

Spiritual Warfare Is Part of Every Believer's Journey

Lesson 2

TEACHER TO TEACHER

There are several ways in which people can learn about spiritual warfare. For example, you can read about it in any of the numerous books available on the subject, including the Bible. You can also attend classes, seminars, workshops, and conferences. You can gain understanding by listening to others share both their experiences and their knowledge gained in the trenches. You can watch as others actively engage evil spirits who are harassing others. AND—you can learn it by stepping into the battle for your sake and that of others. It really is a “learn as you go” or “on the job training” sort of thing.

This lesson is designed to help people better understand that spiritual warfare—“resisting the enemy”—is part of every believer’s journey toward spiritual maturity. Spiritual warfare is not something that is reserved for a few especially-gifted people in the church. While the more mature and experienced of the saints can stand with the less experienced, it undeniably remains a hallmark of spiritual young adults and, consequently, more mature spiritual mothers and fathers.

As you and your Bible Fellowship progress through this lesson you will see that it is built upon 4 key points:

1. Jesus engaged Satan and his demons on numerous occasions prior to and during His public ministry.
2. His disciples watched and learned. Then, Jesus gave them authority over the demonic and sent them out to minister to people as He had done.
3. Later, Jesus instructed His Apostles to teach others what they had learned from Him.
4. As the century drew to a close, the Apostle John observed that spiritual young men and women had learned to overcome the evil one.

In the mid-eighties, Casas took some bold steps to begin to include spiritual warfare in her teachings, recognizing that learning to overcome the evil one was essential to the spiritual transformation or discipleship process. Since then, I would guess that thousands have found healing and deliverance from the domination of Satan, and strength and wisdom to walk freely with Christ.

Our church leadership is excited that so many in our Bible Fellowships now have an opportunity to learn from you more about what it means to successfully resist the enemy. Some of you are experienced veterans in the war “against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Eph. 6:12). Others are new recruits. Your faith is being strengthened by the Word Who dwells in you. Some have “book learning” but lack real experience. I want to encourage you to be honest with your group about where you are in your own journey. There is no room for pretension here.

I pray that God will give you freedom to speak boldly as you teach the focal Scripture passages associated with this lesson. Thank you for partnering with the Holy Spirit to “proclaim freedom for the prisoners... [and] to release the oppressed” (Luke 4:18).

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Studying the Word Together

Too many Christians say, "I want to be a spiritual father or mother, but I don't want to do that spiritual warfare stuff." They do not understand. Engaging the evil one and overcoming is part of growing on to maturity.

—Roger Barrier¹

Let's take a moment to review a few things that we learned in *The Prayer God Always Answers*. In that Bible study series, Roger reviewed the basic characteristics of spiritual children, spiritual young adults, and spiritual mothers and fathers. The characteristics of these spiritual development stages were based upon 1 John 2:12-14:

[12] I write to you, dear children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name. [13] I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, dear children, because you have known the Father. [14] I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

The chart below relates the basic development characteristics to the appropriate stage of spiritual growth. Look at it carefully before going on.

Spiritual Children	Spiritual Young Adults	Spiritual Mothers and Fathers
Spiritual children know their sins have been forgiven because of Christ (v. 12). This can be expanded to say that spiritual children understand the basics of the gospel—the Kerygma (the crucifixion, burial, resurrection, appearances, and ascension of Jesus). ²	Spiritual young men and women are strong (v. 14). Strong refers to the spiritual potency that flows in us because of our deepening intimacy with the Word of God (Christ) and our expanding knowledge of the content of the inspired Word (Scripture). ³	Spiritual mothers and fathers [intimately and experientially] know Him who is from the beginning (v. 13, 14). ⁴
Spiritual children know their spiritual Father (v. 13). Spiritual children are beginning to experience and know their Heavenly Father as human children experience nurture and security from their parents. ⁵	The Word of God lives in spiritual young men and women (v. 14). The term <i>Word of God</i> , when used by John, primarily refers to Christ. ⁶	
	Spiritual young men and women have learned to overcome the evil one (v. 13, 14). ⁷	

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As you reviewed the chart, did you see that believers grow in intimacy with Christ as they progress from one stage to the next? And did you notice that spiritual young adults have a stronger faith than spiritual children? Did you see that they have experience with the indwelling Word (Christ) and are skilled in spiritual warfare, too? Can you imagine that spiritual children need to be assisted by spiritual young adults? And, of course, spiritual young men and women need to be mentored or disciplined by spiritual mothers and fathers.

In this lesson we will discuss one particular characteristic of spiritual young men and women: They “have overcome the evil one.” Let’s approach this study by considering the following:

- ◆ Jesus personally overcame Satan and exercised authority over evil spirits or demons who demonized people
- ◆ Jesus empowered His disciples to “cast out demons”
- ◆ Jesus instructed the Apostles to teach others what they had learned from Him
- ◆ John, the Apostle, identified being able to overcome the evil one as a characteristic of spiritual young adults

Jesus Personally Overcame Satan and Exercised Authority over Evil Spirits Who Demonized People

I recently conducted some word searches of the New Testament,

looking for the frequency of occurrence of several words: demon(s), devil, Satan, evil spirit(s), evil one, and prince of this world. Cumulatively, these words or phrases occur more than two hundred times in the New Testament. The chart below summarizes my findings. You might find it interesting.

Word	X's in NT	X's in Gospels	X's used by Paul
Demon or demons	81	70	6
Devil	36	15	5
Satan	32	14	10
Evil spirit or evil spirits	29	20	0
The evil one	12	5	2
Prince of this world	3	3	0
Total References	207	127	23

Each of the 207 uses of the referenced words speaks to the reality of demonic spiritual beings that can and do harass people—including believers—both directly and indirectly. Notice that 60% of the references occur in the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The Gospels testify to the reality of Satan and his demonic army. The passage below is the account of Jesus’ first recorded major

encounter directly with Satan, whom He would later call the “prince of this world” (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”

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Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written:

"He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."

Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him. (Matthew 4:1-11)

We can learn much about spiritual warfare from this passage, but we will save that for another time. For now, it is important for us to recognize that Jesus began His ministry with a significant encounter with Satan! The word *Satan* comes from a Hebrew word that means adversary, the great opponent of God and man. It is the personal name of the devil.

This is not the only time that Jesus directly battled Satan. Luke ends his version of what has become known as the "Temptations of Christ" by saying, "When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time" (Luke 4:13). Apparently, the Christ engaged Satan on other occasions (Matt. 16:23; Luke 10:18; Luke 13:6; Luke 22:3; Luke 22:31).

It is important to mention that Jesus resisted all of the temptations of Satan. He was tested and found faithful. He remained sinless. It seems that testing by Satan has long been viewed as part of a God-follower's path to maturity. As one apocryphal writer said, "My son, if you come forward to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for temptation."⁸

Jesus also encountered Satan's demons during His ministry. Look at this passage from Luke:

They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are — the Holy One of God!"

"Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!" The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. (Mark 1:21-26)

In this passage we see Jesus exercising His authority over an evil spirit who had demonized a man. The evil spirit, because of Christ's authority and power, had to obey Him. Roger made another point when preaching on this passage. He said:

You can see a striking difference between the forms of address for Jesus employed by the demonized and the titles for Christ used by ordinary individuals. Ordinary people referred to Christ as Lord (Mark 7:8), Teacher (Mark 9:17), Son of David (Mark 10:47-48), or Master (Mark 10:51).

The demonized address Jesus as the Holy One of God (Mark 1:24), the Son of God (Mark 3:11), or the Son of the Most High God (Mark 5:7).⁹

Evil spirits and demons knew who Jesus was.¹⁰ While operating under Satan's

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authority, they recognized that Christ had greater authority and power than did their immediate supervisor. Evil spirits, like Satan, had to be obedient to the Son of God.

Jesus Empowered His Disciples to Cast Out Demons

In previous studies we discussed the traditional understanding of the role of a disciple at the time of Christ. There were many rabbis who offered different interpretations of the Law. Each rabbi's teaching was referred to as his "yoke." You will recall that when a disciple took on the yoke of his teacher, he committed to teach what the rabbi taught and to do what the rabbi did. In other words, a disciple was committed to becoming like his teacher. As His followers took on Jesus' yoke (teachings and practices) they were equipped and empowered to do what He did. Look at the verses below:

He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.... These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "...The kingdom of heaven is near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give." (Matthew 10:1, 5-8)

Read the verses again; underline the four primary instructions given the Twelve. Can you imagine their excitement and probable apprehension as they contemplated their directions: "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, [and] drive out demons"? These are the very kinds of miracles that the Twelve had observed Jesus doing in Matthew 8 and 9. How would you have felt if you had been one of the Twelve receiving such instructions from the Christ?

I think that the last sentence in this passage may be very revealing: "Freely you have received, freely give." I have

heard Christians apply this verse in many different contexts, making a biblical principle of it. However, it probably is not used by Jesus here as a broad principle. I believe it suggests that at least some of the Twelve may have received from Jesus some of the same kinds of ministry that He is instructing them to render to others (Matt. 8:14). They certainly had witnessed each of the identified ministries. But it is also possible that Christ had healed some of them of illness and delivered some of them of demonic oppression. That may be why He said to them, "Freely you have received, freely give."

Similarly, Luke records the story of seventy-two Jesus-followers being sent out. He says that they "returned with joy saying, 'Lord even the demons submit to us in your name'" (Luke 10:17).¹¹ Jesus responded to this group saying, "I have given you authority...to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you" (Luke 10:19). What a stunning statement! What a privilege to wear such a mantle! What a responsibility!

Jesus Instructed His Apostles to Teach Others What They Had Learned from Him

One of the great arguments that opponents of spiritual warfare pose is based upon the idea that when the Apostles died, the authority entrusted to them by Christ was not passed on to others. Thus the miraculous things they had done in His Name came to an end. The Great Commission seems to soundly refute that argument. Read the abbreviated version of the Commission below.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you...." (Matthew 28:18-20)

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The Apostles must have understood from this passage that they were to pass on to others what they had learned while with Christ.¹² We can study the meaning of three words in the last sentence of the Commission to clarify our understanding of this aspect of Christ's principle imperative of making disciples: *teaching, obey, and commanded*.

Teaching means holding a discourse with others to instruct them. The teacher expects that his teaching will lead to a level of understanding that impacts the will of the student so that the information being taught is assimilated and acted upon.

The word figuratively rendered *obey* in the NIV could also be correctly rendered as *attentively observe* or *faithfully practice*. The attentive and faithful practice of a teaching is the resultant action of having received the instruction or command.

Commanded comes from a Greek word that can also mean *commission*, because it is associated with instructions coming to a subject from a king or ruler, although sometimes it is used when referring to directions given by a teacher. The Apostles would have understood this to mean that they were to teach people to practice all of the things that Jesus had instructed, commissioned, or commanded them to do; this would include high level commandments like:

- ◆ Love God (Matt. 22:27)
- ◆ Love you neighbor as yourself (Matt. 22:39)
- ◆ Love one another (John 13:34)

However, the imperative to teach "all things" tells us that lesser instructions were also to be passed on. Some of these would include:

- ◆ Preach that the Kingdom of Heaven is near (Matt. 10:7)
- ◆ Heal the sick (Luke 10:9)
- ◆ Drive out demons (Matt. 10:8)

Spiritual Young Men and Women Have Overcome the Evil One

The Apostle John observed that spiritual young men and women possessed spiritual power to overcome the evil one in Jesus' Name. They had gained sufficient strength of faith and had grown in their intimate relationship with the indwelling Word of God. Look again at what John says to those he considered spiritual young adults:

...I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one....

I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one. (1 John 2:13, 14)

When writing in *The Prayer God Always Answers*,¹³ Roger said, "The word *overcome* used here means to conquer, to master, to prevail over, to make helpless, to overpower or to overwhelm. John meant that spiritual young men and women know how to use the spiritual strength or power placed in them by Christ and, acting in His authority, take on the evil one in hand-to-hand spiritual combat and win! This involves battle training and experience." He continued, "In another sense, the word *overcome* means to be no longer deceived by Satan's workings and devices.... Spiritual young men and women are no longer deceived by the workings of the evil one. Not only are they able to defend themselves adequately in battle, they are able to help those who have been ensnared in his traps."

Christ victoriously contended directly with Satan and exercised His authority over Satan's demons. Jesus taught His followers to personally overcome the evil one and to help others do the same. Just prior to His Ascension, Jesus commissioned the Apostles to make disciples, instructing them to adhere to His teachings and to practice the all things they had witnessed Him doing. This certainly included overcoming the evil one.

If we are to be like Christ—children of God appointed to be joint heirs with Him—we must assume that we, too, should find it necessary to do battle with demonic or evil spirits. Our challenge as we grow toward spiritual maturity—toward becoming spiritual parents at any cost—is to learn to overcome evil spirits when we discern their attack upon us and upon our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Application Ideas and Questions

Our primary teaching objective for this lesson is simple: Lead those who enter the discourse with us to understand that learning to overcome the evil one is part of their journey toward becoming a spiritual mother or father.

As they embrace the idea, they must evaluate their ability to personally recognize and contend with the demonic forces or evil spirits that Satan uses to stymie their spiritual growth. Then they need to assess their ability to help others gain freedom from spiritual oppression.

The following questions might be helpful in these personal evaluations:

1. Can I accurately determine when I am being spiritually harassed, oppressed, or attacked by demonic spirits? Do I trust others to help with necessary spiritual discernment?
2. Have my experiences with Christ strengthened my faith to the point that I am emboldened to engage the evil one in the Name and Authority of Christ?
3. When I encounter the demonic operating in my life, do I know what to do? Do I feel that I have the knowledge and skill to overcome the evil one?
4. Do I trust my faith community to stand with me as I struggle against Satan and his demons?

The balance of the lessons in this series are dedicated to building faith, spiritual strength, and skill in overcoming the evil one. Some of the “battle tactics” will be defensive, while others will take the form of offensive weapons. The questions above will help your group get ready to learn about and use the “weapons of our warfare.”

Notes 

¹ Roger Barrier and Jerry Wilkinson, *The Prayer God Always Answers: Lord, Make Me a Spiritual Parent at Any Cost*, copyright © 2005 by Casas Adobes Baptist Church, Tucson, AZ, p. 5-9.

² Ibid. pp. 5-4 to 5-5.

³ Ibid. pp. 5-5 to 5-6.

⁴ Ibid. pp. 5-9 to 5-11.

⁵ Ibid. pp. 1-2 to 1-4.

⁶ Ibid. pp. 5-6 to 5-7.

⁷ Ibid. pp. 5-7 to 5-8.

⁸ Sirach 2:1. The Book of Sirach is part of ancient wisdom literature considered to be older than both Daniel and Esther. It is a highly valued apocryphal book valued by both Jewish and Christian scholars. It has never been included in the Protestant Canon, but is included in that of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

⁹ Roger Barrier, from sermon titled “Christ Surprises a Demon at Church,” preached at Casas Adobes Baptist Church, Tucson, AZ, March 15, 1988.

¹⁰ See Commentary, pp. 2-8—2-9.

¹¹ See *Growing Wise*, copyright © 2006 by Casas Adobes Baptist Church, Tucson, AZ, p. 4-4.

¹² See *Growing Wise*, Lesson 4, “Acting and Acting in Jesus’ Name.”

¹³ Barrier and Wilkinson, p. 7-4.

Notes 

Commentary

The Temptation of Christ

The 40-day timeframe that Jesus spent in the wilderness fasting and being tempted by Satan generally is known as the “Temptation of Christ.” Each of the Synoptic Gospels refers to the event (Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-14; Luke 4:1-13). Mark’s mention of the experience is abbreviated while the Matthew and Lucan accounts provide more detail. Great importance is given this event by the fact that each of the three writers sandwiches the Temptation between Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan at the hands of John the Baptist and the actual beginning of His public ministry.

Several parallels between Jesus’ experience in the wilderness and that of Moses add to the significance of the Temptation. For example, Jesus was “led by the Spirit” into the wilderness as Moses was called by God to the mountain (Ex. 24:12). Next, both Jesus and Moses fasted for forty days and forty nights (Matt. 4:2; Ex. 34:28). Finally, Jesus was shown all the promised kingdoms of the world (Ps. 2:8; Matt. 4:8); Moses was taken to a mountain and shown the “Promised Land” (Deut. 3:27).

The Meaning of the Temptations

The writer of Hebrews reminds us that “we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin” (Heb. 4:15). This is important for us to remember as we consider the possible meaning of each of the three desert temptations experienced by Christ. (We will follow Matthew’s order as we look at each.)

Temptation 1: Satan’s suggestion that Jesus turn the stones into bread (Matt. 4:3; Ex. 16:13-21) apparently was designed to lure Christ from His ordained path for the sake of satisfying His hunger.¹ Jesus had accepted the limitations associated with “being made in human likeness and being found in appearance as a man” (Philip. 2:7-8). Therefore, it was necessary for Him to carry out His responsibilities and trust God to provide for His physical human needs. Had Jesus turned the stones into bread, He would have become unlike men who must trust in God’s providence. Many Christians prefer to give in to the temptation of prideful self-reliance rather than living in humble dependence upon God.

Temptation 2: In both the first and second testing, Satan attempted to raise doubt in Jesus’ mind concerning the Sonship so wondrously proclaimed at His baptism. In addition, this test called for Jesus to place Himself in peril in order that He might be rescued by His loving Father. It is worth noting that Satan used a distortion of Psalm 91:11-12 as the basis of his challenge. How many Christians selfishly and foolishly have placed themselves in perilous situations, hoping that God would prove His love by delivering them?

Temptation 3: This testing is obvious from the outset. Satan boldly suggests that Jesus could grasp power for the sake of good and holy reasons by compromisingly doing evil at the outset. This temptation appeals to holy motives based upon the good that might come from worshiping and serving Satan. Too many Christians fall prey to Satan’s schemes that cause them to test God by questioning His care (Ex. 17:2, 7; Deut. 6:16), by refusing to remember and recognize His power (Num. 14:20-23; Ps. 78:40-43), by asking Him to prove Himself (Isa. 7:12), and by disobeying Him (Mal. 3:15).

Word Study

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Remember this chart from this lesson's Studying the Word Together? It was used to demonstrate that the more than 200 references to demonic beings in the New Testament testified to the reality of such beings, both then and today.

Word	X's in NT	X's in Gospels	X's used by Paul
Demon or demons	81	70	6
Devil	36	15	5
Satan	32	14	10
Evil spirit or evil spirits	29	20	0
The evil one	12	5	2
Prince of this world	3	3	0
Total References	207	127	23

Let's briefly define some of the terms used in the chart.

Demon, Evil Spirit: Among the pagan Greeks of Jesus' day the noun *demon* was used to refer to an inferior deity, either good or bad. In the New Testament it denotes an evil spirit. It likely is derived from a root meaning a "knowing one." Hence, evil spirits or demons knew the true identity of Jesus (i.e., calling Him the Holy One of God, the Son of God, etc.).

According to *Vines Expository Dictionary of Words*,² demons are spiritual beings acting in idolatry. Each idol has connected to it a demon who leads humans into idolatry (1 Cor. 10:20-21). Demons or evil spirits spread false teaching among men and seduce believers (1 Tim. 4:1). They deceive men into believing that through mediums (those who have "familiar spirits," (Lev. 20:6, 27), they can converse with deceased human beings. Hence the destructive deception of spiritism is forbidden in

Scripture (Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:11; Isa. 8:19).

Satan: The Greek form of *Satan* (*satanas*) is derived from the Aramaic (Heb., *Satan*) meaning "an adversary." In the New Testament, the word is always used of "Satan" as the adversary of God and Christ (Matt. 4:10; 12:26; Mark 1:13; 3:23, 26; 4:15; Luke 4:8). "Satan" is not simply the personification of evil influences in the heart. Rather, it is a personal name. Satan is sometimes called Beelzebub, prince of demons (Matt. 9:34; 12:24). Three times Jesus referred to Satan as the title "ruler (prince) of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).

Devil: The term *devil* comes from a Greek word that means "a false witness" or "malicious accuser." The title *devil* appears 33 times in the NIV. In every case it is preceded by the article *the*, indicating a title rather than a name. It is the main title for Satan.

¹ *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*. Originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois, copyright © 1988).

² *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, copyright © 1985 by Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Notes **RESOURCES
NEEDED:**

- ◆ 2-sided copies of Lesson Notes / Take-Home pages
- ◆ Pencils or pens for each person
- ◆ Dry erase markers and marker board or felt tip markers and a flip chart

TIMEFRAME:

- ◆ 35 minutes

Suggested Lesson Plan

NOTE TO TEACHER: This *suggested* lesson plan contains many elements that, if employed, will help maximize learning for life-change in your Bible Fellowship. If you are an experienced teacher, you have freedom to create your own plan based upon the "Studying the Word Together" section. If you are less experienced, we suggest that you "stick to the plan." However, even less-experienced teachers should feel free to modify the plan based upon the needs of your Bible Fellowship. This plan is designed to be presented in 35 minutes. It is important, therefore, that you carefully plan your presentation so that you communicate the main points with brevity and clarity.

**Important Scripture
References:**

- ◆ Matthew 4:1-11
- ◆ Mark 1:21-26
- ◆ Matthew 10:5-8
- ◆ Matthew 28:18-20
- ◆ 1 John 2:13-14

Teaching Goals:

- ◆ **Learn:** Help Bible Fellowship members understand that learning to overcome the evil one is part of every believer's journey toward spiritual maturity.
- ◆ **Experience:** Experience Jesus' promise of power to defeat the enemy and promise of protection as we engage in spiritual warfare (Luke 10:19).

Before Class Begins:

- ◆ Write the question from Step One, subparagraph 3, on the board.
- ◆ Distribute handouts.

**STEP ONE: GETTING
READY TO LEARN
(5 MINUTES)**

1. Tell your group that today's lesson is about the relationship between learning to resist the enemy (overcoming the evil one) and spiritual growth.
2. Refer them to the quote from Roger Barrier located at the top of their handout. Ask each person to silently read the quote. After a moment, read the quote aloud to them.
3. Write the following question on your white board: "What might individual believers, our Bible Fellowship, and our church expect, if we avoid learning to overcome the evil one?" (HINT: Save time by writing the question while your department is gathering.)
4. Ask your department to quickly form buzz groups of 2 to 3 people and discuss the question.

**STEP TWO: CASAS
BELIEVES THAT
LEARNING TO
OVERCOME THE EVIL
ONE IS PART OF EVERY
BELIEVER'S JOURNEY
TOWARD BECOMING A**

SPIRITUAL MOTHER OR FATHER. (20 MINUTES)

Since 20 minutes have been allotted to this step, it is important that you plan your presentation carefully, including only the essential information. The first point will require more time than the other three. (NOTE: If additional time for teaching is available, I recommend that you apply it to Step Three rather than to this step.)

▶ **Jesus personally overcame Satan and exercised authority over evil spirits who demonized people.**

1. Arrange ahead of time for three people to read Matthew 4:1-11 to the class (Scripture on handout) as if it were a role play or readers' theater presentation. You will need a narrator and someone to read Jesus' part and Satan's part.
2. Utilizing information from "Studying the Word Together" (pp. 2-3—2-4) and the "Commentary" (p. 2-8), briefly cover essential points of the Temptation of Christ (Matt. 4:1-11).
 - a. Jesus' wilderness temptations were a significant event in which He directly encountered Satan.
 - b. The temptations were in essence similar to those still experienced by believers today.
 - c. Jesus effectively resisted Satan on both this occasion and others.
3. Next, personally read aloud Mark 1:21-26 (on handout). Then, utilizing information from "Studying the Word Together" (pp. 2-4—2-5) and the "Commentary" (p. 2-9),
 - a. Explain that the term "evil spirit" means "knowing one";
 - b. Note that evil spirits knew who Jesus was;

- c. Point out that evil spirits had to submit to Him.

▶ **Jesus empowered His disciples to cast out demons.**

1. Refer your group to Matthew 10:1, 5-8 (on handout). Read it aloud.
2. Utilizing information from "Studying the Word Together" (p. 2-5), briefly cover the essential points of this passage.
 - a. When disciples took on the "yoke" of a rabbi or teacher, they committed to becoming like him—to teach what he taught and to minister as he ministered.
 - b. After the disciples had been with Jesus for a while, He gave some of His disciples the authority and power to cast out demons as He did.
 - c. The disciples successfully dealt with evil spirits in the Name of Jesus.

▶ **Jesus instructed His apostles to teach others what they had learned from Him.**

1. Refer your group to the abbreviated Great Commission passage (Matt. 28:18-20) on the handout. Ask them to read the passage aloud with you.
2. Utilizing information from "Studying the Word Together" (pp. 2-5—2-6) briefly cover the essential points of this passage.
 - a. Part of the process of disciple-making included teaching people to understand and practice the things that Jesus had commanded or instructed the Apostles to do. Of course, this included dealing with demons or evil spirits in the name of Jesus.

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LESSON NOTES BLANKS

- ◆ Casas believes that learning to overcome the evil one is part of every believer's journey toward becoming a spiritual mother or father.
- ◆ Jesus personally overcame Satan and exercised authority over evil spirits who demonized people.
- ◆ Jesus empowered His disciples to cast out demons.
- ◆ Jesus instructed His apostles to teach others what they had learned from Him.
- ◆ Spiritual young men and women have overcome the evil one.

► **Spiritual young men and women have overcome the evil one.**

1. Refer your group to the handout and read the abbreviated version of 1 John 2:13-14 to them. Remind them that you have talked about this passage when you studied spiritual development stages last fall (*The Prayer God Always Answers*).
2. Utilizing information from “Studying the Word Together” (pp. 2-6—2-7), briefly cover the essential points of this passage.
 - a. Many scholars believe that John wrote this letter in the latter part of the first century—30 to 40 years after Christ issued the Great Commission prior to His Ascension.
 - b. This indicates that the Apostles had indeed taught others to resist the enemy or to overcome the evil one, making it a common practice among believers who had achieved a particular level of maturity.

STEP THREE: APPLICATION (7 MINUTES)

1. Refer your group to the “Overcoming the Evil One” Assessment Grid on their handout. Ask each person to place an “X” in the square that most accurately describes him or her.
2. Ask A’s to go to one corner of the room; B’s to another; C’s to another; D’s to another.
3. When groups arrive in their designated corners, ask those in quadrants

A, B, and C to discuss why they see themselves in the selected quadrant and also what they feel they need to learn and/or do to be able to move into the next quadrant.

4. Those in the D quadrant are in the highest level quadrant. Therefore, ask them to discuss how they find themselves most often helping others obtain spiritual freedom.
5. Ask everyone to return to their seats for the closing.

STEP FOUR: CLOSING MEDITATION (3 MINUTES)

1. Invite your class to close their eyes and prayerfully imagine themselves as one of the disciples receiving this instruction directly from Christ.
2. Read the abbreviated passage from Matthew 10:1, 5-8 (on the handout).
3. Ask them to imagine what they would have said to Jesus when they received the instructions. Ask them to think about what Jesus would have said in response to their statements.
4. Now invite them to hear Jesus say from Luke 10:19: “I have given you authority...to overcome the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.”
5. Now ask them to prayerfully commit to Jesus to take whatever “next step” they are willing to take.
6. Close with a prayer thanking Jesus for giving us power to overcome the evil one and for His wisdom and protection for each person in the department as they take the “next step” in learning to resist the enemy.

Today in My Bible Fellowship

Too many Christians say, "I want to be a spiritual father or mother, but I don't want to do that spiritual warfare stuff." They do not understand. Engaging the evil one and overcoming is part of growing on to maturity.
— Roger Barrier[†]

- ◆ Casas believes that learning to _____ the evil one is part of every believer's _____ toward becoming a spiritual mother or father.
- ◆ Jesus personally _____ Satan and exercised _____ over evil spirits who demonized people.
- ◆ Jesus _____ His disciples to cast out demons.
- ◆ Jesus instructed His apostles to _____ others what they had _____ from Him.
- ◆ Spiritual young men and women have _____ the evil one.

"Overcoming the Evil One" Assessment Grid

<p>Can recognize spiritual attack, but cannot help self or others.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">B</p>	<p>Can recognize spiritual attack. Can help self but not others.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">C</p>
<p>No ability to recognize spiritual attack. Cannot help self or others.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">A</p>	<p>Can recognize spiritual attack. Can help self and others.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">D</p>

[†] Roger Barrier and Jerry Wilkinson, *The Prayer God Always Answers: Lord, Make Me a Spiritual Parent at Any Cost*, copyright © 2005 by Casas Adobes Baptist Church, Tucson, AZ, p. 5-9.

Today's Scriptures

Matthew 4:1-11: Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Mark 1:21-26: They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!"

"Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!" The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

Matthew 10:1, 5-8: He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.... These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give."

Matthew 28:18-20: Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you...."

1 John 2:13, 14 : I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one.... I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

Next Week's Lesson:

The Authority of Christ over Satan

Daily Reflections

Begin each daily reflection by meditating a few minutes on the suggested Scripture passage. Seek to listen to the Holy Spirit as He speaks to you. Then consider the comments and questions about the passage. Be aware of both your thoughts and your feelings. Respond to God through both.

Monday: *[The Father said] "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." Then Jesus was [compellingly] led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. (Matthew 3:17-4:1)*

Imagine for a moment what it must have been like for Jesus to hear His Father's affirmation. Now imagine, forty days later, Jesus being locked into conflict with His arch enemy! Do you suppose that as a beloved child of the Father you, too, may find yourself periodically locked conflicting with the evil one? Ask Jesus to equip you for spiritual warfare just as the Father equipped Him.

Tuesday: *Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? ... I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" "Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!" The evil spirit... came out of him with a shriek. (Mark 1:23-26)*

Notice that Jesus did not treat the man with the evil spirit as being mentally ill or otherwise disturbed. Instead, He immediately acted to free the man of the oppression he was enduring. If you are willing, ask God to give you discernment and courage to act boldly on behalf of yourself and others when directly confronted with demonic spirits.

Wednesday: *He called his twelve disciples [Apostles] to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.... [and] sent [them] out with the following instructions: "Heal the sick...drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give." (Matthew 10:1, 5-8)*

As you meditate on this passage, place yourself in the shoes of one of the Twelve. What would you have been thinking and feeling as such authority was imparted to you? From what spiritual bondage or illness have you been delivered? Are you ready to freely minister to others in His Name what you have freely received from Him? Talk this over with Jesus now.

Thursday: *Then Jesus came to them [the Apostles] and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you...." (Matthew 28:18-20)*

Remember, the Apostles were instructed to help set people free from the influence or oppression of demonic spirits in the Name and Authority of Jesus (Matt 10:5-8). What does this passage suggest to you about God's heart for His people? For you? How are you wishing to respond from your heart to God's heart for you concerning freedom from demonic influence or oppression?

Friday: *.... I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one.... I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one. (1 John 2:13, 14)*

Roger Barrier has lamented that many a Christian wants to become a spiritual mother or father, but wishes to have nothing to do with spiritual warfare. Can you imagine that it is impossible to become a spiritual mother or father without learning to overcome the evil one? Evaluate your current feelings and thoughts about spiritual warfare and becoming a spiritual young adult or spiritual parent. Be honest in your expression regardless of your level of spiritual maturity.

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