



TRAINING FAMILIES AT FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH, PARKER,  
COLORADO, TO FACE SPIRITUAL WARFARE BY USING  
PRINCIPLES BASED ON WILLIAM GURNALL'S  
*THE CHRISTIAN IN COMPLETE ARMOUR*

---

A Project  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

---

by  
Robert Rhinehart Buchanan  
May 2011

**APPROVAL SHEET**

TRAINING FAMILIES AT FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH, PARKER,  
COLORADO, TO FACE SPIRITUAL WARFARE BY USING  
PRINCIPLES BASED ON WILLIAM GURNALL'S  
*THE CHRISTIAN IN COMPLETE ARMOUR*

Robert Rhinehart Buchanan

Read and Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donald S. Whitney (Faculty Supervisor)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Adam W. Greenway

Date \_\_\_\_\_

To Neetz,  
my best friend, the love of my life,  
and to  
the members of Faith Baptist Church

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE .....	iv
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Goals for the Project .....	1
Context of the Project .....	4
Rationale for the Project .....	15
Definitions, Limitations and Delimitations .....	21
Research Methodology .....	23
Transitory Questions .....	25
2. THE “SEPARATOR-IN-CHIEF” .....	26
The Satan Revealed in the Old Testament .....	28
Satan Revealed in the New Testament .....	47
Believer’s Need for the Armor of God in Ephesians 6:10-20 .....	59
Conclusion .....	71
3. HOME: THE “LITTLE CHURCH” .....	75
Implications from Chapter 2 .....	79
Pressures on Today’s Families .....	83
A Prescription: Families as Command and Control Central .....	100

Chapter	Page
Conclusion: “The Little Church” .....	113
4. DETAILS OF THE PROJECT .....	122
Phases of the Project .....	123
Final Considerations .....	139
5. EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT .....	140
Evaluation of the Purpose of the Project. ....	140
Strengths of the Project .....	144
Weaknesses of the Project .....	150
Improvements for a More Effective Ministry .....	151
Theological Reflections .....	154
Personal Reflections .....	165
Conclusion .....	169
 Appendix	
1. BULLETIN INSERT .....	171
2. INITIAL MEETING AGENDA .....	172
3. PRE- AND POST-PROJECT SURVEY .....	174
4. LOW RISK INFORMED CONSENT FORM .....	177
5. A SAMPLE OF ALL FAMILY DEVOTIONS .....	178
6. SAMPLE “KID’S MEAL” DEVOTIONS .....	182
7. SERMON SERIES .....	186
8. FAMILY HUDDLES .....	187
9. THE COLORING PAGE .....	188
10. POST-PROJECT IN-HOME INTERVIEW .....	189

Appendix	Page
11. THE GURNALLIAN WARFARE CD SONG LIST .....	190
12. SURVEY RESULTS .....	192
13. A PRAYER AGAINST UNBELIEF .....	198
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	199

## PREFACE

During the three years of this journey in biblical spirituality, many hands have made for light work, as a friend often says. When I first proposed the subject of spiritual warfare to the members of Faith Baptist Church, the most frequent question was, “Couldn’t you have chosen a different topic?” The questioners knew what it might mean for our fellowship, and they were not far from wrong. As one staff member asked in a meeting, “Are we going to be responsible for this teaching, too?” We all knew we would have the opportunity.

The real opportunity came when working with so many tremendously talented and skilled people. Therefore, I must thank those who helped me reach the finish line. Thanks to Barb Henderson for keeping a keen eye and a sharp pencil on my many grammatical gaffes. She taught me the proper use of commas, colons, and semi-colons, even though I flagrantly misused them. Thanks too for making encouraging suggestions that honed my own thinking. She even let me know when something in particular ministered to her soul. Thanks to Dan Trathen, who introduced me to the wonders of the Likert Scale and helped to formulate the survey that served so well the purposes of the project. A special thanks to John and Carol Burba, who helped me analyze the results of the Likert Scale in a way that made sense to my mathematically challenged mind. The creative mind behind the graphics of the Gurnallian Warrior and his armor was that of Brett Mugg. He also made an excellent judge for the coloring contest.



I must say a hearty thank you to the Faith Baptist Church staff that put up with one prayer request for nearly a year – and they were untiringly faithful to pray. Thanks to Joanne Heckle, Pam Huber, Ed McCampbel, Sherrie Linderer, Phill Crust (now an SBTS student), and Steve Reese for hanging in there during my ministry updates, which never strayed far from reiteration of the project. In order for me to focus on the final parts of the project, the elders of the church (Dave Hoos, Stuart Stanton and Mike Huber) took up the burden of weekly preaching. They stepped into the pulpit for four weeks and served our congregation well. Special thanks to Lance Dyer, one of our “occasional preachers.” Actually, the idea was more than just “filling in,” but served to teach us that God’s Word is more important than God’s preacher.

The twenty-seven families who participated in the project performed enthusiastically and admirably. High expectations were placed on them, and they met the challenge and learned something about God along the way. Their stories of God’s grace at work in their families over the weeks of the project humbled and blessed me. There is a sense whereby churches “bring up” pastors and they have made me a better pastor.

Finally, I must set aside space for three important people. First, to our daughters, who kept encouraging me (pestering may be a more appropriate word) to pursue this degree. Daughters love their fathers and usually think they can do anything. Their encouragement was never faked, and I used it to keep on going. Thanks Shaunna and Abigail, because I believe you have made me a better a father, and prepared me to be a biblical grandfather.

Most of all, my gratitude and love which cannot find words sufficient, go to my best friend and the love of my life, Nita. Like our daughters, she encouraged me from the beginning. However, her encouragement took a different path. She believed that not

only can I do this work, I must. She gave up vacations for living out of a popup tent trailer with a dog too big for the trailer to vacation in some of the finest places while I was in class. She gave up every Friday (her day off) for nearly two years and almost every weeknight for nearly a year and a half while the project unfolded. She never complained; instead, she prayed for me, and for those in the project. She enjoyed discovering, along with me, the principles of spiritual warfare and growing in our understanding of our union with Christ. She often told me how much the discipline of family worship – in our empty nest – meant to her in our spiritual growth together. Her love for God and support of me has made me a better husband.

Sometimes I think that the only reason I am a shepherd of God’s people is so that God can “keep an eye on me.” The accountability and stakes are high, and I have learned the answer to Paul’s question, “Who is sufficient for these things?” (2 Cor 2:16). Over and over, I answer, “Not me; only the grace of Christ” (1 Cor 15:10; 2 Cor 3:5; 12:9). Furthermore, sometimes I think that the only reason God directed my path into this subject was to help me overcome my own heart’s unbelief by learning to cherish my union with Christ (Eph 1:6-10). It is a biblical teaching that I will explore and cherish the rest of my life. My hope is that others will benefit in some way as well. *Soli deo Gloria.*

Robert R. Buchanan

Castle Rock, Colorado  
May 2011

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this project was to design and implement a program that would equip families of Faith Baptist Church, Parker, Colorado, to persevere in the face of confrontations with evil powers that impede, tempt, or discourage faithful Christian living by adopting William Gurnall's (1616-1679) teachings on spiritual warfare found in *The Christian in Complete Armour* (1669).<sup>1</sup> The context for studying and implementing Gurnall's instruction based on Ephesians 6 was a sermon series and weekly study applied during daily family worship in the homes of the participating families.

#### **Goals of the Project**

Realizing that a spiritual battle exists between the flesh and the Spirit (Gal 5:17), and that the powers of the world and the devil seek to influence believers toward sin and hinder the work of God's grace in their lives (1 Thess 3:5; Gal 4:8-9; 2 Cor 2:11; Eph 4:27; 6:11), Christian parents at Faith Baptist Church were eager to train their children in godliness (1 Tim 4:7, 8; 2 Pet 1:3; 3:11). The parents wanted their families equipped with the biblical knowledge and skills necessary to disciple their children in order to persevere in the good fight of spiritual warfare (1 Tim 6:12). God intends for the Christian family to be the primary setting for discipleship (Deut 6:4-9; Ps 78:1-7; Eph 6:1-4). The follower of Christ must learn how to fight the spiritual battles that will certainly come with living for Christ (Matt 18:7b; John 16:33). In order to fight spiritual

---

<sup>1</sup>William Gurnall, *The Christian in Complete Armour*, 2 vols. (reprint, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2002).

battles the biblical way, Christian families can learn together how to “dress” in “the full armor of God” (Eph 6:11), and use the weapons of the Christian’s warfare that “are not carnal but mighty through God” (2 Cor 10:4).

A fundamental presupposition for this project accepted the biblical truth that the Christian’s warfare is not against a flesh and blood enemy (Eph 6:12a), but against spiritual powers much greater than human strength (Eph 6:12b). Therefore, Christ’s power is the essential power sufficient for a Christian’s battle. Having already defeated the powers through the cross (Eph 1:15-23; 3:10; 4:8-10; Col 2:15), Christ’s power must be appropriated by faith for a successful battle.

Therefore, the three goals for the participating families served as criterion for evaluating the project. The first objective for the parents was to grasp a better understanding of who they are as believers in Christ. The believer’s authority over the powers of darkness flows from union with Christ as members of his kingdom. Therefore, what believers know, and practice about the new life in Christ (e.g., Rom 3:24; 6:11; 1 Cor 1:30; Gal 3:26; Eph 1:3; 2:5-6 10, 13) is key to possessing a firm footing in the spiritual battle for godliness. For example, does the believer understand his or her new status before God? Does the believer welcome the conviction of the Holy Spirit? Is the believer growing in love for Christ, for God, for the church, for God’s Word, etc.? Does the believer practice “spiritual mindedness” (Rom 8:6)?

The doctrine of the believer’s union with Christ is both an objective reality and a subjective experience. The subjective experience must be examined in light of the objective truth of Scripture, but the sense of belonging to God through union with Christ is the essential truth to be understood, and applied as the foundation for training in godliness (1 Tim 4:7b). Without understanding the doctrine of union with Christ, the Christian may falsely conclude that he or she is alone in the fight, and tend to “fight in the flesh.” The specific core knowledge necessary to strengthen one’s doctrinal grip on the believer’s union with Christ also includes understanding the Holy Spirit’s role in

sanctification (Rom 8:12-17), a biblically informed awareness of the believer's weakness due to indwelling sin and how to respond (Rom 6:6; Eph 4:25-32), an understanding of Christ's power (Col 1:16, 17; 2:10-15), the believer's need for faith in him (2 Cor 6:7; 10:4; 12:9; Eph 1:19, 21; 3:16, 20), and a basic understanding of Satan's tactics against the believer (2 Cor 2:11).

The second goal for parents was to cultivate biblical wisdom for the spiritual battles brought on by living in a culture hostile to Christian truth and practice. The wisdom necessary must be informed by a biblical worldview – especially a biblical view of the realm of spiritual powers – that applies critical thinking about the culture in which Christian families live. In a post-modern society, Christians seem confused and sometimes careless about the biblical worldview of evil powers and demonic spirits. Opinions among Christians vary. Some deny the existence of a spiritual realm of evil. Some fall into the trap of an unhealthy fixation on the demonic. Still others may admit to the existence of demonic spirits, but only as a Third World phenomenon, unrealistic for the technologically advanced West.

The third goal for the families was to acquire the biblical skills necessary for waging a good warfare. These skills were the practice and mastery of the spiritual disciplines provided to the believer for spiritual warfare. The NT writers believed that Satan's schemes to destroy the work of grace in God's children were not to catch the believer off guard. Indeed, Paul said to the believers in Corinth that they should not be outwitted by Satan because "we are not ignorant of his designs" (2 Cor 2:11). Believers are to remain vigilant at all times because the adversary, the devil "prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (1 Pet 5:8). Therefore, it is imperative that the believer develop the habit of resistance to the devil's schemes (Eph 6:11, 13, 14; Jas 4:7; 1 Pet 5:9).

The place where this habit of resistance was taught and practiced was in the context of family worship. The habits of resistance included the following spiritual

disciplines: prayer, memorization of Scripture, meditation upon God’s Word, learning to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor 10:5), learning how to mortify the flesh and walk in “the new self” (Eph 4:22-24), practicing regular communion with God (1 Cor 1:9; 1 John 1:3), and singing together (Col 3:16; Eph 5:18-19).

### **Context of the Project**

At thirty-seven years old, Faith Baptist Church (hereafter referred to as FBC), affiliated with the Baptist General Conference,<sup>2</sup> has been nicknamed a “countrified-suburban” congregation.<sup>3</sup> The reason for such an odd designation arises from the church’s geographic and demographic location. Situated in the eastern border of Douglas County, Colorado, the church is not actually in the city proper, but seven miles east in the picturesque Black Forest. Parker is at the extreme southern end of the Denver Metro area. The southward spread of the Denver metro area expanded at a rapid rate between 1990 and 2000. In that time, Douglas County grew 191 percent, making it the fastest growing county in the United States.<sup>4</sup> In the same period, Parker grew at a staggering 332.3 percent which made it the fastest growing municipality in the United States.<sup>5</sup>

The geographic location of the church is unique in that it is seven miles equidistant from Parker to the west, the small town of Elizabeth to the east (Elbert

---

<sup>2</sup>In 2009, the Baptist General Conference officially changed its name to Converge Worldwide. For the purposes of this project, I will retain the use of the name BGC when referring to the Conference.

<sup>3</sup>This name for FBC came in private conversation with Bob Gilliam, president of T-Net, International, whose organization consulted FBC in 2003 during a period of transition.

<sup>4</sup>Town of Parker, Colorado (U.S.A.), *Demographics and Economic Profile*, Susan Pacek, “Chapter 1: Community Profile,” from the Parker 2025 Master Plan [on-line]; accessed 2 February 2009, available from: [http://www.parkeronline.org/archive/pdf\\_files/comprehensive\\_planning/master\\_plan\\_2005/chapter1.pdf](http://www.parkeronline.org/archive/pdf_files/comprehensive_planning/master_plan_2005/chapter1.pdf); Internet. Geographically, Douglas County shares borders with Arapahoe and Jefferson Counties. These three counties along with Denver and Adams Counties comprise the Denver Metro area in which two million residents live.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

County) and Franktown to the south (Douglas County). The church sits on approximately eight acres, surrounded by five-acre to thirty-five-acre horse ranches. This Colorado horse country is in the middle of the Black Forest, which stretches from Aurora to the north and to Colorado Springs in the south. From the church, one sees a panoramic view of the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains stretching from Long's Peak to the north to Pike's Peak to the south.

### **Demographics of the Community**

Although FBC's mailing address is Parker, Colorado, nearly three-quarters of those who call FBC their church home come from the cities of Elizabeth and Franktown.<sup>6</sup> Work traffic patterns for those who live in these two cities takes them west past the church to their work places in Denver's Tech Center (30 percent), Downtown Denver (18 percent), North Douglas County (10 percent), and Aurora (12 percent), with the balance working in the city of Parker.<sup>7</sup>

The tri-city population of Parker, Elizabeth and Franktown combine for a total of 44,384 persons.<sup>8</sup> The ratio of males to females works out to be 50.4 percent males, 49.6 percent females.<sup>9</sup> The ethnicity of the area is: white (92.6 percent); Hispanic (5.8 percent);<sup>10</sup> African-American (1.0 percent); American Indian/Eskimo/Aleut (0.5 percent); Asian/Pacific Islander (1.7 percent); other (4.2 percent).<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup>Franktown is an unincorporated township also in Douglas County. Elizabeth is in Elbert County.

<sup>7</sup>Town of Parker, "Profile."

<sup>8</sup>Parker (42,754); Elizabeth (1450); Franktown (99).

<sup>9</sup>Parker, Colorado [on-line]; accessed 9 February 2009; available at <http://www.city-data.com/city/Parker-Colorado.html>; Internet. Elizabeth, Colorado [on-line]; accessed 9 February 2009; available at <http://www.city-data.com/city/Elizabeth-Colorado.html>; Internet. Franktown, Colorado [on-line]; accessed 9 February 2009; available at <http://www.bestplaces.net/city/Franktown-Colorado.aspx>; Internet.

<sup>10</sup>Parker's "Community Profile" lists Hispanics in a separate column with this note: "can be of any race." The Elizabeth website lists Hispanics the same way with this note: "Total can be greater than 100% because Hispanics could be counted in other races." This way of figuring accounts for the population

The population change in Parker grew by 73.3 percent between 2000 and 2007.<sup>12</sup> The most recent census shows that residents living in the tri-city area are a bit younger than the rest of Colorado, with a median age of 30.15 years compared to 34.3 years for the state.<sup>13</sup> Residents are much more likely to be married (75 percent) when compared with all residents of Colorado (52.5 percent).<sup>14</sup> The average household size is 3.01 persons.<sup>15</sup> Median household income is much higher for this area than overall Colorado, estimated at \$82,959 compared to \$55,212 for all Colorado residents.<sup>16</sup> Only 1.7 percent of the population earn below the poverty level.<sup>17</sup> Primary employment for residents includes managerial, professional, sales or high tech positions. In 2000, educational attainment showed residents with the following degrees: high school or less (17.6 percent); some college/associate degrees (37.1 percent); bachelor's degrees (33.5 percent); graduate/professional degrees (11.8 percent).<sup>18</sup>

### **Demographics of the Church**

FBC's congregation reflects the demographics of the surrounding tri-city communities. In December 2003, a church survey of 131 people revealed the following

---

disbursement totaling 104 percent.

<sup>11</sup>Town of Parker, "Community Profile," from the Parker 2025 Master Plan [on-line]; accessed 2 February 2009; available from [http://www.parkeronline.org/archive/pdf\\_files/comprehensive\\_Planning/master\\_plan\\_2005/chapter1.pdf](http://www.parkeronline.org/archive/pdf_files/comprehensive_Planning/master_plan_2005/chapter1.pdf); Internet.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Parker, Colorado [on-line]; accessed 2 February 2009; available from <http://www.city-data.com/city/Parker-Colorado.html>; Internet.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Town of Parker Facts and Stats, June 2006 [on-line]; accessed 9 February 2009; available from [http://www.parkeronline.org/archive/pdf\\_files/economic\\_dev\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.parkeronline.org/archive/pdf_files/economic_dev_factsheet.pdf); Internet.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.



statistics.<sup>19</sup> Of those surveyed, 45 percent were male, 54 percent female. The average adult age was 42.2 years. Persons surveyed had been attending FBC for 6.9 years on average. The average adult educational attainment was 14.7 years (i.e., “some college”). The average household income was \$87,800 per year. Giving to the church was 18 percent below the national average: 5.4 percent of those surveyed gave \$3,388.00 per year. However, giving to ministries outside FBC was higher than the national average by 2.9 percent. Travel patterns to work and church reflected the same patterns in the community. The average driving time to the church was 13.8 minutes or 8.1 miles. The employment of the members and attendees reflect what is found in the tri-city area: computer technologies, managerial and professional positions, with some construction and small business ownership.

At the time of this survey, the church was in turmoil. The “Executive Report” took this situation into account: “During the last year, the senior pastor left under duress, two other staff members were fired for moral reasons and two others quit. As a result, the church experienced a loss of nearly half its attendance. The exodus is now over, and virtually all who now attend are committed to stay.”<sup>20</sup> The effects and results of this turmoil will be taken up in the recounting of the history below.

### **Current Ministries of FBC**

The government of FBC is an elder-led congregational church. FBC is also served by a Deacon Council of three men and three women. Two other standing committees have been formed: the Finance Team and Missions Team. FBC has one Sunday morning worship service where 290 persons attended weekly in 2008.<sup>21</sup> The style

---

<sup>19</sup>Church Effectiveness Survey, “Executive Report,” prepared by T-Net, International for Faith Baptist Church, 15 December 2003.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>This number was calculated from weekly attendance counts made by the deacons and supplied to the church Office Manager.

of worship is best described as “blended,” but leans toward a contemporary flavor. The worship director, a former worship leader employed by Promise Keepers, is an African-American male in his early forties. The music team consists of six regular instrumentalists and five singers. Direction for the themes of the service is carefully planned to be God-centered and Word-saturated. The service lasts from seventy-five to ninety minutes.

Adult Bible Communities (called ABC’s) follow the worship gathering. Four life-stage communities meet in the church for fellowship, Bible study, and outreach activities. The total number participating in these four ABC’s averages 150 persons each week. Each ABC functions as a small church within the church. The participants of the ABC’s seek to build a sense of Christian community in which they grow in systematic and sequential biblical education. Each ABC has its own leadership team which includes an outreach leader, a teacher, a shepherd and a hospitality team.<sup>22</sup>

The Children’s Ministries department serves 135 children on Sunday mornings and 105 in AWANA on Wednesday nights. The Youth Ministries serve fifty teenagers at two weekly functions for middle school and high school students on Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights. A medium-sized group for “college and career” aged young people is offered for those of this age group who return from college during the summer months.

FBC also has eleven small groups with 135 people in attendance. Three kinds of small groups are offered: covenant groups (evangelistic), basic accountability (learning to practice the spiritual disciplines), and ongoing accountability (growing in Christlike character).

---

<sup>22</sup>An outreach leader focuses on the purposes of the ABC’s and develops projects that lead the group to reach out to the tri-city community. Teachers take the community through a systematic and sequential curriculum of God’s Word. Shepherds provide pastoral care and, with others, take prayer requests for the group. The hospitality team coordinates food and beverages.

FBC also has ministries for women (various weekly Bible studies, MOPS) and men (The Dead Theologians Fraternity). The church also offers a preschool four days a week.

### **History of FBC**

FBC began as a Bible study ten years before Parker incorporated. In 1971, the Rocky Mountain Baptist Conference (RMBC) of the BGC decided to plant a new church in the Parker area. The effort was begun by the District's Executive Minister. Mission Hills Church, the largest RMBC church in Denver at the time, supported the church plant with financial and people resources. For the first year, the Bible study met in area homes until growth demanded a larger meeting place. The church began to hold public meetings in a local elementary school and became self-supporting in 1972.

Early events in the life of the church shaped the character of the church and its ministries. For the first five years, two part-time pastors served the church as it grew slowly. In time, the church sought to build its first building. FBC found and purchased land in Parker proper. However, the church faced its first challenge from residents because a Lutheran church had just been built on the same street where FBC intended to build. Residents mounted a legal challenge opposing the construction of the new church. Although the church had already laid the foundation, the county bowed to the pressure and revoked the church's building permits.

Rather than sue the county, the church decided to sell the property and look for a new location. Within a few months, the current location at 11150 Hilltop Road was purchased. The move from the small city to the country helped shape the identity of the church as a "little country church." During these early years, the church assumed that identity, placing a great deal of emphasis on fellowship. In fact, every Saturday night the young congregation came together for a dinner at the church.

The next significant milestone in the shaping of FBC's identity came with the hiring of its first full time pastor. Byron McDonald was a recent graduate of Denver

Seminary. Under his leadership and commitment to expositional preaching, the church grew to three morning services over the next seven years. Responding to the needs for more room and growing ministries, the church decided to expand the building in 1987. The congregation launched a building program to construct a new 65,000 square foot facility.

Just about two months before the scheduled move into the new building, a fire brought the congregation's plans to a halt. A weld unknowingly left smoldering in the roof caught fire and set the old wooden church structure ablaze. The old auditorium and office space were completely destroyed. The aftermath of the fire forced the congregation to move to a local high school for the next several months until repairs could be made.

In 1989, the congregation moved into its new home. But within a few months, the beloved pastor announced his resignation in order to move to a church in California. McDonald's leaving was a sad and disappointing time for the congregation. One can still hear stories from those few in the church today who remember his ministry and especially mention his excellent exposition of God's Word.

In 1991, a new pastor came, someone whose ministry contributed the next identity shaping emphasis for FBC. Ron Sheveland led the church into an "all member ministry." His Doctor of Ministry project focused on identifying and deploying the spiritual gifts of members for the work of the ministry. This lay-ministry focus provided another building block of the church's identity by creating a culture of volunteerism. Many people responded to his teaching on the spiritual gifts and sought to serve the ministries of the church. In 1996, the pastor resigned to become a District Executive Minister for the Baptist General Conference.

During the interim between 1996 and 1997 before the next pastor came, FBC began a debt retirement program. In just over a year, the church raised funds enough to

retire the mortgage. When the next pastor came in late 1997, the church celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary with a mortgage burning.

The new pastor, John Snyder, led the church in a new direction. Snyder had been a church planter affiliated with the Willow Creek association of churches, and he implemented their model for FBC. At first, there was agreement among leadership and membership. A number of new staff positions were added. However, the staff expansion caused unintended consequences. Some people who had previously served in ministry positions found themselves displaced by hired “professionals.” The new outward focus of the church successfully drew a number of people to the church. By 2001, attendance at the morning worship services reached about 500 people for the first time since 1989.<sup>23</sup>

By the fall of 2002, relationships among the pastor, the Leadership Board, and the staff began to deteriorate. Some in the church today reflect on that time as a “period of testing” because it brought conflict in relationships. At root, it seems that the origin of the conflict was an issue of polity. The newly hired executive minister lobbied for the church to move toward biblical eldership. The staff and Leadership Board increasingly agreed with the new direction and began studying the Scriptures and other books on the matter.<sup>24</sup> However, the pastor strenuously resisted this direction. At the same time, a growing discontent surfaced among people once involved in ministry tasks who now felt “shut out” of the ministries of the church. Suspicions and tensions among staff, pastor, and Board members began to grow. The pastor asked for and received time for a sabbatical. During his absence, the staff communicated to the Leadership Board its unwillingness to continue working with the pastor.

With relationships at an impasse, the pastor resigned in the first weeks of 2003. A plan for transition was proposed and adopted which included an agreement

---

<sup>23</sup>Survey, “Report,” 3.

<sup>24</sup>Notably Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership*, rev. ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: Lewis and Roth, 1995).

among the FBC Leadership Board and the BGC District Executive Minister that the pastor would leave his pastorate at the church in order to plant a new church in the city of Aurora (about twenty miles north of FBC). However, the pastor broke this agreement in order to become the pastor of an independent community church in the heart of Parker, seven miles away. Some from FBC followed the pastor to his new pastorate. The leadership felt betrayed and angry. The staff remained intact, carrying on their duties under the leadership of the youth pastor. Within a few months, the Leadership Board let the music director go due to financial considerations because contributions were falling off.

By June of 2003, the Leadership Board contacted me to fill the pulpit duties on Sundays during their search for a new pastor. Within a month of arriving, the youth pastor confessed to involvement with internet pornography on his church computer. This announcement to the church membership came as a “last straw,” leading many to leave the church. The youth pastor agreed to an official restoration process as outlined by the BGC. He was not asked to return to his ministry position at the completion of the process. Before the fall of 2003, all remaining staff members resigned, leaving me and the church secretary as full time personnel.

Two significant events took place in the fall of 2003. The first was the congregationally ratified decision to begin the transition from a Leadership Board to an Elder Council slated to be completed by June 2004. The polity is best described as elder-led congregationalism. The second significant event was the church survey mentioned above that led to FBC’s current vision, mission, and ministry structures.

### **Growth Patterns of FBC**

According to the Church Effectiveness Survey (December 2003), FBC’s attendance patterns plateaued or declined in the ten years between 1993 and 2003. The brief spike in growth to 500 persons in 2001 did not change the survey’s findings. At the

time of the survey, worship attendance was 277 persons.<sup>25</sup> The Decadal Growth rate was negative 26 percent, and the Annual Growth rate was negative 34 percent.<sup>26</sup>

As might be expected, the staff upheaval in 2003 translated into very low morale among the members. Because confidence in the leadership was low, giving also declined. While members were committed to stay, they were not committed to follow the leaders or to serve the church.<sup>27</sup>

In spite of the turmoil, the survey revealed a number of strengths in the church. The church enjoyed a youthful congregation when compared to evangelical churches of its size across the United States.<sup>28</sup> FBC had a strong financial base for ministry and a well educated congregation with high leadership potential. The church survey also showed strong doctrinal unity among the members, a healthy practice of assimilation, and excellent and well-kept facilities.<sup>29</sup>

The survey also revealed some surprising intangibles. Most said they felt “stuck” in their current level of spiritual growth, desired greater growth but did not know how to advance in it.<sup>30</sup> The survey linked growth frustrations to low levels of personal commitment to Christ as contributing to the cause of low morale. The remedy recommended was to train the church in the use of the spiritual disciplines. Also, the survey found that the church had grown inward and needed to improve in evangelism, discipling, and leadership training.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup>This number included 66 children, 27 teens and 184 adults.

<sup>26</sup>Survey, “Report,” 3.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 2.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., 1.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 2. The T-Net organization survey tests Christian growth in four phases. The phase in which most considered themselves to be “stuck” is the phase characterized by the regular practice of the spiritual disciplines.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 2.

Currently church attendance has stabilized and grown slightly since 2003. Attrition slowed as new members were received. The current church membership is 232 persons. The average attendance at the Sunday morning worship service for the year 2007-2008 was 290 persons. The combined factors of new vision, clarity of purpose, and a new leadership structure to accompany new ministry structures helped to restore health to the church.

### **My Role**

In June 2003, during the church's most turbulent time, I came to FBC to serve as "pulpit fill," and then as interim pastor. Within three months of serving the church, the Search Committee offered me the position as pastor. However, sensing a possible desire for a "quick fix," I counseled the Committee to seek the Lord diligently through an appropriate search process. Many questions had to be sorted out. For example, because the issue of ministry direction had not been settled, it would have been premature to take the pastorate. Ecclesiological matters needed to be clarified; was eldership to be adopted? Furthermore, did FBC have a sense of God's will, personally and corporately?

At the same time, the Leadership Board increased my pastoral responsibilities beyond filling the pulpit on Sunday morning. A restoration process for the youth pastor had to be drafted and implemented. Various groups throughout the church needed shepherding through the implications of a restoration plan and their support gained. A training process for men who might serve as elders needed to be created. The process for elder training had to begin in the fall if the church was to be ready to present candidates by June the following year. The staff and the daily operations of the church needed oversight. By late fall 2003, the staff completely changed to an all-volunteer staff with the exception of the church secretary. This change was financially necessary. Adding to the changes, the leadership earlier approved two new initiatives. First, the church was launching a new preschool. Second, a new Christian school was set to begin holding classes in rented parts of the building. Just four weeks before the start of the preschool,



the man hired as the Director resigned. To other pastoral responsibilities was added oversight of these two new ministries.

All the while, the Search team went about its responsibilities searching for a new pastor. The Search team negotiated with the District to remove the contractual stipulation that interim pastors may not be considered for a permanent position.<sup>32</sup> In June 2004, FBC extended a call to me to become their next pastor. I have been serving as pastor since that time. The ministry direction has changed. FBC leadership implemented discipling structures and became intentional about fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20). Also, since June of 2004 elders have been serving FBC.

### **Rationale for This Project**

A Christian son moves in with his nonchristian girl friend. A nineteen-year-old comes home at Thanksgiving and announces that she has become convinced that belief in Christianity is a superstitious holdover from the pre-modern era. A deacon confesses the ongoing torment of “adult” bookstore images gripping his mind. A pastor’s wife declares that she plans to leave her husband for another woman. The common thread among these illustrations is the battle for purity of life and doctrine that is the daily struggle for Christians.

Modern families are under attack; Christian families are not exempt. Consider the evangelical divorce rate, which according to some researchers, matches that of non-evangelicals.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, consider the heartache for Christian parents who watch

---

<sup>32</sup>The District contract used for interim pastors includes the stipulation that these men are prohibited from consideration for the pastoral vacancy.

<sup>33</sup>Christine Wicker, “Dumfounded by Divorce,” in *The Dallas Morning News* [on-line]; accessed 12 February 2009; available from [http://www.adherents.com/largecom/baptist\\_divorce.html](http://www.adherents.com/largecom/baptist_divorce.html); Internet. Also see The Barna Group, “New Marriage and Divorce Statistics Released” [on-line]; accessed 3 March 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/15-familykids/42-new-marriage-and-divorce-statistics-released>; Internet. According to Barna, the rate among evangelicals is 26 percent and among non-evangelicals who claim to be born-again is 33 percent. Barna defines born-again Christians as “people who said they have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their life today and who also indicated they believe that when they die they will go to Heaven because they had confessed their sins and had accepted Jesus Christ as their savior.” According to Barna’s criteria,

a son or daughter walk away from the church who may experiment with an eternally dangerous faith alternative. Questions arise in the heart: “What went wrong? How could she do that? Did we do enough as parents? Did I miss something? Did we neglect a responsibility? What will be the outcome of my child or spouse’s eternal destiny?”

The Christian life is not easy, but hard (Matt 7:13, 14; Luke 13:24). There will always be resistance (John 16:33; 2 Tim 3:12). Many NT passages teach that struggle will be a way of life for those who follow Christ (2 Tim 1:8; 2:3, 4; 4:5). The Bible teaches that upon conversion, a Christian enjoys peace with God (Rom 5:1) and cleansing from sin (2 Pet 1:9; Titus 2:14; Heb 9:14; 1 John 1:7), a new sense of intimacy with God (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6) and greater understanding of his purposes (Eph 1). However, because the convert has been transferred from the realm of disobedience to the realm of Christ’s rule (Eph 5:8), a Christian also gains an implacable enemy whose single-minded goal is destruction (1 Pet 5:8). Furthermore, Christians increasingly discover that the world they once knew is now hostile toward them. They may slowly “wake up” to the reality that their once familiar culture opposes efforts to become Christlike. This opposition would be struggle enough, but there is a rebel concealed in the basement of the heart, a kind of “double agent,” who plots to open the door and let in the foe. A Christian, though redeemed and possessing a heart on which God’s law is written (Jer 31:31-34), lives with a fallen nature in a fallen world, led by a fallen angel scheming to undo all the good God has done (Rom 7). Hence, Paul writes, “for we do not

---

evangelicals meet the born-again criteria plus seven other conditions. Barna writes those conditions “Include saying their faith is very important in their life today; believing they have a personal responsibility to share their religious beliefs about Christ with non-Christians; believing that Satan exists; believing that eternal salvation is possible only through grace, not works; believing that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life on earth; asserting that the Bible is accurate in all that it teaches; and describing God as the all-knowing, all-powerful, perfect deity who created the universe and still rules it today. Being classified as an evangelical is not dependent upon church attendance or the denominational affiliation of the church attended.” Perhaps the better statistic is that “Notional Christians,” which I take to mean those who believe they are but have not truly converted, is at the same percentage as “Evangelicals” (i.e., 33 percent). In other words, it seems that “Christians” and the world are doing about the same. But the term for Christian is too broad in Barna to get an accurate picture.

wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the spiritual forces of wickedness over this present darkness” (Eph 6:12).

What assurance of success does the believer have against so mighty an alliance of evil? The Bible answers, “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God” (2 Cor 10:4). What implications does this verse have for the Christian family that regularly attends church, tries to get along with others at the church, serves coffee for the Sunday school class, and pays taxes on time? If the children are getting good grades and the only trouble they have is handing in homework assignments a day or two late, then where is the battle?

Perhaps not knowing that the Christian life is a spiritual battle explains why so few fight it. Could it be that “spiritual forces of wickedness” is merely a way of describing the cultural worldview of evil in the first century? If demons really existed today, they do not seem to bother many in America. If one travels to India or the Dominican Republic where belief in multiple gods and evil spirits still defines the culture, surely there may be spiritual warfare in those places.

David Powlison writes that for many Christians, “the working worldview of spiritual warfare has the ring of a horror movie or fantasy novel instead of the sound of Scripture.”<sup>34</sup> Most Christians would not deny that there is an enemy of the soul, but few realize the extent of Satan’s power or their own authority and protection in Christ. It may be time to reach back into the rich understanding of the English Puritans who understood and practiced a brand of spiritual warfare firmly grounded in the doctrine of a believer’s union with Christ. Apart from this union, a person was held in the grip of “the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19). There is no neutrality on the spiritual battlefields of life.

---

<sup>34</sup>David Powlison, *Power Encounters: Reclaiming Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 13.

The evangelical church seems caught between two options for spiritual warfare. C. S. Lewis said of these options, “One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them.”<sup>35</sup> Denying the existence of demonic powers and falling into dangerous preoccupation are unacceptable theological or practical positions for Christian living. There is a healthy “third way” practiced by the Puritans who believed in an “every day” spiritual warfare. The Christian was to practice biblical resistance against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and refused to be complacent about the “rebel” within. Striving for godliness meant appropriating the resources available due to union with Christ and believing the Scriptures were sufficient to counter the enemy.

The evidence that there is a need for training in the practice of spiritual warfare becomes urgent when a child renounces the faith. Imagine a typical story of a precious daughter “devoured” by postmodern commitments to the proposition that truth cannot be known. The college bound student was regularly brought to Children’s Church, Sunday school, VBS, and youth group. Her parents prayed for her each night but as she entered her pre-teens, the practice waned. Her parents hoped she was praying and reading her Bible for herself.

When she went off to college, she was taught to be suspicious of anyone who espoused the existence of absolute truth. They were guilty of making a grab for power. The professor illustrated the case by pointing to Christianity as an oppressive patriarchal system designed to keep women powerless. Making the case from history and sociology, the daughter now feels empowered to liberate herself from the superstitions of the biblical worldview she heard at church. Her newfound freedom permits her to move in with her boyfriend in spite of her parent’s pleadings and disappointment. She knows she was not brought up “that way,” but she is writing her own story now. The “roaring lion”

---

<sup>35</sup>C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters* (New York: HarperOne, 1961), ix.

rooms (1 Pet 5:8), looking for those he can devour, taking one bite at a time. Believers can and must learn to resist the devil (Jas 4:7; 1 Pet 5:9). Therefore, the intention of this project was to “arm” families to become familiar with, and practice using, the “weapons of our warfare” in order to fight the enemy of their souls in the everyday context of life.

### **Meet William Gurnall**

William Gurnall’s *The Christian in Complete Armour*, first published in three volumes (1655, 1658, and 1662),<sup>36</sup> played a central role in this project. Found in Denver Seminary’s library among works on spiritual warfare, it is one of the few that are theologically evangelical rather than of a contemporary Charismatic origin.<sup>37</sup> Gurnall’s *Complete Armour* stands out for its sheer size. One need not to look any further than the inside cover flap for recommendations. The first recommendation is from Charles Spurgeon who said of Gurnall’s book it was, “peerless and priceless; every line is full of wisdom; every sentence is suggestive.” Spurgeon called it “the preacher’s book.” Next, the publishers quoted John Newton, who said if he had to make a choice of one other book to read beside the Bible, Gurnall’s was his choice. In his own book on the Ephesian passage, Lloyd-Jones wrote, “It (i.e., *Complete Armour*) is a great classic which has given food for the soul to countless thousands of Christian pilgrims during the last 300 years.”<sup>38</sup> These recommendations are enough to be convincing that there might be much to learn from listening to the wisdom of the Anglican pastor.

---

<sup>36</sup>J. C. Ryle, “A Biographical Account of the Author,” in Gurnall, *Armour*, 1: xli. One will find very little written on Gurnall’s life. This is his only work still in publication.

<sup>37</sup>For several years after my conversion, my wife and I were part of the charismatic movement. A number of books on spiritual warfare were published in the 1990s. Such topics as defeating territorial spirits (hovering over American and world cities), generational curses, demon possession, spirits of various sins (e.g., a spirit of covetousness), and warfare prayers that bind or loose or take authority over evil were common fare. This genre of books has sometimes been confusing, even disappointing to the average Christian.

<sup>38</sup>D. M. Lloyd-Jones, *The Christian Warfare: An Exposition of Ephesians 6:10 to 13* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976), 16.

Gurnall served as pastor of the Lavenham Church in Lavenham, Suffolk, England, from 1644 until his death 1679.<sup>39</sup> The *Christian in Complete Armour* is Gurnall's masterwork, rich in pastoral teaching and practical application of Paul's principles of spiritual warfare (Eph 6:10-20). Gurnall methodically followed the text, explaining each piece of armor and applying the meaning with precision for his congregation. Gurnall considered each piece of the armor a metaphor revealing an aspect of Christ's character. He carefully explained the meaning and necessity of the armor for daily Christian living. Gurnall made practical application of each piece of armor, exhorting Christians to conform to the image of Christ. Gurnall believed Christ was the believer's armor due to union with Christ. For Gurnall, success in spiritual warfare meant developing a close, vital and growing relationship with Christ throughout the believer's life.

### **Personal Interest**

Academic interest was not the only significance for the project. Before coming to faith in Christ, it was my experience in the occult world that God used to "scare the hell out" of me. Rescued from the darkness of the occult and brought into the marvelous light of God's dear Son (Col 1:13) meant a clear line of demarcation for life. Knowing that the power of evil was real, and God's power in the cross to overcome all powers in heaven or on earth, the Christian life demands the adoption of a warfare lifestyle against the world, the flesh and the devil (1 John 2:15, 16). It is biblically true that a believer cannot slip back into darkness, but this assurance does not imply there is no struggle for godliness (1 Pet 1:3-5; Phil 1:6; 1 Tim 4:7). The church must take the power of the evil one seriously and teach God's people to fight strenuously in the power of the Spirit for

---

<sup>39</sup>Joel R. Beeke, and Randall J. Pederson, *Meet the Puritans: With a Guide to Modern Reprints* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 305-06.

the purposes of growing in godliness. It is in this fight that the church gives evidence of the wisdom of God's power (Eph 3:10).

### **Definitions, Limitations and Delimitations**

J. C. Ryle wrote, "True Christianity is a fight; it is the best fight."<sup>40</sup> Martin Lloyd-Jones, in *The Christian Warfare*, reminds his readers: "We have to realize that we are called, in the Christian life, to a battle, not to a life of ease."<sup>41</sup> According to Lloyd-Jones, the call of the Christian life is not to convalesce in a hospital for the soul, but to live sparingly in a barracks preparing for warfare.<sup>42</sup> William Gurnall introduces his work on spiritual warfare by calling the believer to the battlefield: "Indeed, there is no duty in a Christian's whole course of walking with God, or acting for God but is lined with many difficulties, which shoot like enemies through the hedges at him, while he is marching towards heaven: so that he is put to dispute every inch of ground as he goes."<sup>43</sup>

The battle for holiness is waged on the unholy battlefield of the world, which is under the dark leadership of the father of lies, and with a heart prone to wandering from simple devotion to Christ (2 Cor 11:3). Joel Beeke reminds the believer never to surrender the fight by quoting Samuel Rutherford: "The devil's war is better than the devil's peace."<sup>44</sup>

Therefore, for the purposes of this project, "spiritual warfare" may be defined as the Christian's daily pursuit of practical holiness. In the battles, the believer seeks to

<sup>40</sup>J. C. Ryle, *Holiness: Its Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties and Roots* (Moscow, ID: Charles Nolan Publishers, 2001), 73-76.

<sup>41</sup>Lloyd-Jones, *Warfare*, 20.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>43</sup>Gurnall, *Armour*, 1:12.

<sup>44</sup>Joel R. Beeke, *Puritan Reformed Spirituality: A Practical Theological Study from our Reformed and Puritan Heritage* (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 2004), 418. Beeke quotes Samuel Rutherford, *The Trial and Triumph of Faith* (Edinburgh: William Collins, 1845), 403.

increasingly reflect Christ's character in the midst of the struggle against the world, the flesh and the devil. The good news is that the believer is not alone. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the believer learns to fight with the weapons of God.

This project had one limitation and one delimitation. The limitation was the lack of a longitudinal study that extended three, six or twelve months after the completion of the project. The long-term effects of the project on the families could not be measured within the period allowed. However, a post-project survey and interview provided helpful information to infer future assessment and possible replication. Additionally, it was not possible to measure the positive or negative effects of extraneous variables on the participants. Extraneous variables might have been an inspiring book, a particularly engaging youth group meeting or sermon, or discussions with other Christians during the twelve weeks that might have influenced the participants in positive or negative ways during the project.

The delimitation was with regard to the subject matter of the project. Contemporary interests in spiritual warfare often focus on a range of subjects not addressed by this project. For example, this project did not address current interests in territorial spirits, spiritual mapping, strategic level warfare, breaking generational curses, or the contemporary deliverance ministry. Instead, the focus of this project was to apply Gurnall's understanding and practice of the Christian's spiritual warfare.

Therefore, this project sought to apply Gurnall's thought as closely as possible. Bryan G. Zacharias, a student of the Puritans and in particular of Gurnall's work, wrote,

The Puritan interest in this subject is very much a pastoral interest. In a sense, they are not interested at all in the devil. They are not indulging in occult speculation for its own sake, to satisfy their curiosity. One might say their demonology is a subset of their doctrine of sanctification, or of their ecclesiology. That is, their pastoral concern is to help the church (made up of individual Christians), or Christians (who together make up the church) to live a holy life to the Lord. Their primary source for pastoral instruction is the Scriptures. The Bible, as well as their own experience,



tells them that Christians as individuals, and Christians as the church, are impeded, tempted, deceived, discouraged by a powerful spiritual antagonist.<sup>45</sup>

### **Research Methodology**

Fighting the spiritual battle for holiness on a daily basis should be characteristic of the growing Christian. A growing Christian desires to become more like Christ and seeks to cultivate a heart that pursues God by obeying his Word and denying the world's empty promises. A growing Christian organizes his or her life in ways that subdues the flesh by relying on the power of the Spirit. A growing Christian progresses in the joy of faith. Therefore, the growing Christian becomes increasingly aware of the spiritual opposition to these goals. Opposition comes from a three-pronged attack: the pressures of the world (Rom 12:2; Eph 2:2), the internal insurrection of one's own flesh (Eph 2:3) and the soul's greatest foe, Satan (Eph 2:2). Therefore, the wise Christian lives with a soldier's battle-ready mentality for the fight. The humble Christian takes up the mighty weapons of God's armor (Eph 6:10-20).

### **Pre-project Survey**

In order to establish how a Christian might grow in the above ways by the use of God's armor, the project included a survey of the participants. First, a pre-project questionnaire was given to members and attendees of FBC who agreed to participate in the project. My goal was to recruit at least twenty families with children between the ages of twelve and eighteen, not regularly practicing the discipline of family worship. These families may have been intact (i.e., two parents) or single-parent families. The questionnaire covered four areas of the believer's life. One part of the questionnaire assessed the family's core biblical knowledge: (1) the theological foundations of the believer's union with Christ, (2) an understanding of the nature, character and power of

---

<sup>45</sup>Bryan G. Zacharias, *The Embattled Christian: William Gurnall and the Puritan View of Spiritual Warfare* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1995), 5.

Satan, (3) understanding of the believer's fight against the adversary, and (4) an understanding God's power. A second part of the questionnaire considered the practice of private family worship. Measurements sought to gather information in two areas: (1) how often the family worships together in the home, and (2) what practices the family used. A third part of the questionnaire sought to measure how much knowledge the participants had of the spiritual disciplines and how they practiced them. A series of questions were asked regarding prayer, Bible intake, public worship, private meditation in the Word, journaling, and Scripture memorization.

The families agreed to a covenant stipulating expectations for participation. Because the project called for a high level of commitment, it was important that the participating families understood what was required of them before they agreed to participate. The covenant included agreement to attend a weekly meeting, practice family worship for twelve weeks using the devotionals provided, complete the survey twice, and schedule a final in-home interview.

### **The Fellowship of Gurnallian Warriors**

Because the work of applying Gurnall's principles was accomplished in the family worship setting, the families were reminded to anticipate spiritual opposition such as discouragement and distraction. Therefore, the intention for the weekly meetings was to encourage the husbands and wives to persevere. As well as helping them to keep their commitment to the project, the weekly meeting sought to equip them with skills for discipling their children.

The meetings, called huddles, lasted only thirty to forty-five minutes. The format for the meeting was the same each week. The family devotional material for the upcoming week was distributed. Opportunity to ask questions regarding the material and its use was given. A teaching segment on a practical topic of how parents can shepherd their children in spiritual growth was also planned. Time was set aside to share information of a practical nature addressing obstacles and to pray for one another.

### **Post-project Survey**

Two methods of measurement were used to assess progress in the spiritual disciplines and understanding of spiritual warfare. The pre-project survey was given a second time in the twelfth week of the project. The results provided an opportunity to compare changes in family worship practices when measured against the first use of the survey.

The second method included a visit to the homes of each family for a final interview. The in-home visits made it possible to obtain feedback from the family about their overall experience, how many devotionals were completed, and to hear about the family's commitment to continued practice of family worship. The time also gave an opportunity to extend pastoral care to the family.

In the event that a family dropped out of the project, the interview was still scheduled. Valuable information was gathered from the family's experience and the interview provided an opportunity for pastoral care to the family.

### **Transitionary Questions**

The teaching of spiritual warfare may seem out-of-date to the contemporary Christian family. How much do believers know about Satan? How many families think he might be an influence upon their children? Is the subject merely the stuff of horror movies, Christian novels and pagan countries? Are Christian families adequately taught the biblical principles of spiritual warfare? What role do demons play in spiritual warfare? How do the forces of evil influence people, culture, or social institutions? Do Christians have the information needed to understand the enemy? Can families discover together Satan's tactics? What knowledge is needed in order that the believer might wage a successful warfare? The Bible gives the answers believers need to these questions and more. These answers are discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE “SEPARATOR-IN-CHIEF”

At times, the battle for holiness may seem unwinnable. Discouragement over the slow progress toward Christlikeness can wear down a believer. Nothing in the natural world encourages believers to pursue holiness. Rather, spiritual forces of evil under the leadership of the Prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2; 6:12) scheme against the children of God. The Christian who ignores God’s Spirit-supplied armor does so at great spiritual and personal peril.

God’s armor is not optional. Christians are not merely invited to put on the armor; they are commanded to do it. With the command comes the promised result: believers will be able to withstand whatever “flaming darts” (Eph 6:16) Satan launches against them. Satanic “darts” may come in many forms, but they are designed with a single-minded objective, namely to separate the believer from the love of God in Christ and to separate believers from each other.

The battlefields where these arrows fly are targeted to ruin Christian marriages, cause conflict in Christian homes, upset the work place and trouble the church. In other words, in every significant relational sphere of a Christian’s life there is a battle underway or the potential for one. Therefore, Paul instructs the church at Ephesus to stand firm in the face of satanic attack by putting on the full armor given by God. Putting on the armor of God is the same thing as saying “put on the new self created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness” (Eph 4:24), thus enabling believers to carry out God’s ethical commands for the Christian life.

Satan, the Christian's enemy, will be the major focus of this chapter because Paul puts the believer into the theatre of cosmic battle where Satan rules over the "world forces of this darkness," and "spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenlies" arrayed for war against the believer. Therefore, Paul instructs the believer in the necessity and nature of God's armor, and how the armor is appropriated for a successful fight (Eph 6:10-20).

Two truths guide the framework of this chapter. The first is the Father's sovereignty. The second is the Son's victory. The way Satan is revealed from Genesis to Revelation is instructive and an encouragement to the believer for the battles to be faced. When seen in the Old Testament, Satan is revealed as subordinate to God the Father's sovereign will. When seen in the New Testament, Satan is revealed in the context of the God the Son's victory. Paul writes that Christ "disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame by triumphing" over them at the cross (Col 2:15). Satan is never revealed as God's equal. Satan is always considered a created being subject to the will, the power, and the divine restrictions of God (see Rom 16:20; Rev 12:9).

The goal of Satan is to wage war against the saints in order to put a wedge between God and his children. Satan seeks to separate believers from God, from Christ, and from one another (Rom 8:38-39). For these reasons, one might refer to Satan as a cosmic "Separator-in-Chief."

Satan is a created being and exists as a personal being, not merely a force of evil, and there is intelligence behind his attacks. Therefore, believers are in need of an appropriate armor to defend against the attacks. Christians are not to be ignorant of Satan's devices (2 Cor 2:11) and must have some knowledge of their enemy. What can be learned about him? What is he like? What is the extent of his power? Most helpful of all would be to know what sorts of strategies he employs in his opposition to God, the family, the individual believer, and the church. When the curtain rises on God's creation in the OT, the one who opposes God's purposes appears on the scene of history almost

immediately. Many take to be the first “appearance” of Satan to be in the Garden of Eden.

### **Satan Revealed in the Old Testament**

There seems to be a logical and sequential revelation of Satan within the unfolding story of redemption. With each appearance, God uncovers a bit more of Satan’s character or his strategy until by the end of the biblical story of redemption his final defeat is seen in the full and glorious light of Jesus’ eschatological victory.

This chapter explores the revelation of Satan in four OT appearances. God’s enemy and the believer’s adversary appears as “the satan” explicitly in only three OT passages: the first two chapters of Job, again in 1 Chronicles 21, and finally in Zechariah 3. On these occasions, the word “satan” (*stm*) is used meaning adversary or opponent. In his first appearance, Satan comes in the form of snake.

It is significant that in the first and last books of the Bible, Genesis and Revelation, God has something important to say about Satan. Satan appears as the cunning serpent in the Garden beguiling Eve, tempting Adam and bringing about the ruin of the fall (Gen 3). However, John saw Satan’s final defeat at the hands of Christ, being summarily dispatched into the Lake of Fire: “the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world” (Rev 12:9).<sup>1</sup>

### **Genesis 3: The Opening Gambit**

How should the serpent in the Garden be understood? Is this the first reference to Satan? There is some discussion as to whether or not the serpent is to be identified

---

<sup>1</sup>Rev 12:9 governs the way we are to understand the serpent in the Garden. Much discussion about the question, “Is Satan the serpent of the Garden?” fills many commentaries. Based on the hermeneutic rule that Scripture should interpret Scripture, there should be no doubt in our minds that the inspired writer of Revelation was also the inspired interpreter of the identity of the serpent in Genesis.

with Satan. Gerhard von Rad writes, “In the narrator’s mind, [the serpent] is not the symbol of a ‘demonic’ power and certainly not of Satan.”<sup>2</sup> In spite of the church imposing a “great theological weight . . . almost without exception” on the serpent as Satan, Von Rad argues that the snake is “almost incidental” to the story.<sup>3</sup> In shaping his comments with this view, Von Rad wants to be careful not to shift personal responsibility away from Adam in the fall: “therefore the narrator has carefully guarded against objectifying evil in any way and therefore he has personified it as little as possible as a power coming from without.”<sup>4</sup> He concludes that his position does not diminish the presentation of the snake as “a sinister, strange animal” nor does the writer present readers with a myth.<sup>5</sup>

In surveying some of the arguments against identifying the serpent as Satan, Gordon Wenham interacts with attempts to understand the story against the backdrop of Ancient Near Eastern creation stories. He agrees that the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, an ancient Akkadian poem from about 2,000 BC, tells a story which shares many of the same elements found in Genesis 3. The hero of the *Epic*, Gilgamesh, loses the chance at gaining eternal life due to a thieving snake.<sup>6</sup> However, he rightly concludes that the stories of Genesis and the *Epic* are very different kinds. While Gilgamesh may have been

---

<sup>2</sup>Gerhard Von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1972), 87.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>James B. Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958), 1:40-75. After a rigorous journey to meet the wise Utnapishtim, a Noah-like figure who was granted eternal life after a great flood, Gilgamesh discovered the “secret” of eternal life was to be found in a plant that would return him “to the state of my youth.” He camped out one night returning home. While Gilgamesh was bathing in a pool of water, a serpent “snuffed the fragrance of the plant; It came up [from the water] and carried off the plant.” Gilgamesh weeps at the loss of this opportunity for eternal life. (See especially Tablet XII, ll. 280-90).

guilty of not being watchful for the thievery of the snake, Adam's and Eve's loss of eternal life was due to disobedience to God's command. Gilgamesh may have had "bad luck;" but the first couple engaged in a decisive act of rebellion.<sup>7</sup>

Karen Randolph Joines understands the appearance of the serpent against an ancient Near East background. She believes this background sheds light on three themes in the Genesis account: first, the desire for youthfulness ("you will not surely die," v. 2); second, the desire for wisdom ("For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil," v. 5); and third, the result of chaos (i.e., alienation from God and the Garden).<sup>8</sup> In passing, Wenham references Joines' ideas but then goes on to put the discussion into its correct context: "Early Jewish and Christian commentators identified the snake with Satan or the devil."<sup>9</sup> Wenham argues for a biblical understanding:

Furthermore, it may be noted that according to the classification of animals found in Lev 11 and Deut 14, the snake must count as an archetypal unclean animal. Its swarming, writhing locomotion puts it at the farthest point from those pure animals that can be offered in sacrifice. Within the world of the OT animal symbolism a snake is an obvious candidate for an anti-God symbol, notwithstanding its creation by God . . . . So for any Israelite familiar with the symbolic values of different animals, a creature more likely than a serpent to lead man away from his creator could not be imagined.<sup>10</sup>

Kenneth Matthews does not hesitate to take the traditional position held by the church. He identifies the serpent's voice as Satan's trickery. "Although the snake is never identified as Satan in the Old Testament," he writes "more than the principle of evil must

<sup>7</sup>Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 1A (Waco, TX: Word, 1987), 73, 76.

<sup>8</sup>Karen Randolph Joines, *Serpent Symbolism in the Old Testament: A Linguistic, Archaeological, and Literary Study* (Haddonfield, NJ: Haddonfield House, 1974), 17.

<sup>9</sup>Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 72.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 73.



have been intended by the serpent's presence since 3:15 describes an ongoing war between the serpent and the seed of the woman."<sup>11</sup>

The serpent does not stand apart from God's creative activity. It is identified as "more crafty" than any of the other beasts in the Lord God's creation (v. 1). The serpent is not God's equal. God remains sovereign over every part of his creation.

Although a malevolent creature, the serpent's evil was not attributed to God during the story. The responsibility lies with Adam, Eve and the serpent.<sup>12</sup> Bypassing Adam, the serpent engaged Eve directly in conversation (vv. 1-5). In this brief appearance of only seven verses the writer reveals vital information about this "anti-God" character that will appear consistent with later depictions of Satan.

**The serpent's nature.** The serpent exhibits a superior intelligence as he schemes to beguile and confuse Eve during their conversation. The Hebrew word for serpent here is *nahas*.<sup>13</sup> Victor Hamilton points out that the word is also connected to words describing the "practice of divination [and] observ[ing] signs (Gen 30:27; 44:5, 15; Lev 19:26; Deut 18:10)."<sup>14</sup> Ancient Near Eastern practices of divination included snakes frequently in the rituals of worshipers.

**The serpent's character.** The serpent is described as "cunning" (*arum*) in verse 1. Ironically, the word for cunning also means "to be naked" in verse 7. In their effort to become "wise," Adam and Eve succumbed to a shrewd plan that left them with the discovery that they were naked. Wenham writes, "They will seek themselves to

---

<sup>11</sup>Kenneth A. Matthews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, New American Commentary, vol. 1A (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 234.

<sup>12</sup>Notice that God cursed the serpent, but did not curse Adam or Eve personally. See vv. 14-17.

<sup>13</sup>Num 21:7-9; Deut 18:15; Prov 23:32.

<sup>14</sup>Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 187.

become shrewd but discover they are nude.”<sup>15</sup> To be shrewd or cunning can be a commendable trait when contrasted with the “fool,” as in the book of Proverbs.<sup>16</sup> But here the writer uses the word with negative moral connotations. The serpent employs its cunning ways for evil purposes.

**The serpent’s strategy.** The serpent impugned God’s character. Beginning in chapter 3, the writer speaks of God by using his covenant name, Yahweh, eighteen times. He is called “the LORD God.” The author’s use of this name contrasts with the serpent’s form of address of God. Rather than using God’s covenant name, the serpent consistently speaks of him as “God” (*elohim*). By reducing the title of God, the serpent reveals a contemptuous disrespect for God, his Creator. This attitude of disregard and disrespect for the LORD God reveals the nature of his character and a strategy to be used, namely to belittle God. This attitude is identical to how Satan appears in the court of heaven in the opening chapters of the book of Job. In fact, the attitude defines his nature.

**The serpent’s flattery.** When the serpent pretended surprise at God’s prohibition (2:16, 17; 3:1, 4-5), he was not providing new theological insights for Eve about the nature and character of God. Instead Hamilton writes, “he intends to place before her the possibility of being more than she is and more than God intended her to be.”<sup>17</sup> Behind the flattery stand lies and destruction. The serpent’s strategy used flattery to induce Eve into believing that she, and by implication Adam, could extend their lives “beyond the limits set by God at creation.”<sup>18</sup> They could become like God (v. 5)! Hamilton insightfully says,

---

<sup>15</sup>Wenham, *Genesis*, 72.

<sup>16</sup>Prov 12:16; 12:23; 13:16; 14:8, 15, 18; 22:3; 27:12.

<sup>17</sup>Hamilton, *Genesis*, 190.

<sup>18</sup>Von Rad, *Genesis*, 89.

Deification is a fantasy difficult to repress and a temptation hard to reject. In the woman's case she need give in to both only by shifting her commitment from doing God's will to doing her own will. Whenever one makes his own will crucial and God's revealed will irrelevant, whenever autonomy displaces submission and obedience in a person, that finite individual attempts to rise above the limitations imposed on him by his creator.<sup>19</sup>

**The serpent's lies.** Without having gained Eve's confidence through flattery, the serpent would not have been able to lie outright. Flattery was merely the ego-boosting tactic that opened the door to plant seeds of doubt in Eve's mind about the goodness of God. The serpent, without supportive evidence, asserted that he knew God better than the woman. Furthermore, if she would listen to him she would realize that God was not good. He lied to her that God's limitations were spiteful and mean. However, she could break free from God's self-protective and jealous limitations through a single act of disobedience. Rather than death, she could have the blessings of freedom and fulfillment. Notice that in his cunning, Satan did not actually tell Eve what to do.

Not only did the serpent lie about the character of God but also about the outcome of disobedience. In one sense, the serpent was right: they did not die a physical death immediately. But Adam and Eve did not see that the serpent's half-truths cost them something better than life, namely the enjoyment of God's presence.<sup>20</sup>

**The serpent's goal.** The second half of Proverbs 16:28 says that "a whisperer separates close friends." The serpent achieved his goal namely separating God from his first children. The sad result of the fall – alienation from God – is pictured here in stark terms.<sup>21</sup> Adam and Eve were separated from God by their act of rebellion. Then God made it official by expelling the couple from his presence. They were alienated from

---

<sup>19</sup>Hamilton, *Genesis*, 190.

<sup>20</sup>Ps 63:3.

<sup>21</sup>See Eph 4:18; Col 1:21.

unbroken communion with God. They had become strangers, to God and to each other. The ones charged with the protection and expansion of the Garden (2:15) were now put outside the Garden and kept from reentry (3:24).

### **Job: Subordination to Divine Limits**

The first appearance of Satan, here used as a title, comes in the first two chapters of Job. Job 1:6 says, “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.” Here the word “satan” is accompanied by the article “the” (*hassatan*). In this case, the word could be translated “the adversary” rather than the personal name Satan.<sup>22</sup>

The main character, Job, is introduced. Job was a wealthy cattle rancher in the land of Uz (1:3). Much of the discussion about the Book of Job focuses on the date of its composition. However, many commentators place the life-setting of Job during the time of the Patriarchs.<sup>23</sup> Like the patriarchs, Job was “a priest to his own household” (1:5)<sup>24</sup> who made regular sacrificial offerings for himself and his family. Job is presented as a pious man who enjoyed God’s favor.

---

<sup>22</sup>The word “satan” is used eight times in the OT to mean an “adversary.” The adversary can be the angel of the Lord who opposed Balaam (Num 22:23, 32). The other six references describe human adversaries. The sons of Zeruiah were adversaries against David (2 Sam 19:22). David himself was labeled an adversary to the Philistines (1 Sam 29:4). Hadad the Edomite and Rezon the son of Eliada were raised up against Solomon as adversaries (1 Kgs 5:4; 11:14, 23, 25).

<sup>23</sup>Robert L. Alden, *Job* New American Commentary, vol. 11 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993), 26. Elmer B. Smick, *Job* in vol. 4 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, Regency Reference Library 1988), 853. David J. Clines, *Job 1-20*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, 1989), lvii. John E. Hartley, *The Book of Job*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 39. Marvin H. Pope, *Job*, in *The Anchor Bible* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), xxxvii. Norman C. Habel, *The Book of Job: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985), 42. These commentators vary widely in dating the composition of Job from the second millennium BC to the post-exilic period. However, most put the life-setting of Job in the Patriarchal past.

<sup>24</sup>Alden, *Job*, 26.

From God's perspective, Job was a servant of the Lord's like no one else on earth. He was "a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil" (v. 8). This was all the opening Satan needed to drive a wedge of separation between God and his servant. In the two scenes of dialogue between God and Satan (1:6-12; 2:1-7), the Bible reveals a bit more of the character and strategy of the adversary.

The scenes teach important truths about the nature of Satan: he roams restlessly throughout the earth (1:7; 2:2). When God asks, "Where have you come from?" Satan's answer in effect says sarcastically, "Nowhere in particular and everywhere in general." He attempts to conceal himself from God by providing no information.

Norman C. Habel suggests the possibility that the word for roving (*swt*) may be a word play on "satan" (*stn*), "the title which the Satan bears."<sup>25</sup> Francis Anderson holds that Satan's roving reveals him to be a vagabond among the angels.<sup>26</sup> Although his meanderings are not aimless, it seems that Peter picked up this same image when he wrote that believers are to be "sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (1 Pet 5:8).

Satan appears in heaven's court along with the "sons of God" (v. 6). Whether he comes with the angels regularly or as an intruder, the author does not say, but Satan comes as an adversary ready to charge Job and God with wrong. Consistent with the serpent's character in Genesis, Satan possesses an adversarial attitude toward God using

---

<sup>25</sup>Norman C. Habel, *The Book of Job: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985), 89. Habel does not see any malice in the satan's accusations: "The verbal root *stn* does not refer to an action which is necessarily evil but to the behavior of one who opposes or challenges another party (Num. 22:22, 32; 1 Sam. 29:4; I Kings 11:14) . . . Clearly the 'roving' (*swt*) eyes of Yahweh (Zech. 4:10), and his 'patrolling' (hithpael of *hlk*) angels (Zech. 1:10-11), perform the same function as the satan, namely, to range the earth, report back signs of disorder, and raise doubts about the integrity of leading citizens (as in Zech. 3:1-2).

<sup>26</sup>Francis I. Anderson, *Job: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1976) 83.

a condescending form of address. Imagine the discordant note in heaven's holy court where one might expect decorum and respect. Instead, Satan addresses the Lord with a disdainful familiarity. He refers to the Lord as "you" instead of "my LORD."<sup>27</sup> His mind is "twisted away from God" proving that he does not belong in this court.<sup>28</sup> He is an outsider.

Satan is also cynical. His response to the Lord's obvious pleasure in Job is met with a detractor's doubt. Satan cannot accept that anything or anyone is genuinely good. It is as if Satan said, "Of course Job is interested in practicing piety because he receives benefits from God in return" (vv. 9, 10). Anderson accurately assesses the essence of Satan's character when he writes, "cynicism is studied disbelief . . . a mind turned in upon its own malice is the final horror of the diabolical."<sup>29</sup> Satan's accusations are not limited to Job, but he audaciously includes accusations of God, to God! First, he argues that Job's piety is artificial because it has never been tested. Second, he accuses God of playing favorites. After all, he argues, God guarantees Job's devotion by using bribery and protection from harm.

The Lord initiates the ensuing actions even though Satan is the antagonist.<sup>30</sup> To show that his servants can live uprightly, God grants limited powers to Satan to test Job. The adversary has power over everything that Job owns but his life is untouchable (v. 12). Four calamities come upon Job's children, two from human enemies and two from natural causes. Satan is the cause of all this terrible loss. Yet, Job maintains his faith in God (vv. 20-22). Having passed the test, God approves of his servant Job and accepts

---

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 82.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 84.

<sup>30</sup>When a Christian is tempted, James warns believers to reject the idea that God is the tempter: "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one" (1:13).

the responsibility for what befell the man while rebuking Satan: “Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil? He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason” (2:3).

True to his character, Satan accuses God that the first test was insufficient because God kept him from assaulting Job with physical harm. If he could bring sickness on Job, Satan asserts, Job would “curse you to your face” (v. 5). The scheme the adversary has in mind is to afflict Job physically – “strike his bone and flesh” – and Job will abandon his allegiance for the sake of his “skin” and desire for well-being.

God gave Satan power to plague Job physically with disease, but with limitations. He could not take Job’s life. Satan pulled no punches even with God’s limits and inflicted Job with a serious disease. Job complained that his body was “clothed with worms” and festering wounds (7:5). He suffered from fever (30:30) and was “repulsive [in] appearance” (2:13). Yet, through the intensity of the physical pain and his wife’s faithless advice (2:9), Job kept faith with God (2:10).

**The goal.** The story of Job presents Satan as a hostile troublemaker and provocateur – the chief mischief-maker of the universe.<sup>31</sup> His goals were clear: to sever permanently the relationship between God and his faithful servant. The Lord revealed Satan’s motive for the destruction of Job: it was for “no good reason” (1:9; 2:3). Satan’s plan was to turn Job away from God. With insight, Alden says, “God and good people do not do things for nothing; Satan does.”<sup>32</sup> Satan hoped that his strategy would result in God and Job abandoning one another. It did not matter to the devil who abandoned whom, so long as the relationship was ruined. However, by God’s grace Job’s struggles

---

<sup>31</sup>Francis, *Job*, 82.

<sup>32</sup>Alden, *Job*, 64.

ended well. Although Satan is not mentioned explicitly in the epilogue, the “loose end” is answered. Alden writes an encouraging summary that takes into account the outcome of Job in light of Satan’s temptations:

The felicitous resolution of the story is also the final ignominy to him who would destroy God’s servants by luring them into sin and urging them to deny their Lord. Except for the additional cattle, Job ended the book just where he had started. But in the intervening forty chapters he passed through an ordeal that changed his perspective on life and God forever. It would be a great gift if we could be in Job’s position at the end of the book without going through what he did throughout the book – gain his knowledge without suffering. But it is doubtful that it can happen. It takes fire to refine gold (23:10).<sup>33</sup>

God limited the activities of the nefarious adversary and sovereignly subordinated him to God’s decrees. God did not allow Satan to separate Savior and servant. No matter how fierce, God rules the day of battle when his foe attacks his children.

### **1 Chronicles: Judgment and Redemption**

The story of David’s census and God’s judgment for this sin needs to be read by comparing the story in 1 Chronicles 21 with 2 Samuel 24. A comparison of the passages raises two questions. First, what is meant by the use of “Satan” without the article? Might this suggest an evolution into the use of a proper name as many translations read (e.g., ESV, AV, NASB)? J. A. Thompson takes it this way: “The word generally has the article and means ‘The Accuser.’ Here it is without the article (as *satan*), suggesting that it was used as a proper name.”<sup>34</sup> However, Roddy Braun writes, this “probably represents the final stage in the OT’s development of a figure of Yahweh’s heavenly council who not only brings charges against his people but actually incites them to evil.”<sup>35</sup> A few commentators take the word *satan* in the more generic sense of “an

---

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 413.

<sup>34</sup>J. A. Thompson, *1, 2 Chronicles*, New American Commentary, vol. 9 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 161. The Septuagint (LXX) uses *diabolos*.

<sup>35</sup>Roddy L. Braun, *1 Chronicles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 15 (Waco, TX: Word,



adversary.”<sup>36</sup> Although some may want to call this character “an anonymous schemer,”<sup>37</sup> Satan is much more than the “Opposition Party in God’s Parliament.”<sup>38</sup> As the Scriptures reveal him, Satan’s ambition is more than putting up roadblocks to frustrate God’s purposes. His ambition is to claim worship as God.<sup>39</sup>

A comparison of these two OT passages (1 Chron 21; 2 Sam 24) also prompts a second question. The writer of 2 Samuel says, “Again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, ‘Go, number Israel and Judah.’” However, the parallel passage of 1 Chronicles says, “Then Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number Israel.” Who instigated David’s sinful behavior? Was it Satan or God?

God is angry at Israel once again (2 Sam 21:1-14). The author does not tell the explicit reason for God’s anger.<sup>40</sup> Rather, he does say that God will act in order to punish sin. However, the writer does reveal that David was “incited” to call for the census. Again, readers are not told why the census was sinful, but David clearly recognized he had sinned (v. 8). Whether David’s desire for the census was the cause for judgment or the judgment itself does not seem to be the concern of the writer.

However, the relationship between God’s role and Satan’s role is of concern. How can God hold David guilty for an action that God incited? Robert Gordon believes

---

1986), 217.

<sup>36</sup>Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), 375. Marvin E. Tate, “Satan in the Old Testament,” *Review and Expositor* 89, no. 4 (1992): 461-74.

<sup>37</sup>Japhet, *Chronicles*, 375.

<sup>38</sup>Michael Green, *I Believe in Satan’s Downfall* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1981), 33.

<sup>39</sup>See Luke 4:7 and Matt 4:9.

<sup>40</sup>Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel: A Commentary*, Regency Reference Library (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 317. Gordon believes the cause of God’s anger was directly tied to the census David took in order to count the number of fighting men in Israel and in Judah.

that both writers are “grappling with the mystery of evil” and that by the time of the NT, the unfolding development puts evil at Satan’s door.<sup>41</sup> Gordon writes, “The difference between Samuel and Chronicles does . . . illustrate the increasing tendency to associate evil with Satan, a tendency which is already discernible in the later OT books and which was fully developed by the time of our Lord and apostles.”<sup>42</sup>

When setting the texts side-by-side, it seems clear that God took the initiative in the entire episode. God used means, and in this case, the instrument in his hand was Satan. Dale Ralph Davis quotes Walter Kaiser,

It is also true, according to the Hebrew thinking, that whatever God permits he commits. By allowing this census-taking, God is viewed as having brought about the act. The Hebrews were not very concerned with determining secondary causes and properly attributing them to the exact cause. Under the divine providence everything ultimately was attributed to him; why not say he did it in the first place?<sup>43</sup>

**Grace overcomes sin.** On one level, the goal of Satan was to separate David and God. However, the larger story in this event in David’s life is not about how Satan incited him to sin. Rather, it is another example of God’s grace overcoming sin, thus giving believers a strong hope when crushed under the weight of sin.

The immediate purpose of the writers of 1 Chronicles and 2 Samuel was to answer the question of how David shifted the place of worship from the tabernacle in Gibeon to the future temple site in Jerusalem. This story of sin, judgment and grace explains the transition.

When David confessed his sin, the prophet Gad gave David three options for punishment: three years of famine, three months of military devastation at the hands of

---

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 317.

<sup>43</sup>Dale Ralph Davis, *2 Samuel: Looking on the Heart* (reprint, Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 1999), 261, cited in Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Hard Sayings of the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988), 131.

Israel's enemies, or three days "of the sword of the Lord," a pestilence upon the land (vv. 9-13). David chose the direct punishment from the angel of the Lord who would bring a deadly pestilence. The pestilence killed 70,000 men (v. 14) with the angel on the way to destroy Jerusalem. However, the Lord stopped the angel at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. When David saw the angel at that location "standing between earth and heaven and in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem," he and the elders fell on their faces in repentance. David confessed his sin and asked God to let the plague come upon him and his house, but to have mercy on God's people.

David was instructed to raise an altar on that threshing floor to make sacrifices of burnt offerings and peace offerings to the Lord for the plague to be stopped (v. 26). David paid a very high price for the threshing floor and did not seek to avoid the personal cost when Ornan offered the floor for free. God accepted David's sacrifice with a consuming fire from heaven signifying the new place of atonement (v. 26). "Then the Lord commanded the angel, and he put his sword back into its sheath" (v. 27). The author concluded the account by explaining clearly how Jerusalem became the center of worship for God's people:

At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he sacrificed there. For the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses had made in the wilderness, and the altar of burnt offering were at that time in the high place at Gibeon, but David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was afraid of the sword of the angel of the LORD. (vv. 28-30)

God's wrath was stirred against David and Israel. God's judgment was sure and swift. God used his adversary, Satan, to stir up residual sin in David's heart. God sent the angel of the Lord to execute his judgments. At the same time, God offered mercy to the repentant king so that the triumph of his grace might be seen for all the ages. J.

Barton Payne writes,

Ezra's record now serves a double function. On the one hand, the various aspects of David's repentance remain exemplary for readers up to this moment. On the other hand, the decision of God to establish his altar and temple at Moriah in Jerusalem have affected all history (cf. Rev 11:1); for this mountain became the focus of the

Holy City (v. 2) where his Son was crucified (v. 8). And it will continue to affect history; for from this “city he loves” (20:9), he will some day rule the nations of the earth (v. 4; cf., Isa 2:2-4) and then eternally heal the dwellers of his new earth (Isa 65:17-19; Rev 21:1-2; 22:2).<sup>44</sup>

Grace that conquers sin stands as the great promise in this account. Braun comments, “That same grace of God which triumphed over David’s sins and led to the establishment of God’s house remains God’s principal attribute available to human beings.”<sup>45</sup> The temple to be built would be the new way for sinful people to seek the Lord who would “draw and sustain the weak.”<sup>46</sup> However, the episode points to a larger NT truth. Christ would become the supreme place of atonement. In the unfolding story of the gospels, Satan incites evil men who put to death the Son of God (Acts 2:22-24). But as Peter testified, Jesus was “delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God” (v. 23). Once again Satan became an instrument in God’s hands to bring about his redemptive purposes. The final triumph of God’s grace through the sacrifice of the Son provides repentant sinners access to God.<sup>47</sup> Through the gospel of the Son, God reaches out to sinners offering to forgive sins.

### **Zechariah: The Accuser**

The final OT appearance of Satan in Zechariah 3 reveals him once again to be the accuser of God’s people in God’s court. The scene comes in the fourth of Zechariah’s eight night visions preached by the prophet over a two-year period from about 520 to 518 BC.<sup>48</sup> The Persian king, Cyrus, had just signed the edict that allowed the Israelites to

---

<sup>44</sup>J. Barton Payne, *1, 2 Chronicles*, in vol. 4 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 406.

<sup>45</sup>Braun, *1 Chronicles*, 218.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>Matt 12:6; John 2:19.

<sup>48</sup>Kenneth L. Barker, *Zechariah*, in vol. 7 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985), 598. Andrew E. Hill and John H. Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 417. The new temple in Jerusalem was dedicated on

return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple (539 BC). Under the leadership of Ezra, Nehemiah, Zerubbabel and Haggai about 50,000 Jews returned. But eighteen years passed and the temple restoration languished, then stopped. It was a spiritual emergency.<sup>49</sup>

Zechariah discerned the problem: God's people needed spiritual renewal. The people had become spiritually lethargic during the rebuilding process. Zechariah preached in order to stem the tide of lethargy and low morale by encouraging God's people to renew their faith in God. Zechariah called on the people to repent and renew their faith in God as the only pathway to the true worship of God. In a series of eight night visions – sermons – Zechariah rebuked, motivated and encouraged God's people to finish the building project. They needed to look up from their discouragement and see the compassion God had for them and his plans for their future. Only as they pressed in to God's purposes, would they find the spiritual strength needed to finish their task and live faithfully in a hostile world.

The scene opens allowing one to peer into heaven's court where legal proceedings were already underway. The high priest Joshua is on trial for his life as he stands in as a representative for the nation of Israel. God is the presiding Judge. The presence of Satan in the courtroom is surprising. The author presents him in the role of a prosecuting attorney.

As the curtain rises, the writer reveals Satan standing at Joshua's "right hand to accuse him (v. 1)."<sup>50</sup> The accusations have already been presented and although the writer does not specify the charges brought, from verse 4 one can glean that Joshua is

---

March 12, 516 BC. Zechariah's final prophecies were given some time after 480 BC.

<sup>49</sup>Andrew E. Hill and John H. Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 417. Additionally, apathy and selfishness crippled the work. The temple was left a heap of rubble while drought ravaged the land.

<sup>50</sup>See Rev 12:10. Ps 10:6 says, "Let an accuser [a *satan*] stand at his right hand."

being accused of moral and ceremonial unfitness for the role of high priest, and consequently unacceptable to God. According to Leviticus 22:3, if Joshua is utterly defiled, he is disqualified from the position of high priest: “If any one of all your offspring throughout your generations approaches the holy things that the people of Israel dedicate to the LORD, while he has an uncleanness, that person shall be cut off from my presence: I am the LORD.”

The rebuke of God in verse 2 comes as a stunning rejection of Satan’s case. Satan has been overruled on the basis of God’s grace. God’s legal judgment comes in the words that describe Joshua as one “The LORD who has chosen.”<sup>51</sup> The Greek (*eklegomai*) and Hebrew (*bachar*) mean the same thing: “chosen” by God, “appointed” by God or “joined” to God.<sup>52</sup> It is important to notice in verse 3 that God’s rebuke of Satan did not deny the evidence. The accuser was accurate about one thing: Joshua was thoroughly polluted by sin. God did not nor does he turn a blind eye toward human sin.<sup>53</sup>

The image of the filthy garment is especially important. The “filth” of Joshua’s garment was the evidence of his sin, and the author’s discrete way of saying that Joshua was covered in human excrement. Joshua was repellant to God. It is in these verses that hope is found for acceptance with God through his gracious act of declaring sinners justified.<sup>54</sup> Verse 4 declares the solution: “I have taken iniquity away and will clothe you with pure garments.” God himself removes the guilt and obligation of

---

<sup>51</sup>Here is an echo that reaches into the future with victory through Christ in Rev 12:9, 10. When Satan, “the great dragon . . . that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan” is thrown down, salvation and the power and the kingdom of Christ come and “the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down.”

<sup>52</sup>Colin Brown, ed., *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), s.v. “Elect . . .,” by L. Coenen.

<sup>53</sup>Of course, this poses the very problem all people face with God: if God is holy and will not accept sinners as the naturally born enemies of God, how can any be accepted by God?

<sup>54</sup>Rom 3:26.

Joshua's sin, pictured here as taking off an old garment and putting on a new one. It is a visual aid pointing toward the NT call for exchanging the old nature for the new.<sup>55</sup>

What is learned from this appearance of Satan is that he is an accuser. David Petersen comments that Satan "appears to be an individual consistent with the other appearances of a creature by that name: one who acts in a legal context, one whose action inspires a negative connotation, one of the divinities functioning in the divine council."<sup>56</sup> While no one has yet used the proper name of Satan, one can say that the OT reveals the nature of Satan as one who "seeks to discredit God's servant by accusing him of his sinfulness and ceremonial defilement."<sup>57</sup> He is the "accuser of our brothers" (Rev 12:10).

### Summary

What may be concluded about Satan revealed in the OT? The character of the adversary is clearly displayed, and unmistakably portrayed, as the cunning and wily deceiver; a chief separator of friends. Satan is an impudent liar, hostile to God and the accuser of the servants of God. These OT passages reveal Satan's strategies for achieving alienation and separation. He aims to separate God from his people and his people from one another. The deception of Adam and Eve reveals an effective tactic for alienating both the vertical relationship with God and the horizontal relationship with each other. The same goal of separation was the intended outcome of relationship between Job and God. Arguing that Job would abandon his fidelity to God under the unreasonable assaults of destruction to family, livelihood and physical well-being, Satan was given permission

---

<sup>55</sup>Paul uses the same imagery in Eph 4:22-24: "to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness."

<sup>56</sup>David L. Petersen, *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*, Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984), 190.

<sup>57</sup>George Klein, *Zechariah*, New American Commentary, vol. 21B (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2008), 136.

to test his accusation by testing the servant of God. However, Job proved faithful and did not turn away from God. Instead, Job humbly worshiped God and kept trusting him (1:21; 2:10; 13:15). One might say that a hint of horizontal alienation had crept into the relationship between Job and his wife who ridiculed him for his allegiance to God. Yet, while Job corrected her, there is no evidence that Job turned away from her. Neither did God abandon Joshua when Satan accurately accused him of moral and ceremonial defilement. Instead, God redeemed his servant Joshua by justifying the ungodly (Rom 4:5).

If Satan could incite the “man after God’s own heart” (Acts 13:22) to sin, surely God would turn against David. However, in the wake of the judgment of God, David’s sin was forgiven and the episode of David’s unfaithfulness became the vehicle to establish a new place of atonement for God’s people. This event points to a picture of the cross of Christ when God sovereignly used the insane hatred of sinful men to establish the ultimate place of atonement for sinners seeking God’s mercy. Their respective writers exonerated neither David’s sin nor the sins of those who crucified Christ. The sins of morally culpable people remained evil in God’s sight in spite of the outcomes. Nevertheless, God, in his power and wisdom, can override sin for his purposes.

Satan’s leash is short. When turning attention to the NT, one finds the adversary of God and the believer revealed by a host of names and titles that give full vent to his evil character. He is the “Prince of the power of the air” (Eph 2:2), the destroyer (Rev 9:11), the dragon and serpent (Rev 12:9), and the ruler of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Eph 5:19; 1 John 5:19). Green writes of Satan, “Rebel that he is, it is not surprising to find Satan called the Antichrist, the embodiment of opposition to our Lord.”<sup>58</sup>

---

<sup>58</sup>Michael Green, *I Believe in Satan’s Downfall* (London: Hodder and Stouton, 1986), 49.



### Satan Revealed in the New Testament

It is not clear when biblical writers adopted the proper name Satan.<sup>59</sup>

Embryonic ideas from the OT came to “full flower in the apocalyptic literature of Judaism from the middle of the second century BC, generally without compromising monotheism. The NT writers drew upon these ideas for their various references to spiritual powers in the heavenlies who stood behind human activity and institutions.”<sup>60</sup>

By the time one comes to the NT, Satan becomes a proper name and is revealed as a powerful spiritual being, ruling over other spiritual beings (e.g., “demons”) in opposition to God and his people. The characteristics already seen of Satan in the OT continue into the NT with a significant change. Satan is revealed in the context of Christ’s victory over sin, death and the grave.

Although Satan is the predominant name used by the NT writers, he is also known as the “devil,” “Beelzebul” (or the “prince of demons”), “the evil one,” “the tempter,” “the deceiver,” “the accuser of the brethren,” “a murderer and the father of lies,” “Belial,” sinner and an “angel of light.”<sup>61</sup>

The many NT references to Satan will not be addressed here. Instead, five significant passages reveal an aspect of Satan’s character, his defeat and the believer’s ability to stand against his assaults.

Although the NT gives a more fully developed picture of Satan, his goal remains the same: to separate and alienate people from God and one another. In fact,

<sup>59</sup>The change from the small case “s” to the capital “S” reflects NT usage as a proper name.

<sup>60</sup>T. Desmond Alexander and Brian S. Rosner, eds., *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 801.

<sup>61</sup>The following names for Satan illustrate the variety: Matt 4:10 (Satan: 33 times); Luke 4:2 (the devil: 33 times); Mark 3:22 (Beelzebul or Beelzebub (AV): 3 times); Matt 13:19 (the evil one: 10 times); Matt 4:3 (the tempter: 2 times); 2 John 1:7 (the deceiver: 1 time); Rev 12:10 (the accuser of our brothers: 1 time); John 8:44 (murderer and father of lies: 1 time); 1 Pet 5:8 (the adversary: 1 time) and 2 Cor 6:15 (Belial: 1 time); 1 John 3:8 (sinner: 1 time); 2 Cor 11:14 (angel of light: 1 time).

Paul uses the words of separation to describe the reality of every person not in union with Christ: “remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world” (Eph 2:12). Those alienated from God belong to Satan (vv. 1-3). The alienation is intensive and comprehensive; every part of a person’s being is affected by alienation from God. It is the “natural man’s” condition.<sup>62</sup> Paul describes the effects of this condition to be “darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity” (4:18-19).

However, there is comfort and hope to stabilize the heart of all believers who face the evil tactics used against them:

If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died – more than that, who was raised – who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (Rom 8:31-37)

### **Jesus Overcomes the Strong Man**

Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem because “the days were approaching for his ascension” (Luke 9:51). At an undetermined point in this momentous journey, Jesus met a demon-possessed man incapable of speaking (11:14).<sup>63</sup> Jesus powerfully and graciously delivered the man of the demon that caused him to be mute. This deliverance sparked an angry response by some in the crowd, which charged that Jesus performed this miracle

---

<sup>62</sup>See 1 Cor 2:14; Jude 19.

<sup>63</sup>See Matt 12:22-32; Mark 3:22-30.

by the power of Beelzebul, or the prince of demons (v. 15). The cynicism did not go unchallenged by Jesus who took the opportunity to teach his audience that it was illogical for Satan to cast out Satan. What sort of being, spiritual or human, would work against his own interests? To act against himself would mean the collapse of Satan's kingdom (v. 18). Jesus then asked rhetorically, if the followers of these complainers were casting out devils, by what power did they perform the miracle (v. 19)?<sup>64</sup> In their silence, Jesus challenged them with the only real alternative to the miracle: the "finger of God" was at work among them (v. 20a). In other words, the miracle proved the presence of the kingdom of God (v. 20b).

Sidney Page notes that the meaning of the term Beelzebul is uncertain. He cites three explanations for the name: "(1) . . . an insulting term meaning 'lord of dung,' (2) . . . from an Aramaic expression meaning 'enemy' or 'adversary,' and (3) . . . 'lord of the dwelling.'"<sup>65</sup> Geldenhuys takes the name to mean "lord of the house," *zebul* meaning a 'residence' or earthly temple.<sup>66</sup> Page picks up Geldenhuys' idea seeing in the name a pun made by Jesus that a household divided against itself cannot stand. "Corroboration for this reference," he writes "may be found in the reference to Beelzebul as 'head of the house' (*oikodespotes*) in Matthew 10:25"<sup>67</sup> Marshall's view is best: although the English form (Beelzebub) comes from the Latin, the origin of the name is "unimportant for the

---

<sup>64</sup>Sidney Page, *Powers of Evil: A Biblical Study of Satan and Demons* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 104. Page notes that Jesus' argument "does not depend on the assumption that his exorcisms were indistinguishable from those of other Jewish exorcists; it simply assumes that there were Jews who performed exorcisms with the approval of the same religious leaders who were now criticizing him. Indeed, in what follows, Jesus appears to stress the uniqueness of his exorcisms."

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, 100.

<sup>66</sup>Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 332. Geldenhuys also notes that the original sense, "lord of the high place" was used for a Canaanite deity in the *Ras Shamra* tablets (c. 1400 BC), and used in a play on words for "lord of the flies" in 2 Kgs 1:2ff.

<sup>67</sup>Page, *Powers*, 101.

meaning of the text.”<sup>68</sup> What is important is that Jesus makes clear in verse 18 that Beelzebul and Satan are one in the same. All the possible derivatives of the name simply point to the malicious nature of Satan.

Luke significantly edits his version of the parable so that he might draw out the military motif of spiritual warfare. Compared to Mark and Matthew, Luke emphasizes the intensity of the battle by magnifying the power of Christ over Satan. Luke’s strong man (Satan) is like a well-armed lord of a castle. The stronger man (Christ) conquers the strong man: “When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed. But when someone stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied and distributes his plunder” (vv. 21-22). Matthew and Mark agree that the stronger man binds the strong man and then carries off the property of the strong man (see Matt 12:29; Mark 3:27). However, in Luke, Christ strips the well-armed ruler of his armor and goods, which become the spoils of victory.<sup>69</sup> The battlefield imagery of Luke corresponds well with Paul’s military imagery used to instruct believers to “put on the full armor of God” (Eph 6:11). The Christian life is set in the context of warfare in a hostile world. It will take “weapons . . . [that] are not carnal but mighty through God” (2 Cor 10:4) to live the life Christ calls his people to live.

When did Jesus “bind the strong man”? Was there a particular time in Jesus’ mind? Does the parable point forward to the cross where Christ “disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them” (Col 2:15)? Does the parable point back to the temptation in the wilderness when Jesus overcame Satan’s temptations? Alternatively, does the parable refer to the entirety of Jesus’ ministry in

---

<sup>68</sup>I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 473.

<sup>69</sup>John Nolland, *Luke 9:21-18:34*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 35B (Dallas: Word, 1993), 636.

which his power over demons constituted the occasion of Satan's defeat in various exorcisms? Or, does it have something to do with Luke's comment in 10:18 that Jesus saw Satan fall from heaven?

It might be best to say that from birth to his ascension, Jesus brought about the defeat of Satan. It would also be right to add special weight to the wilderness defeat of Satan. After all, that scene forecast the ultimate end of Satan. Everything about Jesus Christ defeated everything about Satan. With the revelation of Christ in the gospels, Satan's defeat is progressively revealed. The first coming of Jesus Christ established the beach head of his kingdom. With each successive advance of the kingdom of Christ, Satan's kingdom was actually being defeated on another front. There is to be no question in the mind of the readers of the NT that Satan was defeated, was being defeated and will finally be defeated (Rev 20:2). Page writes, "That Luke 10:18 and Revelation 12:9 are referring to the same event is surely correct; however, there is good reason to think that Revelation 12 is describing what happened at the first advent of Christ."<sup>70</sup> Therefore, whether Jesus' parable of the strong man points back to the defeat of Satan in the wilderness or forward to the cross, resurrection and ascension, or refers in some way to Christ's entire ministry, "the parable of the strong man definitely implies that, during his earthly ministry, Jesus vanquished Satan."<sup>71</sup>

This approach is not meant to minimize the decisive victory of Christ over Satan in the wilderness. The significance of that event showed Jesus successfully standing in the place of the failures of Adam and Israel. Jesus stood against the enticements, lies, and temptations rendering Satan forever "unable to prevent Jesus from

---

<sup>70</sup>Page, *Powers*, 110.

<sup>71</sup>*Ibid.*, 107.

liberating those who are in bondage to him and his minions.”<sup>72</sup> With great encouragement Page writes,

If Satan had been able to deflect Jesus from his messianic task in the desert, Satan would have been free to continue to exercise his tyranny over humankind. Satan’s defeat in the desert means that, even though he remains active, he cannot stop Jesus from beginning the blessings of the kingdom to those formerly under Satan’s power. It is not surprising then that the demons characteristically display fear when confronted by Jesus, for they know that Jesus has already worsted their master.<sup>73</sup>

The importance of the “Beelzebul controversy” is that it helps believers to trust the power of God in Christ’s victory. The image of the “finger of God” comes from Exodus 8:19, which is the testimony of Pharaoh’s magicians who could not resist or overcome God’s power. God intervened to make his presence felt in Egypt. Now Jesus claims to be the new Moses delivering God’s people from slavery to Satan and sin. Nolland writes, “Jesus is claiming that his exorcizing activity is nothing less than an aspect of the arrival of this hoped for kingdom of God. The hope of the future has now become present.”<sup>74</sup> With the ease of a flex of his finger, God through Christ overcame the well-armed lord of the castle.

Luke’s battlefield motif accords especially well with Paul’s two prayer requests for the Ephesians: that they would know “what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe” (1:19) and that “God would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man” (3:16). Christ received all power (Matt 28:18) and demonstrated that power in his ministry of deliverance. He continues to wield that power today in the life of his followers through the agency of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8).

---

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., 108.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Nolland, *Luke*, 643.

Christians learn something else that points to their need of spiritual armor. Although Satan is defeated, he still works in the world influencing people, institutions and cultures to oppose God. His agents, demons and devils are his means of implementing goals to harm, to alienate and to separate. Identifying Satan as the prince of demons reveals his leadership over them. The league of wicked spirits with Satan reveals a sinister coordinated attack, “rather than haphazard occurrences.”<sup>75</sup> Jesus’ encounters with demons were the same thing as an encounter with Satan himself. Even though Satan was not explicitly mentioned, Jesus defeated his agents and with each defeat the prince of demons lost another piece of his kingdom.

The OT picture of Satan “on a leash” continues into the NT: defeat is not yet final, just delayed. For the time being, Satan and the fallen angels have been given “sufficient freedom to carry on their evil activities.”<sup>76</sup> Satan’s work can still be carried out in the world, employing temptation, deception, inflicting disease and opposing the spiritual progress of godliness in God’s people.<sup>77</sup>

Satan possesses the ability to influence all sorts of earthly entities including people and institutions.<sup>78</sup> C. E. Arnold writes that Satan and the powers of evil have ability to influence the world system and its many institutions by influencing the people in that system. “The structures of our existence,” he writes “represent the composite result of human ideas, affections and activity. Both people and their ideas can have an evil bent.”<sup>79</sup> Quoting from the *Ascension of Isaiah* 2:2-5, Arnold makes the case that “the

---

<sup>75</sup>Page, *Powers*, 103.

<sup>76</sup>Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993), 447. Rev 12:12 says, “Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!”

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., 449.

<sup>78</sup>In the case of the garden, he used a snake.

<sup>79</sup>C. E. Arnold, *Powers of Darkness: Principalities and Powers in Paul’s Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 203.

powers of darkness are viewed as independent agents who worked directly on the leader of a country to create a regime of terror and evil.”<sup>80</sup>

Therefore, Luke presents his reader with the most important question to be answered: on whose side will one be found? Neutrality between Christ and Satan is impossible. Geldenhuys notes that every person will be “inhabited or controlled either by the Spirit of God or by the powers of darkness. God be thanked that Jesus has broken the powers of Satan, so that those who look to Him in faith are liberated from the influences of darkness.”<sup>81</sup>

In the light of Christ’s victory and the limited freedom of Satan to wage war against believers, how are Christians to live? Three passages from the NT indicate how believers fight a spiritual enemy. These three passages set the stage for the ultimate instruction from Ephesians.

### **Preliminary Instructions for the Fight**

Before the Ephesian text, three NT writers sprinkle instructions about spiritual warfare in the body of their letters. Like salt, the mention of spiritual warfare in the context of Christian living, enlivens awareness to the tension of living in a hostile world. Each of the authors holds the view that living faithfully to God in a fallen world is the spiritual contest to be won.

**Rules for engagement.** Paul mentions two rules of engagement in his letter to the troubled and proud Corinthian church. The first way to engage the enemy is by extending forgiveness to the repentant believer. The church had already experienced the effects of its pride in separation and alienation among the membership. Paul encouraged the church that “we are not ignorant of Satan’s designs” against the church (2 Cor 2:11).

---

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., 202.

<sup>81</sup>Geldenhuys, *Luke*, 331.



Unfortunately, it seems they were being outwitted by Satan. The specific design of Satan meant to prevent the church from extending forgiveness to a repentant man. The man in question had caused pain for Paul and the church which necessitated church discipline. The discipline was meant to be redemptive and seems to have given birth to good fruit (vv. 6-7). Paul had forgiven the man and asked the church to follow his example (v. 10).

The instruction to forgive and restore the man was also the means to prevent Satan from swallowing the man in remorse (vv. 6-7). To withhold forgiveness when the man repented would play right into Satan's hand. Satan had already gained one victory by inciting the man to sin. Paul pleads with the church to shut the door on further Satanic victories by forgiving the man thus resisting the fleshly tendency to seek vengeance. The way of the world is to allow vindictiveness to rise in the heart and give vent to revenge, Satan's natural realm.<sup>82</sup> Revenge ruins God's work of reconciliation, cause discord in the church and further separate the man from fellowship. The church must balance firm discipline with compassion.<sup>83</sup>

The church must insist on reconciliation as an absolute necessity, not giving in to the strategy of Satan. Because the church is engaged in this cosmic battle between God and Satan (not in any dualistic sense), God demonstrates through the church to the powers of the air the many ways they have been defeated through the reconciliation of the cross. "To ignore this responsibility," writes Murray Harris, "leaves the church vulnerable to further attacks, leading to spiritual decay and maybe even 'death' in the sense of having our 'candlestick removed' from among the fellowship of Christ-exalting churches."<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, it did not matter to Satan how he might gain the advantage. On this passage Charles Hodge commented,

---

<sup>82</sup>David E. Garland, *2 Corinthians*, New American Commentary, vol. 29 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 131.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid.

<sup>84</sup>Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*,

It was a gain to Satan if either an individual soul could be driven to despair, or the peace of the church could be disturbed. Both of these evils were to be apprehended if discipline were carried too far. This dread of Satan was not chimerical or unreasonable, for he really does seek to turn every thing to the disadvantage of Christ and his kingdom.<sup>85</sup>

Even when God is at work purifying his church, believers need to be discerning because, as Garland warns, “a situation that requires forgiveness is the time when Satan can work his worst and is most dangerous. Satan fans the flames of hurt into an inferno of hostility.”<sup>86</sup>

The second rule of engagement is to rely on the “power of God” rather than to rely on human strength or wisdom (2 Cor 10:4). With his apostolic authority under attack by detractors who measured his effectiveness and gospel by worldly standards, Paul forcefully defended himself (vv. 1-2). They said Paul was timid, but Paul referred to himself as meek; these two qualities were not to be confused. Paul did not deny his weaknesses but there is a difference between being in the world and using worldly techniques in order to conduct gospel ministry (vv. 3-4).

Paul explained in other places the nature of these divinely empowered weapons. They are the weapons of God’s righteousness working through him (2 Cor 6:7); the truth of the gospel revealed in the cross (1 Cor 1:18, 23-24; 2:5; 2 Cor 6:7; Rom 1:16); the knowledge of God (2 Cor 2:14; 4:6); prayer, divine wisdom and holy conduct.<sup>87</sup> God uses weak people armed with these weapons to bring down God-denying arguments, and to take every thought captive to Christ.

---

New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 233.

<sup>85</sup>Charles Hodge, *Commentary of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), 41.

<sup>86</sup>Garland, *2 Corinthians*, 132.

<sup>87</sup>These weapons will be seen again in Paul’s letter to the Ephesians.

Paul reminded his readers that the aim of these weapons was to destroy spurious and false arguments, not the people who held them. Garland writes, “All too often, people, rather than their wrongheaded opinions become the object of any attack.”<sup>88</sup> Believers are to pummel the idea and pursue the person!<sup>89</sup>

**Nearness to God.** Resistance to Satan and his attacks are futile apart from submission to God. James’ command to “submit to God and to resist the devil” (4:7) comes with the promise that Satan will flee from the believer. The third rule of engagement is a total commitment to God expressed in humility, the pursuit of holiness and a close communion with God. God responds to the humble person by giving more grace for living in a hostile world.<sup>90</sup>

What does James mean by nearness to God? Douglas Moo rightly identifies that drawing near to God includes one’s personal recognition of spiritual poverty, acknowledgment of one’s desperate need for God’s help and submission and obedience to God’s commands.<sup>91</sup> In addition, drawing near to God means separating from worldliness. Worldliness results in distance from God; God’s enemies keep their distance, not so his people. In these practices the spiritual weapons of divine power are found to resist the “suprapersonal forces of evil” which stand behind the evil impulses in the world.<sup>92</sup>

---

<sup>88</sup>Garland, *2 Corinthians*, 438.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid.

<sup>90</sup>Peter H. Davids, *The Epistle of James: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 166.

<sup>91</sup>Douglas Moo, *The Letter of James*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 192.

<sup>92</sup>Davids, *James*, 166.

From James' text, one learns that because of the victory of Christ, Christians can resist Satan. God's power is available to the humble to resist the powers that oppose God. By resisting the devil, a believer imitates God who resists the proud (Jas 4:6). Failing to resist the devil is to act like a double-minded person.<sup>93</sup>

**The duty of watchfulness.** Peter says that the Christian's "adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (1 Pet 5:8). Like James, Peter instructs firm and faithful resistance with patience "knowing the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world" (v. 9). As the fourth weapon in the believer's arsenal, Christians are to be watchful.

Peter portrays Satan as a prowling and roaring lion. This characteristic of Satan is the basis of Peter's urgent appeal to alertness. The image points to a fierce, determined, and hungry intent to seize on the prey.<sup>94</sup> This is not to say that Satan does not also come as an "angel of light" (2 Cor 11:14). "Smiling is as easy for the devil as roaring – and he is adept at both, and whichever he is doing, he is bent on evil."<sup>95</sup> There is an edgy sense of restless activity in Satan's search for victims. The present active participle expresses the impatient persistence of Satan's search. "Satan's aim," says E. Edmond Hiebert, "is not merely to harass and injure; his true desire is to kill his victims by destroying their faith. Whatever human agents Satan may employ, Peter recognizes him as the real instigator."<sup>96</sup> The roar of the lion is meant to induce fear in Christians so that they will lay down their weapons in the face of persecution or suffering. Separate a

---

<sup>93</sup>Ralph P. Martin, *James*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 48 (Dallas: Word, 1988), 153.

<sup>94</sup>D. Edmond Hiebert, *First Peter: An Expository Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1984), 296.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid. Hiebert quotes Nathaneal Williams.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid.

Christian from his chief weapon, namely simple faith in God's tender care and protection, and the devil wins the battle.

Using another military metaphor, Peter calls for a resistance movement warning: be alert, stay awake because God cares about the believer's struggles in this world. Clear-headedness is needed in this battle for faith. Sober-mindedness means freedom from the confusion of passions, a necessary quality for every soldier on his watch. The condition for victory is a firm and steadfast faith; "the inner attitude of granite-like unyielding faith."<sup>97</sup> Christians are told to flee many things: sexual immorality (1 Cor 6:18), idolatry (10:14), the desire for wealth (1 Tim 6:11), and youthful passions (2 Tim 2:22), but never to flee the devil. The trusting believer will witness the fleeing of Satan. Incentive for continued trust and resistance comes in knowing that other Christians also suffer the same assaults and have done so successfully in God's power. Passivity is not the way to victory for the Christian. Thomas Schreiner writes, "Resistance, then, is not passive but represents active engagement against a foe. Believers will not triumph over the devil if they remain passive."<sup>98</sup>

### **The Believer's Need for the Armor of God in Ephesians 6:10-20**

Paul's objective in the letter to the Ephesians is to encourage the believers to walk worthy of their new life in Christ, to walk wisely (5:15), and not in their former manner as Gentiles (4:17). Believers are to do this by exchanging the old self for the new self created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness (4:22, 24). Since the first chapter of the letter, Paul was describing how all that is possible.<sup>99</sup>

---

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., 297.

<sup>98</sup>Thomas Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, New American Commentary, vol. 37 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003), 242.

<sup>99</sup>Regarding the debate of Paul's authorship of the letter to the Ephesian church, the differences seen in this letter, when compared to the "generally accepted Pauline letters has caused many scholars . . . to conclude that the epistle was not written by the apostle Paul." (Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter*

In what manner should this exchange of life be accomplished? The verses on spiritual warfare are the “crucial element to which the rest of the epistle has been pointing.”<sup>100</sup> Paul writes so that his audience will live in their community with a cosmological perspective. Peter O’Brien comments, “The moral issues with which he deals are not simply matters of personal preference, as many within our contemporary and postmodern world contend. On the contrary, they are essential elements in a larger struggle between the forces of good and evil.”<sup>101</sup> The believer must dress for battle in the armor God provides.

### **Paul and the Church at Ephesus**

Ephesus was known as a “chief city of Asia Minor.”<sup>102</sup> At the time of Paul’s ministry there, Ephesus was “the greatest commercial center in Asia this side of the Taurus River.”<sup>103</sup> Economically, the port city of Ephesus became a prosperous commercial center controlling the financial affairs of western Asia Minor.<sup>104</sup> Politically, the city of Ephesus was the seat of a Roman senatorial province.<sup>105</sup> Geographically, the city was accessible from the Aegean, “situated at the junction of two major highways leading to the interior – the Royal Road, which led across Mt. Tmolus from Sardis, and a

---

*to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999], 46). Clearly, Paul was a man with vast intellectual capacities. Those who disagree with the position of Paul’s authorship have the burden of proof to point out that Paul was incapable of varying his writing style and ability at diverse ways of self-expression for different readers (see Arnold, *Dictionary*, 243).

<sup>100</sup>Peter R. O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 457.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid.

<sup>102</sup>Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians: Power and Magic: The Concept of Power in Ephesians in Light of its Historical Setting* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 13.

<sup>103</sup>Clinton E. Arnold, “Ephesus,” in *The Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 249.

<sup>104</sup>Ibid.

<sup>105</sup>Arnold, *Ephesians*, 13.

second route with an easy pass leading through the Maeander valley and to the Southern Highway.”<sup>106</sup> The cities of Colossae, Laodicea and Hierapolis were dependent upon this port city for commerce and communication.<sup>107</sup>

Paul’s first visit to Ephesus (Acts 18:18-21) was brief. Paul preached in the local synagogue and “reasoned with the Jews” (v. 19). Although invited to stay, he continued his journey to Galatia and Phrygia in order to strengthen the believers in those regions (vv. 22-23). However, Paul’s second visit (Acts 19:1-41) in the autumn of AD 53 to the spring of AD 56 caused a riot to break out in the city’s theatre.<sup>108</sup> Paul’s preaching of the gospel was so powerful and effective that many followers of the goddess Artemis and those who practiced magic arts turned to Christ. Because of their conversion, they burned the paraphernalia of their former religious devotion (vv. 11-20). The amount of money this burning represented was about 50,000 days’ wages.<sup>109</sup>

Paul’s preaching was bad for the business of those tradesmen who manufactured and sold silver images of Artemis. When the silversmiths began losing their profits, Demetrius, a leader of the local silversmiths’ trade union, incited a mob to oppose Paul’s teaching (vv. 23-41). Luke says this gathering caused “no little disturbance concerning the Way” (v. 23). Luke also says that the underlying objection was not religious, but economic. The outrage that “the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be counted as nothing” (v. 27) and the cries of the crowd “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians” (v. 28) did not mask the real cause of opposition: “from this business [i.e.,

---

<sup>106</sup>Ibid.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid.

<sup>108</sup>Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 90.

<sup>109</sup>Arnold, *Ephesians*, 15. Luke records the amount as “fifty thousand pieces of silver” (Acts 19:19).

idol making] we have our wealth” (v. 25). When things quieted down, Paul left Ephesus for Macedonia (20:1).<sup>110</sup>

### **The Spiritual Darkness of Ephesus**

The religious climate of Ephesus provides a backdrop for understanding the Christian’s call to spiritual warfare. While many contend there is no specific occasion for the writing of this letter, Clinton Arnold argues persuasively that Paul’s purpose for the letter was to encourage the believers to grow in their imitation of Christ in the middle of a hostile spiritual atmosphere. Quoting Metzger, Arnold writes, “Of all ancient Graeco-Roman cities, Ephesus, the third largest city in the Empire, was by far the most hospitable to magicians, sorcerers, and charlatans of all sorts . . . [it] swarmed with soothsayers and purveyors of charms.”<sup>111</sup> Luke’s record of the book burning (Acts 19:19), reveals that renouncing the practice of magic was a serious decision for those who participated. Fear of the demonic realm was woven into daily life of Ephesus. Arnold writes,

[The Ephesians were cognizant] of a spirit world exercising influence over virtually every aspect of life. The goal of the magician was to discern the helpful spirits from the harmful ones and learn the distinct operations and the relative strengths and authority of the spirits. Through this knowledge, means could be constructed (with spoken or written formulas, amulets, etc.) for the manipulation of the spirits in the interest of the individual person. With the proper formula, a spirit-induced sickness could be cured, a chariot race could be won, sexual passions could be enhanced, etc. Conversely, great harm could be brought to another person through the utterance of a curse.<sup>112</sup>

Not only was Ephesus hospitable to multiplied magical arts, it was the home of the temple of Artemis (or her Roman name Diana), one of the seven wonders of the

---

<sup>110</sup>That was not the last time Paul had contact with some of the Ephesians. While in Miletus (Acts 20:15), Paul met with the Ephesian elders to give them encouragement in their service to the church (vv. 17-38).

<sup>111</sup>Arnold, *Ephesians*, 14.

<sup>112</sup>*Ibid.*, 18.



ancient world.<sup>113</sup> The Ephesians were positively missions-minded about spreading the worship of Artemis beyond the borders of the city. Adherents to the cult were added through the annual Artemisia, “a monthly festival held in the month of Artemision in honor of Artemis.”<sup>114</sup> As a result, Artemis was worshiped in Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis.<sup>115</sup>

Adherence to Artemis was strengthened when her temple also served as a powerful banking and financial center.<sup>116</sup> Arnold concludes, “So through economic means the religion of Artemis became an indispensable pillar in the cultural structures and life of Asia, and was therefore a crucial factor in the lives of all individuals whom Christianity hoped to convert.”<sup>117</sup>

What sort of obstacles to the gospel did Artemis and her devotees pose? The Ephesians claimed that Artemis fell directly from heaven (Acts 19:35). Artemis was known as Savior (*soteira*), Lord (*kuria*), and Queen of the Cosmos (*basileis kosmou*).<sup>118</sup> Her cosmic power was superior to the power of the astrological fates. Her followers prayed to her asking for help by her power. For example, the followers of Artemis might invoke her assistance by saying,

O Great Artemis of the Ephesians, help! Display your power (*dunamin*) upon this young man who has died. For all the Ephesians know, both men and women, that all things (*ta panta*) governed by you, and that great powers (*dunameis megalai*) through you. Give now to your servant what you are able to do in this regard. Raise up your servant Domnos.<sup>119</sup>

---

<sup>113</sup>Arnold, “Ephesus,” 249.

<sup>114</sup>Arnold, *Ephesians*, 20.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid.

<sup>116</sup>Ibid.

<sup>117</sup>Ibid., 21.

<sup>118</sup>Ibid.

<sup>119</sup>Ibid., 22.

Artemis' supremacy reached over the world of all magical and occult arts, and of their many spirits. As supremely powerful, Artemis could exercise her power for the benefit of the devotee in the face of other opposing powers and spirits. She also played an important role as a goddess of the underworld demonstrating power, authority, and control over the demons of the dead.<sup>120</sup>

The Ephesian religious climate influenced the political, economic and social structures of the city. This powerful spiritual influence would have shaped the hearts, minds and lives of the citizenry. Paul's desire to preach in Ephesus must surely have been strategic for its geographic benefits but dangerous for its spiritual obstacles. God's power would be necessary to establish a church there, which is clearly the way Luke tells the story of the birth of the Ephesian church. The prominent use of the words for power and authority throughout the Ephesian letter make sense in the light of the life-setting of a city dominated by "cosmic powers of spiritual darkness" and "spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places" (Eph 6:12). Converts to Christ from the pagan practices of magic and devotion to the goddess would come into the church with many questions about Christ's power and Artemis' power. If they were to live like Christians, replacing the old person of the flesh for the new person made in the image of Christ, by what power would they succeed? The new converts would want assurances that the power of Christ was great enough to protect them from the power of Artemis. Perhaps some in the church would still secretly practice their magical arts, because they had not come to rest in God's power.

Therefore, Paul writes to convince them that God demonstrated his power in Christ "when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above

---

<sup>120</sup>Ibid., 22-26.

every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come” (Eph 1:20-21).

The solution for the Ephesian church was to learn more about their new life in Christ. They had been “made alive with” Christ, raised up and seated with him in the heavenly places in order to demonstrate God’s rich kindness (2:5-7). Paul’s letter clearly showed that the believers in the church at Ephesus were “not as aware as they should be of some of the dimensions of their Christian identity.”<sup>121</sup> They had more to learn about their identity in Christ and much to apply regarding their new life in Christ.

### **The Armor of God**

It is likely that Paul wrote the letter from his imprisonment at Rome in AD 61-62.<sup>122</sup> He wrote to a group of churches in Asia Minor that needed help in their spiritual growth.<sup>123</sup> They needed to hear from Paul in order to “develop a Christian perspective on the ‘powers’ and encouragement in their ongoing struggles with these pernicious spirit-forces.”<sup>124</sup> Living in a pagan culture steeped in the practice of magical arts and the ever-present cult of Artemis touching nearly every facet of daily life, the Christians needed a strong dose of faith in God’s superior power and the supremacy of Christ over all things. For their spiritual success, the believers needed to know how to access God’s power and to rest in their union with Christ, their resurrected and exalted Savior and Lord. They had

---

<sup>121</sup>Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 42 (Dallas: Word, 1990), lxxv.

<sup>122</sup>O’Brien, *Ephesians*, 57. Arnold seems to favor the Caesarea imprisonment but mentions Bruce, Barth and Robinson favoring Paul’s first Roman imprisonment.

<sup>123</sup>O’Brien writes, “If the letter were for Ephesus (alone), we would have expected more of the warmth evidenced in Philippians than the general tone it has. We conclude that Ephesians was a general epistle sent to mainly Gentile believers in southwestern Asia Minor, and that it was linked with Ephesus at an early stage, perhaps because of its being a strategic church or because it was one of the several cities to which the letter was sent” (ibid., 86-87).

<sup>124</sup>Arnold, *Ephesians*, 167.

to be persuaded to believe that they had no reason to fear the spiritual forces of this present darkness because they were indwelt by the Spirit of the Living God. In order to receive God's strength they must exercise faith (1:19; 3:17; 6:16). Furthermore, with their new perspective on the "powers" of the "prince of the authority of the air," they must resist and stand firm in their faith. The power of God will not only cause them to stand firm, it will cause them to stand out from the darkness of the world by loving one another in the power of God and imitating Christ as their model.<sup>125</sup>

Standing firm and standing out cannot be accomplished in a believer's own strength. Believers are instructed to "put on the new self created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness" (Eph 4:24). From this point on Paul gives practical instructions about the characteristics of the new nature. The new nature does not lie, but speaks the truth; may be angry but does not sin; does not steal but works hard; does not speak corruptly but speaks with wholesome words of grace; renounces bitterness, malice, anger; embraces kindness, tenderness and forgiveness. The new nature united with Christ transforms the community life of the church, the married life of husband and wife, the family life of parents and children, even the work life of owners and slaves (or more contemporaneously, employers and employees), into an imperfect reflection of heaven.

How are believers to walk worthy of this new life? The answer is by putting on the armor of God. The believer must appropriate God's own armor for the battle in order to be empowered to walk in newness of life in Christ (Eph 6:10, 11). The image of the Lord as divine warrior comes from the prophet Isaiah (11:4-5; 49:2; 52:7; 59:17). The genitive *tou theou* (Eph 6:11) should be taken as a genitive of possession indicating that the armor is God's and that believers are called upon to put on God's own armour.<sup>126</sup>

---

<sup>125</sup>Ibid., 170.

<sup>126</sup>Thomas R. Yoder Neufeld, *Put on the Armour of God: The Divine Warrior from Isaiah to Ephesians* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 118.

Isaiah pictures God as preparing himself for war and coming to the defense of his people (59:17-18).<sup>127</sup> God is dressed for war. J. Alec Motyer writes,

Clothing is always a metaphor for character, commitment and enduement for the task. Righteousness, salvation, vengeance and zeal are all aspects of the divine nature. When the Lord dons this clothing he is publicly revealing what he is. But he is also declaring what he intends to do and that he is able to do it. It is a work which will display and satisfy his righteousness, save his people, repay his foes and be carried through to completion by the driving motivation of divine zeal.<sup>128</sup>

Is God's armor strong enough to live the Christian life in a worthy manner when surrounded by foes in enemy territory? John Oswalt answers, "God is fully clothed as a warrior with helmet, coat of mail, tunic and cloak. It is interesting that no offensive weapons are mentioned, not bow, spear, or sword. Why these should be omitted is not apparent. Perhaps Delitzsch is correct when he says that all that was needed to wreak God's vengeance on his enemies and work salvation for his people was his mighty arm."<sup>129</sup>

Paul told the community that he had prayed for them to gain knowledge of God's power in order to live the Christian life (Eph 1:16; 3:14-19). Not only should they pray for the power of God but they should also take the initiative to put on God's power in Christ. Living the Christian life faithfully means entering into the spiritual battle. However, Christians do not enter the battlefield alone, unarmed, or in their own strength. Believers fight in God's strength, and in God's own armor, worn by God and his Messiah. God's armor is essential for a successful campaign waged over the believer's lifetime.<sup>130</sup>

---

<sup>127</sup>See also Ps 18.

<sup>128</sup>J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1993), 491.

<sup>129</sup>John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 529.

<sup>130</sup>O'Brien, *Ephesians*, 457.

This concluding section covers a general overview of Ephesians 6:10-20 describing the nature of the armor under two headings: (1) Actions to be taken; and (2) Manner of the action to be taken.

### **Actions to be Taken**

Hostile forces are arrayed against the church: “rulers” (*archas*) “powers” (*exousia*) “world rulers” (*kosmokrator tou skoto*) and “spiritual wickedness” (*pneumatikos poneria*) (v. 12). Paul gives no evidence of hierarchy in this list, but piles up the adjectives in order to impress the believer with the overwhelming need for an overwhelming force capable of a successful resistance.

Satan, the devil, the Prince of the power of the air, is in charge of this army of evil. He marshals his wicked forces of spiritual powers with the goal of separating believers from God and from one another. Quoting Bunyan, F. F. Bruce writes that Satan has a “twofold infernal policy: tactics of intimidation and insinuation alternate . . . . He plays the bully and the beguiler. Force and fraud form his chief offensive against the camp of the saints, practiced by turns.”<sup>131</sup> The theatre of battle is the church (Eph 3) and the family (Eph 5, 6). What then should the Christian do in order to repel the attacks of the powers of darkness? Paul gives two types of commands, both in the imperative mood: put on/take up and stand.

**Put on/take up.** The command to “be strong in the Lord” (a passive imperative in v. 10) is followed by the command to “put on the full armor of God” (*endusasthe*, an aorist imperative in v. 11).<sup>132</sup> God himself supplies the needed power for

---

<sup>131</sup>F. F. Bruce and E. K. Simpson, *Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), 144. Bruce and Simpson quote from Bunyan’s *Holy War*.

<sup>132</sup>According to Hoehner, the phrase in v. 11 is a genitive of origin explaining that God provides the armor for the supernatural battle. Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 823.

strength in warfare against an “incalculable variety” of hostile forces.<sup>133</sup> Christians cannot empower themselves. This power is given to the believer by virtue of union with Jesus Christ. The believer’s union with Christ is the single most important relationship necessary for successful spiritual warfare. Sinclair Ferguson writes,

Since by nature we were dead in sin and used to live according to the fashions of this world, gratifying our own lusts (Eph 2:1-3), our new lifestyle in Christ is bound to be on a collision course with the lifestyle of this world . . . . Now that we are united to him we are immediately involved in a conflict which is engaged precisely in the same heavenly realms (Eph 6:12). Our daily lives involve the skirmishes of the eschatological war of the end times. For this reason we need to wear all the armor of God, so that “when the evil day comes” we may remain standing.<sup>134</sup>

“Putting on” the armor is equivalent to Paul’s statement that Christians are to “put on the new self” (4:24) or to “put on the Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom 13:14). This action is the believer’s responsibility. God has the power; Christians are to receive it. Hoehner believes Paul uses this word to underscore the urgency of the need (4:24; 6:11, 14).<sup>135</sup>

Likewise Christians are to “take up” (*dechasthe*) or “to receive” the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit (v. 17). Another aorist middle imperative is used for this instruction. Christians are to “grab” the helmet and sword when they see an approaching enemy. The genitive here is probably a genitive of apposition meaning “grab the helmet which is salvation.”<sup>136</sup> Once again, the believer is responsible for these actions.

**Stand.** A parallel imperative is found in verse 14: “stand firm” (*histemi*). The goal of putting on all the armor of God is that the Christian will be able “to stand firm

<sup>133</sup>O’Brien, *Ephesians*, 463.

<sup>134</sup>Sinclair Ferguson, “The Reformed View,” in *Christian Spirituality: Five Views of Sanctification*, ed. Donald L. Alexander, ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 63.

<sup>135</sup>Hoehner, *Ephesians*, 822.

<sup>136</sup>*Ibid.*, 850.

against all the schemes (*methodeias*) of the devil” (v. 11b), who seeks to cause division and disruption in the lives of God’s people.

But how is the believer to do these things? How does the believer put on the armor, grab the helmet and the sword in order to stand firm against the onslaught of Satan, and his forces of evil? How does a believer translate the language of metaphor into action?

### **Manner of the Action to be Taken**

Paul uses six participles in verses 14-16, 18 to explain the manner in which the believer dresses in the armor of God for the battle. The participles used in verses 14 and 15 are aorist middle; in verse 16 aorist active; in verse 18 the first is present middle, the second present active. Hoehner comments that these participles denote an aspect of action issuing from a “causal relationship with the main verb ‘stand.’”<sup>137</sup> “Therefore,” Hoehner comments, “the believers are told not to advance but to hold the ground and not to retreat in the face of wicked spiritual leaders led by the devil.”<sup>138</sup>

**Having put on.** The aorist form of the verb describes an action already taken but more importantly describes the aspect of the action. The armor already put on is the cause of standing firm. In other words “we are commanded to stand because we have put on the armor.”<sup>139</sup>

The “armor” of truth, righteousness, the gospel, and faith come to the believer as the result of being united with Christ. They are part of the riches that belong to everyone in him (Eph 1:18; 3:16). They are the reason for the Christian’s ability to stand

---

<sup>137</sup>Ibid., 834.

<sup>138</sup>Ibid., 837.

<sup>139</sup>Ibid.



firm in the strength of the Lord “holding fast to territory already won by Christ.”<sup>140</sup> Satan and his forces may be strong but they are not omnipotent.<sup>141</sup>

**Praying and being alert.** The believer must not fall prey to another enemy scheme by dropping his or her guard. Paul exhorts believers with present tense verbs to stay alert in prayer at all times and in all ways for all the saints (v. 18). Christians are to keep on praying and keep on watching in prayer as they take up these pieces of armor so as not to allow Satan to gain new territory in the church, in the home, or in the heart.

Prayer is the indispensable practice in spiritual warfare to which a believer must be devoted and persevering. Hoehner writes, “Nuclear wars cannot be won with rifles. Likewise, satanic wars cannot be won by human energy. Thus, Paul warned the saints to constantly pray and remain alert, ready to put on the helmet of salvation and grasp the sword of the Spirit in order to do battle at a moment’s notice.”<sup>142</sup> Prayer in the Spirit is meant to be “inspired, guided and made effective through the Spirit.”<sup>143</sup> To be alert means to renounce spiritual sluggishness or decay or becoming entangled and absorbed in the world as these promote complacency in spiritual things.<sup>144</sup>

### Conclusion

William Gurnall warns that the soul without God’s armor is sure to fail and fall into misery.<sup>145</sup> When asked to define the armor of God, Gurnall wrote, “By armour is

---

<sup>140</sup>Ibid., 836.

<sup>141</sup>Ibid.

<sup>142</sup>Ibid., 859.

<sup>143</sup>Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 452.

<sup>144</sup>Ibid., 453.

<sup>145</sup>William Gurnall, *Christian in Complete Armour* (reprint, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2002), 1:44.

meant Christ.”<sup>146</sup> Union with Christ arms believers to fight the battles against sin and Satan. As Gurnall writes, “A soul out of Christ is naked and destitute of all armour to defend him against sin and Satan.”<sup>147</sup>

This chapter demonstrates the progressive biblical unveiling of Satan. It should encourage believers that Satan is never revealed as an independent contractor loose in God’s universe. Satan is always subordinated to God’s will and all his activities are restrained by God’s power. Furthermore, God graciously revealed Satan at his most hateful and hostile only when Christ stepped on the scene as the God-man who came with authority to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8b). Until that time when Satan’s fate is forever sealed in the Lake of Fire (Rev 20:10), Christians fight confidently in the power of the Spirit.

### **The Defeated “Separator-in-chief”**

Satan is a powerful foe, but believers must never lose sight of his defeat by Christ (Col 2:15). Satan’s main scheme is to draw Christians into sin and by it to separate them from God’s love. Gurnall gives insight into how the devil thinks his schemes will turn out: “If I can, thinks [Satan] get such a one to sin, God will be angry, and when angry he will whip his child soundly; this will be some sport; and when God is correcting the saint, he will be questioning the love of God to him and cool in his love to God.”<sup>148</sup>

Satan tempts, and assaults as a roaring lion; he may woo as an angel of light, but believers must remember that his plans have a single aim: to disrupt the peace of God in the believer’s heart and the unity of the church. Nonetheless, believers must be reminded regularly that regardless of the intensity of assault or the varieties of the fiery

---

<sup>146</sup>Ibid., 1:45.

<sup>147</sup>Ibid.

<sup>148</sup>Ibid., 1:105.

arrows, Satan was defeated by Christ on battlefield after battlefield. Satan's power comes with God's restraints on its use. Satan cannot do all that he wants nor can he do all that he wills.

### **Believers Called to Display New Life in Christ**

Based on Satan's defeat and the new life of Christ in believers, Paul instructs the Ephesians to live up to their new condition and status before God. Because Christians are united to Christ in the new birth, they are no longer to live like they belong to Satan: "Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart" (4:17-18).

The new life in Christ is to be seen in the most important relationships given in society: the marriage, the family, the church and the workplace. But it is precisely in these relationships that Satan seeks to work evil influences. These are the places of potential battlefields where believers are called to express of the life of Christ. It is in these battlefields that Satan wins a beachhead or is handed defeat that glorifies Christ.

### **Displaying the New Life Requires God's Armor**

Therefore, the believer must appropriate God's armor in order to win the battles – battles so strong and sometimes so fierce that the believer may be "subject to decline in their graces."<sup>149</sup> However, since Christ is the believer's armor, victory is certain.

Gurnall explained that his reason for writing *Armour* was the eternal happiness of the reader. "God hath sent me, as Jesse did David, with this little present, to you and

---

<sup>149</sup>Ibid., 1:232.

the rest of my brethren that are in his camp. May it be but to the strengthening of your hearts and hands in fighting the Lord's battles, and I shall bless God that put it into my heart thus to visit you."<sup>150</sup> The balance of these chapters will seek to explain how the family is the best setting for becoming strong in Christ and standing firm in an unloving and hostile world.

---

<sup>150</sup>Ibid., 1:3.

## CHAPTER 3

### HOME: “THE LITTLE CHURCH”

God designed the family to be a rich foundation and source of emotional and spiritual growth, strength and comfort.<sup>1</sup> Christian parents understand and agree on at least two basic principles about the family. First, Christian parents understand and agree that their children are not their property; children do not ultimately belong to the parents but to God who gave them.<sup>2</sup> Second, Christian parents agree that the home is the primary place of nurture in all its variety: physical, emotional, volitional and spiritual. These two principles combine to make the family the most foundational relational unit in society. And as Martyn Lloyd-Jones exclaimed, “What a tremendous thing it is that we should exist and live as individuals! And when we consider the realm of the home and the family it becomes yet more wonderful.”<sup>3</sup>

Third, something has gone terribly wrong in the last half of the twentieth century, especially among Christian families, that has put God’s design under attack. As one observer wrote, “Scant decades ago, most Westerners agreed that lifelong monogamy was ideal, that mothers should stay home with children, that premarital sex was to be discouraged, that heterosexuality was the unquestioned norm and that popular

---

<sup>1</sup>Deut 6:4-6; Ps 78:1-8; Eph 5:22-6:4; cf., 2 Tim 1:5.

<sup>2</sup>For example, see Gen 18:19; Pss 14:15; 127:3; 128:3, 6.

<sup>3</sup>D. M. Lloyd-Jones, *Life in the Spirit: In Marriage, Home and Work: An Exposition of Ephesians 5:18 to 6:9* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1973), 289.

culture should not corrupt children. Today not a single one of these expectations is uncontroversial.”<sup>4</sup> Nor a single one is “uncontested.”

Although it is a tremendous blessing, not to mention a spiritual advantage, to grow up in a Christian home,<sup>5</sup> Christian families are as much the targets of Satan’s schemes as are other families; indeed more so. Therefore, Peter warned: “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Pet 5:8).

However, there seems to be a disconnection between what may be observed of today’s Christian families and the biblical affirmation that “we are not ignorant of Satan’s devices” (2 Cor 2:11b). A number of reports and studies increasingly warn Christian families of cultural and social trends that have potential to harm the spiritual growth of family members. This study asks what stands behind these trends. Is it possible that the “principalities and powers” of the spiritual forces of evil exert influence upon these trends in some way? Therefore, Christian families must take seriously the biblical call to engage in spiritual warfare in order to withstand the attacks of the “powers and principalities.”

The consequences of ignorance are costly. For example, the Barna Research Group has shown that parents’ approaches to disciplining their children determines the level of that child’s vitality of faithful Christian living. The Group cites two common but weak parenting approaches: passivity and a “trial and error method.”<sup>6</sup> The Group defines

---

<sup>4</sup>Rodney Clapp, *Families at the Crossroads: Beyond Traditional and Modern Options* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 10.

<sup>5</sup>Paul certainly thought this case for Timothy: “I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well” (2 Tim 1:5).

<sup>6</sup>The Barna Group, “Research Show Parenting Approach Determines Whether Children Become Devoted Christians” [on-line]; accessed 29 May 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/15-familykids/106-research-shows-parenting-approach-determines-whether-children-become-devoted-christians>; Internet.

the passive parenting approach as taking “the path of least resistance . . . [and doing] whatever comes naturally . . . as influenced by cultural norms and traditions. The objective is to keep everyone [in the home] as happy as possible.”<sup>7</sup> Passive parents shift their responsibility for a child’s spiritual growth to another institution, perhaps to a school or church. The expectation of the passive parent is that the heart transformation of the gospel can be outsourced to “professionals.” This project was designed to contest and to defeat that notion in the families of FBC.

In the home, parents typically focus their efforts on behavior modification rather than heart transformation.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, the “trial and error” believes that “there are no absolute guidelines to follow, and that the best parents can do is to experiment, observe outcomes, and improve based upon their successes and failures in child rearing.”<sup>9</sup>

R. Kent Hughes warns, “Passivity is the enemy to effective parenting. Many parents are good, churchgoing people, loyal employees and successful in business. And yet, they are passive on the home front. Passive parenting is dangerous to our children’s health.”<sup>10</sup> The costly outcome can be heard in the statement of a youth pastor who lamented, “When our students graduate from high school, they also graduate from God.”<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>See Cary Schmidt, “The Pitfalls of Passive Parents” [on-line]; accessed 15 October 2009; available from <http://thebaptistvoice.com/categories/student-ministry/pitfalls-passive-parents>; Internet.

<sup>9</sup>Barna, “Parenting Approach.”

<sup>10</sup>R. Kent Hughes, “Passive Parenting vs. Purposeful Parenting” [on-line]; accessed 23 January 2010; available from [http://www.hkenthughes.com/articles/PASSIVE\\_PARENTING\\_VS\\_PURPOSEFUL\\_PARENTING.pdf](http://www.hkenthughes.com/articles/PASSIVE_PARENTING_VS_PURPOSEFUL_PARENTING.pdf); Internet.

<sup>11</sup>I first heard this statement from the youth pastor serving our church. He heard it in conversation with other youth pastors.

Perhaps a further agreement about spiritual warfare among Christian parents would open the door to a potentially powerful solution. If Christian parents adopted the biblical worldview that believers are opposed by a defeated yet “implacable evil . . . [an] intelligence, a power of concentrated and hateful wickedness,”<sup>12</sup> as Michael Green says, then it must confidently be assumed that God has provided weapons for a successful warfare. This is precisely the encouragement found throughout the Scriptures. As quoted above, 1 Peter 5:8 sets out the truth that the devil is the enemy. To Peter’s insight, Paul offers his understanding of the nature of the fight: “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God” (Eph 6:12). Furthermore, “The weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds” (2 Cor 10:4). As well, James weighs in with great encouragement in a pithy statement: “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (Jas 4:7).

One of the main arguments made in this project is this: Christian families are the first line of defense for instruction, training and equipping for godliness and therefore must be equipped to withstand the spiritual assaults that aspire to hinder that goal. Christian families that invest themselves in family worship as the cornerstone of the disciplines for training in spiritual warfare, benefit by standing strong against the many deceitful schemes of Satan. Therefore, the practical purpose of this project is to encourage the practice of the spiritual discipline of family worship as a means of strengthening Christian families in their allegiance to Christ; to equip families to stand strong against the attacks of Satan and to grow in godliness. It is a basic assumption of

---

<sup>12</sup>Michael Green, *I Believe in Satan’s Downfall* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1981), 30. Col 2:15 says, “[Christ] disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.”



the project that biblical behaviors consistent with growing in Christlikeness will develop in those families that frequently practice this discipline.

### **Implications from Chapter 2**

At this point, an important question must be asked: what connection does Paul's understanding of the "principalities and powers" have to do with the pressures coming upon today's Christian family? Certainly, secular society gives little, if any, credibility to the existence of Satan or evil spirits.<sup>13</sup> Today's culture prefers to reduce Satan to a red-suited nuisance, a cloven-hoofed satyr-like character more at home in mythical stories than day-to-day living. Satan is seriously doubted and terribly underestimated. "The more he can do to encourage this doubt of his existence, the better," writes Michael Green. He goes on, "The more he can blind people's minds to the true state of affairs, the better his aims are furthered. The very doubt of his existence becomes evidence for it."<sup>14</sup>

What of the church? Where does it stand on the matter of Satan's existence and influence in society's institutions? Clinton Arnold refers to a comment by Peter O'Brien, who has become increasingly convinced that the Western view of principalities and powers is the world's exception rather than the rule. O'Brien cites the criticism of Asian students dissatisfied with "some Western commentaries on the Gospels and the Epistles because of the failure to take seriously the accounts about demons, exorcism, or Christ's defeat of them."<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup>Not everyone in our society marches exclusively to the tune secularism. Segments in our society weave all sorts of religious or metaphysical ideas into their lives.

<sup>14</sup>Green, *I Believe*, 17. Satan's scheme of blinding people to his existence is only part of the way he works in the world. He also blinds people to the existence of God and the glory of Christ (2 Cor 4:4). Although there might be much cultural "God-talk," the substance of the talk is ephemeral.

<sup>15</sup>Clinton E. Arnold, *Powers of Darkness: Principalities and Powers in Paul's Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 180.

Rick Langston of the East Asia School of Theology (EAST) in Singapore, responded to O'Brien's comment and related his own view on spiritual warfare.<sup>16</sup>

Langston experienced spiritual warfare first hand.

I was a missionary in the Philippines before coming to Singapore. I was typical of many Western missionaries at that time with a Western worldview and not much working knowledge of spiritual warfare. I was teaching in a school of theology until 1985 when our 14 year old son was a victim of spiritual warfare due to his involvement in some common occult practices. We left the field for a time as a result, while I did my D.Miss. studies.<sup>17</sup>

While working on his doctorate, Langston was “awakened to a more biblical worldview of the spirit world and a working knowledge of spiritual warfare.”<sup>18</sup> When he and his family moved to EAST, he began to teach the subject of spiritual warfare to his students from Korea and China. They asked for his notes to be translated into their languages so that they might teach on the subject because of the need in their countries. His course is now required for graduation. Langston observed that more western missionaries are becoming aware of the need to understand the topic. “But,” he wrote “it seems like many western Bible teachers, especially those without much overseas experience, still seem to embrace a worldview that does not have much of a working knowledge of spiritual warfare.”<sup>19</sup> Langston confirmed O'Brien's comment that the “biblical and Pauline world view did not present a stumbling block to these younger third world scholars.”<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup>The East Asian School of Theology (EAST) is an inter-denominational graduate seminary founded by Campus Crusade (1992). Website available from <http://east.edu.sg/>; Internet.

<sup>17</sup>Rick Langston, email correspondence with author, 16 January 2010.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Arnold, *Powers*, 180.

Clinton concludes that Western culture has a “significant blind spot” in its worldview when it comes to thinking seriously about the influence of evil spirits.<sup>21</sup> What accounts for the “blind spot”? While many factors contribute, the fundamental deficiency seems to be the failure of adopting a biblical worldview because, as apologist Ronald Nash writes, “we must believe something before we can know anything.”<sup>22</sup> A worldview, defined by Nash, is a “conceptual scheme by which we consciously or unconsciously place or fit everything we believe and by which we interpret and judge reality.”<sup>23</sup> Using this definition of worldview reveals the weakness of many of today’s Christian families. If Christians do not share Paul’s conceptual scheme of the principalities and powers in the supernatural realm, they are very likely to become complacent or blind to the influences of those powers upon their families. This blindness reveals inconsistent theological commitments that make the family vulnerable to spiritual attacks.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, complacent families also suffer from a kind of spiritual deafness when it comes to hearing the urgent biblical call to “put on the armor of God” in order to engage in spiritual warfare.

If the existence of this blind spot is accepted, then the remedy must be to find the “right eyeglasses [to] put our world into clearer focus.”<sup>25</sup> The right spectacles are

---

<sup>21</sup>Ibid. Arnold quotes anthropologist Paul Hiebert.

<sup>22</sup>Ronald H. Nash, *Faith and Reason: Searching for a Rational Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 27. Sam Storms offers twelve reasons why “Christians are tragically ignorant of and dangerously ill-prepared for spiritual warfare.” The twelve reasons would serve as a good test of one’s worldview in relation to Paul’s. See Sam Storms, “Confronting Reality of Spiritual Warfare” [on-line]; accessed 5 December 2008; available from <http://www.enjoyinggodministries.com/article/confronting-reality-of-spiritual-warfare/>; Internet.

<sup>23</sup>Nash, *Faith*, 24.

<sup>24</sup>Green, *I Believe*, 31, 32. Green argues, “Much hangs on the judgement [*sic*] we make about the devil. It is logical for an atheist to reject belief in the devil, just as he rejects belief in God. He is perfectly consistent . . . What is totally inconsistent is to accept one part of the spiritual realm, God, and to reject the other. The existence of a devil is a necessary part of consistent theism . . . Can [Christians] listen to Jesus Christ whilst [they reject] the [existence of the] devil to whom he bears witness?”

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 25.

needed because “human beings have a deep-seated need to form some general picture of the total universe in which they live, in order to be able to relate their own fragmentary activities to the universe as a whole in a way meaningful to them; and that a life in which this is not carried through is a life impoverished in a most significant respect.”<sup>26</sup>

Therefore, adopting Paul’s worldview of the principalities and powers are the “right eyeglasses” that give clarity to spiritual warfare.

### **Looking through Paul’s Lenses at the “Principalities and Powers”**

Paul believed the principalities (*arche*) and powers (*exousia*) could and did influence believers as well as social institutions. However, one needs to be careful with the application of these ideas to understand Paul. Clinton says that Paul’s view was “very balanced.”<sup>27</sup> Although these dark powers were decisively defeated at the cross, they were not entirely disabled. For example, in Paul’s own case when he asked God to remove the thorn in his flesh afflicting him, he recognized the immediate source to be a “messenger of Satan to harass me.” Paul was able to discern the reason for the affliction: “to keep me from becoming conceited” (2 Cor 12:7). It was through this means of affliction that God intended to protect Paul from the sin of pride over being the recipient of such great “visions and revelations from the Lord” (v. 1). Although denying the request for relief, God promised grace enough to endure the affliction and to show the power of Christ at work in Paul’s life and ministry (v. 9). Paul was content with this arrangement (v. 10).

In Ephesians 2:1-3 Paul says the principalities and powers work through the three avenues of the world, the devil, and the flesh. The Prince of the power of the air is the “supreme commander” of the forces of darkness and he rules over the evil powers. Neither Satan nor his subordinates are omnipresent nor omniscient, much less

---

<sup>26</sup>Nash, *Faith*, 24-25, quoting philosopher W. P. Alston.

<sup>27</sup>Arnold, *Powers*, 123.

omnipotent. They are powerful and not to be underestimated. Yet, Paul does not think it necessary to rank them or create an organizational chart. It is enough to know that these powers work their evil influences through people, institutions, and governments in order to oppose the work of Christ's kingdom.

It should be noted that at times Paul will use the same word to describe spiritual powers and earthly powers. For example, the word *arche* (Eph 6:12) translated "rulers" (ESV) is used to refer to spiritual beings (Rom 8:38; Eph 3:10), while the same word refers to earthly rulers (Col 1:16; Titus 3:1). It is not that Paul does not see a difference or understand a distinction between earthly and spiritual powers, his point is that regardless of the nature of the rulers, Christ reigns supreme over them all (Col 2:10) and they are unable to separate the believer from God (Rom 8:38).

### **Pressures on Today's Families**

A culture is the collective creation of the people who are in it. American culture is complex and wide-ranging. It would be foolish to argue that there is a monolithic American culture. However, neither is American culture a group of compartmentalized and tightly segregated cultures. When discussing pressures facing today's families, one must accept that not all segments of society experience the same degree of pressures in the same areas of life. The purpose of this section is to explore the relationship between the influence of the powers and principalities and the important social institutions and cultural trends intersecting the lives of Christian families. Institutions and the people who inhabit them are distinct. Arnold offers a helpful reminder when he writes,

We ought to distinguish between the powers of darkness and the structures of our existence. The two categories are ontologically distinct. One is personal, the other is nonpersonal; one possesses intelligence and the ability to will, the other does not. Truer to Paul's letters is to say that the powers exert their influence over the

structures of our existence than to make the powers coextensive with the structures.<sup>28</sup>

Principalities and powers influence social institutions in two ways. First, by the exercise of direct influence, individuals are seduced into violating God's standards of holiness. The influence of Satan is an important strategy that maintains the iron grip of kingdom of darkness on the lives of a society's key individuals, especially its leaders. Whether those people are political leaders like duly elected presidents or ruthless dictators, superstar athletes or pop stars, they provide examples to be emulated by those who follow them. The lifestyles of these highly visible individuals are there for all to see and imitate. Second, Christians know that the principle of sin is pervasively at work in any society affecting "personal motivations, decisions, and acts" in all social relationships.<sup>29</sup> The sin is not "in the society" *per se*, but works in all the members of society. The Bible shows that sin's corruption brings decay, moral and spiritual, working in and through people to further separate them from God. Arnold writes of spiritual powers,

They can influence authors, television producers, political thinkers and analysts, pastors, university professors, composers, artists, screenplay writers, economic policy makers, architects of defense strategies and journalists. Through a unified networking influence, it is not difficult to imagine how the powers can influence the direction of an entire culture. In one decade something may be considered morally outrageous and in the next morally acceptable through a changed public opinion.<sup>30</sup>

Four areas of family life will be examined in the section that follows that have proved to be vulnerable to the influences of the principalities and powers. These are relationships in the home, teens and "twenty-somethings," technology in daily life and church life.

---

<sup>28</sup>Arnold, *Powers*, 195.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, 203.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, 204. Isa 5:20 says, "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness."

## Home Life: Disciplemakers and Chauffeurs

Contemporary home life is not what it used to be. “People are tired and frazzled. People are anxious and depressed. People don’t have the time to heal anymore,” writes Richard A. Swenson.<sup>31</sup> The author suggests that the cause of these symptoms comes from the pains produced by progress. Today’s society is predisposed to “trust the idea of progress” but progress has not delivered what was hoped for. Progress does not bring “benign abundance” but stress.<sup>32</sup> “That progress,” says Swenson, “flows strongly in the direction of increased pressure on the individual and on the system has come as a rude shock to almost all observers.”<sup>33</sup> The author defines progress as “more and more of everything faster and faster.”<sup>34</sup> The more of everything faster and faster “collides with the established fact of human limits” and therefore having time for “room to breathe” and “freedom to think and permission to heal” has disappeared.<sup>35</sup>

The pressures of progress in this post-modern age have challenged all aspects of society; the family no less than others. Swenson writes, “Our relationships are being starved to death by velocity.”<sup>36</sup> Jack and Judith Balswick have written extensively on the challenges of progress bearing down upon the family.<sup>37</sup> They analyze the impact of

---

<sup>31</sup>Richard A. Swenson, *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2004), 16.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup>Jack O. Balswick and Judith K. Balswick, *The Family: A Christian Perspective on the Contemporary Home* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991); *idem A Model for Marriage: Covenant, Grace, Empowerment, and Intimacy* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006); *idem The Two-Paycheck Marriage: Making it Work* (New York: Spire Books, 1999); *idem Social Problems: A Christian Understanding and Response* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990); *idem Families in Pain: Working Through the Hurts* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1997).

modern progress on the family in four categories: the fragmentation of consciousness, the complexity of communication, the disintegration of community and the dominance of commodities.

**The fragmentation of consciousness.** This category refers to an individual's "subjective experiences, including thoughts, beliefs, images and emotions."<sup>38</sup> They write that the present cultural context has created a crisis that has resulted in a disjunction between what people believe and how they behave. In other words, "people today live in a state of cognitive dissonance."<sup>39</sup> For example, people may say they value intimate relationships, yet live in the context of unstable relationships. With a diversity of worldviews competing for acceptance, people must negotiate a way through this plurality either by dialogue with others, molding a new framework through synthesis, imposing one's own beliefs on others, or turn inward for a subjective way forward.

**The complexity of communication.** If families breathe in the air of fragmentation, it will invariably affect communication patterns which are already strained by the pervasiveness of the digital age. Generational differences, the proliferation of technical and professional languages and a general lack of face-to-face conversations tend to impoverish real communication in families.

The Balswicks suggest that the generation gap is "in large measure a gap in communication."<sup>40</sup> Not only is there a "new language" for ever-emerging adolescent generations, there are new and significant ways of communication. For example, among young people old words have new meaning: "wicked" is something good; "uber" is something beyond big. More complex is the manner of communication among today's

---

<sup>38</sup>Balswick, *Family*, 280.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, 287.



younger generations: the digital network. According to a Barna report from 2009, younger adults – eighteen to twenty-four – admit to “gadget lust” meaning the acquisition of the latest technology to be a “very high priority in life.”<sup>41</sup> The priority is so valued that this age group relies on technology “to facilitate their search for meaning and connection. These technologies have begun to rewire the ways in which people – especially the young – meet, express themselves, use content and stay connected.”<sup>42</sup> R. Albert Mohler writes, “The mobile and online media revolutions have arrived in the lives – and the pockets – of American youth. Try waking a teenager in the morning and the odds are good you’ll find a cell phone tucked under their pillow – the last thing they touch before falling asleep and the first thing they reach for upon waking.”<sup>43</sup>

**The disintegration of community.** The breakdown of traditional communities has created the “the isolated individual.”<sup>44</sup> In the last half of the twentieth century has seen the development of the youth sub-culture, increased family dependence on mass institutions, the isolated nuclear family (i.e., without support of the extended family), diminished parental authority and equalization of power within the family.<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup>Barna Group, “New Research Explores How Technology Drives Generation Gap” [on-line]; accessed 29 May 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/14-media/212-new-research-explores-how-technology-drives-generation-gap>; Internet.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>R. Albert Mohler, Jr., “‘Like the Air they Breathe’ – The Online Life of Kids” [on-line]; accessed 21 January 2010; available from <http://www.albertmohler.com/2010/01/21/like-the-air-the-breathe-the-on-line-life-of-kids>; Internet.

<sup>44</sup>Balswick, *The Family*, 282.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 285. See Table 9. It must be recognized that there is no monolithic youth sub-culture in American society today. There are many sub-cultures: hip-hoppers, ravers, punkers, rockers, skateboarders, goths, etc. However, a feature that seems constant in any youth sub-culture is peer-dependence upon the group for relationships, wisdom, and cultural identity distinct from familial or social institutions. A great emphasis is placed on the autonomy of the young people who are members of a youth sub-culture. The rise of mass youth sub-cultures marked by distinctive behaviors, styles of dress or music blossomed in American and Great Britain during World War II when the term “teenager” was first used to describe a youth culture. Associate professor Joe Austin of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee writes, “Although the commercialization of youth as a consumer market did not end with the 1920s, college youth’s role as

In a recent blog commenting on the essay and book, *The Death of the Grown-Up* by Diana West, Mohler wrote, “The shift from the duty of children to parents to the duty of parents to children was not subtle. All of a sudden, the young became the instructors of the old, on everything from the morality of war and peace to issues of sex and the meaning of life.”<sup>46</sup> He quotes West: “It is hard to overstate the significance of this change more than half a century ago. It is this fundamental rearrangement of life’s building blocks that put successive decades on an entirely new footing from all that had come before.”<sup>47</sup>

The consensus today is still that the most basic of social communities is the family unit. Yet, divorce in America is the highest it has ever been. The divorce rate among evangelicals has likewise reached significant enough levels to be nearly indistinguishable from the national divorce rate.<sup>48</sup> Barna concluded from a study that “there no longer seems to be much of a stigma attached to divorce; it is now seen as an

---

the avant-garde of consumerism diminished significantly during the Depression. That role was passed on to another group of consumers, high school students, during the early 1940s, when the word ‘teenager’ came into common usage among marketers. This trend coincided with America’s entrance into World War II. During the war, youth cultures in high schools became a national social problem, initiated through a series of moral panics about their sexual activities (especially between high school girls and GIs), ‘delinquency,’ and the influence of mass popular culture, particularly comic books, films, and ‘rock-and-roll’ music. By the late 1950s and early 1960s, the existence of a mass youth culture itself was widely recognized, although mostly ridiculed. Youth cultures adopting unusual and spectacular clothing and hair styles appeared in the United States (the Beats) and Great Britain (the Teds).” Commercial marketers learned quickly how to take advantage of this social phenomenon and have “moved more definitively to segment pre-adolescents as a separate market, a mass ‘kid’ culture has begun to emerge.” See Joe Austin, “Youth Culture,” in *Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood: In History and Society* [on-line]; accessed 30 July 2010; available from <http://www.faqs.org/childhood/Wh-Z-and-other-topics/Youth-Culture.html>; Internet.

<sup>46</sup>R. Albert Mohler, Jr., “NewsNote: Seen But Not Heard?” [on-line]; accessed 26 January 2010; available from <http://www.albertmohler.com/2010/01/22/newsnote-seen-but-not-heard>; Internet.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Christine Wicker, “Dumfounded by Divorce” in *The Dallas Morning News* [on-line]; accessed 12 February 2009; available from [http://www.adherents.com/largecom/baptist\\_divorce.html](http://www.adherents.com/largecom/baptist_divorce.html); Internet. Also see The Barna Group, “New Marriage and Divorce Statistics Released” [on-line]; accessed 3 March 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/15-familykids/42-new-marriage-and-divorce-statistics-released>; Internet.

unavoidable rite of passage.”<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, the study noted that young adults may want their marriages to last but “are not particularly optimistic about that possibility.”<sup>50</sup> Many young people, growing up with the effects of divorce, are choosing cohabitation rather than marriage and/or embracing the idea of serial marriage “in which a person gets married two or three times, seeking a different partner for each phase of their adult life.”<sup>51</sup> Studies that show the value of preparing for marriage seem to have fallen on deaf ears.<sup>52</sup>

**The dominance of commodities.** The Balswick’s call the third challenge “the dominance of commodities.”<sup>53</sup> They define the problem this way: “The family [has become] a unit of consumption instead of production.”<sup>54</sup> “It is rare,” they write, “to find family members together for the purpose of producing; it is equally rare to find family members together for any purpose other than consuming.”<sup>55</sup> The effect of this dominance means that the ability to acquire commodities is the “chief determinant of the worth of individuals and families.”<sup>56</sup> There are disappointing side effects to this view of life. For example, some families hope they will be able to create a sense of community through

<sup>49</sup>George Barna, “New marriage and Divorce Statistics Released” [on-line]; accessed 3 March 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/15-familykids/42-new-marriage-and-divorce-statistics-released>; Internet.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

<sup>53</sup>Balswick, *The Family*, 290.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 285.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 290.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid. Jesus’ words convey that one’s life does not consist in the abundance of things but of being rich in God (Luke 12:21).

the acquisition and consumption of things. The family that consumes together does not necessarily bloom together.<sup>57</sup>

### **Tweens, Teens, and Twenty-Somethings**

Having looked at parents, one must ask what about their children. What sorts of pressures do “tweeners,” “teens” and “twenty-somethings” face? There are many disheartening challenges as well as some signs of health. But these all depend on the relationship between parent and child. There are common themes that arise among the three groups.

After the Virginia Tech tragedy (April 26, 2007) which left thirty-two dead, the Barna Group found the incident to be a “dramatic wake-up call” to parents. Important observations about the younger generations surfaced in the research.

1. The typical worldview of a person in their early twenties promotes self-centeredness, the right to happiness and fulfillment, the importance of personal expression in all forms, the necessity of tolerating aberrant or immoral points of views, allows for disrespect of other people and use of profanity, and advances forms of generic spirituality that dismiss the validity of the Judeo-Christian faith.
2. The average adolescent spends more than forty hours each week digesting media and the typical teenager absorbs almost sixty hours of media. For better or worse, the messages received represent unfiltered, unchaperoned worldview lessons.
3. By the time an American child is twenty-three years old, the age of the killer in Virginia, he will have seen more than 30,000 acts of violence and murders through television, movies and video games.
4. By the age of twenty-three, the average American will have viewed thousands of hours of pornographic images. And listened to hundreds of hours of music that fosters anger, hatred, disrespect for authority, selfishness and radical independence.
5. Stress levels have been steadily rising among young children over the past couple of decades. The contributing factors include parental acrimony and divorce, financial troubles, media-fed expectations regarding materialism, over scheduling of children, bullying, physical abuse within the home and excessive peer pressure.

---

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., 291.

6. Education, both in the home and outside, put diminishing emphasis on character development while increasing expectations for academic performance.
7. Most young people admit they feel as if they do not receive sufficient attention from their parents; they do not have friends on whom they can rely; are unsettled about their future; lack role models and do not feel they have intrinsic value.<sup>58</sup>

**Common challenges.** When parents were asked to identify the challenges faced by their teens or younger children, the most common responses were peer pressure, school performance, substance abuse and behavioral issues, college choices, media use and the development of values.<sup>59</sup> The survey identified two significant areas of concern raised by the children: peer pressure and a sense of connectedness with their parents. Children younger than thirteen years old felt “particularly plagued by peer pressure [which] more than doubles once a child reaches high school.”<sup>60</sup> The pressure came in many forms: drug and/or alcohol abuse, owning specific media technologies, sexual experience, wearing brand name clothing, etc. Feeling misunderstood by parents was “one of the most widespread and long-lasting difficulties felt by young people.”<sup>61</sup> The research also showed that mothers were more aware of social pressures, while fathers were more aware of academic pressures. The opportunity provided by this research could be useful to parents and church leaders as they try to relate to this age group “understanding the tensions the kids are wrestling with [enabling] adults to connect with a child at a deeper level.”<sup>62</sup>

---

<sup>58</sup>Barna Group, “Virginia Tech Tragedy is a Wake-up Call to Parents” [on-line]; accessed 29 May 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/14-media/105-virginia-tech-tragedy-is-a-wake-up-call-to-parents>; Internet.

<sup>59</sup>Barna Group, “Survey Reveals Challenges Faced by Young People” [on-line]; accessed 29 May 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/15-familykids/96-survey-reveals-challenges-faced-by-young-people>; Internet.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

It seems that all segments of the American population under the age of forty years old report a wide variety of challenges, and very different views about life, morality and hopes for the future. The three pressures most commonly mentioned were sexual morality, parenting, and worldviews.

The first of the challenges, ethics and the morality of sexual behavior, revealed a significant divide among generations, specifically Boomers and Builders from Busters and younger. Twenty and thirty-year-olds opt for less traditional lifestyles than those over forty.<sup>63</sup> A “one-size-fits-all” moral consensus was difficult to find. However, Barna reports an alarming result from the “new rules of morality.” As they interact with their peers, the younger generations in their twenties and thirties, are creating a culture with less civility, less respect, and little patience.<sup>64</sup> The differences between Busters and Boomers have detectable roots:

The morality of Busters comes from a very different background. For instance; divorce, crime, single-parent households, and suicide were much more prevalent while Busters grew up. Boomers took moral experimentation to new heights, but Busters now live in a world where such experimentation is the norm, not the exception. Busters have a more disconnected, individualized, less trusting spin on morality. They are trying to create a sense of identity because they feel that shaping influences such as family, church and community have failed them. Boomers experimented to overthrow the morals of their parents, while Busters live with a mindset of trying to survive.<sup>65</sup>

In an odd twist, American society seems to be discussing moral issues more in recent years, while simultaneously redefining what it means to “do the right thing.”<sup>66</sup>

Barna’s report shows that young adults, those under twenty-five, were more than twice as

---

<sup>63</sup>Barna Group, “A New Generation of Adults Bends Moral and Sexual Rules to Their Liking” [on-line]; accessed 15 August 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/13-culture/144-a-new-generation-of-adults-bends-moral-and-sexual-rules-to-their-liking>; Internet.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>The Barna Group, “Young Adults and Liberals Struggle with Morality” [on-line]; accessed 20 August 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/16-teensnext-gen/25-young-adults-and-liberals-struggle-with-morality>; Internet.

likely to engage in “morally inappropriate” behavior, at least by traditional standards. Engaging in sex outside marriage, viewing pornography, lying, drunkenness, gossip and acts of retaliation among younger adults make Boomers look like paragons of virtue!<sup>67</sup> What the groups have in common is that the new moral systems are based on “convenience, feelings and selfishness.”<sup>68</sup>

The second challenge is parenting. Many studies show that a parent’s approach to parenting determines the overall spiritual life of their children. Perhaps today could be called the age of the disengaged parent. Christian parents say they are concerned about the media consumed by their children, yet they “buy them for their kids anyway.”<sup>69</sup> Why would Christian parents continue to purchase what makes them uncomfortable? Barna’s research revealed an answer: “Millions of Christian parents want to appear to be relevant in their children’s eyes, and to provide gifts that fit within the mainstream of postmodern society. The problem is that many of the entertainment products that meet those criteria conflict with the moral precepts of the Christian faith.”<sup>70</sup> The survey showed that parents are torn between pleasing their children’s sensibilities and satisfying God’s standards. As a result, spiritual and emotional tensions rise in homes while many Christian parents try to serve two masters: God and society. Barna notes that these parents “refuse to believe that they cannot satisfy both.”<sup>71</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>The Barna Group, “Christian Parents are Not Comfortable with media but Buy them for the Kids Anyway” [on-line]; accessed 29 May 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/15-familykids/90-christian-parents-are-not-comfortable-with-media-but-buy-them-for-their-kids-anyway>; Internet.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

To illustrate the nature of the disengaged parent, one can examine responses to the *Harry Potter* novels and movies.<sup>72</sup> These books have been very popular because they are well written and their appeal reaches out across demographic and religious lines. Simply put, parents were glad that their children were reading books. Three-quarters of all church-going teens, and the same percentage of born-again teens, have read or seen *Potter*.<sup>73</sup> These books may be “fun to read,” yet “one out of every eight teenagers (12%) said that the *Potter* chronicles increased their interest in witchcraft. That translates to nearly three million young people.”<sup>74</sup> It is almost certain that teens who become involved in witchcraft are struggling in other ways.

While many Christian teens and adolescents find entertainment value in the series, Christian leaders and parents have responded either by condemning the series or ignoring it.<sup>75</sup> Barna’s report says, “That response hasn’t worked because most teens still consume the stories – along with dozens more like it – but without the critical input that would help them make sense of the supernatural dimension described in the *Potter* universe.”<sup>76</sup> The disengaged parent who does not provide the “critical input” Barna suggests, generally feels too busy or too stressed by all their responsibilities. However, parents miss the best opportunities for shaping the heart of their children for the kingdom of God when they retreat from their responsibilities or outsource their parenting to institutions for the spiritual development of their children. The children may hear how

---

<sup>72</sup>One could also consider the new *Twilight* book and movie series.

<sup>73</sup>Barna Group, “Harry Potter’s Influence Goes Unchallenged in Most Homes and Churches” [on-line]; accessed 29 May 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/14-media/154-harry-potters-influence-goes-unchallenged-in-most-homes-and-churches>; Internet.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid.



God is to be a priority relationship, but the heart of the child is rarely transformed in the one place where it is most sanctioned by God, namely, the home.

**Signs of health.** Regardless of all the bad news from the research above, parents continue to play a significant and important role in the shaping of their children's worldview; and even the children agree. David Kinnaman, the director of research for the Barna Group made this encouraging observation when he wrote,

The teenage years are an important transition from the leadership of parents to independence and reliance upon God. Instead of simply trying to isolate children from all the spiritually dangerous material available in our media-saturated culture, parents could prepare their kids to be missionaries to their peers and to our society. Even though the approach and even the outcome will look different for every teen, helping teens to respond biblically to the messages of popular culture . . . is an important function of parents and church leaders. You do not get a free pass if you are not interested or if you do not enjoy stories like Potter. Young people are avidly consuming contemporary pop legends. Adults can guide them in knowing how to interpret that information and to respond in a Christ-like manner.<sup>77</sup>

The positive side of such a series like *Potter* is that it can be used to raise important conversations about purpose, destiny, the gospel, spiritual power, etc. It is through discussions about these subjects that parents shape the worldview of their children. Parents still top the list as the most significant and important shaper of a child's views and values. Research suggests that, "one of every three pre-teens (35%) said they find it easy to talk to their parents about everything that is happening in their life."<sup>78</sup> Moreover, Christian young people do better than their non-Christian cohorts. They are more likely to feel "safe at home, to enjoy spending time together as a family, to find it easy to speak with parents about their life, to choose morality over popularity, to say their church has had a positive impact on them, and to trust their parents."<sup>79</sup>

---

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>Barna Group, "Survey Describes the Ups and Downs of Tween Life" [on-line]; accessed 29 May 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/15-familykids/146-survey-describes-the-ups-and-downs-of-tween-life>; Internet.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid.

Additionally, teenagers are “some of the most religiously active Americans.”<sup>80</sup> While twenty-somethings are more likely to “put their Christianity on the shelf,”<sup>81</sup> Barna notes that many teens want to make a connection with God, to understand the content of the Christian faith (i.e., what is believe), to learn more about prayer, to participate in religious teaching and discussions about religion and faith, to be mentored in spiritual development and to study the Bible.<sup>82</sup> These are healthy signs, but they do not mean a revival has come to the younger generations.

### **Culture and Technology: The Pressures of Digital Progress**

In 1992, Neil Postman’s book *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology*<sup>83</sup> examined the effects of communication technologies on society and culture. He wrote about the effects with regard to children,

Children come to school having been deeply conditioned by the biases of television. There, they encounter the world of the printed word. A sort of psychic battle takes place, and there are many casualties – children who can’t learn to read or won’t, children who cannot organize their thought into logical structure even in a simple paragraph, children who cannot attend to lectures or oral explanations for more than a few minutes at a time. They are failures, but not because they are stupid. They are failures because there is a media war going on, and they are on the wrong side – at least for the moment.<sup>84</sup>

---

<sup>80</sup>Barna Group, “What Teenagers Look for in a Church” [on-line]; accessed 29 May 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/16-teensnext-gen/93-what-teenagers-look-for-in-a-church>; Internet.

<sup>81</sup>Twenty-somethings continue to be the most “spiritually independent and resistant” group in America. In a survey result regarding the church attendance of this group, sixty-one percent had been “churched at one point during their teen years but they are now spiritually disengaged,” meaning they are not actively attending church, reading the Bible or praying. See Barna Group, “Most Twentysomethings Put Christianity on the Shelf Following Spiritually Active Teen Years” [on-line]; accessed 29 May 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/16-teensnext-gen/147-most-twentysomethings-put-christianity-on-the-shelf-following-spiritually-active-teen-years>; Internet.

<sup>82</sup>Barna, “Teenagers.”

<sup>83</sup>Neil Postman, *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992).

<sup>84</sup>*Ibid.*, 17.

As for his thoughts about computer technology: “Now comes the computer, carrying anew the banner of private learning and individual problem-solving. Will the widespread use of computers in the classroom defeat once and for all the claims of communal speech? Will the computer raise egocentrism to the status of a virtue?”<sup>85</sup>

Much has changed in the fifteen years since Postman’s book, especially in the growth and influence of digital communications, games, movies, etc. Today, a younger generation uses the digital network as a “venue for self-expression” and a way to find “meaning and connection” with others.<sup>86</sup> Even more staggering is the number of hours young people give to digital activities: seven and one-half hours each day. And because young people are consummate multitaskers they are able to “cram” in another three and one-half hours. Mohler cites a Kaiser Family Foundation study that said, “Eight-to-eighteen-year olds spend more time with media than in any other activity besides (maybe) sleeping” and they are offered a “constant stream of messages about families, peers, relationships, gender roles, sex, violence, food values, clothes” all of which shape heart and mind.”<sup>87</sup>

In a thought provoking article, “Is Google Making Us Stupid?” author Nicholas Carr asks what media consumption may be costing society.<sup>88</sup> Carr argues that a biological alteration of the human brain occurs with exposure to the digital universe. Carr writes,

The Net’s influence doesn’t end at the edges of a computer screen . . . . As people’s minds become attuned to the crazy quilt of Internet media, traditional media have to

---

<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

<sup>86</sup>Barna, “Barna Technology Study: Social Networking, Online Entertainment and Church Podcasts” [on-line]; accessed 29 May 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/harna-update-/article/14-media/36-barna-technology-study-social-networking-online-entertainment-and-church-podcasts>; Internet.

<sup>87</sup>Mohler, “Like the Air they Breathe.”

<sup>88</sup>Nicholas Carr, “Is Google Making Us Stupid?” *The Atlantic Online* [on-line]; accessed 5 May 2009; available from <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200807/google>; Internet.

adapt to the audiences' new expectations. Television programs add text crawls and pop-up ads, and magazines and newspapers shorten their articles, introduce capsule summaries and crowd their pages with easy-to-browse info-snippets . . . [these] "shortcuts" . . . [spare readers] the "less efficient" method of actually turning the pages and reading the articles . . . . Never has a communications system played so many roles in our lives – or exerted such broad influence over our thoughts . . . . Yet for all that's been written about the Net, there's been little consideration of how, exactly, it's reprogramming us. The Net's intellectual ethic remains obscure.<sup>89</sup>

Carr contends that adaptation is taking place at the biological level. According to James Olds, professor of neuroscience at the Krasnow Institute for Advanced Study at George Mason University, "The brain has the ability to reprogram itself on the fly, altering the way it functions."<sup>90</sup> Because of the way information comes through the internet, there is a significant fight to "stay focused on long pieces of writing." Since users of the internet "skim" for information and rarely stay long on one site before jumping to another, what implications might there be for teachers, and church ministries? Carr asserts that a different kind of thinking begins to operate: "Our ability to interpret text, to make the rich mental connections that form when we read deeply and without distraction, remains largely disengaged."<sup>91</sup> He warns that people could become "pancake people," that is, thinkers who are spread wide and thin.<sup>92</sup>

As an antidote, parents must learn to set and supervise ground rules. However, as Mohler contends, parents are setting few rules for media use in their homes. He observes, "The majority of teens and tweens reported that their parents have set no rules about the type of media content they can use or the amount of time they can devote to media consumption."<sup>93</sup> When rules are set they are usually about content but not much

---

<sup>89</sup>Ibid.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid.

<sup>93</sup>Mohler "Like the Air they Breathe."

about the amount of time. Unfortunately, many parents who set rules rarely monitor their children's use of media or enforce the established rules.

### **Church Life: Influential or Inconsequential?**

How do tweens, teens and twenty-somethings assess their church experience? The twenty-somethings remain the most disengaged especially during the college years.<sup>94</sup> Disengagement persists into adulthood and is not the result of testing the boundaries of independence. When entering parenthood, a time when maturing adults desire spiritual guidance for their children, it is common to see this demographic group continue the habit of disengagement.

However, teens have a much more positive view of church involvement. Teens “thrive on fresh experiences and new perspectives.”<sup>95</sup> While typical attendance at a youth group meeting or small group remains low (once in a three month period) in Barna's research, teens were more open to spiritual discussions.<sup>96</sup> Teens listen in church and learn in ways that shaped their ethical standards, relational conduct and influenced their personal evangelism. Their top desire for church experience included learning to “connect with God, learn[ing] about their faith, and serv[ing] others, in a loving and relational environment.”<sup>97</sup>

But there is a failure to translate the teen experience over into the twenty-something experience. Barna believes the church in general and youth ministries in

<sup>94</sup>Barna Group, “Most Twentysomethings Put Christianity on the Shelf Following Spiritually Active Teen Years” [on-line]; accessed 29 May 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/16-teensnext-gen/147-most-twentysomethings-put-christianity-on-the-shelf-following-spiritually-active-teen-years>; Internet.

<sup>95</sup>Barna, “Teenagers.”

<sup>96</sup>Ibid.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid.

particular, are failing at the task of discipleship and spiritual formation. “A new standard for viable youth ministry should be – not the number of attenders, the sophistication of the events, or the ‘cool’ factor of the youth group – but whether teens have the commitment, passion and resources to pursue Christ intentionally and whole-heartedly after they leave the youth ministry nest.”<sup>98</sup>

However, the Barna group concludes that the primary place for spiritual formation is the home: “It is not entirely surprising that deep, lasting spiritual transformation rarely happens among teenagers . . . since teenagers’ faith often mirrors the intensity of their parents, youth workers face steep challenges because they are trying to impart something of spiritual significance that teenagers generally do not receive from home.”<sup>99</sup>

#### **A Prescription: Families as “Command and Control Central”**

Christian families need massive doses of grace and encouragement to face today’s pressures. Families must learn how to draw upon the spiritual strength of God’s promises in Christ in order to grow in godliness. Jesus promised power for godliness when he said “in the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). The apostle John wrote, “The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil . . . Little children you are from God and have overcome [the antichrists already in the world] for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world . . . For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith” (1 John 3:8; 4:4; 5:4).

Christ called his people to be salt and light in the world (Matt 5:13, 14), strategically placed to reflect his glory and to rescue those held in the grip of the Prince

---

<sup>98</sup>Barna, “Twentysomethings.”

<sup>99</sup>Ibid.

of darkness. Arnold writes, “Our highest priority is to help people find ultimate freedom from the deadly constraints and terror of the present age and experience the untold blessings of the age to come, and to be liberated from the world and its hellish prince.”<sup>100</sup>

The gospel of God breaks through the powers of darkness, opens blind eyes so that sinners might turn from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God, so that they might receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in Jesus (Acts 26:18). The gospel not only brings sinners out of darkness into light, it continually cleanses, heals and fuels growth in godliness.

What follows makes the case for the family being the first line of defense in the spiritual battle for godliness. Five commitments need to be made by believing families in order to become the central equipping agency for growth in grace and ability in spiritual warfare. With so many avenues of attack at Satan’s disposal, it may seem that the Christian family stands little hope of victory over the forces of darkness. However, the optimistic tone of Scripture is that while the family may be outnumbered, it is not outgunned.

### **God Has Privileged Parents to Disciple Their Children in Godliness**

Parental involvement strongly influences the direction of spiritual training. More than spiritual institutions, parents are key. Churches may and should serve families as a resource in the area of spiritual formation, but they must avoid taking the place of parents who are to faithfully fulfill their obligation to God in the spiritual training of their children. Therefore, the first commitment of families is that they accept that God gave to parents the primary responsibility of training their children. Parents “shall teach them (the words God commanded) diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you

---

<sup>100</sup>Arnold, *Powers*, 205.

rise” (Deut 6:7). Christian families are to be gospel-centered homes of training in righteousness and equipping for spiritual warfare.

**Defining biblical families.** The modern nuclear family nearly, but not exactly, reflects the biblical understanding of families. Surely, Jesus grew up in a family with a father (actually, a step-father), mother, brothers and sisters (Matt 13:55, 56). However, the understanding of family in both the OT and the NT might include a wider group of people “consisting of one or two generations of close relatives (e.g. Gen 24:38; 1 Kgs 12:19; Isa 5:7).”<sup>101</sup> Today the definition of family has been tremendously affected by changing views on human sexuality, divorce, spousal roles, etc. A discussion of these matters is not within the bounds of this project, but it will be necessary to consider the one-parent family, and the step-family, in the process of training outlined in the next chapter.

**Marriage: The context of biblical training.** Jesus and Paul affirmed the biblical vision of a monogamous relationship between a man and a woman as God’s design for marriage. Jesus quoted Genesis 2:24 at Matthew 19:5 and Paul reinforced the creation design of marriage at Ephesian 5:31. These affirmations form the foundation of a biblical marriage. They also inform the church of value of men and women in marriage as equal partners before God, and help believers understand the differing roles of each as a complementary design for the relationship. It is within this relational context that the spiritual formation of children takes place. Biblical marriage differs from postmodern views in that a covenantal commitment forms and strengthens the relationship. Biblical marriage rests on the powerful activity of God’s grace in each spouse. God’s Word instructs each spouse in their respective roles of authority and submission. These

---

<sup>101</sup>T. Desmond Alexander and Brian S. Rosner, eds., *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 494.



important distinctions provide an atmosphere of godly intimacy that creates a place of safety and structure for the spiritual training needed by children.<sup>102</sup>

**Parenting: Biblical versus post-modern.** While the modern view of parenting accepted that mothers carried the greatest weight for parenting and fathers were mostly weak and disengaged, the postmodern view of parents has gone further to marginalize parents as nearly unnecessary. “On the television screen,” writes Mohler “it is the kids on the sitcoms who are wise. The parents and other authority figures are routinely corrected by the wisdom of the young. The bumbling adults learn to laugh at their foolishness and follow the direction of the children and adolescents.”<sup>103</sup> Christian parents and children must strive to stand against this cultural trend. Satan’s influence through these cultural pressures challenges parental authority, indeed a child’s view of all authority. The work of Christian parents must include training that leads to a mature understanding of God’s gift of authority. This training will set the stage for “walking in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him and bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col 1:10). This goal will be realized not so much by good parenting techniques, as useful as that may be, but by focusing on being a biblically spiritual parent. “Good parenting,” write the Balswick’s “is a matter of interacting with our children day in and day out . . . [in] daily experiences which build our relationship with them.”<sup>104</sup>

**Formative instruction: Definition and goals.** Tedd and Margy Tripp have written two helpful books aimed at instructing Christian parents in the spiritual formation

---

<sup>102</sup>See Balswick, *The Family*, 80-88.

<sup>103</sup>Mohler, “Seen but Not Heard?”

<sup>104</sup>Balswick, *The Family*, 94.

of their children.<sup>105</sup> The authors emphasize the need for parents to form the heart of the child in biblical spirituality. They define formative instruction as “providing our children with a grid for interpreting and responding to reality.”<sup>106</sup> Formative instruction provides a culture for children that is “distinctly Christian” and provides biblical values and a worldview “through which the redemptive story of God” can be meaningfully adopted.<sup>107</sup>

The Tripps outline five important goals for the process of formative instruction.<sup>108</sup> First, formative training includes making the story of Scripture the family’s personal history (Deut 6:20-25). Christians are children of God and “distant relatives” of the heroes of the faith (Heb 11). The second goal is to teach and train children to develop godly habits (2 Tim 1:5; 3:14-17). The third goal is to apply the truth of the Scriptures to everyday life (Deut 6:4-9). Fourth, parents must model a vital spiritual life for their children. The authors write, “As children grow to young adulthood in our churches, they are searching desperately for a faith that has the warmth and vitality of a close relationship with the living God, and the sure footing of sound doctrine that will stand the storms of life.”<sup>109</sup> Finally, the family must grow together into spiritual maturity.

### **Satan Uses Means to Hinder Growth**

The second commitment families need to make is to accept that Satan will use every means possible to weaken and hinder a family’s growth in godliness.

---

<sup>105</sup>Tedd Tripp and Margy Tripp, *Instructing a Child’s Heart* (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 2008); Tedd Tripp, *Shepherding a Child’s Heart* (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 1995).

<sup>106</sup>Tedd Tripp and Margy Tripp, *Instructing a Child’s Heart* (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 2008), 31.

<sup>107</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup>*Ibid.*, 23-30.

<sup>109</sup>*Ibid.*, 29.

Remembering that he is a master deceiver and a student of the Christian's weaknesses helps understand the imperative for putting on the armor of God.<sup>110</sup> Scripture reveals that Satan has no scruples about using a good thing for evil outcomes. For example, he can use sexual temptations or sexual abstinence. He can tempt married couples with sexual adultery, or use proper occasions of sexual abstinence in order to lead them into sinful choices (see 1 Cor 7:2, 5).

Satan employs the means of the world and the flesh, as well as direct assault, in a strategy to hinder Christian families from spiritual growth. Although Christians who have experienced the new birth are freed from the penalty of sin, they are not freed from its presence. Sin remains an active principle in the believer's life that must be resisted in the power of the Spirit. Bryan Zacharias quotes Thomas Watson who wrote, "[Sin] is not perfectly cured in this life. Though grace does subdue sin, yet it does not wholly remove it . . . . Though the Spirit be still weakening and hewing down sin in the godly, yet the stump of original sin is left."<sup>111</sup> Therefore, Christian families must learn how to put on God's armor. Willem Teellinck, the "father of the Dutch Second Reformation," wrote that not only does God's armor completely protect the believer, but it uncovers the schemes of the enemy and leads to victory in the battle.<sup>112</sup>

---

<sup>110</sup>C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letter* (New York: HarperOne, 1961), 45. *The Screwtape Letters* provides the reader with the creative insights of Lewis' mind as he shows how Screwtape's instructions to Wormwood exploit the weaknesses of his Christian "patient." For example in letter nine Screwtape tells his nephew, "I have always found that the trough periods of the human undulation provide excellent opportunity for all sensual temptations, particularly those of sex . . . . But there is a better way of exploiting the trough; I mean through the patient's own thoughts about it . . . . [Convince him] that his present dryness is an equally permanent condition. Having once got this misconception well fixed in his head, you may then proceed in various ways."

<sup>111</sup>Bryan G. Zacharias, *The Embattled Christian: William Gurnall and the Puritan View of Spiritual Warfare* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1995), 133 n. 4.

<sup>112</sup>Willem Teellinck, *The Path of True Godliness*, trans. Annemie Godbehere (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2003), 200-01.

William Gurnall examined the many avenues of personal vulnerability exploited by Satan. Indwelling sin tops the list. If Satan can get the child of God to sin, then he believes that God will be angry and “whip his child soundly.” “This will be some sport,” the devil thinks “and when God is correcting the saint, [the saint] will be questioning the love of God to him and cool in his love to God.”<sup>113</sup> Temptation would not be so powerful if Christians did not have their own lust for it (Jas 1:14, 15). Satan will use a Christian’s yet-to-be-subdued lusts to draw God’s child away. The “dark providences” of God may make God’s child feel alone, and aggravated by Satan’s presence, begin “disputing against God’s love to, and grace in, a soul.”<sup>114</sup>

Satan may use the tactic of surprise against the believer. He may suddenly shoot his fiery arrows to catch the believer off guard in order to prevent obedience to God’s Word. Gurnall also warns that there are specific times when the Christian may be more vulnerable to Satan’s attack than at other times. These times can include adversity or prosperity, performing good works or simply being idle.<sup>115</sup>

Sometimes other people may make a Christian vulnerable to sinful behaviors, attitudes, or thoughts, especially people of power and influence, greater intelligence or close relations.<sup>116</sup>

### **Evangelicals Must Adopt Paul’s View of the Principalities and Powers**

Therefore, Christians begin their engagement in spiritual warfare by accepting Paul’s cosmology and demonology. Many factors may contribute to the weak grasp of

<sup>113</sup>William Gurnall, *The Christian in Complete Armour* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1964), 1:105.

<sup>114</sup>*Ibid.*, 1:97.

<sup>115</sup>Zacharias, *Embattled*, 63-65.

<sup>116</sup>*Ibid.*, 67-73. The person inordinately influenced by others, should read Ed Welch’s book *When People are Big and God is Small* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1997).

spiritual warfare among Christian families but certainly the foundational weakness must be an inattention to the biblical view of the unseen realm of darkness.

**Five contributing factors.** Sam Storms suggests at least five contributing factors explaining why Christians are so ill-prepared for spiritual warfare.<sup>117</sup> First is a general ignorance about God’s Word. Many Christians are unaware of what the Bible says on the matter. Many more may think the subject is irrelevant in this postmodern age.<sup>118</sup> Second, Christians may fear the sensational or becoming imbalanced once they study the subject. “According to Timothy Warner,” writes Sam Storms, “a lot of Christians ‘have become so accustomed to operating with no demonstrations of spiritual power that they are bothered by any demonstration at all.’”<sup>119</sup> Third, Storms points to “insulated lifestyles.” American Christians live “relatively docile and decent lives” and find it hard to believe that spiritual warfare is even necessary. They do not realize the far reaching touch of evil or that spiritual warfare is not an event but an all-encompassing lifestyle. Fourth, Christians may fear what others will think of them if they espouse such a belief. Finally, there is the powerful influence of the western worldview. Storms writes, “Spirit beings, whether angels or demons, are not a functional part of how they [i.e., those in the Western culture] view the world and the way we live.”<sup>120</sup> The Western worldview, dominated as it is by “naturalism,” competes with the Christian worldview. Naturalism says, “Nothing exists outside the material, mechanical (that is,

---

<sup>117</sup>Sam Storms, “Confronting Reality of Spiritual Warfare” [on-line]; accessed 5 December 2008; available from <http://www.enjoyinggodministries.com/article/confronting-reality-of-spiritual-warfare>; Internet.

<sup>118</sup>Green, *I Believe*, 17. Green writes, “[Satan] is bound to be glad when men forget all about him, when they ridicule him, when they dismiss him . . . Like any general who can persuade the opposition to underestimate him, Satan . . . must be enchanted at the present state of affairs which leaves him free to operate with the maximum of ease and efficiency confident that nobody takes him seriously.”

<sup>119</sup>Storms, “Confronting.”

<sup>120</sup>*Ibid.*

nonpurposeful), natural order.”<sup>121</sup> Nash quotes sociologist S. D. Gaede: “The naturalistic worldview rests upon the belief that the material universe is the sum total of reality. To put it negatively, naturalism holds to the proposition that the supernatural, in any form, does not exist.”<sup>122</sup>

The degree to which Christians are influenced by naturalism shapes their presuppositions and determines their conclusions about Paul’s demonology. Philosophers, scientists and prominent theologians shaped by naturalism have challenged Paul’s view of principalities and powers. Arnold notes two prominent names, Marcus Borg and Walter Wink. Arnold quotes Borg’s dismissal of Paul’s worldview: “Within the framework of the modern worldview, we are inclined to see ‘[demon] possession’ as a primitive prescientific diagnosis of a condition which must have another explanation.”<sup>123</sup> Auburn Seminary professor Walter Wink, Arnold says, “reveals the controlling influence of his cultural presuppositions . . . . ‘We moderns cannot bring ourselves . . . to believe in the real existence of these mythological entities . . . lumped under the general category ‘principalities and powers.’”<sup>124</sup>

**A critique of the Western worldview.** Arnold challenges these presuppositions with convincing arguments. First, he argues that science cannot decide the question of the existence of evil spirits because that realm is outside the province of the material universe. Science cannot stand on a pedestal where it is given no ability to judge. Second, naturalistic explanations are inadequate for describing many forms of evil in the world. Martyn Lloyd-Jones recognized this:

---

<sup>121</sup>Ronald H. Nash, *World-Views in Conflict: Choosing Christianity in a World of Ideas* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 116.

<sup>122</sup>Ibid.

<sup>123</sup>Arnold, *Powers*, 176.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid., 177.

It is to me almost beyond understanding that anybody who looks at the modern world and reads a newspaper can still go on believing [in education as a way to improve man's lot] . . . How can they believe that wisdom and knowledge and learning, and the ability to reason and to use logic, is the solution of the problem, when what is to be seen daily in the lives of men and women proves the exact opposite? It is amazing!<sup>125</sup>

Third, Arnold says, Christians should remember this time and place in history. “The last 300 years in the West represent the only time in human history that the existence of evil spirits has been treated with widespread skepticism.”<sup>126</sup> Likewise, Arnold warns that it is “only contemporary society that denies the reality of evil spirits.” Many people groups around the world, not dominated by Western worldviews, accept the existence of evil spirits as an integral part of their worldview.<sup>127</sup> Even many Americans, disenchanted with some of the failures of modern presuppositions, are drifting away from the Western worldview in search of alternative explanations to life. Their search may lead them to experiment with occult practices, or New Age philosophies, or the practices of neo-paganism, or Eastern mysticism; and they do this regardless of the dominant anti-supernatural bias all around.<sup>128</sup>

**What was Paul's view of devils and demons?** It seems Paul has at least three presuppositions informing his view of the Christian's warfare against the principalities and powers. In the paramount position, the principalities and powers are created by and subject to Christ. They owe their existence to Christ. Not only are they subordinate to Christ by virtue of creation, they are subordinate to his Lordship as the exalted King who defeated them through his redemptive sacrifice at the cross.

---

<sup>125</sup>D. M. Lloyd-Jones, *The Christian Warfare: An Exposition of Ephesians 6:10 to 13* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976), 47.

<sup>126</sup>Arnold, *Powers*, 179.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid., 181-82.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. (Col 1:15-20)

Paul appears unconcerned over distinctions of powers and ranks of principalities. It matters little to him whether they are earthly or spiritual. At one time, Paul may speak of powers as earthly rulers: “None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory” (1 Cor 1:28). Here Paul referred to “our chief priests and rulers [who] delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified” (Luke 24:20). This group would include “those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers” (Acts 13:27). Paul may use the same phrase to describe the powers under Satan’s rule: “so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places” (Eph 3:10). While Christians may be interested in ranks and organizations of the evil spirits, Paul’s interest is the supremacy of Christ over all powers:

Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died – more than that, who was raised – who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 8:34-39)

Without doubt, believers face a hostile enemy arrayed in a mighty force of evil, armed with many weapons poised for the destruction of God’s beloved. However, Paul’s view is victorious, nourished by the promise that believers are “more than conquerors” (Rom 8:37) through a stronger, more aggressive, invincible and victorious Savior who has disarmed the enemy (Luke 11:22), and who loves his own with an



everlasting love. The goal of Satan is defeated in Christ and nothing in heaven, on earth or under the earth will be able to separate God's child from his steadfast love.

Second, although the principalities and powers are subordinate to Christ and stand as defeated foes which are "taking an unconscionably long time about dying,"<sup>129</sup> they have power enough remaining to seduce to sin, assault the purity of the Christian and the church, work through the institutions of fallen cultures, and therefore must not be underestimated.<sup>130</sup> Satan may make a "direct demonic inducement to violate God's standards of holiness" and especially aim his strategy against prominent leaders of all stripes.<sup>131</sup> How many Christian leaders have fallen prey to Satan's schemes, only to witness the devastation brought to the church he served? How extensive and successful is the influence of cultural icons whose lifestyles display God-ignoring ways?

The believer must be vigilant in spiritual discernment and Christian responsibility, aware of Satan's attempt to exert his polluting influence on all aspects of society's institutions and culture, including the church.<sup>132</sup> That is not to say that all institutions and the fabric of culture are comprehensively as evil as they can be. What should be said about institutions that make morally upright decisions? To be sure the

---

<sup>129</sup>Green, *I Believe*, 16.

<sup>130</sup>G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 202. Although the focus of discussion has been on Paul's view of the world of devils and demons, he aligns with other NT writers like the apostle John. In his commentary G. K. Beale writes, "The beast from the sea in ch. 13 will be described in the same way as the dragon here: the beast is red and has 'ten horns and seven heads, and on his heads diadems' (see 13:1ff. and 17:3-4; cf. 12:9, 12). This identity shows that the devil performs his oppressive will against the church and world through his kingly representatives on earth" (634). John believed and wrote that the "devil is the force behind the wicked kingdoms who persecute God's people" (634).

<sup>131</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>132</sup>Arnold, *Powers*, 188. "When biblical ethics are portrayed in a negative light in society, Satan has been successful in extending his evil influence on a broad scale for instance, when pilfering from one's employer is rationalized, Satan becomes victorious. When vengeance is regarded as the best course of action against a person who wrongs us, Satan has successfully twisted our moral conscience. In short, Satan can pervert societal morals, traditions and customs."

general climate of the world is fallen and passing away (1 Cor 7:31) and held captive under the influence of the “prince of the power of the air” (Eph 2:2; 1 John 5:19).

Arnold’s assessment is accurate when he says, “Men inhale it [evil] and thus pass it on into their institutions and various conditions . . . . It is so powerful that no individual can escape it.”<sup>133</sup> The only escape is through the power of the gospel. Green writes,

There are forces at work in human history which represent human solidarities perverted and twisted and full of danger. They are part of the pattern of evil. They are part of the conflict in our human existence. If the Christian gospel were only concerned with the moral problems of individual men and women, it would be defective indeed. But the first Christians knew better when they affirmed, “Christ has conquered sin and death and the principalities and powers.”<sup>134</sup>

Paul’s third presupposition is the central exhortation of the letter to the Ephesians, namely a reminder of who believers are in Christ. Once they were God-hating “sons of disobedience” who followed their father, the Prince of the Power of the air (Eph 2:2). Now, in Christ they are reconciled to God (1:9-10, 20-23; 2:10-22; 3:6) and have become his “workmanship” (2:10). The Christian’s knowledge and experience of union with Christ is the “shield of God’s favor” (Ps 5:12).

Ephesians instructs believers of every age how to respond to the invisible realm of principalities and powers that in some way stand behind the structures of society, government, business and culture. Regardless of the many ways the powers may influence these institutions, the believer must contend with “spiritual forces of evil over this present darkness” (Eph 6:12). O’Brien states that Paul exercised his apostolic authority with the intention of encouraging the church in the fight based on the work of Christ. Paul, he says, writes to the Ephesians,

[A]ssuring them of their place within the gracious, saving purpose of God, and urging them to bring their lives into conformity with this divine plan of summing up all things in Christ (1:10). Paul wants to “ground, shape and challenge” his readers

---

<sup>133</sup>Ibid., 197.

<sup>134</sup>Green, *I Believe*, 106-07.

in their faith. In other words, the main purpose of his letter is “*identity formation*.”<sup>135</sup>

### **Conclusion: “The Little Church”**

Another important presupposition of this project is that the primary responsibility for the spiritual training of children belongs to their own parents. There are obligations belonging to parents that are too important to put into the hands of others, even “church professionals.” The most important parental obligation is the discipleship of their children. God gives this responsibility primarily to parents: “You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise” (Deut 6:7). This command follows an important first step: “These words that I command you today shall be on your heart” (v. 6). Parents are, first of all, Christians who experience the grace of forgiveness in union with Christ. Then, in gracious response, they take their responsibility as parents to teach and live out the reality of God’s salvation before their children. God’s desire is that the older generation teaches the story of God’s salvation to the younger generation.<sup>136</sup>

Christian parents believe, and consistently affirm, that they are responsible for the spiritual development of their children. In fact, close to nine out of ten parents affirmed this belief.<sup>137</sup> Yet, in spite of this high percentage, “a majority of parents do not spend any time during a typical week discussing religious matters or studying religious materials with their children.”<sup>138</sup> Barna’s report showed “most of those parents (who take

---

<sup>135</sup>Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 57.

<sup>136</sup>That is not to say the church has no role in the discipleship of children. More below.

<sup>137</sup>Barna Group, “Parents Accept Responsibility for Their Child’s Spiritual Development but Struggle with Effectiveness” [on-line]; accessed 5 May 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/5-barna-update/120-parents-accept-responsibility-for-their-childs-spiritual-development-but-struggle-with-effectiveness>; Internet.

<sup>138</sup>*Ibid.*

their children to church services) are willing to let their church or religious center provide all of the direct religious teaching and related religious experiences that their children receive.”<sup>139</sup>

There is no better or safer place for children to learn to fight the flesh, the world and the devil than in the context of family life. There is no better or safer weapon given to the family than time set aside for family worship. The discipline of family worship has been a principal means of Christian education for generations. It was the commitment of Abraham who led his family in trusting God’s promises (Gen 18:19). In Joshua can be seen a father ready to lead his family in obedience to God. His commitment was reflected in the declaration, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Josh 24:14). In Psalm 78, Asaph instructs parents to “tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done” (v. 4). Conversely, notice the national disaster and dissipation of spirituality the lack of leadership brought about through the sons of Eli. Though priests serving in the tabernacle, Eli’s sons were deemed “worthless men” (1 Sam 2:12-36; 4:10-11).

The lessons from biblical history were not lost on Christian families through the centuries. With the invention of the printing press (1440) and the publication of the Bible five years later for mass consumption, private family worship would become a prominent feature of Christian piety. With the availability of the Scriptures in the modern period of the church, a great emphasis was placed on private family worship. Family worship was considered so important that the *Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689* includes this statement: “Neither prayer nor any other part of religious worship is now under the gospel tied unto, or made more acceptable by any place in which it is

---

<sup>139</sup>Ibid.

performed, or towards which it is directed; but God is to be worshipped everywhere in spirit and in truth; as in private families daily, and in secret each one by himself.”<sup>140</sup>

English author Peter Lewis records that Puritan families practiced ways to absorb the sermon at home after it was preached in church: “Repeat it in your families – the Bereans [pored] over Paul’s sermons and examined his proofs and allegations . . . . Talk of it as you go from hearing . . . . Pray to the Lord that he would preserve the word in your hearts by his Spirit.”<sup>141</sup>

Itinerant preacher, Samuel Davies (1724-1761) gave several strong arguments to the men in his congregations to practice family worship. Davies recognized that parents, particularly fathers, would try to excuse themselves, complaining they were too busy or too tired or lacked ability.<sup>142</sup> After reminding his audiences that children are not made only for this world, but with “immortal souls . . . entrusted” to parents who must give an account for the spiritual outcome of their children, Davies drives home the point that children will do what they see their parents doing. He asked, “Can prayerless parents expect to have praying children? If you neglect to instruct them, can you expect they will grow up in the knowledge of God?”<sup>143</sup> Davies then urged his audience:

If you love your children; if you would bring down the blessing of heaven upon your families; if you would have your children make their houses the receptacles of religion when they set up in life for themselves; if you would have religion survive in this place, and be conveyed from age to age; if you would deliver your own souls – I beseech, I entreat, I charge you to begin and continue the worship of God in your families from this day to the close of your lives . . . . [It is] your greatest privilege granted by divine grace.<sup>144</sup>

---

<sup>140</sup>The Elders of Grace Baptist Church, *The Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689* (Carlisle, PA: n.p, n.d), 32.

<sup>141</sup>Peter Lewis, *The Genius of Puritanism* (Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 1977), 58.

<sup>142</sup>Samuel Davies, “The Necessity and Excellence of Family Religion” [on-line]; accessed 28 March 2011; available from <http://www.puritansermons.com/banner/sdavies1.htm>; Internet.

<sup>143</sup>Ibid.

<sup>144</sup>Ibid.

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) instructed the families of his church to take seriously the training of their children as if the family were a “little church.”

[H]eads of families have the greatest opportunity and are under the greatest advantages with respect to them that are under their roof of anybody whatsoever. A Christian family is as it were a little church and commonwealth by itself, and the head of the family has more advantage in his little community to promote religion than ministers have in congregation, and magistrates in the commonwealth, they being always with them and having them at continual command, and having always opportunities of instructing them. If parents did what they might do this way, multitudes of souls might be saved by their means, and a great increase and addition might be made to the kingdom of Jesus Christ.<sup>145</sup>

Edwards believed that this little church was the chief means of growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. He wrote that if home education failed “all other means are like to prove ineffectual. If these are duly maintained, all the means of grace will be like to prosper and be successful.”<sup>146</sup>

Baptist preacher Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892) emphasized the role of fathers in discipling their children:

First, let us begin by emphatically declaring it is parents (fathers in particular) and not the church who are given the primary responsibility for calling the next generation to hope in God. The church serves a supplementary role, reinforcing the biblical nurture that is occurring in the home. It is not the job of “professionals” at the church to rear the children of believers in the faith.<sup>147</sup>

---

<sup>145</sup>Jonathan Edwards, “Living to Christ” [on-line]; accessed 4 January 2010; available from [<sup>146</sup>Jonathan Edwards, \*Sermons and Discourses 1720-1723\* \[on-line\]; accessed 4 January 2010; available from \[<sup>147</sup>Steve Wright, “Key Puritan Quotes” \\[on-line\\]; accessed 2 January 2010; available from\]\(http://edwards.yale.edu/archive?\_\_\_pgfa=aHROcDovL2Vkd2FyZHMueWFsZS51AHUvY2dpLWJpbi9uZXdwGlsby9zZWYy2gzdA%3D%3D&dbname=wjeo&KEEPIHISTORY=7199945799&word=christian+family&OUTPUT=conc&CONJUNCT=PHRASE&DISTANCE=3&title=&collection=&date=&DFPERIOD=1&POLESPAN=5&THMPRTLIMIT=1&KWSS=1&KWSSPRLIM=500&trsortorder=author%2C+title&editor=&createdate=&shrtcite=&sortorder=author%2C+date&dgdivhead=&dgdivtype=&dgdivocauthor=&dgdivocdateline=&dgdivocsalutation=&dgsubdivtag=&dgsubdivtype; Internet.</a></p>
</div>
<div data-bbox=\)](http://edwards.yale.edu/archive?___pgfa=aHROcDovL2Vkd2FyZHMueWFsZS51ZHUvY2dpLWJpbi9uZXdwGlsby9zZWYy2gzdA%3D%3D&dbname=wjeo&KEEPIHISTORY=7199945799&word=christian+family&OUTPUT=conc&CONJUNCT=PHRASE&DISTANCE=3&title=&collection=&date=&DFPERIOD=1&POLESPAN=5&THMPRTLIMIT=1&KWSS=1&KWSSPRLIM=500&trsortorder=author%2C+title&editor=&createdate=&shrtcite=&sortorder=author%2C+date&dgdivhead=&dgdivtype=&dgdivocauthor=&dgdivocdateline=&dgdivocsalutation=&dgsubdivtag=&dgsubdivtype; Internet.</a></p>
</div>
<div data-bbox=)

No one should be surprised when children may complain that family worship is boring. Fathers need to take a page out the life of James Paton, the father of missionary John G. Paton. John Paton gave the most eloquent eulogy to his father when he reflected on times spent together in family worship. Paton’s father became a Christian, “through a crisis of religious experience and from that day he openly and very decidedly followed the Lord Jesus.”<sup>148</sup>

After his conversion at seventeen, and with the blessing of his mother, James began leading his family in “daily morning and evening prayer and reading of the Bible and holy singing,”<sup>149</sup> a practice that continued into his own family after marriage. He faithfully led his family in worship until his death at age seventy-seven.<sup>150</sup>

As a young man, James “had a strong desire to be a minister of the Gospel,” but came to understand that this was not God’s plan for life.<sup>151</sup> Having accepted God’s direction for his life, he made a “solemn vow, – that if God gave him sons, he would consecrate them unreservedly to the ministry of Christ.”<sup>152</sup>

Paton family worship was a lively and anticipated time. Not only did every family member participate but also if guests were visiting, they joined in. The time was spent in reading Scripture or Christian books like Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*. Time was taken for questions and answers, reciting the catechism and singing. James led by

---

<sup>148</sup>John G. Paton, *Missionary to the New Hebrides: An Autobiography Edited by his Brother* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1898), 19.

<sup>149</sup>*Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>150</sup>*Ibid.* Paton wrote, “And so began in his seventeenth year that blessed custom of Family Prayer, morning and evening, which my father practiced probably without one single omission till he lay on his deathbed, seventy-seven years of age; when, even to the last day of his life, a portion of Scripture was read, and his voice was heard softly joining in the Psalm.”

<sup>151</sup>*Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>152</sup>*Ibid.* James Paton married Janet Jardine on May 24, 1824. They had eleven children. John Paton records that three of his brothers entered the ministry.

giving expositions of the Bible “all tending to impress us with the infinite grace of a God of love and mercy in the great gift of His dear Son Jesus, our Saviour.”<sup>153</sup>

The time spent in family worship was for Paton an important spiritual milestone that shaped his faith in God. In a testimony to the significance of the daily practice for him and for his entire family, Paton wrote,

It has been an amazing thing to me, occasionally to meet with men who blamed this “catechizing” for giving them a distaste to religion; every one in our circle thinks and feels exactly the opposite. It laid the solid rock-foundations of our religious life. After-years have given to these questions and their answers a deeper or a modified meaning, but none of us have ever once even dreamed of wishing that we had been otherwise trained. Of course, if the parents are not devout, sincere, and affectionate, – if the whole affair on both sides is taskwork, or worse, hypocritical and false, – results must be very different indeed!

Paton recalled how his father’s enthusiasm bubbled over with joy as he would rehearse the morning sermon for his wife, who was often unable to attend the public worship service due to “many living ‘encumbrances.’”<sup>154</sup> His father James would “parade across . . . our flag-floor, telling over the substance of the day’s sermons to our dear mother.”<sup>155</sup>

How he would entice us to help him to recall some idea or others, rewarding us when we got the length of “taking notes” and reading them over on our return . . . . And then it was quite a contest, which of us would get reading aloud, while all the rest listened, and father added here and there a happy thought, or illustration or anecdote . . . . There were eleven of us brought up in a home like that; and never one of the eleven, boy or girl, man or woman, has been heard, or ever will be heard, saying that Sabbath was dull or wearisome for us, or suggesting that we have heard of or seen any way more likely than that for making the Day of the Lord bright and blessed alike for parents and for children. But God help the homes where these things are done by force and not by love! The very discipline through which our father passed us was a kind of religion in itself.

Paton sums the sense of legacy left to all his brothers and sisters:

---

<sup>153</sup>Ibid., 24.

<sup>154</sup>Ibid., 25.

<sup>155</sup>Ibid.



None of us can remember that any day ever passed unhallowed thus; no hurry for market, no rush to business, no arrival of friends or guests, no trouble or sorrow, no joy or excitement, ever prevented at least our kneeling around the family altar, while the High Priest (i.e., James) led our prayers to God, and offered himself and his children there.<sup>156</sup>

Presbyterian minister and Princeton professor James W. Alexander (1804-1859) wrote what he called “a small book” for family worship by beginning, “There are some duties so plain, that they are rather assumed, than commanded, in the word of God.”<sup>157</sup> Alexander lays out a number of biblical reasons for parents to practice family worship. In the chapter dedicated to the influence the practice has upon the entire family, he wrote,

Let us not forget, that God doth not always chide, neither doth he keep his anger forever . . . . They cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivereth them out of their distresses. Then comes the time for thanksgiving; to praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men. A whole family engaged in rendering thanks is a delightful spectacle . . . . Where God’s worship has been maintained for years, one may look back upon the successive seasons of deliverance and gratitude, and see each one marked with its separate Ebenezer. Can religious professors willingly spend their lives in the reception of divine benefits, and yet withhold from themselves and their children the appropriate solemnity for such tribute of thanksgiving! Shame on the degeneracy of our day, which has made household irreligion a common thing, even within the pale of the visible church!<sup>158</sup>

Anglican bishop J. C. Ryle (1816-1900) instructed the parents of his church to begin training in the habits of reading the Word, in prayer, in the fear of overindulgence, just to name three of his seventeen point sermon. Point number fourteen was the most “pointed.” He said,

Instruction, and advice, and commands will profit little, unless they are backed up by the pattern of your own life. Your children will never believe you are in earnest, and really wish them to obey you, so long as your actions contradict your counsel. Archbishop Tillotson made a wise remark when he said, “To give children good instruction, and a bad example, is but beckoning to them with the head to show them the way to heaven, while we take them by the hand and lead them in the way

---

<sup>156</sup>Ibid., 21.

<sup>157</sup>James W. Alexander, *Thoughts on Family-Worship* (Pittsburgh: Soli Deo Gloria, 1990), 2.

<sup>158</sup>Ibid., 120, 121.

to hell . . . . Fathers and mothers, do not forget that children learn more by the eye than they do by the ear.”<sup>159</sup>

Finally, in a call to Christian families, urging a return to the practice of family worship J. Ligon Duncan has written,

[T]he family is God’s divinely appointed “small group” discipleship program. The family is the first place that God appointed for teaching and learning about God and godliness . . . . Our goal in evangelical churches ought to be (1) for every family unit to become a discipleship group; (2) for every husband and father to become an active, self-denying, spiritual leader in his home; (3) for our congregations to have as many families functioning as “family-based growth groups” as there are families; and (4) for family religion to be the fountain of healthy, robust, corporate worship, as well as worship in all of life.<sup>160</sup>

### **Why Faith at Home Must Have First Place**

Statistics rarely give insight into matters of the heart. They are unable to tell the whole story because statistics lack the ability to communicate human pain. Next to the death of a child, a child who walks away from the faith brings great pain and sorrow to believing parents. However, there is a way to put a face on the pain and urgency into the hearts of parents. A pastor in Denver began a sermon series on home-centered discipleship. At the beginning of the sermon, the pastor invited ten children to join him at the front of the auditorium. As the children from the congregation faced the audience, the pastor said that recent studies predicted that at least six of those children would walk away from the church or the faith upon graduation from high school. He then put his hand on the shoulder of an eight-year-old girl named Janet and asked the audience to decide if they would be comfortable with Janet being one of the six. The audience unanimously vetoed the choice saying, “No!” The pastor then went down the line of the ten children asking the same question and getting the same response for all ten children.

---

<sup>159</sup>J. C. Ryle, “The Duties of Parents” [on-line]; accessed 25 February 2008; available from <http://www.biblebb.com/files/ryle/PARENTSJC.HTM>; Internet.

<sup>160</sup>Derek W. H. Thomas, Philip Graham Ryken, and J. Ligon Duncan III, eds., *Give Praise to God: A Vision for Reforming Worship* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2003), 320.

Then he asked the parents what they would commit to do from that moment on to fight for the spiritual wellbeing of their children.

The evangelical family must learn how to engage in the spiritual battles for the sake of their family's spiritual growth and perseverance in the faith. Because the Lord is "great and awesome" (Neh 4:14), families must be urgently encouraged to fight the good fight of faith for their sons, daughters, wives and the spiritual life of the home. The next chapter addresses that issue.

## CHAPTER 4

### DETAILS OF THE PROJECT

This chapter explains the procedure for executing this ministry project. This project was conducted at Faith Baptist Church, Parker, Colorado.<sup>1</sup> The project spanned a fifteen-week period beginning in September and concluding in December 2010. The strategy for the design of the project came from a personal desire to improve the methods and practice of spiritual formation in the families of FBC. The study of spiritual warfare became the vehicle to inspire and implement practices for discipleship at home.

The project began with reading of William Gurnall's (1616-1679) *The Christian in Complete Armour*.<sup>2</sup> His treatise on spiritual warfare served as the foundation for the project. The next step in the project required study of the biblical and theological teaching about Satan in relation to Paul's exposition of the armor of God in the letter to the Ephesians.<sup>3</sup> A sociological inquiry into the contemporary stressors on American families followed, with a special eye toward the effects upon Evangelical families.<sup>4</sup>

Two questions guided the research and the project. First, what, if any, correlation might there be between the forces of contemporary culture on the Christian family? Second, how might these forces hinder spiritual formation in the home? After the biblical study of the nature and tactics of the Christian's opponent, it seemed reasonable

---

<sup>1</sup>From this point on Faith Baptist Church will be referred to as FBC.

<sup>2</sup>William Gurnall, *The Christian in Complete Armour*, 2 vols. (reprint, Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2002).

<sup>3</sup>See chap. 2.

<sup>4</sup>See chap. 3.

to assume that contemporary pressures have spiritual roots behind them, and therefore need to be met with spiritual weapons.

### **Phases of the Project**

Upon completion of the theological and sociological studies, a survey of the participants was administered. The survey sought to discover the knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and practices of spiritual warfare in spiritual formation. Two presuppositions guided these initial steps toward the implementation of the project. The first presupposition was that the Christians at FBC needed sound biblical teaching in order to understand the nature and purpose of spiritual warfare. Several factors seemed to have contributed to a general lack of understanding regarding spiritual warfare. However, three dominated: fear of fanaticism, ignorance of the Scripture, and a Western cultural bias against the supernatural.<sup>5</sup> These three factors created blind spots that kept many from considering the effects of spiritual warfare upon the spiritual formation of the family.<sup>6</sup>

A second presupposition was that many Christian families spent little time intentionally planning for spiritual formation in the home. Studies have shown that Christian parents make commitments affirming their personal responsibility for the spiritual formation of their children. However, the primary means for executing their commitments is often limited to taking their children to the church “professionals” who are expected to meet the discipleship needs of children.<sup>7</sup> This situation might be due to

---

<sup>5</sup>See chap. 3.

<sup>6</sup>Sam Storms, “Confronting Reality of Spiritual Warfare” [on-line]; accessed 5 December 2008; available from <http://www.enjoyinggodministries.com/article/confronting-reality-of-spiritual-warfare>; Internet.

<sup>7</sup>Timothy Paul Jones, “Equipping Families to do Discipleship Family Ministry” [on-line]; accessed 6 May 2009; available from [www.timothypauljones.com](http://www.timothypauljones.com); Internet. In the presentation, Jones cites these statistics: “85% of parents recognize they bear the primary responsibility for their children’s spiritual growth” but “65% believe that they are fulfilling this responsibility simply by involving their children in church.” Furthermore, “parents spent fewer than 15 minutes each week in dialogue with their children” and

misguided or false assumptions. For example, a sense of spiritual inferiority may discourage parents from engaging directly in their child's spiritual formation. Some parents might conclude that since the pastors of the church have gone to seminary, they are far more equipped for the task. "How," a parent might ask, "can I compete with the seminary trained pastor when it comes to biblical knowledge?" Not wanting to be seen by his or her child as inadequate, the parent hides behind an outsourcing strategy. Perhaps the reason may be as simple as a parent's ignorance of their Scriptural obligations, or sadly, arising from just plain laziness.

The church itself may also be culpable in discouraging parents from their God-assigned responsibility. A church may have so arranged its programming that the implied promise communicates that the "professionals" will in fact step into the parent's discipleship role. That is not to say that a church's leaders intentionally seek to usurp a parent's authority. The mistake may be the unintended consequence of a good intention. However, neither the abdication of parental responsibility nor the acceptance of the parent's responsibility by the church will receive God's blessing. Without doubt, the church must be an aid and resource supporting the parents' responsibility. Providing aid means equipping the parents with as many biblically sound tools as possible. However, the church must steadfastly refuse the temptation to step into the parental role, placing in the church ministries that which belongs to the home.

The Gurnallian Warrior Project, as it came to be known, was designed to establish a foothold in a home-centered training approach to spiritual formation. The discipline of family worship alone will be insufficient by itself for the needs of spiritual formation; however, the practice is a significant discipline that can serve as a vital

---

"three-fourths of teens couldn't recall having a meaningful conversation with their father." Sadly, Jones points out that a minority of parents are never asked by a church leader about their children's spiritual growth or were offered help in the ministry of home centered discipleship.

ministry for growth in godliness within the family. In order to create a culture of discipleship in the home, the following steps were taken.

### **Promoting and Recruiting for the Project**

FBC had already been aware of this course of study in Biblical Spirituality.<sup>8</sup> In membership meetings, regular updates were given on the progress in the course, the topics being studied and requests for prayer. Early on, the announcement of the general area of focus for the project, namely spiritual warfare created anticipation for the project and built an expectation of involvement. The subject matter was especially attractive to many, particularly those having questions about spiritual warfare. Some admitted they knew nothing at all; others to confusion by various teachings on the subject. Informal discussions with church members revealed that many were willing to participate in order to get answers to their questions and grow in ways that put the principles of spiritual warfare into practice. They expressed a desire to learn more and to teach what they learned to their children.

When it came time to recruit families for involvement in the project, a simple bulletin insert was designed in a mock newspaper format with the banner headline announcing: “IT’S WAR!” (Appendix 1). The Sunday bulletin continued to promote the initial informational meeting for three weeks using the same flyer in order to reach as many members and church attendees as possible. The goal was to recruit at least twenty families for the project.

On the third week of promotion, a meeting with all families interested in participating was held. At this point, few had any idea of what the project would be like. Thus, the purpose of this informational meeting was to explain the project with as much

---

<sup>8</sup>The course, Biblical Spirituality, was the concentration of study offered by The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary beginning in January 2008. It was as part of that D.Min. level course that this project was developed.

specificity as possible. The goal of this meeting was to make clear to all the families the level of commitment they would be asked to give (Appendix 2). If anyone had doubts about being able to fulfill their commitment, they were given the opportunity to decline freely from participation.

Since most had only vague knowledge of the course of study out of which this project arose, it was important to explain the background leading up to the project. In the form of a mini-history lesson, the project was cast in the context of studies in biblical spirituality. The project was designed to bring together the spirituality of William Gurnall reflected in *The Christian in Complete Armour* with the practicality of his instructions for the purposes of spiritual formation in the home.

A clear explanation of the goals for the project was necessary for participation and implementation. Families growing in their understanding of what it means to be “in Christ,” a phrase (or its equivalent) that Paul used in more than thirty verses in Ephesians, was one of the goals. Three “building block” goals contributed to this larger goal. The first goal was equipping families with the biblical knowledge and skills necessary for spiritual warfare. The second was helping families understand and apply what it means to “put on the full armor of God.” The third was encouraging parents and children to form the spiritual habit of family worship.

The final agenda item brought to everyone’s attention the commitments to be made for the fifteen weeks of the project. The participants in a project of this nature, especially those families who have not practiced family worship or done so sporadically, were made aware of the significant effort expected of them. The central commitment was to engage with and use the family devotions created for a twelve week period. Five devotionals each week had been prepared in advance from Gurnall’s work.

The participants were also asked to attend all twelve weeks of the sermon series, “The Christian in Complete Armor,” preached at the public worship services. A further commitment asked that the participants attend twelve weeks of “Family Huddles”



lasting thirty minutes. These were conducted from 12:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. each Sunday. The purpose of the huddles (see below) was to encourage the participants by sharing ideas, reciting the assigned memory verses and distributing the next week's devotionals.

The last item on the agenda was to distribute the Pre-Project Survey (Appendix 3) and Release Forms for families with minors (Appendix 4) which were to be completed and returned at the first huddle a week later.

### **The Pre-Project Survey**

At the first huddle, each person age six and above returned the completed pre-project survey and the Low Risk Informed Consent form. The survey was designed to gather three areas of information. First, the survey asked basic demographics information such as age, gender, number of years of salvation, participation in church ministries and church membership. Second, participants were asked to rate their knowledge of spiritual warfare. Finally, the survey asked general questions about the practice of spiritual disciplines. Answers to the survey created a baseline of knowledge about spiritual warfare, attitudes toward discipleship and practices of the spiritual disciplines. The same survey was given on week twelve of the project in order to discover changes in attitudes and/or behavior of the participants in the same areas surveyed. Although the questionnaire was a "snapshot" of this group at the beginning and the end of the project, it provided information about the effectiveness of learning the principles of spiritual warfare in the context of family worship (see Appendix 12).

### **The Family Devotionals**

Five devotionals were prepared each week for twelve weeks totaling sixty devotionals. Each week's devotions follow the same format: a Scripture to memorize, a

Scripture to read, “Standing Orders for the Gurnallian Warrior,” a song to sing, and a prayer to pray.<sup>9</sup>

For the song, two options were offered to the families. Families were invited to take one or two of the church hymnals to use for their worship together. The second option was to sing along with a CD prepared for the project by members of the FBC worship team. The idea for the CD came in collaboration with the FBC worship director. In the planning phase for the sermon series, the idea arose of creating a CD with fourteen songs thematically tied to the topic of spiritual warfare and used during the public worship gathering of the church. After choosing the songs (hymns and choruses), the FBC music director and the worship team recorded these songs on a CD entitled “The Gurnallian Project.” The CD and lyric sheets were distributed to the participating families to use for their worship (Appendix 11). The use of a hymnal and/or the CD’s gave the families flexibility in songs to sing. The CD encouraged participation for those not keen on singing aloud in a small group (even a family), or who were simply too shy.

Two types of family devotions were made available each week. The first type was called “For All Families” (Appendix 5). These devotionals were designed for adults and teens. They were longer, usually taking fifteen to twenty minutes to read. If the leader added discussion, they would naturally take longer. Where possible, the language of these edited devotionals aimed to keep Gurnall’s diction, and many of his illustrations.

A shorter version for families with elementary aged children or younger was also available called the “Kid’s Meals” (Appendix 6). “Kid’s Meals” devotionals were shorter, designed to take under ten minutes to read, and kept to two pages in length. Little

---

<sup>9</sup>Donald S. Whitney, *Family Worship: In the Bible, in History and in Your Home* (Shepherdsville, KY: The Center for Biblical Spirituality, 2005), 37-42. Whitney’s simple outline “read, pray, sing” was adopted for this project. The only additions to his structure were the Gurnall material and a prayer based on a book of Puritan prayers in Arthur Bennett, ed., *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1975).

attempt was made to keep Gurnall's diction or illustrations. The "Kid's Meals" were more conversational in tone. If the family had a wide span of ages for the children, they were given the "Kid's Meal" version. If the family was an "empty-nester," they used the longer version. However, families were invited to use either version depending on their needs.

### **The Sermon Series**

A sermon series accompanied the twelve weeks of family devotions. The sermon preached on Sunday pointed ahead to the devotional themes of the week. In effect, the sermons gave a "head's up" of the direction for ministry to be applied in the home. The series also provided an opportunity to proclaim and apply the power of the gospel to enrich the entire church through instruction in spiritual warfare (Appendix 7). The goal of the series was to foster an understanding of the Christian's spiritual warfare and to apply practical lessons so that all would be encouraged to stand together in the fight "against the rulers, against the authorities, and against the cosmic powers over this present darkness" (Eph 6:12).

The first sermon in the series, "Christ Is the Main Point of Everything" (Eph 1:9-10), gave the audience an overview of the entire letter to the Ephesians. This sermon provided the historical and cultural background of the church in the city of Ephesus.<sup>10</sup> The sermon communicated Paul's theological understanding of the victorious and exalted Christ as "the main point of history" as the context for spiritual warfare. It was important for the hearers to identify with Paul's fundamental beliefs about the supernatural realm

---

<sup>10</sup>Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians: Power and Magic: The Concept of Power in Ephesians in Light of its Historical Setting* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). Arnold gives helpful insights into the Artemis cult that dominated Ephesus. He also gives an overview of the various religious and pagan influences that swirled around the city. Other helpful works included Clinton E. Arnold, *Powers of Darkness: Principalities and Powers in Paul's Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002); Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999); Andrew T. Lincoln, *Ephesians* (Dallas: Word Books, 1990).

so that a contemporary audience could understand the theological meaning of “standing strong in the Lord and the power of his might” (Eph 6:10).

An overview of Paul’s ministry in Ephesus and an outline of the entire letter under its two major divisions, theological and practical, was helpful in showing the theme of Christ’s victory over the forces of darkness. Chapters one through three (the theological section) related to standing strong in the Lord because of what God had done in redeeming believers by his grace. Chapters four through six (the practical section) related to standing strong in the Lord because of what Christians are to do, namely, to walk in the power of God’s grace. The challenge of the sermon asked the question, “Are twenty-first century American Christians ready and willing to adopt Paul’s worldview of the supernatural forces of evil?”<sup>11</sup>

The second sermon in the series, “Know the Enemy: Don’t be Outwitted by the Cosmic Mafia,”<sup>12</sup> was an exposition of Paul’s view of the supernatural forces.<sup>13</sup> Paul calls believers to live a life worthy of their high calling in Christ. To Paul’s way of thinking, striving to live up to this calling necessarily implies spiritual warfare touching every aspect of the believer’s life. Therefore, the purpose of this sermon was to clarify Paul’s strategy for spiritual warfare. Every believer must put on God’s armor provided for the fight for godliness. The armor is not optional and even more necessary because of the nature, the influence and the strategy used by Satan against the believer.

---

<sup>11</sup>Clinton E. Arnold, *Three Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1997). This book is an excellent resource for thinking through the Scripture’s world view of the realms of darkness and their influence upon society.

<sup>12</sup>Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 825. Hoehner cleverly used this phrase to describe the “principalities and powers” in Ephesus.

<sup>13</sup>Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians: Powers of Darkness* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 82.

Although the passage in Ephesians 6 does not explicitly reference an “in Christ” formula, it clearly commands Christians to “be strong in the Lord and the power of [Christ’s] might.” Therefore, the third sermon, “An Inseparable Bond: Our Union with Christ,” explained Paul’s understanding of the believer’s position in Christ due to the new birth. William Gurnall, in keeping with the Puritan view of his day, taught the doctrine of the believer’s union with Christ as the basis of all confident Christian living. The doctrine of union with Christ was central to effective and successful spiritual warfare in the growth for godliness. Gurnall made it a point to say that Christ is the believer’s armor.<sup>14</sup> The sermon explained how union with Christ comes about (Eph 2:1-10); explained typical evidences of union (Eph 4:17-6:10); and provided practical implications of union with Christ (Eph 6:10). Believers must grow in confidence that when they enter the battlefield against the world, the flesh and the devil, they have much more than a fighting chance.

The first piece of armor mentioned is the belt of truth. The fourth sermon, “The Belt of Truth: Learning to Love the Truth in an Age of Lies” (Eph 6:14a), addressed truth as both an objective and subjective (i.e., experiential) reality. In this message, truth is explained as both a body of revealed knowledge and a revealed Person, i.e., Christ. Believers learned that Christian conduct grows increasingly to reflect the characteristics of Christ and less the characteristics of the “old man.” Using several verses from Ephesians 4, believers learned how to “put on the new man” by growing into a variety of new values and behaviors.

In the fifth sermon, “The Breastplate of Righteousness: The Conscience’s Best Defense” (Eph 6:14b), the second piece of armor was explained. This metaphor, like the

---

<sup>14</sup>Gurnall, *Armour*, 1:45. Another helpful work about the Puritan view of union with Christ is J. Stephen Yuille, *The Inner Sanctum of Puritan Piety: John Flavel’s Doctrine of Mystical Union with Christ* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2007).

belt of truth, has roots in Isa 59:15-17.<sup>15</sup> Isaiah pictured God as a warrior strapping on his armor to go to war on behalf of his people rescuing them from an oppressive enemy. The image of the breastplate provides an excellent opportunity to proclaim the gospel and explain the doctrine of imputed justification. The content of the sermon sought to comfort believers by turning to trust in the God who went to war against the powers of darkness and sin, prevailed and set believers free from those powers. The sermon explained how the righteousness of Christ protects the believer in daily spiritual battles. First, due to imputation as the source of acceptance with God, believers are protected (Rom 3:21-26). Second, Paul explains how righteousness finds expression through new life in Christ (Eph 5:8-14). Third, using a few practical applications from the pastoral insights of Martyn Lloyd-Jones, believers were taught how to “put on” the breastplate.<sup>16</sup>

The sixth sermon, “The Gospel of Peace: These Boots are Made for Walkin’” (Eph 6:15), explained the third piece of armor. The content of the sermon addressed the believer’s need to be prepared and mobile in spiritual warfare by endeavoring to live a gospel-centered life. The gospel is “of first importance” (1 Cor 15:1-3) for all of Christian living; the beginning, the middle and the end. This sermon provided an excellent opportunity to make clear what the gospel is and is not. The preparedness of the gospel of peace is about living a gospel-centered life in the ordinary pursuits of the Christian life. The gospel gives power to avoid the traps of legalism and license, and to appropriate God’s comfort through trials.

The most important piece of armor, according to Gurnall, is the shield of faith. Gurnall’s exposition of Ephesians 6:16 is the second longest section in his work. The seventh and eight sermons, “The Shield of Faith: Faith’s Preeminence” and “The Shield

---

<sup>15</sup>J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1993), 491.

<sup>16</sup>M. D. Lloyd-Jones, *The Christian Soldier: An Exposition of Ephesians 6:10-20* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1977), 252-55.

of Faith: Faith’s Purifying Power” respectively, described the nature and kind of “fiery darts” sent the believer’s way by Satan. God designed the shield of faith to “quench” the darts of the wicked one.<sup>17</sup> In an excellent section of his work, Gurnall explains how faith works to purify believers when facing the three greatest temptations: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life (1 John 5:4).<sup>18</sup> Gurnall wrote, “The heart . . . is an oven, the devil [is] the baker, and temptation [is] the fire with which [Satan] heats [up the heart]” and then sin is born.<sup>19</sup> He then went on to show how faith works to purify the soul of these various expressions of unbelief.

In the ninth sermon, “The Helmet of Salvation: A Full-orbed Hope,” (Eph 6:17a) the significance of the helmet as the believer’s hope of salvation was explained. The helmet reminds believers of their new identity in Christ and the destiny God established for them. The hope of salvation, as Gurnall defines it, is “a supernatural grace, whereby the believer, through Christ, expects and waits for all those good things of the promise, which at present he hath not received, or not fully.”<sup>20</sup> The sermon emphasized how believers are “uprooted” and “transplanted” from one kingdom into another. As such, believers must recognize that God has snatched them from slavery in Satan’s kingdom and brought them into Christ’s kingdom through adoption.

Every soldier needs a weapon; every Christian has one, which was explained in the tenth sermon, “The Sword of the Spirit: More than a Light Saber” (Eph 6:17b). The Word of God is central and essential in spiritual warfare. This sermon provided an opportunity to explain the nature of God’s Word, and the cause for its effectiveness in the life of the believer. Gurnall is especially helpful in the practical application of this piece

---

<sup>17</sup>Gurnall, *Armour*, 2:74-75.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 2:78-91.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 2:76.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 2:130.

of armor explaining how to use God's Word against external and internal threats.<sup>21</sup>

The longest section of Gurnall's work addressed the need for "all prayer." He pens over three hundred pages on the subject.<sup>22</sup> The final two sermons in the series focused practical attention on helping believers grow in the discipline of prayer. Sermons eleven and twelve, "The Necessity of Persevering Prayer" and "The Necessity of Powerful Prayer," respectively (Eph 6:18-20) were not about a seventh piece of armor. But, as Gurnall points out, the armor is only as effective as it is "treated with the oil of prayer."<sup>23</sup>

The first of these sermons focused on the questions of how Satan hinders the believer in prayer and how believers unwittingly cooperate. In the application, Satan's main tactics were exposed and remedies provided. Additionally, since the believer also experiences personal hindrances in prayer, practical remedies were offered.

The final sermon in the series called believers to vital and dependent prayer throughout the life of faith. The exposition systematically walked listeners through each phrase of the passage, unpacking what Paul meant by "all prayer," "at all times in the Spirit," "watching for all the saints," "and for me also." The importance of the work of the Holy Spirit in prayer was emphasized throughout the sermon.

### **The Family Huddles**

The family huddles met weekly with all participants, including the children. (For the title of each huddle, see Appendix 8). The huddles had a threefold purpose: to provide accountability, communication, and encouragement to the participants over the twelve weeks of the family devotions. The huddles lasted thirty to forty-five minutes.

---

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 2:256-82.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 2:288-600.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 2:288.



Any longer would have been to add more to their time commitments; any shorter would have accomplished little. It was during the huddles that the next week's devotions were distributed.

The time was used for encouragement. For example, children and adults (two or three at the most) were periodically quizzed in Scripture memorization. At random, some participants were asked to recite their verses aloud so that all might hear and cheer them on. The huddles provided an opportunity for communication and feedback. When time allowed, the participants were asked to discuss their experiences of family worship, insights into spiritual warfare, and what victories, defeats, or struggles were taking place. The huddles were a very good time to encourage the families in the principles of spiritual formation in the home.

The first week's huddle, "Why Bother with Family Worship?" established the biblical and historical support for the practice of worship at home. Two excellent resources for this huddle came from books by Donald S. Whitney and J. W. Alexander.<sup>24</sup> Alexander's material was the foundation for the second week's presentation entitled "The Shaping Influences of Family Worship." Alexander provides a systematic and thoughtful explanation of the positive effects of family worship on the family that is still useful for today's family.

The third week's huddle explained how the gospel shapes the human heart. This huddle, "Gospel-powered Parenting," focused on the way to cultivate biblical spirituality in the home through gospel-centered discipleship. An excellent book by William P. Farley introduced parents to the principles of gospel-powered parenting.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup>Whitney, *Family Worship*, 11-36; James W. Alexander, *Thoughts on Family-Worship* (Pittsburgh: Soli Deo Gloria, 1990), 30-93.

<sup>25</sup>William P. Farley, *Gospel-powered Parenting: How the Gospel Shapes and Transforms Parenting* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2009), 39-52.

The huddle concentrated on five biblical assumptions necessary for gospel-powered parenting.

Two video presentations from Focus on the Family were shown in huddles four and five.<sup>26</sup> The huddles were entitled, “The Importance of Your Family’s Faith Plan” and “Tools for Your Family’s Faith Plan.” Larry Fowler, executive director of global training for AWANA, is the featured speaker. In these presentations, using the life of Joseph as an illustration, Fowler explained how the OT character Joseph was guided by five biblical principles woven by God through his life experiences.

Biblical spirituality in the home is not an easy task. Nonetheless, God gives to parents the responsibility for discipling their children for the kingdom of God. Huddles six and seven helped parents establish spiritual goals for the family. The titles for these two huddles were “Examining Goals: Parts 1 and 2.” With so many voices clamoring for today’s family to conform to culturally acceptable norms, it would be easy enough to yield to culturally driven life goals. Christian parents need to examine and carefully rethink their family’s goals in light of biblical teaching. Material from Tedd Tripp’s book, *Shepherding a Child’s Heart*, encouraged thinking biblically about culture.<sup>27</sup>

Once again, the Focus on the Family DVD presentation was used for the next two huddles.<sup>28</sup> The sessions featured Tim Kimmel, executive director of Family Matters and author of the book, *Grace-Based Parenting* and *Raising Kids for True Greatness*.<sup>29</sup> Session one warned parents that “effective spiritual training isn’t likely to take place

---

<sup>26</sup>Larry Fowler, “The Importance of Your Family’s Faith Plan,” in *Raising Kids with a Faith that Lasts*, DVD (Colorado Springs, CO: Focus on the Family, 2007), sessions 4 and 5.

<sup>27</sup>Tedd Tripp, *Shepherding a Child’s Heart* (Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 1995), 39-48.

<sup>28</sup>Tim Kimmel, “Raising our Kids Like God Raises Us,” in *Raising Kids with a Faith that Lasts*, DVD (Colorado Springs, CO: Focus on the Family, 2007), session 2.

<sup>29</sup>Tim Kimmel, *Grace-Based Parenting* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005); idem, *Raising Kids for True Greatness: Redefine Success for You and Your Child* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006).

without grace.”<sup>30</sup> Kimmel offered an alternative to controlling our children through guilt and shame by examining the way God brings believers to maturity.

Session two, “What are the Driving Needs of Our Children?”<sup>31</sup> focused attention on identifying the greatest needs of children. Kimmel presented a “big picture” view of parenting, explaining why children are given to the family, what happens when their needs are not met, and how to help them understand God’s purposes for their lives.

Huddles for weeks ten and eleven prepared parents to practice the biblical principles of spiritual formation in the home. In “Foundations for Spiritual Formation at Home: Part 1,” parents were encouraged to deepen roots for a lifelong faith.<sup>32</sup> Part two encouraged parents to nourish the most important relationship in the home for spiritual formation, namely their marriage.<sup>33</sup>

The final huddle tackled perhaps the most untapped resource in the family and the church: grandparents. The Kimmel’s excellent book, *Extreme Grandparenting*, provided a rich resource for this brief presentation.<sup>34</sup> The presentation, “Grandparents: You’re Not Done Yet,” was designed to encourage parents and grandparents to work together for the spiritual formation of the next generation.

### **The Gurnallian Warrior Coloring Contest**

An unexpected and fun feature of the project was a coloring contest. The graphic artist who created the “Gurnallian Warrior” also created a coloring page for the

---

<sup>30</sup>Kimmel, “Raising our Kids,” session 2.

<sup>31</sup>Tim Kimmel, “What are the Driving Needs of our Children?” in *Raising Kids with a Faith that Lasts*, DVD (Colorado Springs, CO: Focus on the Family, 2007), session 3.

<sup>32</sup>Kurt Brunner and Steve Stroope, *It Starts at Home: A Practical Guide to Nurturing Lifelong Faith* (Chicago: Moody, 2010), 41-61.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Tim Kimmel and Darcy Kimmel, *Extreme Grandparenting: The Ride of Your Life!* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2007).

children (Appendix 9). The purpose for the graphics and the coloring page was to make memorable the lessons of spiritual warfare.

The coloring contest became part of the twelfth week huddle. The coloring pages were received without the names of the children on them. Instead, when the children turned in their pages, a number was assigned to them, and placed on their drawing along with the child's age. The drawings were then taken to judges waiting in another room. The prizes awarded were four tickets to the movie *The Dawn Treader: the Final Voyage*, *The Big Picture Story Bible*, *The Family's Pilgrim Progress* and "Songs that Jesus Said" (CD).<sup>35</sup> The prizes were announced at the conclusion of the final huddle.

### **The Post-Project Survey**

At the final huddle, all the participants in the project were given the same survey as at the first week (Appendix 3). After finding the base line from the first survey, the Post-Project Survey measured progress in the three goals of the project as set out in the first chapter (see Appendix 12).<sup>36</sup>

### **The In-Home Interviews**

An in-home interview was conducted with the families during the final three weeks of the project. (See Appendix 10 for a list of possible questions for the interview). The home interview allowed the families to relax in their own familiar surroundings and be more reflective of their experience. Some families experienced lapses from their initial commitments. They considered these lapses as failure and felt apprehensive about mentioning it. However, the interview provided an excellent opportunity for pastoral care and spiritual encouragement. Assurance was given that the family had not disqualified

---

<sup>35</sup>David Helm, *The Big Picture Story Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004); Jean Watson, *The Family's Pilgrim Progress* (Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2007); Keith Getty and Kristyn Getty, *Songs that Jesus Said: Scripture into Music* [CD-ROM] (Franklin, TN: Getty Music, 2005).

<sup>36</sup>See chaps. 1, 2-3.

itself from providing helpful analysis. In fact, it was an opportunity to help the family understand that inconsistency is part of the battle in spiritual warfare. They were encouraged to persevere prayerfully in the battles for time, mental and spiritual concentration, and against interruptions and their own lack of desire. It was important that the children be present in order to gauge how they interacted with parents, one another, and the material. The purpose of the in-home interview was to gain firsthand knowledge of growth in the family's understanding of God and their position "in Christ." Through the stories of victories and defeats, the interviews revealed how much the families grew in their understanding of spiritual warfare after twelve weeks of Gurnall's insights.

### **Final Considerations**

Gurnall's commitment to pastoral care for the people of his church is impressive. Gurnall loved the people of his church and sought to strengthen their walk with God. He understood the importance of stressing that the "successful" Christian life meant battling against the powers of darkness. He called the battle "a solemn war between the saint and Satan."<sup>37</sup> Gurnall summed his pastoral ambitions as a "hearty desire [for his congregation's] eternal happiness."<sup>38</sup> In the Dedicatory, Gurnall wrote,

Truly my heart is enlarged to you, and to God for you. If anything makes me loath to be gone to another world, which my dropping house above many bids me prepare for, it is not the least, to think I shall leave no more of you walking in the way to eternal life, and you who are on the way thither, in no closer gospel order for your mutual help and comfort in your journey: yea, while I am among you, little do you think how much of your poor minister's life lies at your mercy. If I should measure my life by the joy of it – as indeed who doth not? – then in some uprightness I can say with Paul, I live as I see any of you stand fast in the Lord, and die as I see others stand fast in their sins, not to be moved with all the entreaties of the gospel which have wooed you.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup>Gurnall,  *Armour*, 1:2.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*, 1:1.

<sup>39</sup>Gurnall,  *Armour*, 1:1.

## CHAPTER 5

### EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

Twenty-seven families participated in the Gurnallian Project on Spiritual Warfare.<sup>1</sup> This number included 19 families with children, 7 empty-nester couples and 1 single woman. Two families dropped out before completing the twelve weeks. One of the participating families included a believing mother and an unbelieving father. The total number of adults at the beginning of the project was 49. Among these 27 families, there were 47 children and teens; of those 15 children or teens completed surveys.

The pre- and post-surveys were identical. The pre-project survey was taken on September 12, 2010. The post-project survey was taken in the week following November 28, 2010. All in-home interviews were recorded and conducted over a period of four weeks.<sup>2</sup> The holiday schedule allowed for one week of interviews prior to Christmas and three weeks in January.

#### **Evaluation of the Purpose of the Project**

The purpose for the project fell into two main categories. The first purpose aimed at teaching modern families the biblical understanding of spiritual warfare. Reaching this goal necessitated clear instruction in the biblical worldview of the spiritual realm.<sup>3</sup> The second purpose was that families grow in their knowledge of God in facing

---

<sup>1</sup>Referred to from this point as the project.

<sup>2</sup>For a report on the data from the surveys, see Appendix 12.

<sup>3</sup>According to Clinton Arnold, Paul's instruction that "we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against rulers, against authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies" (Eph 6:12) seems like an antiquated, and mythological world view to many American Christians, more along the lines of Peretti, Lewis and Tolkien. The challenge for

the many cultural pressures that come their way. Cultural and social structures are not immune to the influences of the evil powers at work in the world. That is not to say that evil forces dominate all cultural structures or social institutions. However, Christian families must recognize that they live in the context of a fallen world, a world that “lies in the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19).

### **Biblical Understanding and Skills**

The information gleaned from the surveys and interviews revealed the following. Overall, the participants benefited from the project’s aim to help grow in understanding the nature of spiritual warfare. Question ten on the survey asks, “I believe demons exist in nations that practice pagan religions, but not in America.” The comparison of pre- and post-surveys showed an increase in the number of those who came to believe that demonic activity is as much a part of Western culture (albeit manifested in differing ways) as in “pagan religions” by nearly 30 percent. Several in-home interviews confirmed a greater adoption of the biblical worldview. One husband initially responded to the question “What was your attitude toward spiritual warfare at the beginning of the project?” and later answered that he realized the battle for sanctification is a daily fight. Another father said he learned new strategies for the fight. A mother said she learned that “Satan is opportunistic . . . he never sleeps,” and that she and her family must be diligent in prayer. Another family mentioned growing in their admiration of “the beauty of Christ as our armor.”

How did the families do in growing in the skills of the spiritual disciplines?

The disciplines of the project included the disciplines of Scripture reading, memorization

---

many in our day will be to adopt the biblical worldview keeping a distrustful eye on the Western materialistic worldview. See Clinton Arnold, *Powers of Darkness: Principalities and Powers in Paul’s Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 169-82.

and meditation, prayer and singing the praises of God. Not surprisingly, these disciplines increased during the twelve weeks of the project by 36.4 percent.

### **Knowledge of God**

Without exception, every person who continued in the project, regardless of levels of consistency, gave testimony to learning more about God, a growing sense of his protection, learning more about union with Christ and the great blessing that these truths have for the Christian life.<sup>4</sup> Admittedly, measuring one's knowledge of God and his ways is a subjective assessment. However, question seven of the survey asks, "I have assurance of faith." Among adults, the percentage of increase in this category rose nearly 4 percent. Among children who responded the percentage of increase was 6.2 percent. Also, it may be inferred that growth in the spiritual disciplines, acting in faith during normal times or during times of challenge, would indicate a greater knowledge of God. A Christian's ability to stand in temptations and trials is from God. Standing stronger against the schemes of the devil is indication of a faith that is growing in the knowledge of God.

### **The Rationale for the Project**

Regarding the rationale for the project, it was stated earlier "Modern families are under attack; Christian families are not exempt."<sup>5</sup> Satan, it has been argued, is the "Separator-in-Chief." His strategy is to separate what God has joined and to join (or blend) what God has separated. Satan has many targets and many schemes. Significant among those targets is the family. If he can separate husbands and wives through divorce and children and parents through ongoing conflict and estrangement, he certainly will do it. He will use any and all means to produce these evil goals.

---

<sup>4</sup>Eph 1:3 says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places."

<sup>5</sup>See chap. 1.



Perhaps the greatest battle for the families was “finding the time.” However, in spite of the battles for time, children and parents increasingly looked forward to their “time together.” One family made this point most emphatically. According to the parents, no one in their family is a “morning person.” However, before the project began they discussed what time of the day would be best to gather for the family devotions. After some discussion, they agreed to get up twenty minutes earlier every morning for worship. They did this faithfully every day of the project. The husband said that God’s Spirit caused them to grow in their “desire to be together as a family in worship.”

During the interviews, the children were specifically asked whether or not they enjoyed being with their parents in this context of worship in the home. In only one family did the children complain about having to “do devotions.” Overall, the children not only enjoyed being with their parents but appreciated the experience of sharing God’s Word and praying together. Some of the older children (i.e., pre-teens and teens) expressed appreciation for the leadership of their parents in spiritual matters.

Contemporary wisdom is relentless in saying that children would rather be with peers than parents. Indeed, contemporary culture segregates groups by age believing that the homogenous principle is the best way to learn and to socialize. Even in churches, this seems to be the case.<sup>6</sup> However, recent surveys and the project interviews revealed a different story. Sociologists and authors Christian Smith and Patricia Snell write,

With some notable exceptions, most teenagers and their parents seem to basically get along most of the time, if not positively enjoy each other. During the ages 18 to 23, most of the participating emerging adults have reported that their relationships with their parents are improving even more, that they and their parents have become closer, more able to talk, less bothered by conflict, and stronger in their bonds of understanding and affection.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup>This project’s conclusion is not to advocate the complete elimination of the “life stage” principle for Christian education. However, churches should look seriously at ways of creating opportunities for integrating the generations, so that life experiences and biblical knowledge can be passed along from one generation to another. See Pss 71:18; 78:4, 6; 79:13; 102: 18; 145:4.

<sup>7</sup>Christian Smith and Patricia Snell, *Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 43. Also consider George Barna’s findings:

## The Strengths of the Project

Interviews with participants revealed positive regard for several aspects of the project. As one might expect, each family found something unique that helped them in particular. Often, the unique aspect mentioned answered a question or filled a spiritual need in the home. However, four strengths of the project stood out.

### The Devotions

Almost universally, parents said they benefited from the simple “read, sing, pray” format of the devotionals. One father who began the project with “fear and trepidation” became so comfortable with the format that after a few weeks he was convinced that he could create future devotionals for his own family. This family was particularly encouraged during the course of the project. Prior to the project, they had not practiced family worship regularly. They admitted that they had tried on several occasions prior to the project to maintain family worship. However, they admitted that their attempts were inconsistent.<sup>8</sup> For them, the project was a great resource. Parents also mentioned that they were helped by the creation of the Kid’s Meals in the fifth week of the project.<sup>9</sup>

---

“Family life has changed radically in the past several decades, but most of today’s children give positive marks to aspects of their family experience. For instance, the Barna survey found that 8 out of every 10 adolescents (79%) feel safe when they are at home; 2 out of every 3 (69%) say their family eats dinner together at least five nights a week; and 64% say they feel they can always trust their parents to do what is right for the child.” See George Barna, “Survey Describes the Ups and Downs of Tween Life” [on-line]; accessed 29 May 2009; available from <http://www.barna.org/family-kids-articles/146-survey-describes-the-ups-and-downs-of-tween-life>; Internet.

<sup>8</sup>This family became so enthusiastic about family worship that their eleven-year-old son took three days of devotionals with him on a class retreat for his school. During the retreat, he led five other boys in the devotionals each morning.

<sup>9</sup>The first four weeks of family devotionals were created with older children in mind. However, parents were already mentioning how difficult the material was for their younger children. It was then decided to create the “Kid’s Meals” devotionals starting the fifth week. Since the conclusion of the project, Kid’s Meals for the first four weeks have been created.

### **Memorizing and Singing Together**

Two other aspects of the project were encouraging. Parents thought modeling the memorization of Scripture helped their children in the discipleship process. “The memory verses,” wrote one mother “are alot [*sic*] for her (i.e., their daughter) with having her AWANA verses, and her preschool verses to memorize. I think that it helps her to see her mom and dad working to remember verses.” The children did much better at memorizing the verses than their parents. However, this only encouraged the parents to become more diligent. Many families mentioned that they enjoyed singing together. For most, this part of family worship was a first. The accompanying CD with hymns and songs was a huge help to fathers who said they cannot sing or are embarrassed to lead in song. The CD proved to be a big hit with the children. One family made Luther’s hymn, *A Mighty Fortress*, their family’s “theme song” because their four year old loved to sing it at the top of her lungs.

### **The Huddles: Video Instruction**

Another strength was gathering for the weekly huddles. The overall impression was that the huddles enhanced the value of the project. Two goals for the huddles, namely accountability and encouragement, were mentioned as its strengths. The parents were more than willing to give an extra thirty minutes each Sunday in order to gain insights in parenting skills for discipleship in the home. Many said that they needed to improve in this area of family life. They are looking to the church for resources and training in order to improve.<sup>10</sup> The DVD presentations used were the most helpful (see Appendix 8).<sup>11</sup> Because of the DVD instruction, the parents began to take seriously how they might plan for the spiritual development of their families.

---

<sup>10</sup>From these conversations, FBC leadership is persuaded that shaping our church ministries to include family equipping for discipleship at home is an essential ministry direction. FBC plans to take the topics for the huddles to turn them into a sermon series.

<sup>11</sup>A few parents especially mentioned Kimmel’s “Grace Based Parenting” presentation. Upon

Some parents among the empty nesters caught a vision for becoming a spiritually influential mother or father to their adult children, a spiritually influential grandfather or grandmother, or even as aunt or uncle. One couple lamented becoming “painfully aware” of how they “failed in the past” with their own children. However, after some discussion, they were also aware that they had new opportunities before them. They still had time to influence their adult children not walking in faith and soon-to-be born grandchild for the kingdom of God. They were quite enthusiastic about the possibilities still available to them.

### **The Sermon Series**

Many parents and older children found the sermon series helpful as preparation for the devotional topics for the upcoming week. The goal of the sermons was twofold. The first goal was to shed light on the theological truths of Paul’s text, and second, to make explicit the link between Christ and the armor. Furthermore, the sermons made it possible to make the gospel clear by explaining what the gospel is and is not, and to rehearse it again for the edification of believers beyond the project families to the entire congregation attending public worship. The sermon also gave the opportunity to offer the gospel to unbelievers who might be present. Participants said the application of the truths of the armor was practical to our contemporary setting.<sup>12</sup>

### **Overall Comments of Spiritual Growth**

Many families admitted to observing spiritual growth over the twelve weeks. For example, a few husbands found rich insight in Gurnall’s connection of the armor to

---

reflection, they came to see the importance of applying the grace of the gospel in their discipline of the children. The connection between the gospel and discipline was a much discussed topic with many parents.

<sup>12</sup>It is FBC’s habit to print copies of the sermon manuscript each week for distribution during the morning worship and posting on the church website. Parents took these along with the devotions each week in preparation.

the Person and work of Christ. One man said that he had an “intuitive” sense that there truly was a connection, but could not express it until reading Gurnall, and then the “lights went on.” Another, a former “Charismatic” Christian, told me that he appreciated the biblical and practical ways Gurnall approached spiritual warfare.<sup>13</sup> He was especially encouraged as he realized that Christians of every age battle the same temptations that he did.

Not surprisingly, a number of participants said they had not given much thought to the concept of spiritual warfare and were amazed to find that it was a “daily battle.”<sup>14</sup> Reading the material, as one wife said, opened her eyes to the potential of “warfare everywhere.” Her husband, who had some instruction in spiritual warfare growing up in his church, admitted that he and his wife rarely talked or prayed about it.

Up to their participation in the project, many believed spiritual warfare was about the “big” things, such as losing a job or marital problems, but they were beginning to understand that attempting to live the Christian life was itself a matter of spiritual warfare. One teenager said it best, “I used to think spiritual warfare was ‘out there.’ But I found out it’s in here.” With that statement, she patted her heart indicating that the struggle for godliness is a desperately internal and personal one. Greater awareness of the struggle for godly living gave shape and definition to what was once vague about spiritual warfare. Many admitted that they were becoming increasingly sensitive to the potential for Satan’s influences in the situations they faced as families.

---

<sup>13</sup>This man had been exposed to many Charismatic traditions in spiritual warfare that eventually left him cold. He deeply appreciated the gospel-oriented and Christ-centered teaching of Gurnall.

<sup>14</sup>Sam Storms, “Confronting Reality of Spiritual Warfare” [on-line]; accessed 5 December 2008; available from <http://www.enjoyinggodministries.com/article/confronting-reality-of-spiritual-warfare>; Internet.

The result of this new awareness about spiritual warfare was that it prompted more prayer about every part of their lives. One husband who regularly prayed for others admitted that he rarely, if ever, asked the Lord for help in matters he faced. Not because he did not think God would not help him, but because he had been convinced that it was “up to me to be godly.” However, through the study he became convicted that this attitude needed to change, started to pray more, and to “move away from self-reliance [in order] to rely on God in everything.” He said he had been disciplining himself to pray about everything in his life, and to pray more with his wife.

This matter of increased and more focused prayer was a common theme, especially among husbands. At the beginning of the project, few husbands prayed with their wives with any regularity. However, the disciplines in the devotions began to change their practice. In one of the huddles, a wife mentioned how thrilled she was that after nearly thirty years of marriage, she and her husband were daily praying together during the weeks of the project.

### **Discipleship Begins at Home**

One of the underlying presuppositions of this project was that the Christian home is the primary context for spiritual development. By example and practice, the project sought to impress participants with the biblical idea that discipleship begins at home. According to Deuteronomy 6, God gives parents the primary responsibility to disciple their children: “You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise” (v. 7). By practicing family worship at home, and giving instructing for parenting skills in the huddles, the message of homegrown spiritual growth began to take root in the practices of participants. In fact, in two interviews, this topic dominated the conversation. One wife said,

Disciplemaking begins at home. On several occasions, I closed my eyes and praised God that we were worshipping together as a family. That had never been done

before. It was just such encouragement . . . the power of God’s Word in healing a family. Frankly, we’ve been pretty broken for a really long time. We did all the devotions on our bed [and] I loved the laughter and the giggling together. Those are such memorable times for our children that when they go away . . . and remembering the security of the marriage is a safe haven for the children . . . that’s priceless. They will go into the world steady.

Another conversation came around to the subject of home schooling versus public schooling. One couple was feeling a great deal of pressure from friends to remove their children from the public schools on the premise that home schools are a better venue for the discipleship of children. The parents disagreed with that premise and said they believed it was the church’s job to equip parents to do the work of making disciples at home. They said,

It’s just that Satan has got a little hook in there because the church has dropped the ball in encouraging parents [to disciple their children at home] and it is a blessing to see our church think this is important – parents you are responsible. I was so encouraged because [the material presented in the huddles] wasn’t about homeschool, it wasn’t about public school . . . it was *disciple your kids* (emphasis added) wherever you school them . . . . And I think [this message] encourages unity in the body . . . . But the church has decided that youth pastors are supposed to disciple (our kids) . . . you know that’s what we’re coming out of . . . and so I was just blessed to see it coming from the pulpit and our church saying it’s important.

Comments like this were not unusual and were truly encouraging since one of the hopes for the project was not only to increase awareness of spiritual warfare and how to fight it, but that each family would begin to see itself “as it were a little church” in the words of Jonathan Edwards.<sup>15</sup> As mentioned above, FBC leadership desires to equip the families of the church to build a culture of discipleship in the home and to find or create ways to equip families for this purpose.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup>Jonathan Edwards, “Living to Christ” [on-line]; accessed 4 January 2010; available from [http://edwards.yale.edu/archive?\\_\\_pgfa=aHR0cDovL2Vkd2FyZHMueWFsZS5lZHUvY2dpLWJpbi9uZXdwaGlsby9zZWZyY2gzdA%3D%3D&dbname=wjeo&KEEPHISTORY=7199945799&word=christian+family&OUTPUT=conc&CONJUNCT=PHRASE&DISTANCE=3&title=&collection=&date=&DFPERIOD=1&POLESPAN=5&THMPRTLIMIT=1&KWSS=1&KWSSPRLIM=500&trsortorder=author%2C+title&editor=&createdate=&shrtcite=&sortorder=author%2C+date&dgdivhead=&dgdivtype=&dgdivocauthor=&dgdivocdateline=&dgdivocsalutation=&dgsubdivtag=&dgsubdivtype;](http://edwards.yale.edu/archive?__pgfa=aHR0cDovL2Vkd2FyZHMueWFsZS5lZHUvY2dpLWJpbi9uZXdwaGlsby9zZWZyY2gzdA%3D%3D&dbname=wjeo&KEEPHISTORY=7199945799&word=christian+family&OUTPUT=conc&CONJUNCT=PHRASE&DISTANCE=3&title=&collection=&date=&DFPERIOD=1&POLESPAN=5&THMPRTLIMIT=1&KWSS=1&KWSSPRLIM=500&trsortorder=author%2C+title&editor=&createdate=&shrtcite=&sortorder=author%2C+date&dgdivhead=&dgdivtype=&dgdivocauthor=&dgdivocdateline=&dgdivocsalutation=&dgsubdivtag=&dgsubdivtype;) Internet.

<sup>16</sup>FBC is intentionally avoiding the phrase “Family Ministry” and rather using the phrase “Faith@Home” to describe this direction. The reason for this decision is that for many the word “family” is limited to mean parents with children. The meaning must be expanded to include empty-nesters, singles, grandparents living with their adult children, and the widowed or widowers of our church. “Faith@Home”

## **Weaknesses of the Project**

Although there were a number of encouragements, there were also a number of constructive criticisms. Three areas of the project proved weak. Several good suggestions came during the interviews about the devotions, the huddles and the survey that can be improved.

### **The Devotions**

Many reported difficulty with the density of Gurnall's material. What they meant was that Gurnall's material was so demanding one could not easily skim, scan or "breeze" through it. Not only was this true of the adult versions, but participants reported it true of the Kid's Meals. One mother of a four-year-old suggested even a third version, which she would have called "Baby Food."

Parents said they had to spend a good deal of time preparing for the devotion so that they could reasonably explain the concepts to their children. Couples without children who read the devotions together complained that at times the language got in the way of understanding Gurnall's ideas. They realized they needed to slow down, think about what they read, and meditate on it. However, these linguistic frustrations were not enough to cause them to abandon the project. They pressed on in spite of the challenges of four hundred years of geographic and cultural distance. They were gaining new insights about God, Christ and spiritual warfare with the world, the flesh and the devil.

### **The Huddles**

Overwhelmingly, the number one suggestion for improvement was huddles. Parents wanted more time for open discussion and especially the sharing of ideas. This,

---

seems to be a phrase that puts the emphasis where it is needed: homeward discipleship. The phrase "Faith@Home" was created by Mark Holmgren of Faith@Home Ministries (Ventura, CA) who said at the D6 2010 conference for children's and youth workers and pastors that since the phrase was not copyrighted anyone was free to use it for their own church setting.



the parents said, would have been a major help in their progress. Being together once a week was very encouraging in itself. However, parents wanted to hear from other parents their responses to questions raised by their children, or to learn from innovative ways of communicating the material. Parents also wanted to discuss ways of handling the distractions that naturally arose when doing something of a spiritual nature. Two other topics that parents would have welcomed for discussion were matters of discipline and response to a child's apparent disinterest in family worship. These suggestions seemed to affirm the reality of contemporary pressures for Christian parents and their need for instruction in parenting skills (see Chapter 3).

### **The Survey**

For many, the survey was not helpful for their children. Some of the concepts behind the questions were too difficult. In order to get a more accurate view of the spiritual development of children, the survey should be rewritten in an age-appropriate manner. Children think and process information differently at different ages. Some questions proved to be beyond their capacity of the younger children to understand. Younger children think more concretely while older children and teens start learning to think abstractly.

### **Improvements for a More Effective Ministry**

During the personal interviews, three areas of improvements came into view. These included improvements in the devotions, in the use and amount of time for the huddles and the creation of a Gurnallian Warfare community blog that would greatly enhance the value of the project to the participants.

### **The Devotions**

Several good ideas came from the interviews to improve the devotionals. The major improvement was to start with the length of the devotionals, both for adults and

the “Kid’s Meals.” Typical comments included, “too dense,” “too much material to digest in one sitting,” and “make them more kid-friendly.” Whether for empty-nesters or for parents with children, the comments were echoed throughout. Proposals for reducing the content by half and making the language more colloquially acceptable, received almost unanimous confirmation as helpful.

Additionally, parents would appreciate help in two other ways. First, make the material more age-appropriate even for the Kid’s Meals. One parent made this entry in her journal: “Micki, being 4, really needs the material brought down to another level. [Therefore, the husband] read the material ahead of time and then summed the paragraph into 2 or 3 sentences she can understand.” The current state of the Kid’s Meals seems appropriate down to about age ten years. Parents with children ages four to six years old said that they found it particularly challenging to communicate the material to them.<sup>17</sup> A second improvement would be to include illustrations and activities in the devotionals that made the topics memorable. During the first huddle, parents were encouraged that if they discovered creative ways to communicate the lessons, time would be given to share and discuss those ideas. None was forthcoming, but this was due more to time constraints than to a lack of ideas. Therefore, if the project were repeated in the future, it would be beneficial to encourage parents to be creative and give this priority time during the weekly huddles.

An idea that merits serious attention is this: provide a demonstration of a family worshiping together. One of the families participating in the project opened their home for dinner and to participate in their family worship using the material developed for this project. Although the devotional would normally have taken only twenty minutes to read, the husband effectively engaged his family (his wife, two teens and his mother)

---

<sup>17</sup>The “ten-year-old threshold” was not a goal in mind in creating the Kid’s Meals. Therefore, it seems that an experienced children’s writer or a teacher of younger children would be a helpful step in creating devotions for families with the youngest of children.

in a lively discussion that took just over an hour to complete. The hour went by quickly as he guided the lesson through impromptu questions in an easygoing manner. There was a great deal of lively participation, a number of good jokes and laughter, and a couple of times the parents and grandmother paused to talk about matters on the minds of the two teenage children. This demonstration of family worship may have been an encouragement to other parents to see how this father led his family in devotions. An idea like this can easily be included in one of the early huddles.

### **The Huddles**

Three excellent suggestions came from the interviews regarding the huddles. First, the parents said (almost universally) that the huddles would have improved had their children not been present. They found that squirming children were a distraction to paying attention to the material presented. By that time of the morning, the children were ready to go home. Second, parents wanted time to share their frustrations, exchange ideas for overcoming obstacles to family worship, and to pray with each other. These good suggestions would necessitate expanding the time for the huddle to sixty minutes. Parents said they would not mind the extra time as long as it was not added to the Sunday morning schedule. The FBC Sunday morning schedule begins at 9:00 a.m. with corporate worship followed by Adult Bible Communities, Student Bible Communities and children's Sunday school from 10:30 to 11:50 a.m. From 12:00 to 12:30 p.m. project participants met in the huddles. By that time, parents and children were already anxious to get home. Parents with smaller children were especially concerned to return home for lunch and naps. A different schedule would need to be found for expanding the huddles.

### **A Community Blog**

A wonderful, but unfulfilled, idea came at the beginning of the project. One parent suggested a "spiritual warfare community blog" accessed through the church's website. Each week, a portion of the sermon or something from Gurnall's work could be

posted. Parents or teens could then access the blog, making comments on what they were learning, what they were experiencing, how they were praying, or simply sharing creative ideas regarding the lessons.<sup>18</sup>

### **Theological Reflections**

In this section, theological truths that rose to the surface in the project are considered. The following topics come from a journal of experiences, interactions and observations during the project, as well as reflections and theological thoughts.

#### **A Daily Fight for Godliness**

Many participants discovered the truth that spiritual warfare and the fight for godliness go hand-in-hand. John Stott wrote, “Holiness is not a condition into which we drift.”<sup>19</sup> Growing in Christlikeness takes regular use of the spiritual disciplines in order to fight against the opposition of the world, the flesh and the devil. Indeed, the warfare for godliness is warfare for the reflection of God’s glory in the lives of his people.

Before his departure, Jesus reminded his disciples that in the world they (and by implication, every Christian) should expect to meet with tribulation for his sake (John 16:33). Paul warns that no believer should expect a warm welcome or approval from the enemy: “All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Tim 3:12). The powers of the world and the provocations of the flesh are Satan’s means of influence to oppose a Christian’s growth in godliness.

#### **God’s Armor: Union with Christ**

The doctrine of the believer’s union with Christ is the foundation for success in spiritual warfare. For the Puritan like Gurnall, union with Christ was the source of

---

<sup>18</sup>This idea went unfulfilled because at the time FBC had just introduced a new church website. The time necessary to create the blog was not feasible.

<sup>19</sup>John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1979), 193.

confidence for growing in godliness. Preceding the Puritans in the importance of the doctrine, John Calvin wrote, “[T]hat joining together of Head and members, that indwelling of Christ in our hearts – in short, that mystical union – are accorded by us the highest degree of importance, so that Christ, having been made ours, makes us sharers with him in the gifts with which he has been endowed.”<sup>20</sup> Gurnall made the point explicitly that Christ is the believer’s armor: “By armour is meant Christ. We read of putting on the ‘Lord Jesus,’ (Ro. xiii.14), where Christ is set forth under the notion of armour.”<sup>21</sup>

According to Gurnall, since Christians are “leaking vessels,” the “streaming strength” of God is needed which flows from this doctrine.<sup>22</sup> The believer’s union with Christ is a precious and encouraging truth that needs highlighting from the pulpit on a regular basis. The teaching opens the door to a deeper understanding of the gospel than many Christians experience today.

In order to encourage the Ephesian church in their battle with the powers, Paul reminded them of the condition from which Christ rescued them and the union that sustained them:

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience – among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved – and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Eph 2:1-7)

---

<sup>20</sup>John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), 1:736.

<sup>21</sup>William Gurnall, *The Christian in Complete Armour*, (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2002), 1:45.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, 1:22.

The teaching that believers are “alive together with Christ” is central to a definition of this doctrine. Louis Berkhof defines union as “That intimate, vital and spiritual union between Christ and His people, in which He is the source of their life and strength.”<sup>23</sup> Wayne Grudem writes, “Union with Christ [is the relationship] through which Christians receive every benefit of salvation.”<sup>24</sup>

Here is why the doctrine is so important. The believer’s union with Christ reveals how God thinks of his children. When God sees his own, it is “through the lens” of Christ’s perfect Sonship. As the Christian’s representative, God looks at whatever Christ did as something the believer did, too. The believer’s source of acceptance with God is from Christ.<sup>25</sup> Everything Christ did God accounts to believers. For example, when Christ died on the cross for sins, believers died “in him.”<sup>26</sup> When Christ rose from the dead, believers were raised in him (Col 2:12; 3:1). When Christ ascended to the right hand of the Father, believers were seated there with him in the heavenlies (Eph 2:5-6). When it comes to spiritual warfare, Jesus’ successful resistance against Satan becomes the believer’s own, all by virtue of being “in Christ.” The importance of the doctrine cannot be overestimated and savoring it cannot be exhausted. In the letter to the Ephesians, Paul used some form of the phrase “in Christ” nearly thirty times.<sup>27</sup> Surely, Paul wanted to communicate something of the grandeur of this mystery (Eph 3:18).

---

<sup>23</sup>Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), 449.

<sup>24</sup>Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 840. Paul lists many of those benefits in Ephesians 1.

<sup>25</sup>Rom 5:19; 1 Cor 1:30; Phil 3:9.

<sup>26</sup>Rom 6:6; Gal 2:20; 2 Cor 5:14; Col 1:22; 2:12; 3:3; 2 Tim 2:11.

<sup>27</sup>The uses break down this way: “in Christ” (Eph 1:3, 12, 20; 4:32); “in Christ Jesus” (Eph 1:1; 2:5, 6, 7, 10, 13; 3:6, 11, 21); “in him” (Eph 1:4, 7, 9, 10, 13 (twice); 2:15, 16; 4:21); “in Jesus” (4:21); “in the Lord” (2:21; 4:1, 17; 5:8; 6:1, 10, 21); “in the Lord Jesus” (1:15); “in whom” (3:12); “in the Beloved” (1:6).

## The Indispensable Spirit

Discipleship is a matter of the heart, the will and the Holy Spirit. The flesh will never cooperate with believer's desire to grow in holiness. However, that is not to say the flesh cannot be overcome by the power of the Spirit. The promise of the Spirit's power and help is the believer's strength for the daily fight for godliness: "So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live" (Rom 8:13).

The promise of the gospel is that God puts a new principle of life in the regenerated. Believers, given a new spirit, born of God, are caused to walk in the commandments of God.<sup>28</sup> Believers are adopted as God's children and the purpose of adoption is that the Spirit leads the believer in the battle for holiness: "Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him . . . . For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God."<sup>29</sup>

Commenting on this important verse, J. I. Packer writes,

Twice Paul speaks of being "led" by the Spirit (Romans 8:14; Galatians 5:18). Both times the reference is to resisting one's own sinful impulses as the flip side of one's practice of righteousness . . . . *Leads* is rightly taken to mean "guides," but the guidance in view here is not a revealing to the mind of divine directives hitherto unknown; it is, rather, an impelling of our own wills to pursue and practice and hold fast that sanctity whose terms we know already . . . . If a person was not being so led, it would be altogether uncertain whether he (or she) was a believer at all.<sup>30</sup>

The work of the Holy Spirit is the *sine qua non* of spiritual transformation.

Without his work in the believer, all the work of Christ would be to no avail. In Charles

<sup>28</sup>Ezek 11:19-20 says, "And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God."

<sup>29</sup>Rom 8:8, 9, 14.

<sup>30</sup>J. I. Packer, *Keep in Step with the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1984), 118.

Spurgeon's sermon, "The Necessity of the Spirit's Work," preached in 1859, the pastor linked the effectiveness of Christ's redemptive work with the necessity of the work of the Spirit.

Christ's blood and righteousness are like wine stored in the wine-vat; but we cannot get thereat. The Holy Spirit dips our vessel into this precious wine, and then we drink; but without the Spirit we must die and perish just as much, though the Father elect and the Son redeem, as though the Father had never elected, and though the Son had never bought us with his blood. The Spirit is absolutely necessary; Without him neither the works of the Father, nor of the Son, are of any avail to us.<sup>31</sup>

Therefore, pastors and believers must give themselves to a regular study of the Holy Spirit's Person and work. Since the Spirit leads in the believer's growth in godliness and the purposes of spiritual formation, it makes sense to learn as much as humanly possible about the doctrine and work of the Holy Spirit.

### **The Spirit's Weapon: The Word**

The Word of God is central to the battle for godliness. Paul calls the Word the sword of the Spirit. The soldier who rushes into battle without a weapon is a fool. The believer who does not know God's Word, likewise rushes into battle without a weapon, and is equally a fool. Believers need both encouragement and instruction in how to handle God's Word, learning to get a solid grip on God's Word, in order to stand in the heat of battle. During the project, the participants were taught how to listen to, to read, to memorize, to meditate, and to pray the Word of God. These lessons will not be learned in a single session, but must be taught patiently and repeatedly.

### **The Believer's Work: Prayer**

Gurnall spent more time on the subject of prayer, and its many forms, than any other subject. For Gurnall, prayer was the spiritual key that unlocked the door of God's power. Therefore, the prayerless Christian will always be a weak Christian. When

---

<sup>31</sup>Michael A. G. Haykin, "Lectures 23-24: C. H. Spurgeon, Sermons on the Holy Spirit" (classroom lecture notes, 80914 – *Spiritual Awakenings and Revival*, photocopy), 20.



spiritual battles come, he or she will be unarmed for the fight. “What bread and salt are to our table,” wrote Gurnall, “prayer is to the Christian in all his undertakings, enjoyments and temptations.”<sup>32</sup>

Prayer is the means God uses to equip the believer with all the benefits of the armor. The reason many find prayer so hard is precisely that it is crucial to the fight. Distractions, discouragements, and low estimations of the nature of God are among Satan’s many weapons employed to stop Christians from praying. Therefore, believers benefit from a corporate holy resolve to guard prayer’s practice. Believers can be lovingly “provoked” by other believers into more and better praying.<sup>33</sup> Instruction in the many kinds of prayer observed in Scripture and the encouragement of Christian books on prayer keep the inward fires of prayer alive and support the fight for consistent prayer.<sup>34</sup>

### **Sanctification and the Church**

The work of spiritual transformation belongs to the church. Jesus said, “go therefore and make disciples” (Matt 28:18-20). Paul said he labored with the Galatian church “until Christ is formed in you” (Gal 4:19). He told the Philippian church “they [all] must work out their own salvation in fear and trembling” (Phil 2:13). Discipleship is not one aspect of the church’s work; it is the work of the church.

It is possible to think of the church as God’s toolbox. In God’s toolbox, as in any master artisan’s toolbox, there are many kinds of tools. There are hammers, screwdrivers, pliers, saws, etc. Each tool, with its specific function, finds room in the box for the work. So it is with God. He has given to the church (the toolbox) workers (the

---

<sup>32</sup>Gurnall,  *Armour*, 2:89.

<sup>33</sup>Heb 10:24 says, “let us consider how to stir up (*paroxusmos*) one another to love and good works.” The writer wants the Christian community to seriously look out for each other in order to avoid apostasy. This loving consideration is one of God’s means for protecting the faithfulness of his people.

<sup>34</sup>See Luke 18:1-8; 1 Thess 5:17.

tools) such as “the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (Eph 4:11-12). The goal of the work is to bring believers to “mature manhood, to the full stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph 4:13). The ministry of the church, organized around this singular calling, will not divide evangelism from discipleship as if they were two separate and unrelated ministries. Rather, each fits into a seamless fabric of the demands of Jesus. The gospel of grace unites these various ministries in the structures of the church. While the tools of God’s toolbox include a variety of ministries, they should each seek to add to the process of growth in godliness in unique ways.

### **Family Worship: “Control Central”**

Family worship is important to the spiritual life of the family. The practice of this discipline was formative for many Christian generations. Many benefits accrue to the family that practices family worship. First, the shaping influences of the Spirit on the heart are promoted. For example, the family learns that nothing in life is exempt from acknowledging God’s interest or involvement. The family learns that no aspect of life is outside the bounds of prayer. The family learns how God’s Word is central for direction in life. In times of stress or confusion, the family will learn together the lessons of dependence upon God and that his throne of grace is the first place to go. God’s Word teaches the indispensable lessons of how to deal with sudden loss, long-term sickness and certainly death.

There are also benefits that accrue to the church. For example, the family learns to put into practice the principles of peacemaking and reconciliation. This practice makes healthier family relationships that translate over into healthier church relationships.

In addition, family members learn how to pray for others who might be experiencing affliction or trial. The family can influence the culture of the church for godliness.

### **Biblical Spirituality**

Every age of the church must define what it means to be biblically spiritual. Perhaps today's Christians might consider reintroducing the old word "piety." The way Calvin used the word meant, "That reverence joined with love of God which the knowledge of his benefits induces."<sup>35</sup> He wrote further, "The whole life of Christians ought to be a sort of practice of godliness . . . . Godliness is the beginning, middle and end of Christian living . . . . Thus the conclusion is that we should concentrate exclusively on godliness."<sup>36</sup>

A bright and distinct line between the church and the world must characterize evangelical spirituality. This line is not for the purposes of isolation but an engaged-separation that makes the line simultaneously porous and attractive.<sup>37</sup>

This project arose from a course of study in biblical spirituality. Defining the contours of biblical spirituality and a thorough examination of its content is beyond the

---

<sup>35</sup>Calvin, *Institutes*, 1:41.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, 1:835.

<sup>37</sup>This idea comes from a sermon by Dr. J. Ligon Duncan III, "I Thank God for You" [online]; accessed 11 January 2011; available from [http://www.fpjackson.org/resources/sermons/Phillipians\\_Vols1\\_and\\_2/01b\\_philippians%20\\_1\\_3\\_5.htm](http://www.fpjackson.org/resources/sermons/Phillipians_Vols1_and_2/01b_philippians%20_1_3_5.htm); Internet. Preaching from Phil 1:3-5, Duncan said, "It ought to be one of our aims as a congregation to cultivate that kind of a deliberately gospel fellowship. If our fellowship is primarily based on the fact of . . . common affinities – we grew up in the same state or in the same town, we went to the same schools, we have a common set of friends, we're in a particular line of work – if those things are the fundamental things that unite us, then . . . the edges of our congregation will be walls, and anybody that cannot join in those natural affinities will not be a part of us. But if our union, if our communion, if our fellowship, is in those things which are related to the gospel, then the edges of our fellowship will be porous, and even people who are not like us – they're not from our socio-economic class, they're not from our racial background, they're not from our hometown, they're not a part of the same set of friends and business colleagues that we normally work with, but they do trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, they will very easily become a part of the gospel fellowship because the thing that fundamentally unites us is not those natural affinities, but the gospel affinities."

scope of this chapter. However, it seems to me that a conversation on this topic should begin with a consideration of the contemporary challenges to Christian faith. Therefore, any definition of biblical spirituality should include at least the following eight ideas briefly stated.

**Cross-centered.** Everything that flowed from Paul’s pen was first dipped in the inkwell of the magnitude of the cross.<sup>38</sup> Every remedy for church problems, marriage problems, questions of ethics or parenting makes sense in the light of the cross of Christ. The cross both humbles the sinner and exalts the Savior. In an age of self-salvation, the self-sacrifice of the Savior’s cross defines the ground of biblical spirituality.

**Gospel-rooted.** It is only in the gospel that an explanation for the foolish actions of humans is found. The gospel of grace provides the only remedy for the ills and evils of the heart.<sup>39</sup> Grace transforms sinners into saints who look like Christ. While the NT writers often refer to Christians as “saints,” the writers simultaneously remind God’s people that the residue of sin remains and resists godliness. Deliverance from sin’s dominion now does not mean deliverance from sin’s presence now.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, overcoming indwelling sin by the power of the Spirit is the believer’s daily call to battle.

**Christ-imitated.** The goal of spiritual transformation is to become like Christ.<sup>41</sup> This process of sanctification begins at the new birth and continues throughout a believer’s life. The blessing of spiritual formation flows from the believer’s union with

---

<sup>38</sup>First Cor 2:1-2: “And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.”

<sup>39</sup>Ps 14:1; Rom 3:10-18; 6:23.

<sup>40</sup>Compare Paul’s statements in Rom 6:14 with 8:13.

<sup>41</sup>Gal 4:19; Rom 12:1-3.

Christ.<sup>42</sup> Conformity to the world's "ideal human" is a false hope. Christ is the divinely revealed image of true humanity to be imitated.<sup>43</sup>

**Church-oriented.** Commenting on the development of the early church, John Stott wrote, "[Jesus] did not add them (i.e., believers) to the church without saving them (no nominal Christianity at the beginning), nor did he save them without adding them to the church (no solitary Christianity either). Salvation and church membership belonged together; they still do."<sup>44</sup> In a day of almost imperial individualism, discipleship in the context of church membership stands as a biblical challenge to this defective understanding of independence. Discipleship in the context of the local church is not only the expectation of Scripture, but is also the most effective means. After all, whoever learned to love the way Christ loves without rubbing shoulders with the unlovely and unlovable? Isolation is a fool's errand for spiritual growth. Spiritual formation is a corporate work as much as an individual work. Christians grow best in a community of faith engaging together the challenges and the influences of culture.<sup>45</sup>

**Word-governed.** God's Word is central to feeding the appetite for spiritual growth. For the believer's part, submission is the necessary attitude. The Word written is authoritative and sufficient for spiritual growth. In a day when objective authority is dismissed for the authority of the individual, believers show the wisdom and sustaining promise of God's Word for life and faith.<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup>Eph 1:4-6.

<sup>43</sup>Third John 11.

<sup>44</sup>John Stott, *The Message of Acts* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 87.

<sup>45</sup>Phil 2:12, 13; Heb 3:13; 10:24, 25.

<sup>46</sup>Heb 4:12; 1 Tim 3:16; 1 Pet 1:22-25; 2 Pet 1:19-21.

**Spirit-empowered.** The believer must become consciously reliant on the work of the Spirit in the sanctifying and purifying process. Efforts by the believer alone cannot produce the fruit of godliness. Paul challenged the notion that sanctification is the sole responsibility of the believer when he pointedly asked the question: “Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?” (Gal 3:3). Believers must study the ways and means of the Spirit’s work in order to submit to and cooperate with his leading and progress in the faith.

**Truth-infused.** In a postmodern world that muddles, blends, and denies objective truth, Christians must be “infused” with massive doses of truth. As tea bags steeped in hot water change the flavor and color of the water, so Christians steeped in the truth will be changed.<sup>47</sup> Paul’s admonition is a sound inoculation against the confusion of the day: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom” (Col 3:16).

**God-enriched.** Jesus told a story that rings with present-day irony. A rich man considered all he had accomplished and owned through his hard and diligent work. He was proud of his good fortune. Just as the fellow decided he could now relax in a comfortable retirement, he died (see Luke 12:16-20). How many of today’s obituaries read like this parable? It was not the “stuff” of his life that Jesus criticized but his self-definition by it. The man in Jesus’ parable measured the meaning of his life by the acquisitions he made. In defining himself as a producer-consumer, he missed life’s most important measurement. The lesson Jesus made of this man warns Christians today to think biblically and to renounce foolish, worldly definitions for what really matters.<sup>48</sup> Rather, Jesus calls believers to be rich in God.

---

<sup>47</sup>John 8:32; 1 John 1:6, 8; 2:4; 3:18; 4:6; 5:6; Eph 1:13; 4:21.

<sup>48</sup>PBS aired a program on the subject called “Affluenza.” In it, the reporters explored the “high . . . costs of materialism and overconsumption.” From the website of this program, this definition was

## Personal Reflections

The time dedicated to this project has broadened my understanding and approach to pastoral ministry for the years ahead. Therefore, this project (and the course in Biblical Spirituality), has been seeking to answer a personal question: “How does the Spirit transform us into the likeness of Christ?” The following observations reflect the pursuit of an answer to this question.

### Pray about Personal Unbelief

During the project and particularly in the eleventh sermon, it was easy to recognize a need to be more aggressive against personal unbelief. Perhaps one of the most common struggles among Christians is the doubt that God will be personally good *to me*. It has often been expressed this way: “God will be good to you.” Then the whispering doubt of my own heart questioned: “But, will he be good to me?” As opportunity arose to talk with participants, many admitted to this same struggle with unbelief. The words of the father who cried out to Jesus came to mind: “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24).

In one of the final sermons of the series, a suggested application encouraged Christians struggling with unbelief to write out a prayer for help in times of temptation as a weapon against this scheme of Satan. The next day, taking the advice personally, I wrote a prayer to memorize for my personal battles against unbelief (Appendix 18).

---

provided: “Af-flu-en-za, n. 1. The bloated, sluggish and unfulfilled feeling that results from efforts to keep up with the Joneses. 2. An epidemic of stress, overwork, waste and indebtedness caused by dogged pursuit of the American Dream. 3. An unsustainable addiction to economic growth. 4. A television program that could change your life.” (See “Affluenza” [on-line]; accessed 3 January 2011; available from <http://www.pbs.org/kcts/affluenza/>; Internet). Also see John de Graaf, David Waan, and Thomas H. Naylor, *Affluenza: The All-Consuming Epidemic* (San Francisco: Barrett-Koehler Publishers, 2001). See also Richard A. Swenson, *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2004).

### **Learn to Hate Indwelling Sin**

The greatest deception of sin is that either it is not present or it is not a problem. Sin wants to grow to full adulthood and will do everything it can to make such growth certain. Unless the believer by the power of the Spirit keeps on killing sin, the promise that sin will not dominate one's life will seem like a fleeting hope.

During a visit to another church's prayer meeting, a young man began his prayer this way: "Father, I hate the sin that is in the world and just want to leave." He caught everyone's attention with his sincere cry. He then went on to pray for a friend who was struggling with a sin too big for her to handle. His honest cry of hatred for sin and desire for the deliverance of his friend sounded like Paul: "but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Rom 7:15-25).

### **Mixture in the Church**

During a two-week period in the middle of the project, several situations arose in the life of FBC that brought home the reality of spiritual warfare in pastoral ministry. Some of these situations included job loss, a member suffering a nervous breakdown, an attempted suicide (itself a cry for help), conflict over changes in room usage and parents wanting a lay-teacher removed from a student Bible community. Most unexpected of all was the sudden death of a child of one the church's families.

Reading Jay Adams' book on spiritual warfare was a providential help at the time.<sup>49</sup> In it, Adams pointed out two of Satan's regular patterns of attack, namely "murder and mixture."<sup>50</sup> Considering these situations, it was helpful to discern a pattern

---

<sup>49</sup>Jay E. Adams, *Winning the War Within: A Biblical Strategy for Spiritual Warfare* (reprint, Woodruff, SC: Timeless Texts, 2001).

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, 18.



of mixture. Satan was attempting to “weaken” FBC and its testimony in the community by planting the seeds of complaining, gossip, questioning and internal strife. Adams explains mixture this way,

Through education, the media and so on we have taken the world into the church as if there were no conflict, no antithesis, no difference between her values, goals and methods and our own. That is mixture. But why is this possible? Because individual Christians have failed to develop a Christian mind. That is to say, they are losing ideological and moral battles within and thus they easily fall prey to the enemy’s propaganda.<sup>51</sup>

The wise pastor will keep prayerfully alert to these satanic strategies so that he can become a first-responder of sorts, as a peacemaker in stressful times.<sup>52</sup>

### **Every Situation: Potential for Spiritual Warfare**

Therefore, every situation or relationship holds potential for spiritual warfare. Staying alert and prayerfully discerning the enemy’s strategy helps to avoid harmful interpersonal conflicts. Discernment is especially necessary in the pastorate. A simple question like, “Pastor, can I ask you a question about what our teachers are teaching that I don’t agree with?” signals potential warfare ahead. With prudence, uneasy situations can be transformed into valuable teaching moments. The person upset and “ready to go to war” over some issue can be turned into an ally for peace rather than an influence for division.

A pastor should continually pray for Spirit-directed wisdom and discernment. Two principles are in play here. First, believers are not to be ignorant of Satan’s schemes,

---

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 19.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 21. Adams defines “murder” as Satan’s temptation of Christians to practice “eating, drinking, smoking, and taking of harmful prescription drugs to counter the effects of sinful lifestyles.” He also warns Christians against “poor scheduling, worry (which the caring heavenly Father has forbidden), discouragement, depression, bitterness, and a host of other practices that wear us down and make us ineffective (while hastening our deaths) . . . . And as surely as suicide is self-murder, such sins are also all violations of the command not to murder. The Christian has a special concern to preserve his body as much as he can in a world in which it will deteriorate soon enough without his help; it is the temple of the Holy Spirit, which he must not defile.”

a consideration already mentioned several times.<sup>53</sup> Second, believers are not to allow emotions like unrighteous anger or let unforgiveness nurture grudges which allow division to become Satan's foothold in the fellowship of the believers.<sup>54</sup>

### **Trust God**

The project provided many opportunities to talk with people about their spiritual lives. One of the best conversations during the project came from an eighty-plus year old Navigator, named Bill, who attended his granddaughter's high school graduation party. Bill's daughter and family attend FBC. Bill served in World War II, went to Moody Bible Institute after the war, lived with Dawson and Lila Trotman during the founding of the Navigators, worked on the Glen Eyrie property, was never "high up" in the organization, and memorized nearly 1,000 Bible verses.

During the conversation, Bill rattled off about twenty verses with such joy that one led to another "really good one to remember." Bill influenced hundreds of lives. At the time, Bill was in the final stages of pancreatic cancer and he shared what was the single most important lesson that kept him going all his years of walking with God. He said, "Just trust God. He's good and won't let you down." Bill passed away in January 2011. Many are grateful to God for Bill's simple, powerful and practical wisdom.

### **Pray and Meditate Before Preaching**

For pastors who preach weekly, each new Sunday starts with each new Monday. Every sermon can benefit from more time and effort. The subject of spiritual warfare necessarily meant a close study of the letter to the Ephesians. The extended and

---

<sup>53</sup>See 2 Cor 2:11.

<sup>54</sup>Eph 4:26-27. In a church discipline matter the year before the project, I learned that Satan can be kept from gaining an opportunity for confusion in the church, when members understand the stakes behind the disciplinary action. Even if some members act out of sync with the elders who might be handling the disciplinary matter, Satan's influences are still limited. No doubt, the pressure is intense and hearts are stretched, but at the end of the day, God will be glorified, Satan defeated and Christ exalted.

intensive study of Paul's letter leading up to the project, leant itself to more time of prayer and meditation over the text. These practices enriched the sermons. Therefore, carving out more time in weekly preparation for preaching will include these two disciplines.

### Conclusion

The proof of the effectiveness of this project cannot be measured in just the fifteen weeks of this project. To realize the lasting effects of the disciplines and the view of spiritual warfare would need another study of the participants six months down the road and another six months after that.

However, if a pastor has a "heartly desire of [his church's] eternal happiness,"<sup>55</sup> he will continue preaching and teaching on the subject of spiritual warfare and encourage family worship. He will need the power of the Spirit to lead the church into this battle that is fought in "every man's own soul" and warn the church that there is no neutrality in this war.<sup>56</sup> "The whole world is engaged in the quarrel," wrote Gurnall, "either for God against Satan, or for Satan against God."<sup>57</sup> He will need to encourage the church to "be thankful for every victory and let not the howling wilderness . . . put the song of your praises for temptations past out of tune."<sup>58</sup> Rejoicing with fear and trembling is the way to keep the victories.

Gurnall's final statement in the "Epistle Dedicatory" to the friends of his church seems a fitting conclusion.

Get but once your hearts mortified to the world, and care rolled upon God, for name, estate, and relations here, and then you are fit to march wherever Christ will

---

<sup>55</sup>Gurnall,  *Armour*, 1:1.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, 1:3.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, 1:3-4.

lead you. The want of this hath made many run home to save their own private stake there, when they should have been in the field for Christ. And now, my Christian friends, march on not in the confidence of your armour, but in the power of his might, who hath promised shortly to subdue Satan under your feet.<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 1:4.

APPENDIX 1  
BULLETIN INSERT

# IT'S WAR!

*It's time to  
put on the  
full armor  
of God!*

EPHESUS, Aug. 8 (UPI) – The apostle Paul said today during his daily lecture in the Hall of Tyrannus that Christians are under attack by an enemy whose goal is to separate them from the love of God in Christ. When asked to identify this enemy he responded: “We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

*(Turn to “War!” page 2)*

PARKER, Aug. 8 (FBC) – Pastor Bob Buchanan of Faith Baptist Church announced today a new campaign to take the battle to the enemy. It's a bold countermove designed to expose the schemes of the enemy. Buchanan said that for too long Christians have been ignorant of Satan's devices.

“Christians have to wise-up,” Buchanan said, pointing out that they need to become “sober-minded and watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” He said the leaders of the church are tired of seeing God's families messed up by the evil one.

When asked about the new campaign, Buchanan said it was like boot camp, training families to face spiritual warfare by using faith-tactics based on William Gurnall's manual *The Christian in Complete Armour*. He said it was crucial to equip 20 FBC families to wage a successful spiritual warfare at a logistics meeting **Aug. 22, 2010 at 1600 hours (4:00 pm) in the Chapel.**

APPENDIX 2  
INITIAL MEETING AGENDA

I. History of this project

A. Doctor of Ministry in Biblical Spirituality – spirituality a hot topic

1. Every generation must answer the question: what does it mean/look like to be biblically spiritual in our age?
2. What does it mean for a 21<sup>st</sup> century family to be biblically spiritual?

B. The distinction of this course of study: looked at evangelical history of the use of spiritual disciplines (individually, corporately) and revivals and renewals in church history from the Patristics to 20<sup>th</sup> century.

C. Culminates in a local church project applying our learning.

II. The nature of the project

A. Must tackle some aspect of biblical spirituality

1. Why I chose a family setting:
  - Conversation with youth pastor Phill: “Graduating from God.”
2. Conclusion: family as the God-ordained place for spiritual disciplines employed.

B. Must use the works of an evangelical from another generation

1. How I stumbled onto Gurnall (1616-1679) – Denver Sem library
  - Gurnall (1616-1679); Anglican pastor at Lavenham, England.
  - Was not ejected in 1662 from his church
2. Where is the church under most attack today? Family

C. Must have sound theological grounding for the practice of ministry in the local church. Two theological themes come into play

1. A theology of spiritual warfare

2. A theology of family as the basic disciple making unit
3. A practice of spiritual disciplines

### III. Goals of the project: to know God better than you do now!

- A. To equip families with the biblical knowledge and skills necessary to disciple their children to persevere in the good fight of spiritual warfare (1 Tim 6:12) as they train their children and themselves in godliness (1 Tim 4:7).
- B. What it means to “put on the full armor of God” against an enemy that is not flesh and blood.
- C. Three goals:
  1. Parents: a better understanding of how they are in Christ as members of his kingdom.
  2. Parents: to cultivate biblical wisdom for the spiritual battles brought on by living in a culture hostile to Christian truth and practice
  3. Parents/children to acquire biblical skills necessary for waging a successful spiritual warfare against the schemes of Satan who wants to destroy the work of grace in God’s children. Not to be ignorant or caught off guard.

### IV. What your participation means

- A. Commitment to 12 weeks of family worship
  1. 10-15 minutes
  2. Pattern: Scripture to read, devotional from Gurnall, song to sing, prayer
- B. Commitment to 12 weeks of sermons on Eph 6:10-20
- C. Commitment to 12 weeks of “Training huddles”
  1. Each week’s devotionals distributed
  2. Short lesson on shaping our children for Christ
  3. Idea’s exchange
- D. Surveys: Pre- & Post- assessing views on spiritual warfare, devotional practice
- E. In-home interview scheduled from week 13-15.
- F. Release forms distributed for families with minor-children
- G. Any Questions?

APPENDIX 3

PRE- AND POST-PROJECT SURVEY

**Demographics Information Gathering**

My age is: \_\_\_\_\_

My gender is: \_\_\_Male \_\_\_Female

My marital status: \_\_\_Married \_\_\_Divorced \_\_\_Single \_\_\_Widowed  
\_\_\_Student

Number of years of salvation: \_\_\_\_\_

I am a member/attendee of FBC: \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No

I serve in the church: \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No

If so, in what ministry? \_\_\_\_\_

My/our child(ren's) ages are: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please indicate the gender of your child after his/her age by writing "M" for male or "F" for female.)

**Pre- project Survey**

Using the following scale, please write the number that corresponds to your opinions in response to the following statements.

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Mildly disagree	Uncertain	Mildly agree	Agree	Strongly agree

1. I am a born-again believer trusting Christ for my salvation. \_\_\_\_\_
2. I believe that Christ defeated Satan at the cross. \_\_\_\_\_
3. I understand what it means to be united with Christ & how to daily apply it. \_\_\_\_\_
4. I have developed the habit of Scripture memorization. \_\_\_\_\_



5. I understand the nature of Christian spiritual warfare. \_\_\_\_\_
6. I understand the enemy's schemes against me, my family and my church. \_\_\_\_\_
7. I have assurance of faith. \_\_\_\_\_
8. I believe Christians have the power to cast out demons. \_\_\_\_\_
9. I know how to discern a spiritual attack. \_\_\_\_\_
10. I believe demons exist in pagan nations but not in America. \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer the following questions:**

11. I teach my/our children to memorize Scripture and test them weekly. \_\_\_\_\_
12. I pray daily\_\_\_\_/weekly\_\_\_\_/monthly\_\_\_\_/not at all\_\_\_\_ with my child(ren).
13. I pray daily\_\_\_\_/weekly\_\_\_\_/monthly\_\_\_\_/not at all\_\_\_\_ with my spouse.
14. My spouse and I read the Bible together daily\_\_\_\_/weekly\_\_\_\_/monthly\_\_\_\_/  
\_\_\_\_never.
15. How often do you read your Bible in a week? \_\_\_\_\_ times.
16. My family normally attends church at least \_\_\_\_\_ weeks a year.
17. How often do you pray in a week? \_\_\_\_\_ days.
18. For how long do you pray? \_\_\_\_\_ minutes.
19. How often does your family meet for worship in your home? \_\_\_\_\_ times per week.
20. How often do you practice spiritual journaling each week? \_\_\_\_\_ times.
21. For how long do you journal? \_\_\_\_\_ minutes.
22. How often do you meditate on God's Word in a week? \_\_\_\_\_ times.
23. For how long do you meditate on God's Word? \_\_\_\_\_ minutes.
24. How often do you watch television in a week? \_\_\_\_\_ times.

**In the following questions, please circle the numeric value that best describes your activity.**

25. How many Scriptures do you memorize each week? 1-2 3-4 5-6 more.
26. How often do you share the gospel with someone each month? 1-2 3-4 5-6 more.

27. How often do you share your testimony in a month? 1-2 3-4 5-6 more.
28. How many Christian biographies do you read in a year? 1-2 3-4 5-6 more.
29. How often do you participate in fellowship with other Christians outside of church meetings in a month? 1-2 3-4 5-6 more.
30. How often do you participate in the Lord's Table in a year? 1-3 4-6 7-9 10-12.

Thank you very much for your answers. It is my hope that by your participation in this project your family's spiritual life will be strengthened now and for the future and you will be able to help other families experience the same blessings.

Bob Buchanan

APPENDIX 4

LOW RISK INFORMED CONSENT

**Agreement to participate.** The research in which you are about to participate is designed to train you and your family in the disciplines of spiritual warfare. This research is being conducted by Robert R. Buchanan for purposes of completing a Doctor of Ministry degree research project through Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. In this research, you will participate in a twelve week study that will include family worship five nights a week, and attendance at FBC worship services to hear the sermon series “The Christian in Complete Armor” (an expositional study of Eph 6:10-20). In addition, you will participate in a weekly training session to help further develop skills in the disciplines of spiritual warfare so that you may also train your children in them. You will also be asked to answer a pre- and post-survey questionnaire prior to and at the conclusion of the twelve week project. Finally, you will schedule an in-home interview with Robert Buchanan in the three weeks that follow the project. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By your completion of this survey and signing your name below, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX 5  
A SAMPLE OF ALL FAMILY DEVOTIONS

**A verse to memorize**

Ephesians 6:18 – “Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.”

**A truth to learn together**

Gurnall writes, “Prayer is a necessary duty to be performed by the Christian and used with all other means in his spiritual warfare” (2:289). He calls prayer the “silver trumpet” by which we call to God to come to our aid and defense. The final two weeks of our devotionals will bring to our attention this most important discipline.

**A Scripture to read**

“In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud Cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him” (Heb 5:7).

**Standing Orders for the Gurnallian Warrior**

What bread and salt are to dinner, prayer is to the Christian in all undertakings, enjoyments and temptations. Whatever circumstance we find ourselves in, prayer must be remembered. As we use salt on our food and bread with our meals, so we are to

mingle every duty and every grace and every enjoyment and oppose every temptation with prayer. It has been the constant practice of believers in all their dangers, whether from enemies within or without, from sin, devils, or men, to go to the throne of grace and draw a line of prayer around themselves. This discipline is the only safe posture in spiritual warfare.

**Why prayer is necessary: Satan is a liar!**

Prayer must be coordinated with all other means of grace just as God has designed. The force of an army does not consist in a troop or a regiment, but in all the parts of the army. If any troop or company presumed to fight the enemy alone, they could only expect to be routed! If any single means of grace is willingly neglected, then the golden chain of obedience is broken – nothing is good that does not have all its parts.

There is a second reason: prayer influences all the other graces. When Christians pray, evidence is given of the reality of the other graces at work. This is important because when we fight the Tempter we want to be sure we are not fighting in the flesh but in the power of the Spirit. After all, Satan will try to cause questions in the believer's mind whether the grace of God is at work. His goal is to overturn the very foundation of hope in Christ and convincing the believer that he or she stands alone. He will lie about the power of Christ in order to gain the advantage. But remember, because he could not keep Christ in the grave, he must lie about the resurrection in order to hinder faith in Christ's resurrection power. When he cannot hinder the production of grace, he misrepresents the work of Christ. He tries to cheat believers out of their faith in Christ by luring them to surrender to his deceits, to which the heart is prone anyway.

Therefore, even though the fear is false and groundless, yet if believed it produces confusion in our mind and distress in our heart – as if it were true. In prayer, however, the Christian stands at a great advantage of knowing the truth of our standing with God.

**Why prayer is necessary:  
Conformity to Christ**

We pray knowing that through prayer Christians are conformed to Christ. The design of God is to make every saint like his Son. This was decided in eternity (Rom 8:29). God will conform his children to his Son in suffering, in grace, and in glory. Christ is holy and so every believer will become holy. Jesus practiced prayer and so will Christians as God conforms them to his image. God promised to support Jesus in all his conflicts: “Behold my servant whom I uphold” (Isa 42:1). And Jesus prayed with “strong crying and tears” when he was nearing the cross (Heb 5:7).

Why should we pray when God already knows what we need? Prayer is a humble appeal to God from our impotency to his omnipotence. No woman goes to a neighbor’s house for supplies if she has it already in her own cupboard. If believers thought God was not able to do something for his children, they would go to another, not to him. However, we glorify his sovereignty, dominion, and acknowledge that he is not only able to procure what is asked, but he gives a right to the blessing of what he gives. Therefore, Christ ends his prayer with “Yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory” because it is God’s glory that is at the heart of our prayers. He alone is the sovereign Lord who gives the warrant to enjoy him. By prayer, God’s children give him the glory due for his free mercy.

God wants believers to pray for all that he has purposed and promised to them in order to show the great delight he takes in the prayers of his own. God takes such satisfaction in the company of his praying children, that to prevent prayer from becoming a strange thing, he orders it so that its neglect comes with a sense that something is lost. Those who live in the total neglect of prayer are more than prayerless people; they are like the ruins of an ancient castle. They have renounced their allegiance to the God of heaven and lost the heart of a human being, living like brute beasts who, while they feed, take no notice of the One who provides food for them!

If Satan might have his wish, surely it would be this – that we might live prayerless lives. For by this he would do the greatest possible damage to God! Prayerless people dismiss God as unimportant; they take no delight in his attributes. In prayerlessness, Satan gets the greatest advantage of the sinner. Don't let this be said of any of us!

### **A song to sing**

### **A prayer to pray**

(Before you close in prayer, ask each family member if they have struggled to keep a regular prayer time. If so, make this a matter of prayer.)

Heavenly Father, we praise you for giving us permission at all times to approach your throne of grace and to spread before you our wants and desires. We are not worthy of your blessings and mercies; our fallen nature reveals itself in disobedience and rebellion. We ask that you forget our sins, our failures to make wise use of our time and talents, our abuse of your mercies and wasted Lord's Days. Help us to remember that our hope is in you because the Lamb of God has taken away our sins. Through Christ we return to you, listen to you, trust in you and delight in your law; through his power we obey you and are sustained by you. Preserve our understanding from error, our affections from the love of idols, our lips from speaking falsely and our conduct and character from the appearance of evil so that we might be harmless and blameless and zealous for your glory. In Jesus' name. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Adapted from Arthur Bennett, ed., *Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2003), 262.

## APPENDIX 6

### SAMPLE “KID’S MEAL” DEVOTIONAL

#### **Weekly memory verse**

“Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.” Ephesians 6:18

#### **A truth to learn together**

Gurnall writes, “prayer is a necessary duty to be performed by the Christian and used with all other means in his spiritual warfare.” He calls prayer the “silver trumpet” by which we call to God to come to our aid and defense. The final two weeks of our devotionals will bring to our attention this most important discipline.

#### **A Scripture to read:**

“In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him” (Hebrews 5:7).

#### **Standing Orders for the Gurnallian Warrior**

What bread and salt are to dinner, prayer is to the Christian in all undertakings. Whatever circumstance we find ourselves in, we must pray. We oppose every temptation with prayer. It has been the constant practice of believers in all their dangers, whether from enemies within or without, from sin, devils or men, to go to the throne of grace and



draw a line of prayer around themselves. This discipline is the only safe posture in spiritual warfare.

**Why prayer is necessary: Satan is a liar!**

God has designed that prayer partner with all other means of grace. The force of an army does not consist in a single soldier or a regiment, but in all the parts of the army. If any troop or company presumed to fight the enemy alone, they could only expect to be routed! If any single means of grace is willingly neglected, then the golden chain of obedience is broken – nothing is strong as when all its parts are present.

There is a second reason: prayer influences all the other graces. When we pray, we give evidence of the reality of the other graces at work in us. This is important because when we fight the Tempter we want to be sure we are not fighting in the flesh but in the power of the Spirit. After all, Satan will try to make us question whether grace is at work in us. His goal is to overturn the very foundation of our hope in Christ and convince us that we stand alone against him. He will lie to us about the power of Christ to try to take advantage of us. But remember, because he could not keep Christ in the grave, he lies about the resurrection in order to hinder our faith in Christ's resurrection power. When he cannot hinder the production of grace, he misrepresents the work of Christ. He tries to cheat us out of our faith in Christ by luring us to surrender to his deceits. In prayer, the Christian stands at a great advantage of knowing the truth of our standing with God.

**Why prayer is necessary:  
Conformity to Christ**

We pray knowing that through prayer God conforms us to Christ. The design of God is to make every saint like his Son (Rom 8:29). God will conform us to his Son in suffering, in grace, in holiness and in glory. When Jesus was facing conflict, God

promised support: “Behold my servant whom I uphold” (Isa 42:1). When nearing the cross, Jesus prayed with “strong crying and tears” (Heb 5:7) and God heard him.

Prayer is a humble appeal to God that rises out of our lack yet while we are trusting in his sufficiency. If we thought God was not able to do something for us, we would go to another, not to him. But in prayer we glorify his sovereignty and dominion, and acknowledge that he is not only able to procure for us what we ask, but can give us a right to the blessing of what he gives. God’s glory is at the heart of our prayers. In prayer, we give God the glory due to him for his free mercy toward us.

God wants us to pray for all that he has purposed for us and promised us in order to show the great delight he takes in our prayers. God takes such satisfaction in the company of his praying children, that to keep prayer from becoming a strange thing to us, God makes it so that if we neglect it, we sense that we are losing something. Those who live in the total neglect of prayer are more than prayerless; they are like the ruins of an ancient castle. They have renounced their allegiance to the God of heaven and lost the heart of a human being. They take no notice of the One who provides food for them!

If Satan might have his wish, surely it would be this – that we might live prayerless lives. For by this he would do the greatest possible damage to God! Prayerless people dismiss God as unimportant; they take no delight in his attributes. In prayerlessness, Satan gets the greatest advantage of the sinner. Don’t let this be said of any of us!

### **A song to sing**

### **A prayer to pray**

(Before you close in prayer, ask each family member if he or she has struggled to keep a regular prayer time. If so, make this a matter of prayer.)

Heavenly Father, we praise you for giving us permission at all times to approach your throne of grace and to spread before you our wants and desires. We are

not worthy of your blessings and mercies; our fallen nature reveals itself in disobedience and rebellion. We ask that you forget our sins, our failures to make wise use of our time and talents, our abuse of your mercies and wasted Lord's Days. Help us to remember that our hope is in you because the Lamb of God has taken away our sins. Through Christ, we return to you, listen to you, trust in you and delight in your law; through his power we obey you and are sustained by you. Preserve our understanding from error, our affections from the love of idols, our lips from speaking falsely and our conduct and character from the appearance of evil so that we might be harmless and blameless and zealous for your glory. In Jesus' name. Amen.<sup>455</sup>

---

<sup>455</sup>Adapted from Arthur Bennett, ed., *Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2003), 262.

APPENDIX 7  
SERMON SERIES

Sermon 1: Ephesians: Christ is the Main Point of Everything (Eph 1-6; esp. 1:9-10)

Sermon 2: Know the Enemy: Don't be Outwitted by the "Cosmic Mafia" (Eph 6:10-13)

Sermon 3: An Inseparable Bond: Our Union with Christ (Eph 6:10)

Sermon 4: The Belt of Truth: Learning to Love the Truth in an Age of Lies (Eph 6:14a)

Sermon 5: The Breastplate of Righteousness: The Conscience's Best Defense (Eph 6:14b)

Sermon 6: The Gospel of Peace: These Boots are Made for Walkin' (Eph 6:15)

Sermon 7: The Shield of Faith: Faith's Preeminence (Eph 6:16)

Sermon 8: The Shield of Faith: Faith's Purifying Power (Eph 6:16)

Sermon 9: The Helmet of Salvation: A Full-orbed Hope (Eph 6:17a)

Sermon 10: The Sword of the Spirit: More Than a Light Saber (Eph 6:17b)

Sermon 11: The Necessity of Persevering Prayer (Eph 6:18)

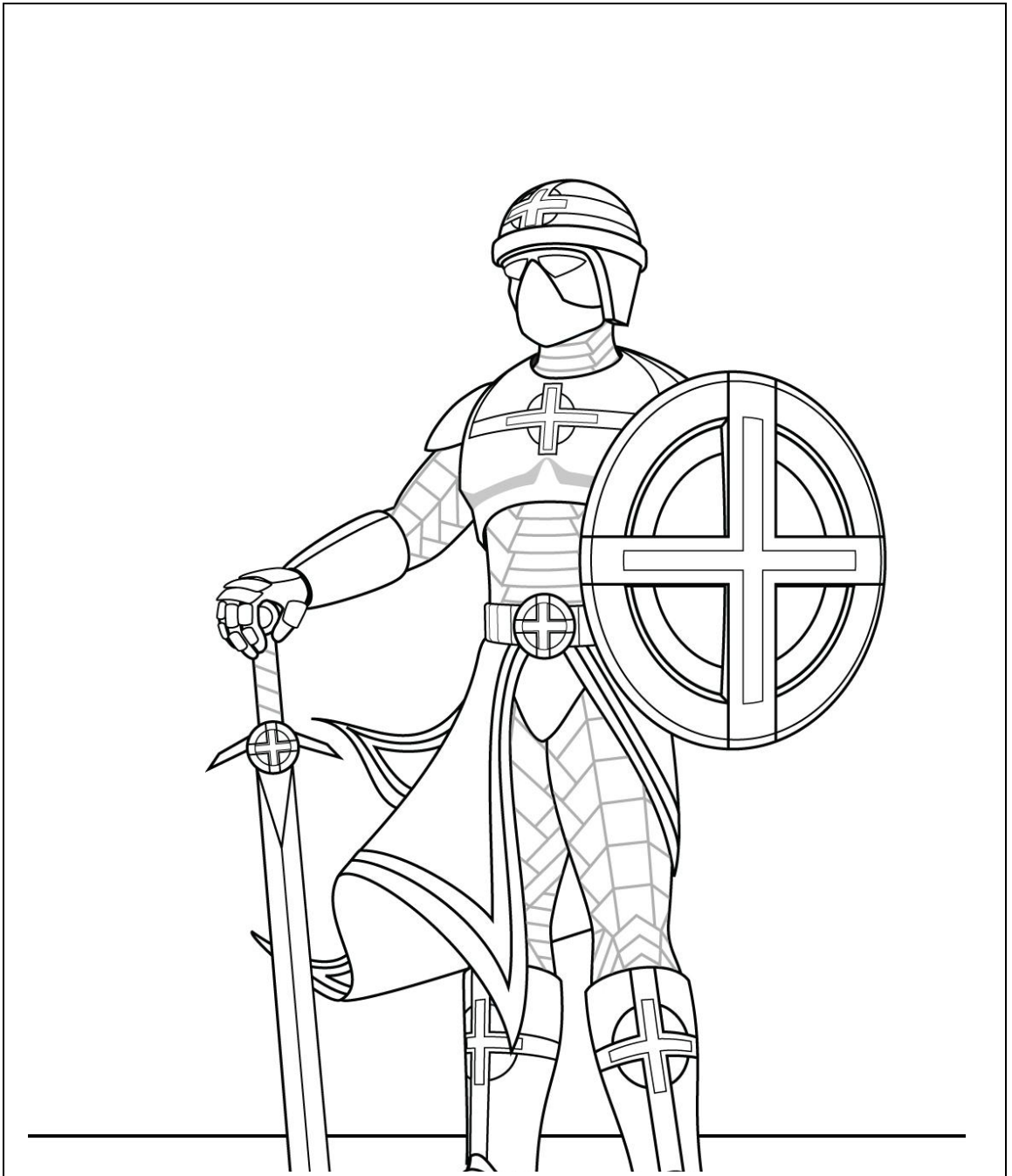
Sermon 12: The Necessity of Powerful Prayer (Eph 6:18-20)

APPENDIX 8  
FAMILY HUDDLES

- Week 1: Why Family Worship
- Week 2: The Shaping Influences of Family Worship
- Week 3: Gospel-powered Parenting
- Week 4: “The Importance of Your Family’s Faith Plan”
- Week 5: “Tools for Your Family’s Faith Plan”
- Week 6: Examining Goals: Part 1
- Week 7: Examining Goals: Part 2
- Week 8: “Grace-based Parenting”
- Week 9: “What are the Driving Needs of Our Children?”
- Week 10: Foundations for Spiritual Formation at Home: Part 1
- Week 11: Foundations for Spiritual Formation at Home: Part 2
- Week 12: Grandparents: You’re not done yet!

APPENDIX 9

THE COLORING PAGE



## APPENDIX 10

### POST-PROJECT IN-HOME INTERVIEW

1. Please tell me about your overall experience of this project.
2. How has your attitude toward family worship changed in the last twelve weeks?
3. How has your practice of the spiritual disciplines of prayer, Bible reading and singing changed in the last twelve weeks?
4. How has your attitude toward the Christian's spiritual warfare changed in the last twelve weeks?
5. What was your attitude toward spiritual warfare at the beginning of the project?
6. What progress in spiritual things have you noticed in your children? In you?
7. Did your child(ren) come to faith in Christ during the twelve weeks?
8. What single aspect of this project stands out to you as particularly helpful? Unhelpful?
9. How would you describe your walk with the Lord before the project began? Now?
10. What have you learned about shaping the heart of your child(ren) for the Lord?
11. Please explain the gospel to me.
12. Do you intend to continue family worship in your home? Why? Why not?

Comments

## APPENDIX 11

### THE GURNALLIAN WARFARE PROJECT CD SONG LIST

- “We Have an Anchor,” Words: Priscilla Owens, 1882. Composer: William Kirkpatrick. Arr. by Ed McCampbel and Dana Vernon.
- “All I have is Christ,” words and music by Jordan Kauflin (Sovereign Grace Praise, 2008).
- “How Deep the Father’s Love for Us,” words and music by Stuart Townend (Kingsway’s Thankyou Music, Admin. by EMI Christian Music Group, 1995).
- “Speak O Lord,” words and music by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend (Thankyou Music, 2005).
- “It is Well with My Soul,” words by Horatio G. Spafford. Music: Phillip P. Bliss. Arr.: Dana Vernon.
- “Be Thou My Vision.” Ancient Irish hymn. Arr. copyright Maranatha! Music, 1996.
- “Let Your Kingdom Come.” Words and music by Bob Kaulflin (Sovereign Grace Praise, 2006).
- “The Solid Rock.” Words: Edward Mote. Music: William B. Bradbury.
- “Loved Before the Dawn of Time.” Words and music by Stuart Townend and Andrew Small (Thankyou Music, 2007).
- “A Mighty Fortress is our God.” Words and music by Martin Luther. Arr. by Tommy Walker (Doulos Publishing, 1997).
- “O Church Arise.” Words and music by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend (Getty Music, 2005).
- “O Worship the King.” Arrangement and additional chorus by Chris Tomlin (WorshipTogether, 2004).
- “Praise the Father, Praise the Son.” Words and music by Ed Cash and Chris Tomlin (WorshipTogether, 2008).



“I Will Glory in My Redeemer.” Words and music by Steve and Vikki Cook (Sovereign Grace Worship, 2000). Arranged by Ed McCampell.

## APPENDIX 12

### SURVEY RESULTS

A Pre- and Post-project survey was conducted in order to get a sense of how beliefs about spiritual warfare translated into the practice of the spiritual disciplines.<sup>1</sup> These surveys measured three principle spiritual goals.<sup>2</sup> The first goal was to increase the family's understanding of the doctrine of union with Christ. The second goal was to increase understanding of spiritual warfare. In other words, it was desired to know if the families had acquired a biblical worldview of spiritual warfare thus gaining wisdom and greater insight when facing spiritual battles. Third, the project leader wanted to know if the family grew in biblical skills for waging spiritual warfare. These skills were the spiritual disciplines woven into the project. Four spiritual disciplines were routinely practiced in the context of each devotion: Scripture reading, Scripture memorization, mutual prayer and singing together.

The surveys were given immediately before and after the twelve weeks of family devotions. Participation in the project included 49 adults, and 47 children and teens. Forty-nine adults and 15 children and teens completed the pre-project survey. The number completing the post-project survey was 30 adults and 12 children and teens.

According to the pre-project surveys, 23 were male. The average age of these men was 45.8 years. All were members or attendees of FBC. The average length of

---

<sup>1</sup>See Appendix 3.

<sup>2</sup>Good friends, mathematicians John Burba and Carol Burba, FBC church members, were very helpful in the statistical analysis of the surveys. They took the raw data and made it understandable. They made many helpful suggestions along the way in order to make the surveys meaningful.

salvation for these men was 27.6 years. Nineteen men served in some ministry of the church, four did not. Twenty-six women participated in the project. The average age of these women was 43.6 years. Twenty-five were members. The average length of salvation for these women was 26.2 years. Twenty-one served in some ministry of the church, four did not and one did not answer.<sup>3</sup>

The sample group of children was quite small. Fifteen children/teens completed surveys: 7 males and 8 females. The average age for the males was 11 years and for the females 8.75 years. For the males, the average length of salvation was 5.5 years, and for the females 3.1 years.

### **Comparing Adult Pre- and Post-Project Survey Results**

As mentioned above, the survey tested attitudes toward spiritual warfare and the practice of the spiritual disciplines. A set of ten questions were chosen from the survey to measure results.<sup>4</sup> The answers to these questions would reveal how close to achieving the goals the project came. The results of the survey showed significant shifts in several important categories. Overall, there was a 36.4 percent increase in the practices of the spiritual disciplines during the twelve weeks of the survey.

For the first goal, increasing an understanding of the believer's union with Christ, questions 7 and 8 were selected. Significant growth occurred here. For example, Question 7 showed a 3.29 percent increase of assurance, while Question 8 showed a 14 percent increase in understanding a believer's authority. The second goal, increased understanding of the tactics of spiritual warfare and a biblical worldview, also showed some significant growth. Questions 6, understanding Satan's schemes, showed a 18.48

---

<sup>3</sup>The average ages and length of salvation for the men and women in the project mirror the demographics of the larger body of FBC members and attendees.

<sup>4</sup>These were questions 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19. See Appendix 3: Pre- and Post-Survey.

percent increase. Question 10, believing that demons exist not only in “pagan countries, but in America, too,” revealed an increase of 18.48 percent. Question 9, rating an ability to discern spiritual attacks, revealed a 24.4 percent increase in aptitude. The third goal, increasing the practice of the spiritual disciplines (i.e., skills), also saw increases. For example, Question 15 showed a 10.26 percent increase in Bible reading in a week. Yearly church attendance increased by 1.15 percent.<sup>5</sup> The most significant increase in the spiritual disciplines was seen in the frequency of family worship which increased by an amazing 91.09 percent.<sup>6</sup> On the question of prayer (Questions 17 and 18), there was an actual decrease in both prayer’s frequency and length. The number of times the respondents prayed dropped off by 2.6 percent. In addition, the length of time spent in prayer decreased by 18.6 percent.

What accounted for this decline in prayer when all other indicators increased? Ironically, it may have been due to the increased practice of family worship. Unless families rigorously disciplined their schedules, many confessed that the devotional time would “slip away” from them. Whatever time the family had spent in prayer before the twelve weeks, either privately or together, might have been the cause of those practices slipping away from their routines. In order to make room for the family time, a new practice, the families “counted” that time toward previous practices in prayer.

### **Comparing Children/Teen Pre- and Post-project Survey Results**

Turning to the children, the findings were inconclusive. The sampling was far too small to be of much help. A larger number of children, perhaps one hundred or more,

---

<sup>5</sup>This small increase may have more to do with the requirement of these families to attend corporate worship each week during the project.

<sup>6</sup>While impressive, this increase should not be very surprising, since family worship was the context of the project. However, it does say volumes about these families’ practice before the project began.

would have been more useful for the purposes of the survey. However, that is not to say that some insights cannot be gleaned from the surveys in terms of trends of belief and behavior.

The same set of questions mentioned above were examined. Two responses stood out indicating at least a trend toward greater assurance of salvation (Question 7) and understanding the schemes of Satan in spiritual warfare (Question 6). In all questions addressing the spiritual disciplines, there were trends toward improvement. Under the requirements of the project, this trend makes sense and should be expected since children, especially younger children, are dependent upon their parents for such activities.

### **Conclusion**

Clearly, the goal of encouraging families to meet for worship was met during the project. Over twelve weeks, the participating families met more often than they had previously. The increase in the frequency of families meeting for family worship was quite a surprise. This statistical result reveals some important lessons. First, families can and will respond to the call of Deuteronomy 6 when they are challenged, encouraged and equipped to do it. As one father said in private, he no longer felt like a failure in leading his family spiritually. For years, he felt guilty over his lapse in performing this leadership role in his home. He admitted that he wanted to be the spiritual head of his household in this way, but was fearful of appearing inadequate. However, once he grasped the simplicity of the approach, i.e., read a Scripture, sing a song and pray a prayer, he grew confident that he could be faithful in fulfilling his obligation.

Second, families, especially fathers, need the support that comes from loving-accountability. In this case, the accountability came in the form of the weekly huddles. Everyone had to be prepared for the “pop quiz” of reciting the week’s memory verse. They knew they could come with questions or comments about their experiences during

the week. The meetings were treated as something of a cheer leading rally to encourage the families to persevere. Out of this need for mutual encouragement came the creative idea for the coloring contest and the prizes for the children.

Third, building a community of like-minded people encourages the creation of a culture of discipleship at home. The intangibles of mothers sharing with other mothers and fathers with other fathers their successes and failures, their ideas for making the home a place of discipleship cannot be calculated nor can it be discounted. The spiritual strength that comes with this sort of interaction is what one hopes for but not one for which structures can be put into place. It seems to be the by-product of the Spirit's work through Christian fellowship.

Fourth, each family interviewed said they would continue meeting for family worship in the future perhaps two to three times weekly. However, they expressed a need for resources similar to the Gurnallian Project. Therefore, FBC pastoral leadership will gather new resources for families to use.

These results are amazing in many ways. The families knew the expectations were high and began the project with a clear understanding of the challenges. To their credit, they performed well, and persisted even in spite of many distractions. Along the way, they learned valuable lessons about the nature of spiritual warfare and the role of the family in it. They learned that they could meet for regular family worship but scheduling would be a matter of discipline. One husband and wife said that family worship should be the most natural thing for a Christian family. The wife wrote in her journal,

My main conclusion, in family devotions in general, is that they should be the most natural, easy thing to do and instead they are terrible hard. Coming together as the family unit that God created, worshipping the Creator [*sic*], and putting that first, should be as natural as breathing . . . . Instead, we fumble, flounder and inch our way through. We have to make time for it [but] it's hard. But it is worth it when you see them (i.e., the children) start to 'get' it. Even when she is not excited about our "botions," (*sic*) she learns something and I think that the truths are starting to penetrate her heart.

While these were encouraging signs in the present, there is concern for the future. What responses from these families might one find six months from now? What will be the habit of the family one year from the end of the project? There will likely be some diminishing of spiritual discipline. The effectiveness of this project could better be ascertained by another survey of the same families at six-month intervals. Then a church leadership could be confident that the people are being served well.

## APPENDIX 13

### A PRAYER AGAINST UNBELIEF

Father, right now, I am experiencing the cold fingers of fear creeping into my heart trying to convince me that you won't continue your steadfast love and faithfulness to me. I know, according to your promise that "the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; your mercies never come to an end. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness" (Lam 3:22).

Father, you are my portion, therefore I will hope in you. For thirty-five years you have kept me and provided for us. We have never missed a meal, gone naked or lacked a roof. With these, I will be content. You have given us your Spirit to guide, comfort and teach; with him, we are blessed.

Only now, fight this enemy and be our refuge. Give us more faith to see you as our Father; know you as our covenant God; and experience your love planted in us.

Help us to cast our anchor upward where we trust in you as our Lord. Be pleased to live in us and move in us, breathing in our prayers, inhabiting our praises, speaking in our words, moving in our actions, living in our lives and causing us to grow in grace.

Lord, at this time, our faith is weak but your goodness is strong. Fan this spark of faith into a glowing flame to put forward its strength until your will fills our soul and the impurity of unbelief is cast out.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Books

- Adams, Jay E. *Winning the War Within: A Biblical Strategy for Spiritual Warfare*. Woodruff, SC: Timeless Texts, reprinted 2001.
- Alcorn, Randy. *Money, Possessions and Eternity*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2003.
- Alden, Robert L. *Job*. The New American Commentary, vol. 11. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993.
- Alexander, Donald L., ed. *Christian Spirituality: Five Views of Sanctification*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988.
- Alexander, James W. *Thoughts on Family-Worship*. Pittsburgh: Soli Deo Gloria, 1990.
- Alexander, T. Desmond, and Brian S. Rosner, eds. *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003.
- Ambrose, Isaac. *The Christian Warrior, Wrestling with Sin, Satan, the World and the Flesh*. Charleston, SC: BiblioBazaar, LLC, 2008.
- Anderson, Francis I. *Job: An Introduction and Commentary*. Tyndale Old Testament Commentary. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1976.
- Anderson, Neil T. *The Bondage Breaker: Overcoming Negative Thoughts, Irrational Feelings, Habitual Sins*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Victory over the Darkness: Realizing the Power of Your Identity in Christ*. Ventura, CA: Regal, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Warfare Prayer: How to Seek God's Power and Protection in the Battle to Build His Kingdom*. Ventura, CA: Regal, 1992.
- Andrews, Robert. *The Family: God's Weapon for Victory*. Mukilteo, WA: WinePress, 1995.
- Arnold, Clinton E. *Ephesians: Power and Magic: The Concept of Power in Ephesians in Light of its Historical Setting*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Powers of Darkness: Principalities and Powers in Paul's Letters*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Three Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1997.

- Ash, Christopher. *The Priority of Preaching*. Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2009.
- Balswick, Jack O., and Judith K. Balswick. *The Family: A Christian Perspective on the Contemporary Home*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991.
- Barker, Kenneth L. *Zechariah*. In vol. 7 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Edited by Frank E. Gaebelin, 595-697. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985).
- Barna, George. *Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions: Why Children Should be Your Church's #1 Priority*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2003.
- Baucham, Voddie, Jr.. *Family Driven Faith: Doing What it Takes to Raise Sons and Daughters Who Walk with God*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2007.
- Beale, G. K. *The Book of Revelation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Beeke, Joel R. *Family Worship*. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Overcoming the World: Grace to Win the Daily Battle*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Puritan Reformed Spirituality: A Practical Theological Study from Our Reformed and Puritan Heritage*. Webster, NY: Evangelical Press USA, 2006.
- Beeke, Joel R., and Randall J. Pederson. *Meet the Puritans: With a Guide to Modern Reprints*. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2006.
- Bellah, Robert, Richard Madsen, William Sullivan, and Ann Swidler. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985.
- Bennett, Arthur, ed. *The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions*. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1975.
- Berkouwer, G.C. *Faith and Perseverance*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Faith and Sanctification*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sin*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Work of Christ*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965.
- Bickle, R. Bruce. *Light and Heat: The Puritan View of the Pulpit*. Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 1999.
- Bounds, E. M. *The Complete Works of E. M. Bounds on Prayer*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990.
- Boyd, Gregory A. *God at War: The Bible and Spiritual Conflict*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997.

- Braun, Roddy L. *1 Chronicles*. Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 15. Waco, TX: Word, 1986.
- Brazelton, T. Berry, ed. *Affective Development in Infancy*. New York: Ablex Publishing, 1986.
- Bridges, Jerry. *The Discipline of Grace: God's Role and Our Role in the Pursuit of Holiness*. Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Gospel for Real Life: Turning to the Liberating Power of the Cross Every Day*. Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 2002.
- Brooks, Thomas. *Heaven on Earth*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1961.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Precious Remedies against Satan's Devices*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1968.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Secret Key to Heaven: The Vital Importance of Private Prayer*. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2006.
- Brown, Colin, ed. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975.
- Bruce, F. F. *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984.
- Bruce, F. F., and E. K. Simpson. *Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians*. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957.
- Brunner, Kurt, and Steve Stroope. *It Starts at Home: A Practical Guide to Nurturing Lifelong Faith*. Chicago: Moody 2010.
- Buchanan, James. *The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit*. London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1966.
- Bunge, Marcia J. *The Child in Christian Thought*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.
- Bunyan, John. *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1993.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1903.
- Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Edited by John T. McNeill. Translated by Ford Lewis Battles. 2 vols. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sermons on the Epistle to the Ephesians*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1973.
- Campbell, Iain D. *The Doctrine of Sin*. Fearn, Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 1999.

- Carson, D. A. *A Call to Spiritual Reformation: Priorities from Paul and His Prayers*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1992.
- Castleman, Robbie. *Parenting in the Pew: Guiding Your Children into the Joy of Worship*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 1993.
- Challies, Tim. *The Discipline of Spiritual Discernment*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2007.
- Chapell, Bryan. *Praying Backwards: Transform Your Prayer Life by Beginning in Jesus' Name*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005.
- Clapp, Rodney. *Families at the Crossroads: Beyond Traditional and Modern Options*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993.
- Clines, David J. A. *Job 1-20*. Word Bible Commentary, vol. 17. Dallas: Word, 1989.
- Davids, Peter H. *The Epistle of James: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.
- Davis, Dale Ralph. *2 Samuel: Looking on the Heart*. Reprint, Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 1999.
- DeYoung, Kevin, and Ted Kluk. *Why We Love the Church: In Praise of Institutions and Organized Religion*. Chicago: Moody, 2009.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Why We're Not Emergent: By Two Guys Who Should Be*. Chicago: Moody, 2008.
- DeVries, Mark. *Family-Based Youth Ministry: Revised and Expanded*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2004.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sustainable Youth Ministry: Why Most Youth Ministry Doesn't Last and What Your Church Can Do about It*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2008.
- Durbin, Kara. *Parenting with Scripture: A Topical Guide for Teachable Moments*. Chicago: Moody, 2001.
- Elders of Grace Baptist Church. *The Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689*. Carlisle, PA: n.d.
- Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1985.
- Farenhorst, Christine. *Amazing Stories from Times Past: Devotions for Children and Families*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2005.
- Farley, William P. *Gospel-Powered Parenting: How the Gospel Shapes and Transforms Parenting*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2009.
- Fee, Gordon D. *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994.

- Ferguson, Sinclair. *Big Book of Questions and Answers*. Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *By Grace Alone: How the Grace of God Amazes Me*. Lake Mary, FL: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Christian Life*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Heart for God*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Holy Spirit*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *In Christ Alone: Living the Gospel-Centered Life*. Lake Mary, FL: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2007.
- Freed, Sandie. *Breaking the Threefold Demonic Cord: How to Discern and Defeat the Lies of Jezebel, Athaliah and Delilah*. Grand Rapids: Chosen Books, 2008.
- Freudenburg, Ben, and Rick Lawrence. *The Family-Friendly Church*. Loveland, CO: Group, 1998.
- Garland, David E. *2 Corinthians*. New American Commentary, vol. 29. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999.
- Garrity, Carla B., and Mitchell A. Barris. *Caught in the Middle: Protecting the Children of High-Conflict Divorce*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publications, 1998.
- Geldenhuis, Norval. *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979.
- Goligher, Liam. *The Jesus Gospel: Recovering the Lost Message*. London: Authentic Media. 2006.
- Gordon, Robert. *I & II Samuel: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986.
- Green, Michael. *I Believe in Satan's Downfall*. London: Hodder and Stouton, 1981.
- Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.
- Gurnall, William. *The Christian in Complete Armour*. 2 vols. Reprint, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2002.
- Habel, Norman C. *The Book of Job: A Commentary*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985.
- Hallesby, O. *Prayer*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1994.
- Hamilton, James M. *God's Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testaments*. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2006.
- Hamilton, Victor P. *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

- Harris, Joshua. *Sex Is Not the Problem (Lust Is)*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 2003.
- Harris, Murray J. *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.
- Hart, Archibald. *Children and Divorce: What to Expect, How to Help*. Waco, TX: Word, 1982.
- Hartley, John E. *The Book of Job*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.
- Hawthorne, Gerald F., and Ralph P. Martin, eds. *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993.
- Haynes, Brian. *Shift: What it Takes to Finally Reach Families Today*. Loveland, CO: Group, 2009.
- Haykin, Michael A. G. *The Empire of the Holy Spirit*. Memphis, TN: BorderStone Press, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The God Who Draws Near: An Introduction to Biblical Spirituality*. Faverdale North, Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 2007.
- Helm, David. *The Big Picture Story Bible*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004.
- Hendricks, William L. *A Theology for Children*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1980.
- Henry, Matthew. *A Method for Prayer: Freedom in the Face of God*. Edited by J. Ligon Duncan III. Reprint, Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2006.
- Hiebert, D. Edmond. *First Peter: An Expositional Commentary*. Chicago: Moody, 1984.
- Hill, Andrew E., and John H. Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991.
- Hodge, Charles. *Commentary of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973.
- Hoehner, Harold W. *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002.
- Howard, Evan B. *Praying the Scriptures: A Field Guide for Your Spiritual Journey*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1999.
- Howat, Irene. *Ten Boys Who Changed the World*. Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Books, 2001.
- Hughes, R. Kent. *Disciplines of the Godly Man*. Rev. ed., Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2001.
- James, John Angell. *The Christian Father's Present to His Children*. Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria, 1995.

- Japhet, Sara. *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993.
- Joines, Karen Randolph. *Serpent Symbolism in the Old Testament: A Linguistic, Archaeological, and Literary Study*. Haddonfield, NJ: Haddonfield House, 1974.
- Kapic, Kelly M., and Justin Taylor, eds. *Overcoming Sin and Temptation: Three Classic Works by John Owen*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006.
- Keil, C.F. and F. Delitzsch. *I & II Kings, I & II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*. Commentary on the Old Testament. Vol. 3. Translated by James Martin. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Job*. Commentary on the Old Testament. Vol. 3. Translated by James Martin. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Isaiah*. Commentary on the Old Testament. Vol. 7. Translated by James Martin. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Pentateuch*. Commentary on the Old Testament. Vol. 1. Translated by James Martin. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Minor Prophets*. Commentary on the Old Testament. Vol. 10. Translated by James Martin. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986.
- Kerr, Hugh T., and John M. Mulder, *Famous Conversions: The Christian Experience*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.
- Kett, Joseph. *Rites of Passage: Adolescence in America 1790 to the Present*. New York: Basic Books, 1977.
- Kholberg, Lawrence. *Child Psychology and Childhood Education: A Cognitive-Developmental View*. Harlow, England: Longman Group United Kingdom, 1987.
- Kimmel, Tim, and Darcy Kimmel. *Extreme Grandparenting: The Ride of Your Life*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2007.
- Kimmel, Tim. *Grace-Based Parenting*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Raising Kids for True Greatness: Redefine Success for You and Your Child*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Why Christian Kids Rebel: Trading Heartache for Hope*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004.
- Kistler, Don, ed. *The Puritans on Prayer: John Preston on "The Saints' Daily Exercise," Nathaniel Vincent on "The Spirit of Prayer," Samuel Lee on "Secret Prayer."* Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 1995.
- Klein, George. *Zechariah*. New American Commentary, vol. 21B. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2008.

- Kleyn, Diana. *Taking Root: Conversions Stories for Children*. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2006.
- Kuczynski, Leon, ed. *Handbook of Dynamics in Parent-Child Relations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2002.
- Ladd, George Eldon. *A Theology of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.
- Ladd, George Eldon. *The Gospel of the Kingdom: Popular Expositions on the Kingdom of God*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Presence of the Future*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.
- Lancaster, Phillip. *Family Man, Family Leader*. San Antonio, TX: Vision Forum, Inc., 2003.
- Lane, Timothy S. and Paul David Tripp. *How People Change*. Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2006.
- Lawless, Charles E., and John Franklin. *Spiritual Warfare*. Nashville: LifeWay Press, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Putting on the Armor: Equipped and Deployed for Spiritual Warfare*. Nashville: LifeWay, 2007.
- Lawless, Charles E. *Discipled Warriors: Growing Healthy Churches that are Equipped for Spiritual Warfare*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Serving in Your Church's Prayer Ministry*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.
- Leahy, Frederick S. *Satan Cast Out: A Study in Biblical Demonology*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1975.
- Lehman, Kevin. *Becoming the Parent God Wants You to Be*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Have a New Kid by Friday: How to Change Your Child's Attitude, Behavior and Character in 5 Days*. Grand Rapids: Revell, 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Making Children Mind Without Losing Yours*. Grand Rapids: Revell, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *What a Difference a Daddy Makes: The Indelible Imprint a Dad Leaves on His Daughter's Life*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000.
- Letham, Robert. *The Work of Christ*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993.
- Lewis, C.S. *The Screwtape Letters*. New York: HarperOne, 2001.
- Lewis, Peter. *The Genius of Puritanism*. Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 1977.
- Lewis, Robert. *Raising a Modern Day Knight: A Father's Role in Guiding his Son to Authentic Manhood*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2007.



- Lincoln, Andrew T. *Ephesians*. Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 42. Dallas: Word, 1990.
- Lloyd-Jones, D.M. *Life in the Spirit: In Marriage, Home and Work: An Exposition of Ephesians 5:18 to 6:9*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1973.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Christian Soldier: An Exposition of Ephesians 6:10 to 20*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1977.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Christian Warfare: An Exposition of Ephesians 6:10 to 13*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books House, 1976.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Puritans: Their Origins and Successors*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1987.
- Lovelace, Richard F. *Renewal as a Way of Life*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979.
- Lowe, Chuck. *Territorial Spirits and World Evangelisation: A Biblical, Historical and Missiological Critique of Strategic-Level Spiritual Warfare*. Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 1998.
- Lundgaard, Kris. *The Enemy Within: Straight Talk about the Power and Defeat of Sin*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1998.
- Lystad, Mary ed. *Violence in the Home: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. NY: Brunner/Mazel Publishers, 1994.
- MacArthur, John. *The Gospel According to Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Why One Way? Defending an Exclusive Claim in an Inclusive World*. Nashville: W Publishing Group, 2002.
- Mahaney, C. J. *The Cross-Centered Life: Keeping the Gospel the Main Thing*. Sister, OR: Multnomah, 2002.
- Marshall, I. Howard. *The Gospel of Luke*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978.
- Martin, Ralph P. *James*. Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 48. Dallas: Word, 1988.
- Matthews, Kenneth A. *Genesis 1-11:26*. The New American Commentary, vol. 1A. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Genesis 11:27-50:26*. The New American Commentary, vol. 1B. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2005.
- Meade, Starr. *Training Hearts, Teaching Minds: Family Devotions Based on the Shorter Catechism*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2000.

- Merrill, Dean and Grace. *Together at Home: 100 Proven Ways to Nurture Your Child's Faith*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1985.
- Michael, David. *Preparing Young People for Baptism*. Minneapolis: Desiring God Ministries, 2001.
- Michael, Sally. *Lord, Teach Us to Pray: Family Devotional Guide: A Study for Children and Adults on Prayer*. Minneapolis: Desiring God Ministries, 2006.
- Mitton, C. Leslie, *Ephesians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973.
- Moo, Douglas. *The Letter of James*. Pillar New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.
- Moreau, Scott A. *Essentials of Spiritual Warfare: Equipped to Win the Battle*. Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1997.
- Motyer, J. Alec. *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1993.
- Murphy, Art. *The Faith of a Child: A Step-by-Step Guide to Salvation for Your Child*. Chicago: Moody, 2000.
- Murray, Andrew. *The Ministry of Intercessory Prayer*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1981.
- Myers, Jacob M. *1 Chronicles*. Anchor Bible, vol. 12. New York: Doubleday, 1965.
- Nash, Ronald H. *Faith and Reason: Searching for a Rational Faith*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *World-Views in Conflict: Choosing Christianity in a World of Ideas*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.
- Nathan, Rich, and Ken Wilson. *Empowered Evangelicals: Bringing Together the Best of the Evangelical and Charismatic Worlds*. Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1995.
- Nettles, Tom J. *Teaching Truth, Training Hearts: The Study of Catechisms in Baptist Life*. Amityville, NY: Calvary Press Publishing, 1998.
- Neufeld, Thomas R. Yoder. *Put on the Armour of God: The Divine Warrior from Isaiah to Ephesians*. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.
- Nolland, John. *Luke 9:21-18:34*. Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 35B. Dallas: Word, 1993.
- Nuttall, Geoffrey F. *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- O'Brien, Peter T. *The Letter to the Ephesians*. The Pillar New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.

- Osborne, Rick. *Teaching Your Child How to Pray*. Chicago: Moody, 2000.
- Oswalt, John N. *The Book of Isaiah Chapters 1-39*. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Book of Isaiah Chapters 40-66*. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- Owen, John. *The Holy Spirit: His Gifts and Power: Expositions of the Spirit's Name, Nature, Personality, Dispensation, Operations and Effects*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1954.
- Packer, J. I. *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Keep in Step with the Spirit*. Grand Rapids: Revell, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Rediscovering Holiness*. Ann Arbor, MI: Servant, 1992.
- Page, Sydney H. T. *Powers of Evil: A Biblical Study of Satan and Demons*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995.
- Paton, John G. *Missionary to the New Hebrides: An Autobiography Edited by His Brother*. New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1898.
- Payne, J. Barton. *1, 2 Chronicles*. In vol. 4 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Edited by Frank E. Gaebelin, 303-560. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988.
- Petersen, David L. *Haggai and Zechariah 1-8*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984.
- Peretti, Frank. *Piercing the Darkness*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1989.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *This Present Darkness*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1986.
- Peterson, David. *Possessed by God: A New Testament Theology of Sanctification and Holiness*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1995.
- Phillips, Benny and Sheree Phillips. *Walking with the Wise: God's Plan for Parents and Teens*. LaVergne, TN: Spring Arbor, 1994.
- Pink, Arthur W. *A Guide to Fervent Prayer*. Edited by Donald White. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.
- Piper, John. *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah Press, 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Purifying Power of Living by Faith in Future Grace*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah Books, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *What Jesus Demands from the World*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2006.
- Piper, John and Justin Taylor, eds., *Suffering and the Sovereignty of God*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2006.

- Piper, John and Wayne Grudem. *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991.
- Plantinga, Cornelius. *Not the Way it's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.
- Plowman, Ginger. *Don't Make Me Count to Three! A Mom's Look at Heart-Oriented Discipline*. Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Wise Words for Moms*. Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 2001.
- Pollock, Linda. *A Lasting Relationship: Parents and Children Over Three Centuries*. Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 1990.
- Postman, Neil. *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology*. New York: Vintage Books, 1992.
- Powlison, David. *Power Encounters: Reclaiming Spiritual Warfare*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995.
- Prime, Derek. *Practical Prayer*. Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2007.
- Priolo, Lou. *Teach Them Diligently: How to use the Scriptures in Child Training*. Woodruff, SC: Timeless Texts, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Heart of Anger*. Amityville, NY: Calvary Press, 1997.
- Prior, K. F. W. *The Way of Holiness: The Christian Doctrine of Sanctification*. Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1967.
- Putnam, Robert. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Shuster, 2000.
- Richards, Clift, and Lloyd Hildebrand. *Prayers that Prevail for Your Children: A Parent's and Grandparent's Manual of Prayers*. Tulsa, OK: Victory House, 1994.
- Richards, Lawrence O. *Creative Bible Teaching*. Chicago: Moody, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985.
- Ross, Allen P. *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of the Book of Genesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988.
- Ryken, Philip Graham. *When You Pray: Making the Lord's Prayer Your Own*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2000.
- Ryken, Philip Graham, Derek W.H. Thomas, and J. Ligon Duncan III, eds. *Give Praise to God: Vision for Reforming Worship*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2003.
- Ryle, J. C. *Holiness: Its Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties and Roots*. Moscow, ID: Charles Nolan Publishers, 2001.

- Schaefer, Charles E., and Theresa Foy DiGeronimo. *How to Talk to Teens About Really Important Things: Specific Questions and Answers and Useful Things to Say*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999.
- Schoolland, Marian M. *Leading Little Ones to God*. Lynwood, WA: Aglow Publishers, 1998.
- Schreiner, Thomas. *1, 2 Peter, Jude*. New American Commentary, vol. 37. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.
- Sherrer, Quin. *How to Pray for Your Children*. Lynwood, WA: Aglow Publishers, 1998.
- Shore, Rima. *What Kids Need: Today's Best Ideas for Nurturing, Teaching, and Protecting Young Children*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2002.
- Sire, James W. *Praying the Psalms of Jesus*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007.
- Smick, Elmer B. *Job*. In vol. 4 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*. Edited by Frank E. Gaebelien and J. D. Douglas, 842-1060. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988.
- Smith, Christian and Patricia Snell. *Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Smith, Gary V. *The Prophets as Preachers: An Introduction to the Hebrew Prophets*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994.
- Stedman, Ray C. *Spiritual Warfare: Winning the Daily Battle with Satan*. Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1975.
- Stetzer, Ed, and Thom S. Rainer. *Transformational Church: Creating a New Scorecard for Congregations*. Nashville: B & H Publishing, 2010.
- Stott, John. *The Cross of Christ*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Men Made New: An Exposition of Romans 5-8*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1966.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Message of Acts*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Message of Ephesians*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979.
- Spodek, Bernard, ed. *Handbook of Research on the Education of Young Children*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., 2005.
- Sproul, R. C. *Getting the Gospel Right: The Tie that Binds Evangelicals Together*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999.
- Strauch, Alexander. *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Biblical Church Leadership*. Colorado Springs, CO: Lewis and Roth Publishers, 1995.

- Swenson, Richard A. *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2004.
- Teellinck, Willem. *The Path of True Godliness*. Edited by Joel R. Beeke. Translated by Annemie Godbehere. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2003.
- Thomas, Angela. *Youth Online: Identity and Literacy in the Digital Age*. NY: Peter Lang Publications, 2007.
- Thompson, J. A. *1, 2 Chronicles*. The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994.
- Tozer, A. W. *The Knowledge of the Holy: The Attributes of God: Their Meaning in the Christian Life*. Lincoln, NE: Back to the Bible Broadcast, 1961.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Pursuit of God*. Camp Hill, PA: Christian Publications, 1982.
- Trent, John, and Gary Smalley. *The Blessing: Giving the Gift of Unconditional Love and Acceptance*. Revised, Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004.
- Tripp, Paul David. *Age of Opportunity: A Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2001.
- Tripp, Tedd, and Margy Tripp. *Instructing a Child's Heart*. Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 2008.
- Tripp, Tedd. *Shepherding a Child's Heart*. Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 1995.
- Turansky, Scott, and JoAnne Miller. *Say Goodbye to Whining, Complaining and Bad Attitudes in You and Your Child*. Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook, 2000.
- Visher, Emily B., and John S. Visher. *How to Win as a Step-family*. NY: Brunner/Mazel Publishers, 1993.
- Von Rad, Gerhard. *Genesis: A Commentary*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1972.
- Wallace, Eric. *Uniting Church and Home: A Blueprint for Rebuilding Church Community*. Lorton, VA: Solutions for Integrating Church and Home, 1999.
- Wallace, Ronald S. *Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian Life*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1997.
- Waltke, Bruce K., with Charles Yu. *An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical, and Thematic Approach*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007.
- Watson, Jean. *The Family's Pilgrim Progress*. Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2007.
- Watson, Thomas. *A Body of Divinity*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Doctrine of Repentance*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1987.

- Weddle, Linda Massey. *How to Raise a Modern-Day Joseph: A Practical Guide for Growing Great Kids*. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2009.
- Wenham, Gordon J. *Genesis 1-15*. Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 1. Dallas: Word, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Genesis 16-50*. Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 2. Dallas: Word, 1987.
- Whitney, Donald S. *Disciplines for the Christian Life*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Family Worship: in the Bible, in History and in Your Home*. Shepherdsville, KY: The Center for Biblical Spirituality, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *How Can I Be Sure I'm a Christian? What the Bible Says about Assurance of Salvation*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Spiritual Disciplines Within the Church: Participating Fully in the Body of Christ*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ten Questions to Diagnose Your Spiritual Health*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2001.
- Wilhoit, James C. *Spiritual Formation as if the Church Mattered: Growing in Christ Through Community*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.
- Wood, A. Skevington. *Ephesians*. In vol. 11 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, eds., Frank E. Gaebelin and J.D. Douglas, 3-92. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, Regency Reference Library, 1978.
- Wright, Tom. *Bringing the Church to the World: Renewing the Church to Confront the Paganism Entrenched in Western Culture*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1992.
- Younts, John A. *Everyday Talk: Talking Freely and Naturally about God with Your Children*. Wapwallopen, PA: Shepherd Press, 2004.
- Yuille, J. Stephen. *The Inner Sanctum of Puritan Piety: John Flavel's Doctrine of Mystical Union with Christ*. Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2007.
- Zacharias, Bryan G. *The Embattled Christian: William Gurnall and the Puritan View of Spiritual Warfare*. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1995.

### Articles

- Anthony, Michael J. "Putting Children's Spirituality in Perspective." In *Perspectives on Children's Spiritual Formation*, ed. Michael J. Anthony, 1-44. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2006.
- Arnold, Clinton E. "Ephesus." In *The Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*. Edited by Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993.

- Balla, Peter. "2 Corinthians." In *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed., G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, 753-83. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.
- Beale, G. K., and Sean M. McDonough. "Revelation." In *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, 1081-163. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.
- Coenen, L. "Elect . . ." In *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. Edited by Colin Brown. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978.
- Ferguson, Sinclair. "The Reformed View." In *Christian Spirituality: Five Views of Sanctification*, ed. Donald L. Alexander, 47-76. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988.
- Tate, Marvin E. "Satan in the Old Testament." *Review and Expositor* 89, no. 4 (1992): 461-74.
- Thielman, Frank S. "Ephesians." In *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, 813-33. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.
- Twelftree, G. H. "Spiritual Powers." In *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. Edited by T. Desmond Alexander, Brian S. Rosner, D. A. Carson, and Graeme Goldsworthy, 796-802. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000.

### Internet Articles

- The Barna Group. "American's Are Most Worried about Children's Future" [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/15-familykids/97-americans-are-most-worried-about-childrens-future>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Barna Survey Examines Changes in Worldview Among Christians over the Past 13 Years" [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article21-transformation/252-barna-survey-examines-changes-in-worldview-among-christians-over-the-past-13-years>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Barna Technology Study: Social Networking, Online Entertainment and Church Podcasts" [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/14-media/36-barna-technology-study-social-networking-online-entertainment-and-church-podcasts>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Christian Parents Are Not Comfortable with Media But Buy Them for Their Kids Anyway" [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/15-familykids/90-christian-parents-are-not-comfortable-with-media-but-buy-them-for-their-kids-anyway>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Harry Potter's Influence Goes Unchallenged in Most Homes and Churches" [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/14-media/154-harry-potters-influence-goes-unchallenged-in-most-homes-and-churches>; Internet.



- \_\_\_\_\_. “Many Churchgoers and Faith Leaders Struggle to Define Spiritual Maturity” [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/12-faithspirituality/264-many-churchgoers-and-faith-l-leaders-struggle-to-define-spiritual-maturity>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Most American Christians Do Not Believe that Satan or the Holy Spirit Exist” [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/12-faithspirituality/260-most-american-christians-do-not-believe-that-satan-or-the-holy-spirit-exist>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “A New Generation Expresses its Skepticism and Frustration with Christianity” [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2008. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/16-teensnext-gen/94-a-new-generation-expresses-its-skepticism-and-frustration-with-christianity>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “A New Generation of Adults Bends Moral and Sexual rules to Their Liking” [on-line]. Accessed 15 August 2009. Available from <http://barna.org/barna-update/article/13-culture/144-a-new-generation-of-adults-bends-moral-and-sexual-rules-to-their-liking>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Most Twentysomethings Put Christianity on the Shelf Following Spiritually Active Teen Years” [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/16-teensnext-gen/147-most-twentysomethings-put-christianity-on-the-shelf-following-spiritually-active-teen-years>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “New Marriage and Divorce Statistics Released” [on-line]. Accessed 3 March 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/15-familykids/42-new-marriage-and-divorce-statistics-released>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “New Research Explores How Technology Drives Generation Gap” [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/14-media/212-new-research-explores-how-technology-drives-generation-gap>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Parents Accept Responsibility for Their Child’s Spiritual Development but Struggle with Effectiveness” [on-line]. Accessed 5 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/5-barna-update/120-parents-accept-responsibility-for-their-childs-spiritual-development-but-struggle-with-effectiveness>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Research Shows Parenting Approach Determines Whether Children Become Devoted Christians” [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/15-familykids/106-research-shows-parenting-approach-determines-whether-children-become-devoted-christians>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Survey Describes the Ups and Downs of Tween Life” [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/15-familykids/146-survey-describes-the-ups-and-downs-of-tween-life>; Internet.
-

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Survey Reveals Americans' Feelings about Wicca" [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/12-faithspirituality/16-survey-reveals-americans-feelings-about-wicca>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Survey Reveals Challenges Faced by Young People" [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/15-familykids/96-survey-reveals-challenges-faced-by-young-people>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Spirituality of Moms Outpaces that of Dads" [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/15-familykids/104-the-spirituality-of-moms-outpaces-that-of-dads>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Virginia Tech Tragedy is a Wake-up Call to Parents" [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/14-media/105-virginia-tech-tragedy-is-a-wake-up-call-to-parents>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "What Teenagers Look for in a Church" [on-line]. Accessed 29 May 2009. Available from <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/16-teensnext-gen/93-what-teenagers-look-for-in-a-church>; Internet.
- Carr, Nicholas. "Is Google Making Us Stupid?" [on-line]. Accessed 5 May 2009. Available from <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200807/google>; Internet.
- Duncan III, Dr. J. Ligon, "I Thank God for You" [on-line]. Accessed 11 January 2011. Available from [http://www.fpcjackson.org/resources/sermons/Philippians/Philippians\\_Vols1\\_and\\_2/01b\\_philippians%20\\_1\\_3\\_5.htm](http://www.fpcjackson.org/resources/sermons/Philippians/Philippians_Vols1_and_2/01b_philippians%20_1_3_5.htm); Internet.
- Edwards, Jonathan. "Living to Christ" (1720). The Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University [on-line]. Accessed 4 January 2010. Available from <http://edwards.yale.edu/archive?pgfa=aHR0cDovL2Vkd2FyZHMueWFsZS5lZHUvY2dpLWJpbi9uZXdwaGlscy9zZWZyY2gzdA%3D%3D&dbname=wjeo&KEEPISTORY=7199945799&word=christian+family&OUTPUT=conc&CONJUNCT=PHRASE&DISTANCE=3&title=&collection=&date=&DFPERIOD=1&POLESPAN=5&THMPRTLIMIT=1&KWSS=1&KWSSPRLIM=500&trsrtorder=author%2C+title&editor=&createdate=&shrtcite=&sortorder=author%2C+date&dgdivhead=&dgdivtype=&dgdivocauthor=&dgdivocdateline=&dgdivocsalutation=&dgsubdivtag=&dgsubdivtype>; Internet.
- Elizabeth, Colorado. "Elizabeth, CO (Colorado) Houses and Residents 2003-2008" [on-line]. Accessed 9 February 2009. Available from <http://www.city-data.com/city/Elizabeth-Colorado.html>; Internet.
- Ellif, Jim. "Childhood Conversion" [on-line]. Accessed 13 May 2009. Available from <http://www.ccwonline.org/cconv.html>; Internet.
- Ellis, Thomas Talbot. "Samuel Davies: The Apostle of Virginia" [on-line]. Accessed 30 July 2010. Available from <http://www.puritansermons.com/banner/sdavies1.htm>; Internet.
- Franktown, Colorado. "City Overview" [on-line]. Accessed 9 February 2009. Available from <http://www.bestplaces.net/city/Franktown-Colorado.aspx>; Internet.

- Hughes, R. Kent. "Passive Parenting vs. Purposeful Parenting" [on-line]. Accessed 23 January 2010. Available from [http://www.hkenthughes.com/articles/PASSIVE\\_PARENTING\\_VS\\_PURPOSEFUL\\_PARENTING.pdf](http://www.hkenthughes.com/articles/PASSIVE_PARENTING_VS_PURPOSEFUL_PARENTING.pdf); Internet.
- Jones, Timothy Paul. "Equipping Families to Do Discipleship Family Ministry" [on-line]. Accessed 6 May 2009. Available from [www.timothypauljones.com](http://www.timothypauljones.com); Internet.
- Luther, Martin. "A Simple Way to Pray (For Master Peter the Barber)" [on-line]. Accessed 20 September 2010. Available from <http://www.hope-aurora.org/docs/ASimpleWaytoPray.pdf>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Small Catechism* [on-line]. Accessed 20 September 2010. Available from <http://www.lutheran.co.uk/docs/Small%20Catechism.pdf>; Internet.
- Mohler, Jr., R. Albert. "'Like the Air they Breathe' – The Online Life of Kids" [on-line]. Accessed 21 January 2010. Available from <http://www.albertmohler.com/2010/01/21/like-the-air-they-breathe-the-online-life-of-kids>; Internet.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "NewsNote: Seen But Not Heard?" [on-line]. Accessed 26 January 2010. Available from <http://www.albertmohler.com/2010/01/22/newsnote-seen-but-not-heard/>; Internet.
- Parker, Colorado. "Parker CO (Colorado) Houses and Residents, 2003-2008" [on-line]. Accessed 9 February 2009. Available from <http://www.city-data.com/city/Parker-Colorado.html>; Internet.
- Paul, Pamela. "Are Fathers Necessary?" [on-line]. Accessed 18 November 2010. Available from <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/07/are-fathers-necessary/8136/>; Internet.
- Rogers, Mark. "Deliver us from the Evil One: Martin Luther on Prayer." *Themelios* 34:1 (2009) [on-line]. Accessed 17 November 2010. Available from <http://www.the-gospelcoalition.org/publications/34-3/deliver-us-from-the-evil-one-martin-luther-on-prayer>; Internet.
- Ryle, J. C. "The Duties of Parents." *The J.C. Ryle Collection* [on-line]. Accessed 25 February 2009. Available from <http://www.biblebb.com/files/ryle/PARENTSJC.HTM>; Internet.
- Scaer, David P. "Luther on Prayer." *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 47:4 (1983) [on-line]. Accessed 7 July 2010. Available from <http://www.ctsfw.net/media/pdfs/Scaerprayer.pdf>; Internet.
- Schmidt, Cary. "The Pitfalls of Passive Parents" [on-line]. Accessed 15 October 2009. Available from <http://thebaptistvoice.com/categories/student-ministry/pitfalls-passive-parents>; Internet.
- Storms, Sam. "Confronting Reality of Spiritual Warfare" [on-line]. Accessed 5 December 2008. Available from <http://www.enjoyinggodministries.com/Article/confronting-reality-of-spiritual-warfare>; Internet.

Town of Parker, Colorado, (U.S.A.). *Demographics and Economic Profile*, Susan Pacek. "Chapter 1: Community Profile" [on-line]. Accessed 2 February 2009. Available from [http://www.parkeronline.org/archive/pdf\\_files/comprehensive\\_planning/masterplan\\_2005/chapter1.pdf](http://www.parkeronline.org/archive/pdf_files/comprehensive_planning/masterplan_2005/chapter1.pdf); Internet.

Town of Parker Facts and Stats [on-line]. Accessed 9 February 2009. Available from [http://www.parkeronline.org/archive/pdf\\_files/economic\\_dev\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.parkeronline.org/archive/pdf_files/economic_dev_factsheet.pdf); Internet.

Wicker, Christine. "Dumfounded by Divorce" [on-line]. Accessed 12 February 2009. Available from [http://www.adherents.com/largecom/baptist\\_divorce.html](http://www.adherents.com/largecom/baptist_divorce.html); Internet.

Wright, Steve. "Key Puritan Quotes" [on-line]. Accessed 2 January 2010. Available from <http://www.alexchediak.com/blog/Steve%20Wright%20-%20reThink%20-%20Puritan%20Quotes.pdf>; Internet.

### CD-ROM

Owen, John. *On Indwelling Sin in Believers*. In *The Works of John Owen: Division 2: Practical*, vol. 6 [CD-ROM]. Rio, WI: The AGES Digital Library, 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. *On Temptation*. In *The Works of John Owen: Division 2: Practical*, vol. 6 [CD-ROM]. Rio, WI: The AGES Digital Library, 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. *On the Mortification of Sin*. In *The Works of John Owen: Division 2: Practical*, vol. 6 [CD-ROM]. Rio, WI: The AGES Digital Library, 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. *On the Work of the Holy Spirit in Prayer*. In *The Works of John Owen: Division 1: Doctrinal*, vol. 4 [CD-ROM]. Rio, WI: The AGES Digital Library, 2000.

### DVD

Fowler, Larry. "The Importance of Your Family's Faith Plan." In *Raising Kids with a Faith That Lasts* [DVD]. Focus on the Family: Colorado Springs, CO, 2009.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Tools for Your Family's Faith Plan." In *Raising Kids with a Faith That Lasts* [DVD]. Focus on the Family: Colorado Springs, CO, 2009.

Kimmel, Tim. "Raising Our Kids Like God Raises Us." In *Raising Kids with a Faith That Lasts* [DVD]. Focus on the Family: Colorado Springs, CO, 2009.

\_\_\_\_\_. "What Are the Driving Needs of Our Children?" In *Raising Kids with a Faith That Lasts* [DVD]. Focus on the Family: Colorado Springs, CO, 2009.

### Class Lecture

Haykin, Michael A. G. "Lectures 23-24: C. H. Spurgeon, Sermons on the Holy Spirit." Classroom lecture notes, 80914 – *Spiritual Awakenings and Revival*, July 2009. Photocopy.

## ABSTRACT

### TRAINING FAMILIES AT FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH, PARKER, COLORADO, TO FACE SPIRITUAL WARFARE BY USING PRINCIPLES BASED ON WILLIAM GURNALL'S *THE CHRISTIAN IN COMPLETE ARMOUR*

Robert Rhinehart Buchanan, D.Min.  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2011  
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Donald S. Whitney

This project unites the teaching of spiritual warfare with the disciplines of family worship. Chapter 1 explains the rationale and goals of the project.

Chapter 2 explores the biblical rationale for the project, examining Satan's appearances in the Old and New Testaments with special attention given to the schemes of the devil.

Chapter 3 considers the sociological reasons supporting the believer's need to understand spiritual warfare. Calling on a number of research studies, the chapter explains the many pressures faced by today's families and the role spiritual warfare might play in those pressures.

Chapter 4 offers a systematic explanation of how the project was first conducted. Every facet of the project is described so that anyone might implement the project in his or her own church setting.

Chapter 5 examines the results of the project in Faith Baptist Church. Strengths and weaknesses are recorded along with recommendations for improvements.

## VITA

Robert Rhinehart Buchanan

### PERSONAL

Born: July 31, 1951, Poughkeepsie, New York  
Parents: Robert, Sr., and Margaret Buchanan  
Married: Leanita Nan Christensen, August 13, 1977

### EDUCATIONAL

Diploma, Boulder High School, Boulder, Colorado, 1969  
B.F.A., Sir George Williams University, 1974  
Broadcaster's Degree, Brown Institute, 1977  
M.A., Bethel Seminary, 1996

### MINISTERIAL

Associate Pastor, Jesus People Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1978-1985  
Pastor, Jesus People Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1985-96  
Pastor, Harvest Baptist Church, Boulder, Colorado, 1996-2001  
Church planter, Rocky Mountain Baptist Conference, Castle Rock, Colorado,  
2001-2003  
Interim Pastor, Faith Baptist Church, Parker, Colorado, 2003-2004  
Senior Pastor, Faith Baptist Church, Parker, Colorado, 2004 -

