

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

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NEW LIFE CHURCH

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>PAGE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
3	Preface
5	The Work of the Church
7	The Work of Jesus
9	Church
12	Spiritual Warfare
15	Demons
20	Wounded Spirits
24	Generational Sins, Curses
27	Strongholds
30	Ministry
34	Principalities

PREFACE

It is abundantly clear from scripture, experience, and extensive writings of many Saints that there does exist a real enemy to God, a usurper of spiritual power, a devourer of the righteous, and a deceiver of the brethren. While writing this I received a book called “War In Heaven, God’s Epic Battle With Evil”, by Derek Prince. Derek died shortly after finishing this book. Reading this excellent book I realized that I needed to describe our common enemy more completely.

At some point in history, whether in time or out of time I do not know, there was rebellion in heaven. Lucifer, who became Satan, began ‘tale-bearing’ amongst the angels and seduced about one-third of them to follow him in opposition to Father God. As a direct result of their rebellion they, in the words of scripture ‘lost their first estate’. This means they were removed from heaven and brought to earth. Their existence on earth is temporary since their permanent abode will be in a place prepared especially for these fallen angels (devils). This place is called Hell. I believe they range in power and ability from Satan who is beautiful and has the gifting of an archangel down to lowly, wispy, wimpy beings with very little power. When these beings broke ranks with God they lost all Godly characteristics. By this I mean that these creatures have no love, charity, humor, creativeness, gentleness, or wisdom. I encourage you to study this list and think about what it is like to deal with creatures who have not the slightest particle of love, charity, empathy, etc. They are evil personified. They are persons. They are persons without bodies but persons indeed. Like all persons, they have personalities. Different personalities embody different kinds of evil. Some embody anger, rage, violence, and even murder. For others it is sexual and from them flow inducements and enticements to all kinds of sexual perversions. Yet others personify fear and terror. I could continue describing these perverted natures but all that is needed is to consider the works of the flesh given in Gal. 5. The point is that behind every kind of evil destructive practice, there are fallen ones working to lure and entrap humans into these behaviours. These enemies of both God and man have been loosed on earth by Father God. He has a purpose in exposing us, His children, His Church, to such evil. I do not pretend to understand all of Father’s purpose but it has become clear to me that a major purpose has been that we, His Church, His body, might grow close to Him

and to one another as we fight, using the power of the Holy Spirit, to overcome – not people – evil person without bodies.

In this writing I have described, in some detail, the nature of human bondage through:

- 1) Demonic oppression.
- 2) Wounded Spirits.
- 3) Generational sins or curses.
- 4) Strongholds in the mind.
- 5) Warring against principalities.

Each of these areas have, at the root, some kind of demonic activity. It is shameful that so few of God's children are even aware of the existence of these things, much less having the faith and power to destroy their work and batter down the gates of hellish activity.

We humans have been created in the image and likeness of God. The term 'image' means 'in the appearance of'. Without going into much detail let me borrow an illustration from Derek Prince. Consider a young woman who loves a young man. She carries his picture in her purse. His image is with her wherever she goes. One day she gets a letter from him saying he has found another and will marry the other woman. What does the first girl do? She takes his picture, his image, removes it from her purse, tears it into pieces, and grinds it under her heel. She has not harmed the man, only his image. So it is with Satan and his followers. They have no power to harm God so they work to grind His image under their heel. We are the image. We are the target of their wrath.

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

It has fallen my lot in life, my path in God's Kingdom, to be involved in Spiritual Warfare quite a lot during the past thirty-five years of my life. I have not chosen this nor, in a certain sense, do I 'like' this. Nevertheless a substantial portion of my energy and effort involves Spiritual Warfare. When I have read other writings about Spiritual Warfare, I have found material that ranges from the sublime to the ridiculous. There is a great deal of foolishness abroad amongst Christians in this field of study and even more foolishness outside Christianity.

An old saying is, "the proof of the pudding is in the taste". You, the reader, cannot taste 'my' pudding. Only those who live in my community and have seen the results of my labor can judge my life and work with any accuracy.

Many years ago I was forced, by circumstances, to deal with something called 'deliverance'. This is where an individual had observable manifestations of oppression of some sort. It became our practice to gather in 'teams' of three to five persons to 'minister' to the individual. This was, of course, with the individual's full cooperation and desire to be free from the oppression. We would consult with the person, pray for discernment. We would ask the individual to pray for the Holy Spirit to reveal to them any unforgiveness that they held in their hearts. We would encourage them to offer full and complete forgiveness before we would minister to them. Many experienced great release from their bondage but I observed that for some, the release was not permanent and for others, the release was not as full and complete as I hoped. I am an engineer. I do not much like to be involved with things that do not work. So I sought the Lord and asked Him to teach me how to make this 'work'. The present manuscript is the result of some thirty- five years of learning how to make this 'work'. I am still learning, but will share with you my understanding of these things up to this time.

You may ask, "Why did you do this? Was it something encouraged by your Church?" No, my Church rather opposed these things. When I was a young man I often prayed that the Lord would teach me to 'love' people. He did. How could I stand by, watching those I love in pain, misery, and bondage without trying to help? So I tried. Often there has been wonderful success. Many times there has been, as far as I could see, little or no success. Perhaps there has always been a success of some kind because I honestly believe that almost all of those to whom I have tried to minister have felt loved, not just loved by me but loved by both Father and I.

As I planned this writing, I proposed, to myself, to present the notion that Spiritual Warfare is one of the works of the Church. Through prayer, I believe the Lord has corrected me. Here is what I now believe to be true. Every aspect of the Work of the Church involves spiritual warfare. Truly Satan is a thief who comes to deceive, steal, kill, and destroy. In these days he is furious in his efforts to gain some point of victory in his totally losing battle.

Many areas of the battle are obvious. Spiritual warfare is essential in the healing of disease, repair of injuries, restoration of physical functions. Casting out demons, breaking curses, healing wounded Spirits, refreshing and restoring wounded Spirits, restoring minds through tearing down strongholds all clearly involve spiritual warfare. How about evangelism? Have you ever shared the Lord with someone who was blinded and deafened by the enemy. No matter what you said, the other person could not see, could not understand, could not receive. Is that not because there was a battle being waged in the 'spirituals'? Let us consider worship and praise. How often have you been hindered in your worship and praise and blamed yourself for distractions and inattention? God has an arch-enemy who absolutely hates for God to receive the praise that he (Satan) so much desires. He will do all he can to prevent and block you from praising your Lord. Also, because God loves you, YOU have the same enemy. This enemy knows that praise and worship are wonderfully beneficial to you so he will try all he knows to block you from entering into Father's throne room through praise and worship. It is just the same with Kingdom Teaching and with everything that Father God calls us to do within the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus and within His Church. There is nothing that the Church, the true Church, is called to do that Satan does not strive to hinder. There is warfare at every step.

It is very important in these days that God's people gain an understanding of their foe's great limitations as well as the enormous power placed in the hands of the believers. Until God's people '**LEARN WHO THEY ARE**', the Kingdom of God will suffer disgrace at the hands of the unspiritual and aggressive persons who fling their arrogant and prideful words about like milkweed seeds in the wind. They are full of words and empty of content. Let the sober, the yielded, the cautious, loving, Sons of God come into the fray, wielding Godly weapons of warfare and bring His Kingdom through the enemy camp like an **ICEBREAKER THROUGH THE COLD HARD COVERING OF THE ENEMY!**

THE WORK OF JESUS

It is both impressive and informative to read the words that Jesus read to the people of Nazareth at the beginning of His earthly ministry. In Luke 4:18 we read:

¹⁸The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, ¹⁹To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. ²⁰And he closed the book, and he gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. ²¹And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

Reading all the gospels, we discover that this is just what Jesus went around the countryside doing. This was His work. This is also the work of His Church.

Here is an outline of what **Jesus came to DO:**

1. Heal the broken hearted
2. Proclaim liberty to the captives.
3. Open prison doors.
4. Proclaim the year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God.
5. Comfort all who mourn.
6. Console those who mourn in Zion.
7. Give beauty for ashes.
8. Give oil of joy for mourning.
9. Give a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness (depression)

And when we are healthy we will:

10. Rebuild the old ruins
11. Raise up the former desolations.
12. Repair the ruined cities.

Surely, since the Church is the body of Christ, the work of the Church to the peoples of the earth must be very similar to the work of Jesus. Many scriptures could be given which give us guidance. One example would be I John 3:8 “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”

This writing is not intended to be long and exhausting but rather to be a kind of tutorial and general guide for those who desire to bring freedom to their brothers and sisters in bondage. Yet, it seems needful that I take some time and space to interpret some of these terms. For example, ‘Proclaim liberty to the captives’. Jesus inferred to the Pharisees that they were in bondage and they were indignant. They claimed that they were slaves to no man, even though they were suffering mightily under Roman rule at the time. Many of our brothers and sisters perceive no bondage while suffering greatly from addictions, uncontrolled anger, deep depression, etc. Many are in prisons of various kinds. In the marvelous book, “Share My Pleasant Stones” by Eugenia Price there are presented several kinds of prisons in which various humans dwell {including Christians}. There are many whose hearts break because of discouragement, lost loved ones, their own past sins, and their lack of intimacy with their heavenly Father. Jesus came to change that. These are deeply spiritual things that haunt those outside the Kingdom and there is little help for them until they come inside the castle walls. For the Child of God, however, there is relief from every bondage that Satan would impose. After all, scripture does say,

Gal. 5:1 ¹It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

It is important that we begin by discussing some things that might seem trivial but will help you to understand some things I am trying to teach.

CHURCH

Reference has already been made to ‘Church’ several times and it is quite essential that you know my definition of ‘Church’ so my communication to you is clear. It is not essential that you agree with my definition, only that you know what I mean when I use the term. Church is the congregation of all those who have been born again into Christ. This is the ‘Universal Church’ and is far beyond our comprehension. Watchman Nee (Nee To-Sheng) whose writings have greatly inspired this author, defines the local Church as the community of all who believe in Jesus and have been born into His Kingdom and live in this locality. Clearly we cannot have close fellowship with so large a number of people so it is common to refer to those with whom we fellowship in Christ as ‘Our Church’.

This Church is composed of persons from all denominations (and persons with no denomination). We are fully aware that many who fellowship within congregations do not ‘know’ Jesus and though they are members of a denomination, they are not members of ‘His Church’. So, my definition is simple. If you are ‘saved’, you are a member of His Church. If you are not saved, you are not a member. The ‘Work of the Church’ is the work inspired and empowered by the Holy Spirit acting through the members of the Church. I believe that it pleases the Lord to delegate much Kingdom work to His Church. I believe that much of the Spiritual Warfare which He directs is to come through His Church. There is another term which I believe to be very important. This term is “Church Life”. Just as the Lord desires and commands that His children develop an intimate relationship with Himself, He also desires that there be a reasonably small number of fellow Christians with whom we develop intimate relationships. Much Christian character is developed through these close relationships and this pleases our Lord. There will be more said about this later.

I understand that the previous introduction to ‘Church’ may, for some, be very simplistic and for others, new and confusing. For those who wish to learn more from the author please feel free to contact me. Information on how to contact me will be given at the end of this article.

Next, we need to consider the nature of the inhabitants of our Father’s Universe. This is very important. There are, of course, the animals and other critters. These are abundant, essential to our daily lives, and tell us much about the nature of our Creator. These creatures possess bodies and

minds. Whether they have ‘souls’ depends entirely on how you define ‘soul’. Again, Watchman Nee defines ‘soul’ as ‘mind, will, and emotions’. Given that as our definition I suppose animals and critters do have souls. They do not have ‘Spirits’. There is no need to belabor this point and all are free to disagree with me in this although I believe the teaching of scripture on this point is quite clear. There also was created, by our Father, a class of beings who do not have bodies. These are the angels which are often mentioned in scripture. Most of the angels exist in the state and relationship with Father in which they were created. They have specific functions and they are very good at what they do. It is the belief of this writer that angels are more involved with the lives of Christians than we are aware and we should enjoy them more than we do. There are, however, other ‘beings without bodies’ which were created as angels who “lost their first estate”. They followed the deceptions of one of the three arch-angels and ‘fell’. They have become devils and are the source of many problems in the world today. For most people the works and influences of these beings go totally unrecognized. For those who do recognize their existence, many are confused as to what to do about them. The primary reason for this writing is to help God’s people understand what to do about combating the works of the fallen angels in their day to day lives.

There are two other types of beings in our Universe. They both are called ‘human’. Humans have both body and soul. Humans also possess something called ‘spirit’ although in many humans this spirit is called ‘dead’ by God. The word ‘dead’ used in this context means, I believe, “not able to communicate and fellowship with Father, Son, or Holy Spirit as they were designed to do”. The spirit is the eternal, intuitive, part of a human and those spirits which have not been brought to life by the work of the cross of Jesus Christ – are dead. Those spirits who, by belief, trust, and yielding to the life and resurrection of Jesus are New Creatures IN Christ, these are the ‘Sons of God’. These are unique beings who, out of all God’s creation, are the only ones who live in both the physical and the spiritual realms. We are the ones most gifted and appropriate to conduct spiritual warfare against the enemies of God. It is only those who have been ‘born of the Spirit of God’ who have the ability to both walk this earth and commune with the realm of the Spirit. This is a phenomenal gift about which much of the Church seems to be unaware. Much of the content of this writing assumes that people CAN receive revelation from God, insights from God, inspiration through the Holy Spirit, and exert power over the works of the enemy. Success is not automatic and I caution the impetuous to not rush in where angels fear to tread.

Yet, there are beings, persons without bodies, which touch our lives, influence us, and can bring both good and ill. Some of these persons without bodies are angelic beings who love and serve our God with all their beings. As a result of that, they can bring much to God's people in the way of peace, guidance, and protection. There are other persons without bodies who are our absolute and total foe. They are angry, spiteful, and desire to offend God in every way possible. Since they can do nothing directly against Father they focus all their energy on hurting, hindering, and deceiving God's Children (US).

Let us look at the tools at our enemy's disposal, see how these things affect us, and learn how we can defeat them.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Spiritual warfare can be divided into three groups to help us in our understanding. I am not suggesting that our enemy, Satan, does not cross over my man-made lines but I believe it will help us to gain insights. These three categories are:

1. Personal, individual attack.
2. Corporate attacks against groups.
3. General deceptions and onslaughts which demand that God's people band together in overcoming the works of the enemies of God.

Let us begin, and place most of our emphasis on the personal attacks. There are, as I have come to understand, four major areas where God's Children can expect personal attacks. These attacks will come whether you believe in the enemy or not. These attacks, however, can only be overcome if we believe in the spiritual nature of both ourselves and the rest of the Universe. You are a spiritual being. Everyone around you is a spiritual being. There are numerous persons without bodies around you who are spiritual beings. If this is accepted and understood then God's instructions about warfare will help us to victory. If this is not understood then God's salvation is still true, we will be held in His mighty hand, and our salvation is 'great' as it says in Hebrews. Yet our lives may still be impacted by suffering, defeat, and tribulations which dog our every step. True, our Lord said that in the world WE SHALL HAVE TRIBULATION. Whether we learn to counter attack or not, the tribulations will come. He also said, "Fear not for I have overcome the world". Hanging on by our fingernails until we die and escape is not Father's plan for our lives. His plan is that we learn how to defeat the enemy and learn, through tribulation, to overcome.

What do we need to overcome? There are four general modes of personal attack. These are:

- a) Demons.
- b) Generational sins (Curses)
- c) Wounding of the human spirit..
- d) Strongholds in the mind.

Before I begin discussion of the warfare, it is very important that we look at the source of our victory. What is the source of spiritual power? From whom does it come and how does an individual

or small group learn to let this power flow through them?

1. All power, in heaven and earth, comes from our heavenly Father. He is the one who has planned all things, seen all things before anything came to be. Both George MacDonald and Bob Mumford teach eloquently how Father created within Himself all things that were created. He saw the end from the beginning (Gene Edwards does this teaching in an exciting way). Then when all was 'In Him', the Son chooses to glorify the Father by bringing all that Father has seen, to reality. In Colossians we are taught wonderfully how it was through Jesus that all things came into being and it is through Jesus that all things hang together. It is tempting to look at the broken and twisted world around us and suspect that it is out of control. We are tempted to believe that Father has not been able to complete the master plan. It takes faith, much faith, to believe that Father and Jesus still are indeed Lord of all. The enemy has much power, coming largely, through deception and lies. Our Father not only has all power over the enemy but, we are told, has given us "authority over all the power of the enemy". If you choose to engage in spiritual warfare as a victor instead of as a victim you must be convinced that Father wills that His power flow through you and that His power far exceeds that of our common foe.
2. One of the tremendous joys of learning about our God is to discover how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit love and honor one another. Surely this can be an example of how they desire their Church to function. Father creates, in Himself, a wonderful Creation. Jesus, desiring to honor Father brings Father's creation into being solely to glorify and honor His Father. Then the Holy Spirit volunteers to be the emissary on earth, the vehicle through which the love and power of Father and Jesus flows and is expressed. Why does He, the Holy Spirit, do this? It is so Father and Jesus will be gloried!
3. Jesus chose to die to His natural glory in heaven. He left the glories and honors which were, by right, His. He left all so that He might come to earth. Here He was born and raised in poverty and suspicion. He comments one time, "Foxes have holes and birds have nests but the Son of Man has no

place to lay His head”. Why did He come? To fulfill Father’s plan which was to bring many sons to Glory. Adam was perfect when innocent but he was not the fulfillment of Father’s plan. Jesus came and fulfilled His own destiny but Father’s plan extended beyond even that. Father’s plan was to bring many Sons and Brothers into the family of God. {This is not a sexist statement. In the Kingdom of God there is no male or female so the women also become ‘Sons of God’}.

4. Jesus has chosen to honor and build up His body, the Church, by sending them to exercise love, power, and authority IN HIS NAME. Does God act sovereignty, without human intervention? Yes, of course He does. The point is not to limit God. No one can do that. The point is that there is so much that is Godly in the things God does that it often goes beyond our desire. What God places in our hands becomes, for many, a responsibility which surpasses our images of ourselves and causes us to draw back for fear of failure. There is more probability of failure in attempting nothing than there is in responding obediently to those things which are clearly in Scripture. The order here is important. He calls us to exercise love, then power, then authority. Love for whom? Love for Father Himself. Love for His ways (which are so often different than our own ways). Love for His Kingdom (which is definitely NOT out own kingdom). Out of this love for Father MUST come a love for His Children, His Church. If you do not come to love Father’s ways, His methods, and His Church then it is possible that it is another god you have come to love. This is meant to be a caution to the reader.

DEMONS

Caution is necessary while presenting the topic of ‘demons’ because some readers may be quite mature in this topic and others not. The church in which I was raised essentially ignored the whole concept of demons, casually inferring that Jesus was catering to the beliefs of the people of His day when He cast out demons. The people to whom He ministered were not demonized, they were just mentally ill. Much later in my life I have encountered groups who, literally, would cast up to a hundred demons from an individual, only to repeat the process in the same individual a week or month later. I thought then, and I think now, that this was ridiculous. I have read many books about ‘deliverance’ and have found the vast majority to be misleading and filled with obvious errors. There are some large denominations that believe a Christian cannot ‘have’ a demon. The Lord has led me for many years in a ‘ministry to the saved’. It has been my calling to work to bring Christians to ‘maturity’. I have not stressed evangelism though, to God’s praise there have been many brought into His Kingdom partially through my efforts. It has also been my lot to do a great deal of Christian counseling. At one point it became evident that I could make little progress helping people unless I worked in the realm of the Spirit. As I studied scripture I came to the conclusion that not only could a Christian ‘have’ a demon but it was only Christians to whom I would minister deliverance. So, let me explain. The following are the opinions of the author based on many years of experience in the ‘laboratory’, not the library.

It is not possible for a demon to ‘possess’ any human, whether saved or lost. In scripture we read of the Gadarene from whom Jesus cast out a legion of demons, yet this man still was in sufficient possession of his will to come to Jesus. While in a Haitian Church one day I heard a visiting preacher who pastored a Baptist Church in Haiti. In former days he had been the number two person in all of Haiti in the Voodoo religion. He was very high in an activity devoted to the worship of Satan, yet he was able to receive Jesus as Lord and be cleansed and called to preach. The scriptural term which some versions translate as possessed when referring to demons should more accurately be translated ‘pressurized’. A demon is a person without a body which has definite, fallen personality traits. Two things all demons have in common are that they hate God and hate His people.

It is my suspicion that demons are fallen Angels who once possessed Godly gifts but when they rebelled and were cast out of heaven, their personality twisted that gift into a perversion. It seems obvious that some demons desire to inhabit people. In order to inhabit a person the demon must have the right to do so. In a most general way our Lord has set up His Universe in such a way that even the demons are under His authority. People are protected from them until and unless the person grants the demon legal rights to come in and set up housekeeping with them. Some of you are saying now, "Surely no one would ever do that". Yes they will and yes they do.

Let me remind you of just a couple of short scriptures. In Matt. 6:14, right after the "Lord's Prayer" we read, "For if you forgive men their trespasses, our Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses". Mark 11:25 "And whenever you stand praying if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses". This may not fit your theology but remember, it was Jesus that said this! I will try to explain the meaning after reminding you of another scripture. There was a man who owed a great debt. When the Master came and demanded payment he begged the Master to forgive the debt. The wonderful Chinese teacher, Watchman Nee first explained this for me. The transaction here was one of accounting. The man owed money and this debt was on the debit side of his 'ledger'. When the master forgave the debt he transferred that man's debt over to his own debit, clearing the debt of the man. The man was now free of his debt. Every Christian teacher I know of understands that the debt was 'sin'. The man could not pay for his own sin and he needed someone to pay that sin-debt. Jesus, who died for the sins of the entire world has accumulated tremendous assets in that department, He can (and does) cover all the sins that ever have been or ever will be committed. He has the assets to cover the debt and He did so. The man, who is now a Christian, goes off and sees another man who owes him just a little bit. The little bit, in our lives may be money, may be libel, may be an insult. It may be anything through which we hold another in spiritual bondage. The other begs the Christian man to forgive the debt using the same words the first man had used when begging Jesus. This Christian man refuses. He has the man dragged into prison! Jesus then recalls the first man, the Christian man, and

calls him a wicked servant (still, however, a servant) and **“delivers him up to the hands of the tormentors”!!** Did Jesus send the man to hell? No, of course not. I know of no one that thinks eternal damnation is God’s answer to unforgiveness. Besides, hell is NOT a place where demons (tormentors) punish anyone. That is a place reserved for their own punishment. No, the only place a demon can torment anyone is here on this earth, in this life. What Jesus is teaching, I believe, is that when we refuse to forgive another, He permits demons to apply pressure on us, tormenting us, so that we will come to a place of repentance.

The last scripture that I will remind you of in this section is one where a person had a demon cast out but was not ‘filled’. Scripture says that this one came back and saw the clean and empty vessel and returned bringing seven others worse than himself. This is why I am so very reluctant to minister deliverance to a non-Christian. If they will receive Jesus and be born of His Holy Spirit then I will pray for them in every way in which the Lord leads. If they will not receive Jesus then I will pray for them to receive Jesus but little more.

So, legal right number one for a demon to oppress a person is when that person holds unforgiveness toward another. This is not simple because many of us hold deep seated resentments. The world would say we have ‘just cause’. Jesus says there is no just cause for unforgiveness. What if the other person does not ask for forgiveness? What if that awful person doesn’t even care? This is about you, not about them. Do you want to be free? Do you want to bring torment on yourself? Forgive, freely, lavishly poured out and flowing over. Sure, this WILL benefit the other person but so what, it will bring freedom and release to you so DO IT!. I have had many tell me, “I try to forgive but I still don’t feel good about that person”. My response is that we are not talking about feelings. We are talking about your will, your decision. You decide that you WILL forgive. You decide that you WILL NOT MAKE THEM PAY. You decide that they owe you nothing and that you will leave all judgment in the hands of our Lord. This includes, I have discovered from personal experience, not talking about them behind their back, even with the pretense of asking for ‘prayer’. Do not avoid them and especially, do not withhold anything that the Lord tells you to do for them. You need not like them. You need not have ‘warm fuzzy feelings’ toward them. You must ‘ACT IN A GODLY MANNER’ toward them. It is your behavior that is important, not your feelings.

Are there other ways that demons have been given ‘rights’ to oppress? Yes there are. Have you ever worshipped ‘another god’? Have you looked to horoscopes for direction in your life? Have you gone to fortune tellers, Oija Boards, palm readers, etc? There is only one ‘other god’. He is Satan. When you seeks answers from the spiritual realms other than through prayer, you are acknowledging Satan as your god. Our Father is a jealous God and demands that we have no other gods before Him. When you do any of those type of things mentioned above you give Satan the right to oppress.

It has been our discovery that many times persons who have indulged in a particular sin over a period of time will have given the enemy ‘rights’ to oppress in that area. Common examples include, but are not limited to, sexual indulgence, lying, gossip, anger, and alcohol. These things require that the one being ministered to repent of that sin. Our expression is, “you can not be delivered from your friends”. If the person is unrepentant, I advise you not to waste time trying to bring deliverance. If the person is truly a Christian, there will come a time when the Lord will make him sick of the sin and that will be the time for ministry in that area. Some may think that no one would make friends with a demon. True, but many make friends with a fleshly indulgence which they refuse to give up even though it brings oppression.

Another observation we have made is that many people are oppressed due to some special time of trauma in their lives. Children of alcoholic parents are typical examples of this. Often these oppressed people were subject to great fears during their childhood. Children almost always believe that they are the cause of things, so when a drunken parent is being loud, swearing, or violent the child takes guilt upon themselves. Commonly this results in depression or other symptoms in the adult. This bondage is almost always accompanied by wounding of the human spirit which will be discussed in a later section. Seeing a terrible accident, seeing a sibling die, having a family member suffer through a terrible disease are all the type of events which seem to permit the oppression of a vulnerable child. This oppression may endure throughout the life of the individual unless the Church steps in and relieves the suffering through the power of Jesus Christ.

Another type of oppression which has been observed is the sharing of a demon between two persons. I will give an illustration. Many years ago my wife, Lavon, and I went to a friends house where

we were to hear a teaching about demons. At that time I did not believe in them and was very skeptical (I am an engineer, after all). During the teaching my wife became convinced that she needed help of this sort and I was flabbergasted when she asked for ministry after the teaching. She is now and always has been an intelligent and very stable individual and I was shocked. She received ministry for seven spirits. One of them was said to be shared with one of our daughters. It was cast away and over the next few weeks there was a very discernable change in both my daughter and my wife. My daughter, being quite young, was told nothing about the ministry, yet she received the benefit. I was still dubious, though beginning to believe something true was among us. Five years later, we were living in another state and my wife, Lavon, ran across a slip of paper with these seven names written down. We had almost forgotten the whole incident. She called to me and showed me the slip. I had to sit down because there had been significant positive changes in every one of the seven areas. The changes had come, not because she was applying the 'willpower screw' but because oppression had been lifted. It was then that I began asking the Lord to teach me about this because His people were suffering oppression and I wanted to work in bringing freedom to those whom Father loves.

Satan and all his fleshly, worldly, kingdom thrives on deception. He cares little whether his deception convinces God's people that demons do not exist or that they are so scary we had better do nothing to draw attention to ourselves. The truth is that, in Christ, we have authority over all the power of the enemy. The truth is that when a demon's rights have been taken away, they are very easy for the Holy Spirit, through us, to evict. When evicted they do not easily come back. Rarely, in my experience, have I been asked to repeat a deliverance for the same demon. Exactly how is this done? I will have some comments and suggestions about that later in this writing.

One main point I do want to stress. Demonic activity is real and it does steal peace and prosperity from people. This occurs in the lives of both Christian and non-Christian but my practice is to only minister to those who are yielding their lives to Jesus. Demonic activity, though real, is not overwhelming. Forget the scary movie versions for they are not real at all. Satan has much more to fear from the believing, yielded, dead to self Christian than we have to fear from him.

WOUNDED SPIRITS

Special thanks are due to John and Paula Sanford and the Elijah House Ministries for insights into this area. Many years ago I was becoming frustrated with the 'deliverance ministry' because, while I observed temporary relief in those for whom I prayed, many of them returned to their former bondage. Personal experience with those close to me had convinced me that demons could not 'legally' return when true repentance was present yet some of those I loved still were in some form of bondage. I read and prayed for several years before discovering the deep insights that John and Paula have. As I learned about this new type of bondage, my own ministry began having wonderfully long lasting results. The healing of wounded spirits is a greatly needed ministry of the Church today and yet, few know anything at all about it. Many are suspicious. What a shame.

Common questions may be: a) What is a wounded Spirit? b) Why doesn't God protect us if a wounded Spirit is so devastating?

HERE IS THE HEART OF THE 'WORK OF THE CHURCH' !!

All human beings are three in one, similar to our God. God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We are body, soul, and spirit. The body heals itself from most cuts and bruises in a period of time. The soul (mind) either forgets or encapsulates memories of attacks and hurts. The human Spirit is the innermost part of man. This is the eternal part and the part that is most like our creator, God. The wonderfully spiritual teacher, Watchman Nee, teaches that we are outer man, inner man, and innermost man. He teaches that we are to be ruled by our innermost man though Satan works devilishly hard to cause us to let our outer man or inner man usurp that control. Our Spirits are sensitive to spiritual things and vulnerable to evil. God's wisdom ordained the family to provide protection and covering to the young Spirit so that it would grow in wisdom and attachment to Father God and thereby be protected from the vicious onslaughts of the enemy. As we fully know, the family in our present society is often shredded, divided, and not only does not provide spiritual protection but often is

the satanic instrument to bring the hurts and wounds to the Spirit.

How do you know if you have a wounded Spirit? One of the most profound things I have heard John Sanford teach is the short, catchy, phrase, “where there is a fruit, there is a root”. If there are ungodly symptoms in your life that linger and place you in bondage - these are ‘fruit’. If there is a strong drawing to any kind of self destructive practice – this is a fruit. If you seem to be addicted to sex, depression, anger, despondency, lust, gossip, etc. – these are fruit. In their writings John and Paula have gone deeply into these things far better than I can or will. Much of the bondage of the Church’s population involves wounding of the Spirit. Just as in demonic activity, here too there are spiritual laws of cause and effect.

{NOTE: *The concept of fruit and root is just as valid in the positive sense. From Gal. 5 we know the fruit of the Spirit. When we see that fruit consistently available for gathering in the life of a person, we can be sure of the deep root in that person*}

I have a good friend, a Christian man who is kind and caring and desires to help those in trouble. He is also drawn to violence and verbal expressions of violence and intolerance. These traits have caused him to be grossly misunderstood by many and have adversely affected his family. When he was quite young, about 7 I believe, he was left at home with an uncle. The young boy was sent to bed but shortly, he heard a loud noise, a gunshot. He rushed to see what was happening and discovered the body of his uncle who had committed suicide. I believe a shotgun was used and the sight was gory and bloody. Did this wound the young boy’s Spirit? Yes! Has it had a profound effect on the young boy? Yes! Does it still have a profound effect on the grown man? Yes!

Another teaching which I draw from John involves sexual union. They use the following example, which I believe to be excellent. A young girl is raised to believe that one day she will form a union with a man and they will be together for the rest of their lives. Even if the mind is not trained exactly like this, the Spirit knows that this is the course for which she was designed. Then, one day she is seduced by a man. Her mind rationalizes that, though not married, this is the ONE. But, this is not the ONE and they break up. Her mind knows that the relationship has been severed but her Spirit is bonded to the Spirit of the other. Scripture teaches this when the Apostle Paul says that when two lie together they become ‘ONE’. Certainly they are not one in body. Certainly they are not one in

mind. They become one, bonded, in Spirit. Then the young girl finds another 'ONE' and sleeps with him. Her mind is enthusiastic but her Spirit is confused. This is not the 'ONE'. What is this other 'ONE' doing here? So her Spirit tries to bond to 'TWO' but cannot fully do so. For some people, their Spirits have tried to bond to countless others until they cannot bond with ANY OTHER. This is a horrible bondage with which so many in our generation have afflicted themselves.

There are many sources which bring wounding to the human spirit. Different people respond differently to the same tribulations. Diagnosing a wounded spirit is not nearly as easy as diagnosing a demonic oppression. Healing a wounded spirit is not nearly so easy as casting away an oppressing demon.

Wounded spirits reveal themselves in various ways. Some hide into caves of shyness, or deep slumber. It is not my purpose to 'teach' about all of the causes and effects of wounding. John and Paula have done it far better than I can. But make no mistake, this type of bondage is real. This is prison, this is a deep prison for many. One very common source of wounded spirits involves something called 'Basic Trust'. I choose not to go into this in great depth but simply must give a brief introduction. In our society there has been much made concerning the importance of mothers in the life of an infant. I agree that mothers are absolutely necessary for normal growth and development of a child. What many do not understand is that the father is at least equally important, perhaps even more important than the mother in a child's development. A new born babe has few cognitive skills. They can not speak, they know no language. The very first level of emotional development is related to something called 'Basic Trust'. Practically all of the remaining development of the child is built on the foundation of basic trust. If the basic trust is not developed, then the various layers of future development will be built on shifting sands. How does the infant gain basic trust? From father. From birth the father should hold, caress, and speak to the baby. It is largely from this touch, speech, and attention that the child grows in basic trust. When basic trust is lacking it is almost impossible for the adult person to develop intimate relationships with others, especially their Father God. Many cannot relate to others and seclude themselves from intimacy to such a degree that they can never develop deep relationships. Not even with a husband or wife. Not even with the God who has brought them into

eternal life. This is tragic and the joy and usefulness of countless fine Christian people has been wasted on the horns of wounded Spirits. Substance abuse is a very common instrument of wounding the human Spirit. Alcoholism and drug abuse is virtually certain to do the job. The substances themselves are physically addictive but the conduct and experiences people have while abusing alcohol or drugs produces a wounding of the Spirit. These things not only wound the Spirits of those taking them, they also produce a wounding of the Spirits of their spouse and their children. Some of the saddest and most difficult woundings that I have encountered have been the result of alcoholism. It has not been part of my experience to deal much with drug abuse but I am confident that the hurt to the person and their families is devastating.

The sad part is that this is a wound that time does not heal. Becoming a Christian does not remove the wounding in the Spirit. Generally speaking, normal counseling does not heal the Spirit. It is the work of the Church to bring healing to the wounded Spirits of those within Her. Seldom do I see the Church do so.

I will bring suggestions for ministry in a later section. The effort and spiritual revelation required for this type of ministry is substantial and the rewards which come with victory are enormous. Fortunately, it has never been my experience that anyone receiving this kind of ministry has ever gotten worse. Some of them had severe problems and almost every one got better. Praise to our God, many have been totally healed as far as they and others could see.

GENERATIONAL SINS OR CURSES

There is another type of bondage of which I was almost totally unaware until about ten years ago. At that time I had the good fortune to receive the hand written notes of a 'soon to be published' book by Derek Prince, a teacher that I hold in very high esteem. The title was, "Blessings or Curses, You Can Choose". As usual, Derek's teachings were solidly backed by both scripture and experience. I highly recommend this book. About three years ago the Lord instructed me to invite people to become part of a ministry group. The instruction was that if they would volunteer and allow me to train them, He (God) would empower them. This was all, of course, heard by faith. Six others joined with me in this enterprise of faith. We spent almost a year meeting regularly, reading, listening to tapes, and me teaching from my experiences and knowledge. We learned much about casting out evil spirits, healing the wounded spirit, tearing down of strongholds in the mind, and breaking curses (I will use the term 'curses' interchangeably with 'generational sins'). As we began ministering to one another and subsequently to others, much to my surprise well over half of our ministering was breaking of curses. We have seen powerful results in this part of the ministry yet, except for Derek's book, I have heard virtually no expression of this ministry in today's Church. This really should be remedied.

One thing I will quickly state. A curse which affects a person is usually the results of the prior action, or words, of another. This other person is commonly a member of that person's family. It is not uncommon that the originator of the curse may have lived several generations before and the ones presently affected never even knew the one who started it all. I hope this is not too confusing. To help you understand, let me tell you a true story.

One day a godly man came to me. He was heartbroken and confused. He was a pastor of a local Church and came from a godly family. Almost all of his relatives were strong Christians, strong Church goers. Almost every family group contained one or more young women who had gotten pregnant before getting married. This pastor's own daughter had just fallen victim to the family trend. The pastor and I prayed together and I believe that the Lord gave me a true picture of how this awful tragic series of events came to be. As I believe it was revealed to me, three generations before this pastor, four before his daughter, a woman from whom they were descended became pregnant without benefit of marriage. Her father, being devout and

ashamed, drove her from the home and said many destructive words to her, placing a curse on her and her descendents. As a result there were more tragedies which followed in generation after generation. I must admit that not enough time has elapsed for us to be certain that we fully broke this curse and that future generations will not be similarly enslaved, nevertheless we trust and believe that the impact will be substantial because of the dramatic impact we have observed through the breaking of other ‘curses’.

I will give more ‘case histories’ later in this writing. The Lord has been gracious enough to reveal several curses which were on me and, consequently, my family. I will share just one at this time. I believe that I was told to present myself to the ministry group which is named the Nathaniels. I used that name because Nathaniel was the one about whom Jesus said, “Behold, an Israelite in whom there is no guile (deception)”. I have seen so much deception and tricks, even in the Church, involving miracles and power that I wanted us to be simple, open, and ‘above board’. It is my solemn intent to express simply and accurately what we have seen and heard. We are not trying to establish ourselves as authorities or in any way special. If we were soldiers we would be called ‘grunts’. I told the Nathaniels that they should pray for me. They asked what my ‘problem’ was and I told them I didn’t know. We went into prayer, seeking guidance and revelation. One of the group mentioned a skin disease I had on the palms of both hands. My hands became dry, the skin split, and they were cut and bloody almost all the time. I had been to several dermatologists and the best they could do was give me a cortisone prescription which would help for a few days at the most. We knew that other members of my family were, or had been, afflicted with skin disease. My paternal grandfather probably died of side effects from rampant infections from an all over body skin disease. My brother had a similar thing (or the same thing) and nearly died, although when he passed through puberty most of the worst symptoms went away. An uncle of mine had a similar disease all over him when he died. I have four children. Two of them had problems similar to mine on their hands and feet. I have eight grandchildren and three of them had similar problems on their hands and feet. When we put that all together it seemed obvious – there was a generational activity. We continued praying until we felt we had a revelation of the source. We broke the curse. Within a week my hands had healed up. They had been a mess for eighteen years. They were still dry and I used lotion on them but I had the notion that as the lubricating ducts in the palms grew back that even the lotion would no longer be necessary. This proved to be true. Within about four months my hands were normal. That was about three years ago and my hands remain

normal to this day. What miracles we have seen through the simple expediency of breaking curses. It is our experience that this is the simplest bondage to detect, the easiest to fix, and has the most visible and pleasant results.

Our basic procedure is to ask the one being ministered to whether there are things within their family which seems to occur in generation after generation. This can be disease, financial failure, succumbing to a specific destructive activity, becoming a workaholic – any of a number of things. If there is bondage which seems to occur with uncommon frequency within that family, there is a high probability that a curse is involved. Later when I present our methods of ministry I will explain exactly what we do. This type of ministry has brought great blessings to those of us who have learned to conduct this type of warfare.

There are some questions that come up when breaking curses.

- a) Where do these things come from? They come from words spoken hastily or evilly. Scripture teaches us that a curse, when spoken, is passed down even to the fourth or fifth generation. Unless it is broken it goes on and on.
- b) Do I need to repent? Probably not. This curse did not begin in you through any deed or thought you did. It is only if you have sinned personally or judged others because of the impact of the curse that you have need of repentance. Commonly the one who began the curse is already dead but we speak forgiveness anyway and pray the blood of Jesus on that sin.
- c) Can a house be cursed? I believe so. As strange as it may sound, we have broken curses which caused problems for people who lived in a certain house. I am not talking about ghosts, haunting, or (as far as I know) demonic activity.
- d) Can we replace curses with blessings? I believe so. I believe that the Lord delights in not only taking Satan's toys away from him but also rubbing salt into his wounds by adding blessings to those whom He has set free. It is our practice to seek guidance from the Holy Spirit concerning what type of blessings the Lord wishes to give to those to whom we minister. I will comment more on this in the section on ministry.

STRONGHOLDS

The last category of bondage that will be presented here is commonly called ‘Strongholds’ and more appropriately should be called, I believe, ‘Strongholds in the mind’. This is a type of bondage that does not lend itself to solving with the laying on of hands. The bondage did not come upon the person suddenly and my experience is, it does not leave the person suddenly. Unlike demonic oppression and curses, this bondage is removed by ‘changing the mind’. Let us begin. Have you ever known someone who repeatedly shot themselves in the foot? It seems like every time they are about to rise above a certain type of problem, just as they seem to have successfully become victorious, they do some stupid thing that sends them back on a downward spiral. Perhaps you have been there yourself. It is not that the person is ‘stupid’. Absolutely not! Yet they perpetuate a self defeating lifestyle, often in only a single area of their lives. Over and over they repeat the same mistakes. Someone once defined insanity as “Doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results”. Why do they (we?) do this? Many times it is because there has been built up in our minds a stronghold of deception. For deception you might substitute, ‘wrong thinking’.

Where does a stronghold originate? Sometimes this question is very easily answered, sometimes it is impossible for us to know. I took an excellent counseling course some years ago from a local group in Rapid City called Christian Life Ministries. The founder, Bill Ewing, gave a very fine example of one type of stronghold. Consider a young girl, a very young girl. She is cute and receives ‘cute’ comments frequently. In fact it is the most common positive comments she hears. As she grows older she learns that when she wears attractive things and has a nice appearance she is treated much more favorably than when she slouches around in sweats and jeans. Her hair in rollers does not draw the positive reinforcement that her hair styled does. Is it any wonder that this girl might grow up believing that much of her ‘value’ lies in her appearance? Now, the young lady may have good teachers who help her keep her mindset in balance. The young lady may NOT have good teachers and her mindset may NOT be in balance. Assume that she is abused, verbally or otherwise. Assume that she believes herself not to be very intelligent. Is it not clear that this young lady might grow into a mindset that says, “My beauty is the only thing that sets me apart. I am valuable to others because I am pretty, and **only because I am**

pretty. There is built into her mind a lie. This lie takes a stronghold on her thinking and her actions. Clearly this can be very destructive in many ways. Certainly one day her beauty will fade. An accident may remove her beauty suddenly. Even if she retains her beauty she will not be drawn into the kind of union with Father God and His people which causes her to increase in true value.

This is only one kind of stronghold. For a young man (or young woman) the false idea of value may lie in strength, athleticism, academic achievement, etc. For an older person these may grow into a mindset that we are valuable because of our jobs, our family, or even the size and beauty of our house. One of the wisest statements I have ever heard is, “You are what you eat”, as applied to mental, emotional, and spiritual things. If we bombard our minds with \$ucce\$\$ we place our minds in bondage and this bondage takes a strong hold on our minds. My observation is that many Christians (as well as non-Christians) have such strongholds.

Where do these strongholds come from? This is not an easy question to answer. How are strongholds built? They are built like any castle, any stronghold. They are built brick by brick. Strongholds develop slowly and steadily in our minds with reinforcements happily thrown in by our arch-enemy Satan. In my experience I have found that when any person has been under demonic oppression over a substantial period of time this oppression will be accompanied by a stronghold in the mind. This is logical. A foreign, evil entity which is oppressing and guiding a person to behave according to his own twisted personality will produce thought processes and deceptions in the mind. The demon will build its own habitation in the mind. Indeed there may be many different answers as to the origin of strongholds for different people. Often these deceived mindsets come from erroneous teaching in our own families. A false belief is easily passed on from parent to child. It is common that we will choose a wrong mindset by making an ‘inner vow’. By this I mean that we will say to ourselves, “I will never do that”!, or “I will never be like that”! We see our father struggling in poverty, working hard but never getting ahead and we say, “I will never live like this”. In a sense this vow warps our entire lives in our struggle never to ‘be like that’. Even Father God finds it difficult to get through to us when our ‘minds are made up’.

I will confess to you that this type of bondage is remarkably difficult to heal or remove and I have never succeeded in removing this bondage with a ‘laying on of hands’ and a prayer. I have been able to remove this type of bondage but I have always needed help, lots of help. I have needed the help of a body of Christians who pour out their love on this person and live out

their love to this person. We must see the truth in action before the lie is exposed because the lie dwells so deeply within us. It is not true that we must remove the stronghold brick by brick because the power of God is much stronger than the work of Satan. I believe we can, through prayer, lay waste to the major stronghold but it takes the active love of many over a period of time to restore Father's loved one to spiritual health. Jesus says that we should deny ourselves, pick up our cross and follow Him. He says that we should 'die daily'. We say, "I wonder what He means by that"? He means what He says! The strongholds in our minds blind us to our own selfishness. Our blindness leads us to think that obedience costs us something valuable. True, it costs us something but we are deceived into thinking that what we lose is valuable to us. Unless and until our minds are brought to a realization of truth we will remain blind and deceived. This is an infection which is epidemic and it requires a true Church to bring healing to this disease.

MINISTRY

I have come to believe that all ministry is principally for the purpose of drawing individuals into the presence and power of our Lord. I have spent much time during the past fifteen years trying to discover the personality and character of our Father, God. Forgive me if this seems arrogant, but I believe I have been somewhat successful. When I was sixteen years old I thought the most unfair thing I ever saw was in the Holy Scriptures. In fact, it was something Jesus Himself said and it really ticked me off. He said that I should love the Lord, my God, with all my heart, all my soul, and all my mind. I couldn't love even my parents like THAT! If I couldn't love those I could see and talk to like that, how unfair to expect me to love one that I could not see (and wasn't even positive He really existed) like that. I wanted to though, and made it a significant part of my life to 'learn how to love'. In recent years I wonder how anyone can NOT love Him with all their hearts, minds, and souls. I have changed a lot. Let me share a bit with you how I see Father now.

I look a lot at His Creation, His world. I am a scientist and know quite a bit about physics and physical laws. As I was praying one evening I was thinking about 'Creation' and I felt I heard the Lord say, "Can you come up with a single sensible alternative theory to Creation that accounts for everything you see being here"? I am familiar with the 'Big Bang' concept but the 'Big Bang' demands that all the material of the entire universe be assembled into one tiny sphere just before the 'bang'. Where did that material come from? I thought and thought about the Lord's question and I could not come up with a single theory, other than there being someone outside of creation which 'caused' it all. I used to teach my students about laws, theories, hypotheses, and wild guesses. A law is something that no one has ever, ever seen fail. It works every time. A theory is something that seems to hold up most all the time. A hypothesis is a wild guess that makes a lot of sense and may have some real truth behind it but we are not sure yet. A wild guess is – you got it, a wild guess is just a wild guess with no science or experience behind it, like the big bang wild guess. I know a little about quarks, a little about neutrons, atoms, molecules, mass, stars, and galaxies. Whoever thought these things up and created them is really clever and really special. I often go into the beautiful Black Hills of South Dakota and just look at things. Sometimes I just look at weeds, very carefully. Sometimes I look at flowers, sometimes trees, sometimes clouds. What a variety of beauty there is all around us. It is wonderful and wonderfully humbling.

My Father made ALL THESE THINGS. He is so creative, making varieties of varieties of all kinds of things. We can, and will, spend a lifetime being overwhelmed by His creativeness and genius. Now consider this! He says that man is the pinnacle of all His creation. You and I are the best of the best. And to the best of the best He has offered to place **in us** His own very nature and character. He offers to us that we can be like Him. Made in His likeness we can become flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone.

It is the **awareness** of this grand plan that Satan tries to steal. He doesn't want you to know who you are! All his deception is to drive you into desiring to find a substitute for the destiny that Father has designed and made possible for you. Our Father is the great builder of all things. Every act of His has been to build up, to create things that grow and become more vigorous. Every act of Satan has been to tear down and destroy. God's nature is agape, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, patience, kindness, and longsuffering. His salvation is a great salvation and this salvation is in effect in your life right now. Satan uses fear, deception, and indulgence to pull you into the pits. Father uses love, grace, and an invitation to intimacy with Himself to draw you into being all you were created to be.

What is ministry? It is the application of the nature and power of our Father to build up what Satan has tried to tear down. What do we do when we minister? Our practice is to have the Nathaniels gather about a half hour before the one to whom we are ministering. We meet in a spiritually healthy place and spend some time sharing with one another the knowledge we have about the person and the revelations we have received from the Lord while in prayer. We also joke and tease one another because a wonderful bonding and love has developed in this group we call Nathaniel. When our brother/sister arrives, we spend some time with them just talking and letting them share with us anything that is on their hearts. Next we set the person in a chair and gather around them and, in prayer, begin praising God for that person. This person is NOT some downtrodden ragamuffin who has come crawling to the 'giants' for help. We are not looking down in strength on someone who is 'needy'. This is a child of the living God. This is one in whom the Holy Spirit dwells and whom our Father has called to Himself from before the foundations of the world. This is one of those for whom our Lord Jesus died. This is one in whom Father has already done much work for whom we have been **ALLOWED THE PRIVILEGE** of being spiritual instruments of worship, acting as conduits of love and power between Father and His child. **What a privilege indeed.** As we gather around Father's child the Holy Spirit guides us in our thankfulness and praise. Next, we talk with our friend and allow them to tell us about the

‘bad fruit’ in their lives. This may take quite a bit of time since some of the things have been with them virtually all their lives and seem perfectly ‘normal’ to them. As we share with one another, asking questions as they arise in our minds, some take notes, some pray, and in all there is ALWAYS a harmony and an honoring of one another. While we minister there are no leaders or to be more accurate we are all leaders in our own way being led by the Holy Spirit.

When this phase is over, the one being ministered to is asked to leave us for awhile and the Nathaniels talk it over. Here is where spiritual gifting really shows up. Some are gifted with visual images, some with insights, some with the ability to bring things together. A primary purpose is to identify the various types of bondage. Are there demonic spirits? If so, can we identify their activity (give them names)? Are there curses? If so, can we discover the source and what we should do about them? Is there spiritual wounding? If so, what is the nature and how should we pray about it. Are there strongholds in the mind? If so, how should we pray? These are the things that are in our hearts as we talk with the person and as we talk with each other after they leave.

When we are finished with this phase we call the person back to us, gather around them, and one by one, begin to minister as we have been led. It does not seem necessary to us to shout. Demons are probably not hard of hearing. Normally we are not very emotional although that is not always true. The one thing that we are very careful of is to always love the brother or sister that Father has sent to us. That agape is absolutely essential to successful ministry. I do make one requirement of the person to whom we minister. I believe it is very important that they experience a season of, what I call ‘Church Life’ and I ask them to spend some time with me (usually once a week) and attend our New Life Home Church meetings for awhile. Both healing of wounded spirits and tearing down of strongholds requires Christian fellowship and drawing from God’s love through God’s people. On page 5 I promised that I would talk more about ‘Church Life’. Here it is. We ALL need Church Life. God has created us to need Church Life. Of all the people who need Church Life it is the people who have just received ministry that need it most. We need intimate relationships with Christian people who consistently show agape love to us, whose lives exhibit agape toward us. We need to be a part of a group of people who are seeking deeper and closer relationships with both God and each other. For those who had wounded spirits, Church Life brings healing. For those with strongholds in their minds Church Life helps pull those strongholds down and helps to build new and positive, godly, strongholds.

A consistent goal of ours is to draw those to whom we minister into an intimate relationship with their heavenly Father. Father has, after all, invited us to become intimate with Himself. Father has, after all, commanded us to be one with Him as He and Jesus are ONE!

When the Lord does miracles it seems good to us that these miracles be shared with others. There is no glory sought by the Nathaniels nor is any owed to them. We are just servants doing what we have been sent to do. Seeing the benefit to others is abundant reward.

BE ON GUARD

For those who are attracted to enter into ministry of this sort I have a word of caution. Satan does not like being actively opposed. He really does not like to see work in which he has invested a lot of time and energy building up get torn down in a single evening. We have experienced significant personal and family attacks. Some of these attacks took the form of sickness, especially on the night of ministry. Some of them took the form of temptations to which we have a weakness. Family squabbles came up from time to time. We were slow to understand just what was happening but we have made it a practice to staunchly pray for one another. One faithful brother in our New Life group consistently reminds the Church to cover the Nathaniels in prayer. Since that time we have not had much trouble.

IT IS FULFILLING

If the Lord should lead you into such a ministry, be very thankful for it is tremendously rewarding. It is a blessing to see miracle after miracle take place before your eyes and under your hands and by your words. Our abundant reward is seeing the benefit that others receive from our ministry. If you are not called into this ministry but others whom you trust have been, I encourage you to ask the Lord whether such ministry is needed by you. Let Him show you whether there are bonds that you need broken, freedom you have not yet known. If you even suspect the answer is yes, then contact your group and have them minister to you. This is the work Jesus came to do and it is the work that He sends His Church to do.

PRINCIPALITIES, POWERS, AND SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS IN HIGH PLACES

Some years ago I was privileged to spend two full days with a young New Zealander named John Dawson. John is a remarkable Christian man who tells a story well. He has also written at least two books of which I am aware. He told a lengthy story of the Polynesians arriving in longboats on the island of New Zealand from their Polynesian Island homes. I do not know the reason for the migration. He described how they founded several main cities and how they honored their forefathers with carvings in their common dwellings and places of meetings. Desiring to honor their forefathers, the artists went to great lengths to make wood carvings that did NOT try to copy the actual appearance of the honored persons. Fearing they would miss the mark in 'detail' they created carvings that were almost caricatures of the real people. Many Christians who arrived later jumped to the wrong conclusion that these people were worshiping demons. They were not! Some years later missionaries arrived and virtually the entire Polynesian population became Christian. It was, probably, the most complete conversion of a local population in Christian history. After that, some commercial Europeans arrived and there began a horrible tale of oppression and slaughter of the Polynesian people. Just a few years ago John Dawson and some others made a tour of New Zealand, with the government's approval. The tour was for the purpose of 'healing old wounds'. The results and the impact on New Zealand were wonderful, impressive, and glorious. One reason for such wonderful results is related to our next topic which is principalities and powers.

A little over a year ago I believe the Lord began teaching me about a type of satanic bondage with which I was unfamiliar. Scriptures teach that we battle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. Through prayer and guidance I believe

I have gained a little insight into the lowest level of these things. Shortly after beginning to minister against principalities I received a very interesting 'Plumline' booklet from Bob Mumford which dealt with some of the things I was exploring and praying about. Mumford entitled the Plumline, "Dr. Frankenstein & World Systems", vol. 23, No. 6. I highly recommend the study of this booklet for anyone who is led by the Lord to do warfare in this area. I will not repeat Mumford's teaching though I have drawn from it in my own experiences.

So far, in this article, I have dealt exclusively with personal attacks. As individuals there are certain types of warfare waged against us and I have written about those and how we may combat them. There is clearly another type of warfare and that is warfare against communities. I use the term community here in a very broad sense. A community is any group of humans who work together for a common purpose or set of goals. From this definition you should realize that we all are part of quite a large number of communities. Where we work may be a community. Where we worship is surely a community. There may be communities related to our sport or leisure times. It is to be hoped that our extended family is a community. I envision a hospital as a community. Before retiring I was a Mechanical Engineering Professor at an engineering school. I was part of an academic community. Each of us are associated with and under the influence of various communities. Probably none of these communities are 'all bad', probably none are 'all good'. I am realizing that many of these communities are working under spiritual influences which may easily affect us. This effect can be good. For example I am fortunate to be a part of a Church body that has close personal ties and much love. I am persuaded that this invites communion with angelic beings as well as the Holy Spirit. Some communities invite the activity of evil spirits, which can work to our harm, especially if we are not on guard. Mumford uses the term 'systems' instead of 'community'. Take your pick.

Not all communities/systems are Godly. Indeed, few remain Godly for very many years no matter how Godly the beginnings of the system. Many hospitals or Bible schools began with a dedication to God and prospered through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. After some years or some generations the motives and principals change from one of serving God to one of serving something else. The something else may be profit, a denomination, or expansion but as long as it is serving some work of the flesh instead of the glorification of Father God it will collectively draw to itself a community of ungodly spirits which will work to drive the system in ungodly directions. I hope that this doesn't sound too complicated. If the

community/system seeks to serve God and God alone then it will be a holy instrument in the hands of our Father. If the community/system seeks to serve ANYTHING else then it will be an unholy instrument in the hands of our enemy. We cannot avoid this. The school where I worked was not evil but neither was it Holy. I did not resign because it was driven by motives outside the realm of the Kingdom of God but it was appropriate for me to understand that there was a principality over the institution which influenced the people making decisions.

I began to observe that there were occasions when specific Christian people came under attack from a system under which they worked. The attacks were impossible to explain or understand unless you understood the concept of 'principalities'. Please do not misunderstand. I am not saying that every time things fail to go our way that it is because a principality is 'out to get us'. That is as bad as seeing a demon 'behind every bush'. I will include several examples where we believed that there were specific attacks on Christian people from a principality. We took authority over the principality and saw some wonderful victories, almost overnight.

Let me present some guidelines. When we discern an attack from a principality we seek to learn, by revelation from God, the source and nature of the evil. Having done that we simply take authority over the principality and order it to stop oppressing the person or people who have been being harassed. At times I have felt led to command that the work of the enemy which was directed toward the Christian be hurled back on the source and that they will quickly reap what they have sown. We are not EVER opposing people. We are ALWAYS opposing a coalition of beings without bodies who are influencing people. Principalities are 'corporate' entities empowered by 'corporate' systems. It is our belief that we cannot cast out this type of oppression as we can a demon unless the human corporate system repents and rejects the evil forces. It has been our delightful experience, however, that we can protect Christians under the attack of a principality and turn the evil back on the source of the attack. We may not have the authority to cast it away but we do have authority to protect God's people and God's work.

Let me emphasize that though we, by God's grace and direction, take authority over the ENEMY, at no time do we presume to take authority over human beings. We are fighting against persons without bodies, never against persons with bodies.

I will present some case histories where we were led to take authority over principalities. I simply must be careful with some details because I do not know who might read this and feel a need to protect the

Christians involved. In at least three cases it would be disastrous if their employers discovered what we have done.

1. I have a very close friend, my prayer partner. She and I have been through many things together and we are very close. She came to me one day, crying, because of a severe problem at work. She holds an important executive position but others who had the authority to do so, were making some very wrong decisions which would affect her department. Without going into detail we came to believe that there was a principality connected to her work environment that was working to cause her distress and to make her look bad. Together we took a few minutes to take authority over this principality. Within twenty-four hours the entire problem vanished, never to re-appear.

2. One day a mature member of our Church came to me in great distress. He has a very responsible position in which he must approve the plans and work of various contractors. One of these, a Muslim man, was behaving in a very threatening way toward him. The man was contacting the Christian's superiors with outrageous charges. Again I will not go into detail but it was quite serious. Together we agreed that this seemed to be a principality (more than one person was involved in the charges). Together we came against the evil spiritual force and, inspired I hope, commanded that all that he was trying to do against the Christian man would fall back on him. Within twenty four hours the entire situation changed from the Christian man being under pressure to the other man and his company coming under pressure and being forced to back down. To my knowledge, no one but the two of us had any knowledge about what we had done although we did share it with our Church at a later time.

3. One of my two daughters is employed by an extended care facility. It was an excellent facility, well run, new and clean. The clients were well fed and well cared for. The staff was conscientious. The owners were providing adequate funding to run the facility without complaint even though it was not yet profitable. Yet, there were empty beds in the facility, it was difficult to get workers, and it had come to my daughter's attention that the facility was getting a bad reputation in the city. She came to me and we discussed it at length. I suggested she meet with the Nathaniels. She did and we discerned a principality. We were given the source of the principality. We prayed and took authority. ***{One note! We pray for guidance and we ask God for delegated authority. We do NOT ask God to take care of the demon or principality. We exercise the authority that God has given. He has put us in place. He has given us guidance. It is the Work of the Church, our work, to take authority over the work of the***

enemy.} Within a week my daughter had confirmed from other sources that our discernment about the source was accurate. Also within a week the facility was full and had a waiting list. Now, approximately one year later my daughter is the manager of that facility and they will be opening a second unit next month.

4. A friend works for a branch of the military. She had a serious problem with an officer who was undermining her work and expecting her to 'cover'. When giving a report to the base commander she was asked very direct questions about this activity. She answered honestly but was threatened after the meeting. This was serious. She came to me, we discerned a principality, took authority together. The next day the man who had threatened her apologized and nothing negative was ever done. I am sorry that I can not give more detail because I have been very impressed with the power shown by these times. Again, it is essential for practical purposes that I not be more specific.

5. We are closely involved with some missionaries in Papua, New Guinea. They ask us to pray for them routinely and we do so. While praying about the principalities my wife and I became strongly impressed that we were to come against a certain specific principality in PNG. The principality was concerning independence, violence, and spitefulness. For months we were faithful to do this. Some time later we learned in a communication that general elections had been held and theirs was the only province in which no one had been killed. We felt our taking authority was, in some measure, responsible. I have always believed that there are many things that God, Himself, manages and controls. I have come to believe that there are some things that God, for His own purposes, places in our hands. If we take the authority Father has given us these things will be accomplished. If we fail, they will not. It is my belief that when dealing with persons without bodies, demons and principalities, we should strongly pray for guidance but we should then exert authority against those enemies. That is not the time to ask God to do what He has commanded us to do. Truly it is always His power yet He desires to train His Body, His Church, to do many Godly things.

I have not yet learned enough about 'powers', or 'spiritual wickedness in high places' to teach on these topics. I have ideas but nothing I can teach.

My goal in writing this manuscript is to help build the body of Christ. I have shared knowledge gained through revelation, being taught by others, and much personal experience. I truly hope that this has blessed you in some way. I have a personal offer to Pastors or leaders of Churches in the Rapid City area. If you have a group of people who feel that the Lord may be calling them into a ministry of this type, I will volunteer to teach them, guide them, and minister with them for a time so that their will be others ministering groups in addition to the Nathaniels.

Anyone wishing to correspond with the author should feel welcome to do so. I am part of the New Life Church of Rapid City.

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