

Introduction: The “Missing Ingredient”

➤ **We are in an invisible war.**

¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. ¹¹Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. ¹²For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:10-12 (NAS)

➤ **We are to prepare ourselves for battle.**

¹³Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Ephesians 6:13-15 (NAS)

➤ **When we resist the enemy, he will flee from us.**

¹⁶in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. ¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Ephesians 6:16-17 (NAS)

➤ **Intercessory prayer is pivotal and essential for corporate and individual deliverance.**

¹⁸With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, ¹⁹and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Ephesians 6:18-20 (NAS)

Summary of Ephesians 6:18-20 – The means by which believers are to withstand and overcome the attacks of the enemy in spiritual warfare is by consistent, intense, strategic prayer for one another in conjunction with the personal application of the armor of God.

1. Intercessory Prayer is Our Most Powerful and Strategic Corporate Weapon in Spiritual Warfare.

- Prayer has a direct impact on spiritual warfare. Mark 9:29
- Prayer provides / assists in the deliverance of others who are undergoing spiritual attack. Luke 22:31-32
- Power falls where prayer prevails. Church history is replete with examples: Acts 1:14, 2:42, 3:1, 4:24-35, 6:4-8, 8:14-16, 9:40-42, 10:1-4

2. What Kind of Prayer Brings God's Deliverance and Power in the Midst of Spiritual Attack?

- **Consistent Prayer** Ephesians 6:18a
 - "with all prayer and petition" = all kinds of prayer
 - "pray at all times" = prayer on all occasions
 - "pray in the spirit" = in communion with and directed by the agency and power of the Holy Spirit
- **Intense Prayer** Ephesians 6:18b
 - "be on the alert" = lit. = without sleep, vigilant
 - "with all perseverance" = enduring, not giving up
- **Strategic Prayer** Ephesians 6:18c-20
 - "for all the saints" = that God's messengers will be bold
 - "utterance may be given" = God's message will be clear and have opportunity

Summary: The Missing Ingredient in most Christian's lives and in most churches is the commitment and regular practice of intercessory prayer. Scripture indicates that (individual and corporate) consistent, intense, and strategic intercessory prayer will in fact "deliver us from the evil one."

“The great people of the earth today are the people who pray. I do not mean those who talk about prayer; nor those who say they believe in prayer; nor yet those who can explain about prayer; but I mean those people who take time and pray. They have not time. It must be taken from something else. This something else is important. Very important, and pressing, but still less important and less pressing than prayer.”

S. D. Gordon

Note: The great majority of teaching in the Bible has to do with alertness, preparation, defense, and being proactive to prevent demonic influence from breaking our fellowship with Christ or thwarting God’s program for our lives. **What are we to do however when the enemy gets a foothold in our life or in the life of someone we know and love?**

3. The Ministry of Deliverance

- Its Validity

- Jesus regularly exercised this ministry. Mark 1:27, 39
- The apostles regularly exercised this ministry. Luke 10
- The early church regularly exercised this ministry. Acts 16
 - ~ Justin Martyr (c. 100-165)
 - ~ Tertullian (c. 160-203)
 - ~ Origin (c. 185-254)
 - ~ Athanasius (c. 296-373)
- The New Testament writers provide clear direction concerning this ministry. James 4:1-10
- Contemporary, balanced deliverance ministries do exist and help many people.

- **Its Problems**

- Extremism and fanaticism tend to negatively color this ministry.
- Confusion concerning demon possession versus oppression of believers cloud this ministry's validity among Christians.
- Fear and ignorance have caused many to simply ignore this ministry.
- Those who engage in this ministry are often tempted by pride or become so singularly focused they fall into theological error.
- Assigning blame of all one's problems to demonic influence versus assuming personal responsibility and using Biblical common sense call this ministry into question.

- **The Cause(s) of Demonic Influence**

- Yielding to sin John 8:34
- Spiritual rebellion 1 Samuel 15:23
- Participating in the occult Deuteronomy 18:10-11
- Attempting to contact the dead Deuteronomy 18:11
- Unresolved anger and bitterness Ephesians 4:26-27
- Association with those involved in Satanic activity 2 Corinthians 6:14-16

- **New Testament Evidences of Demonic Influence**

- Severe sickness Matthew 12:22
- Divination (telling the future) Acts 16:16
- Unusual physical strength Mark 5:3
- Fits of rage Mark 5:4
- Split personality Mark 5:6-7
- Resistance to spiritual help Mark 5:7
- Other voices from within Mark 5:9
- Occult powers Deuteronomy 18:10-11

- **The Cure for Demonic Influence**

- **General Purpose**

1. Victory is through the Cross of Christ Colossians 2:14-15
2. Victory is in the name of Christ Matthew 10:1, Acts 5:16
3. Victory is by the power of the Holy Spirit 1 John 4:4

- **Specific Steps for Deliverance from Demonic Influence**

1. Accept Christ John 1:12
2. Confess sins 1 John 1:9
3. Renounce works of the devil 2 Corinthians 4:2
4. Destroy occult objects Acts 19:17-20 (see also 2 Chronicles 14:2, 23:17)
5. Break friendship with occultists 2 Corinthians 6:14-16
6. Rest in Christ's deliverance Colossians 1:13
7. Resist the devil James 4:7
8. Meditate on and apply the Word of God Ephesians 6:17, Matthew 4:4,7,10
9. Engage in corporate prayer Ephesians 6:18, Matthew 18:19
10. If necessary, exorcism in the name of Christ Acts 16:16
 - By spiritually qualified counselor Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 5:18
 - Who maintains humility James 4:7
 - Who wears spiritual armor Ephesians 6:12f
 - Who knows the Word of God Matthew 4:4, 7, 10
 - Who is supported by prayers of believers Ephesians 6:18
Matthew 18:19

Additional Resources for Help When You Suspect Demonic Influence:

The Adversary – Mark I. Bubeck

Overcoming The Adversary – Mark I. Bubeck

Powers of Evil – A Biblical Study of Satan & Demons – Sydney H.T. Page