants through testimony, faith, and perseverance (Rev. 12:11).
- Ultimate Victory:** Christ's victory is decisive; evil is defeated permanently, and God's eternal kingdom is established.

VII. Step-by-Step Guide to Expelling Demons (NT-Based)

Step	Action / Principle	Scriptural Example	Practical Application / Teaching Insight
1. Recognize Authority in Jesus' Name	Acknowledge that all spiritual authority belongs to Jesus	Jesus casts out demons by His word (Mark 1:23–27; Luke 4:36)	Begin every deliverance with a declaration of Christ's authority
2. Command the Spirit to Leave	Speak directly and firmly to the unclean spirit	Paul commands the spirit to leave the slave girl (Acts 16:16–18)	Use clear, authoritative commands; speak with confidence in Jesus' power
3. Engage in Prayer and Fasting	Prepare spiritually to strengthen authority	Jesus mentions prayer and fasting for certain demons (Mark 9:29; Matt. 17:21 – some manuscripts)	Combine deliverance with prayer and, if needed, fasting to deepen spiritual focus

Step	Action / Principle	Scriptural Example	Practical Application / Teaching Insight
4. Activate Faith	Faith of the person and minister is crucial	Woman with spirit of infirmity healed because of faith (Luke 13:11–13)	Encourage belief and trust in God; faith creates a receptive environment for deliverance
5. Utilize Delegated Authority	Believers act under Jesus' delegation	Disciples given authority over demons (Matt. 10:1; Luke 10:19)	Teach followers to rely on the authority Christ grants, not personal strength
6. Encourage Confession and Repentance	Remove sin or obstacles that may empower demonic influence	New converts renounce magical arts (Acts 19:18–20); James 5:16	Ask participants to repent and renounce sin or occult practices where appropriate
7. Depend on the Holy Spirit	Recognize the Spirit's empowerment	Apostles filled with the Spirit perform exorcisms (Acts 8:6–7; Acts 16:18)	Always pray for Holy Spirit guidance and empowerment before acting
8. Apply Spiritual Armor and Protection	Protect against ongoing attacks	Stand against the devil using the armor of God (Eph. 6:10–18)	Prepare participants to maintain victory; teach ongoing vigilance and spiritual discipline
9. Verify Deliverance and Praise God	Confirm freedom from oppression	Multiple accounts: healed, free, praising God (Acts 16:18; Luke 13:12–13)	Encourage thanksgiving and reinforcement of faith after deliverance
10. Follow-Up and Discipleship	Strengthen spiritual growth and protection	Early church instructed new believers in obedience (Acts 2:42–47)	Provide mentorship, teaching, and prayer to prevent relapse or new attacks

Summary Insight

- Deliverance is **Christ-centered, Spirit-empowered, and faith-based**.
- The process combines **prayer, authority, spiritual discipline, and repentance**.
- New Testament examples show that **both the minister and the recipient's faith are essential**, while God's power does the work.
- Ongoing protection and spiritual growth ensure lasting freedom from oppression.