

REVISED EDITION

DEFEATING DARK ANGELS

BREAKING
DEMONIC OPPRESSION
IN THE
BELIEVER'S LIFE

CHARLES H. KRAFT



Chosen

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Minneapolis, Minnesota

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South Pasadena, CA
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INTRODUCTION

Why fight dark angels? Because when we do, we receive letters like the following from a young woman I will call Karen:

I am writing you because I promised to tell you what has occurred in my life. I do not understand all that happened in the time I was ministered to, but after three months there is definite change in my behavior and my attitude and my state of mind, even after trials have come. I give God much thanks and glory because there would be no way that this would be so unless He had done the work!

Since I came back [home] . . . many, many people have commented on the change in my life, change in my appearance and my countenance. . . . I had prayed for many years for the work to be done that has been done.

How am I different? Well, first of all, my whole view of God is different. I am no longer afraid of Him and can truly say I love Him, even though my love for Him is imperfect. My view of myself has changed. I truly see myself as having worth in Him. I am indeed a princess! I am learning to act as a person of worth. I do not have to fight to be recognized, which I have done all my life. The ugly wound that has plagued

my life is healed and I am learning to be a servant. There is peace in my heart.

I have received many letters and verbal statements like this one. And most of them are from people like Karen, who faithfully attended a church where it was sincerely believed that Christians could not be demonized. Even so, Karen had problems that culminated in self-hatred and extremely low self-worth. Since she and her church did not believe demons can “hide out” in Christians, they never suspected dark angels could be involved. But the demons were there, fulfilling their mission to make bad things worse and keeping Karen and her fellow Christians from recognizing their presence.

How did the church explain Karen’s difficulties? They blamed her for not working harder at being spiritual. This, of course, made the problems worse and made Karen angry both at herself and at God.

But Jesus wanted Karen free. So He led her to visit a friend who brought her to me. We spent a couple of hours together—Karen, her friend, Jesus and me. Most of the time was given to dealing with emotional wounds. But some of those wounds had demons attached to them. And as the Holy Spirit brought healing to the wounds, the demons got weaker and we easily cast them out. There was no spectacle, no violence. Not even any noise. The demons were well entrenched, but the power differential between them and God left them with no hope of staying once they were discovered and disempowered. As with nearly every person I work with, the demons were a minor problem. The major problems were emotional and spiritual.

But God heals emotional problems. And once they are healed, He can banish any demons that may be feeding on those problems. The result? People like this young woman go free, people who for years have been in captivity to the enemy of their souls. They go free because God wants to free such people and because

He has taught some of us what to do to help Him bring such freedom to them.

A Different Perspective on Defeating Dark Angels

This book is about defeating dark angels that torment Christians like Karen. It is also about how to work in the power of God to bring freedom to the afflicted person with a maximum of love and a minimum of craziness.

A lot of books are available on dealing with demons and how to get rid of them. And a lot of practitioners on TV join with those books to give the impression that casting out demons is something mystical, only to be attempted by super-spiritual, super-anointed specialists with a surplus of emotion and showmanship.

This book is of another sort. Satan and his dark angels are not impressed with showmanship or mystical language and behavior. Indeed, high emotion helps their cause more than God's. For according to Jesus, the task of driving out demons is not simply for specialists. Jesus gave to His disciples, and through them to all of us, "power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases" (Luke 9:1).

I and the others who have shared my experiences have been learning some interesting things about how to carry on Jesus' ministry to the demonized. We have learned that today, just as in Jesus' day, getting rid of demons is a normal part of the Christian life for those who would be His disciples. We have also learned that demonization is very common and that deliverance can be done in a loving, often even unobtrusive, way.

This book has been written to share these and other things I have learned over the years. It does not provide all the answers; it may not even ask all the questions. I am convinced, however, that general principles exist that someday may add up

Introduction

to a science of dealing with dark angels. And the way to gain understanding ourselves and to help others gain understanding of those principles is by sharing what we have been learning.

I ask, therefore, for the patience of those who know things we do not know. And that those behind us in learning, plus those using other methods, experiment with the approaches we have found effective. May God grant you the privilege He has granted us of regularly being involved in freeing people from the enemy.

CHAPTER ONE

Are Satan and Dark Angels for Real?

In writing to the Ephesians, the apostle Paul articulated a view of reality that seems strange to even the most sincere Christians today. He wrote:

We are not fighting against human beings but against the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world, the rulers, authorities, and cosmic powers of this dark age. So put on God's armor now! Then when the evil day comes, you will be able to resist the enemy's attacks; and after fighting to the end, you will still hold your ground.

Ephesians 6:12–13

Most of us in the Western world who discover the reality of what Paul was talking about learn it the hard way—by experience. For example, my friend Ed Murphy was blindsided by an incident in his family that he could not explain.

Dr. Murphy's Change of Mind

"Dad, I don't know what's the matter with me. There seems to be something inside of me that takes over at times and makes me do weird things. Dad, help me! I'm scared. I love Jesus, and I want to do what is right. What's wrong with me?"

These were the words of Carolyn Murphy, Ed's daughter. Ed is a respected Christian leader, former vice president of OC International and former professor at Biola University, and he has had a worldwide deliverance ministry for some time. When this event happened during the 1960s, however, Ed had only an intellectual belief in demons, though he had been a missionary in Latin America. And he certainly did not believe that a Christian, especially one with as vibrant a faith as that of his fourteen-year-old daughter, could be demonized.

At the time of this event with his daughter, Ed had returned home from a trip at the frantic urging of his wife and started talking to Carolyn. "Within moments," Ed recalls:

Her usually sweet personality changed. With a strange glare in her eyes, she screamed at me, telling me to leave her alone. There was an undeniably evil presence in her eyes. Carolyn and I went to our knees in prayer, crying to the Lord to break the evil oppressing her life.

I had noticed several weeks before that she had a small round object hanging on a chain around her neck, but didn't think anything of it. As we prayed, my attention was drawn to this object. [She had been given it by a friend who professed Christianity but did not live like a committed believer.] . . .

After a little investigating, I discovered the "star" to be a pentagram, a symbol of the occult world. "You will not find full freedom from evil spirits until you remove it and renounce the spirit forces associated with it," I told her.

She responded quickly, tearing it off her neck and throwing it on the floor. She confessed and renounced her "innocent"

occult involvement and her interest in certain evil rock music. She even confessed to having a selfish and rebellious attitude.

In no time at all, we were in a face-to-face confrontation with evil spirits.

“Dad, they are after me. I’m afraid.”

“Get out of my daughter’s life,” I commanded. “She has broken all allegiance with you. Get out! Leave her alone! In the name and authority of my Master, the Lord, Jesus Christ, who defeated your master on the cross, I command you to go away from Carolyn and don’t return. Get out of her life!”

Immediately the struggle ceased. Carolyn became calm, joyfully praising the Lord for setting her free. The evil spirits had left. We both cried and rejoiced before the Lord for His grace.¹

There was a bit more work to do after this incident, for Carolyn’s involvement at the fringes of the hippie-occult subculture turned out to be more than she had at first indicated. However, as she renounced her involvement, confessed her sins and destroyed the symbols of that way of life (including other “charms” and certain heavy rock music albums), she gained the freedom in Christ she had lost by allowing the enemy to seduce her.

A Radical Shift in Understanding

Ed calls it “the most significant worldview shift” in his Christian life. Not only did he come to believe in the reality of the dark angels spoken of in Ephesians, but he also came to realize that even Christians are not immune to their intrusion. In spite of the warnings given in Ephesians and other portions of Scripture (see 1 Peter 5:8–9; James 4:7; 1 John 5:19), the previous position taken by Ed and still held by most evangelicals is that Satan is so defeated (see Colossians 2:15) that his activities cannot affect them. They believe, therefore, that they do not need to pay much attention to him.

Experiences like Ed's have taught many evangelicals that they were wrong about the enemy and his dark angels. Though they wish it were not true, they find that Satan is alive and active, even among those who are very close to them.

This Wasn't Part of My Life Plan

Neither Ed nor I had ever planned to be involved in challenging and casting out demons as Jesus did. I suppose nobody plans a life with that expectation. Few things could have been further from my mind, since I was not even sure I believed in demons!

Early in my service as a missionary, a Nigerian church leader confronted me with the question, "Do you believe in evil spirits?" Although I answered in the affirmative, I did not know whether I really believed in them or not. Somehow, though, he and the other Nigerian leaders perceived that I was uncomfortable with the subject, so they did not raise it often. And during my missionary years in Nigeria, I never had to deal with a demon.

But pondering his question, I recalled seeing a section in my seminary theology book on Satan and demons. I think, however, we skipped it! Pressed for time, the professor gave us seminarians the impression that the subject was mainly of historical interest, since Jesus defeated and humiliated Satan (again, see Colossians 2:15). We were left with the impression that while we were to accept as fact the existence of Satan and demons, we did not need to be very concerned with their activities.

In 1982, however, the Lord started showing me otherwise. (For more on this story, see my book *Christianity with Power*.) To prepare myself for the inevitable, I began reading and quizzing anyone who had experience in deliverance. I read *Pigs in the Parlor* by Frank and Ida Mae Hammond; *The Adversary* and *Overcoming the Adversary* by Mark Bubeck; *Spiritual Warfare*

by Michael Harper; *War on the Saints* by Jessie Penn-Lewis; *A Guide to Healing the Family Tree* by Kenneth McAll; and *He Came to Set the Captives Free* by Rebecca Brown. I was becoming well read on the subject, but there is nothing like experience to cement the theory.

My first opportunity to experience a genuine confrontation with demons came early in 1986, after a session of a Signs and Wonders class at Fuller Seminary. A student asked for my assistance in praying for an older woman we will call Claire. She had become stiff and seemingly unconscious while being prayed over. I walked over to the part of the room where their ministry was taking place and found that Claire, indeed, was “out of it.”

I laid my hand on her shoulder and spoke peace to her. This brought her back to consciousness. But soon she started shaking violently, and I found myself challenging a demon in the name of Jesus Christ—just as I had learned from the books. We were able to free her from nineteen demons that evening, and then one more two days later in my office. Claire, though already a committed, Spirit-filled and actively ministering Christian, moved into a freedom she had never known before.

This was the beginning of a ministry that now includes several deliverances in an average week, plus a number of seminars each year in addition, over the years, to my regular duties as a professor in the School of Intercultural Studies at Fuller Seminary. I did not plan it this way, but it seems to be what the Lord has wanted me to do. Having now worked with the Holy Spirit to bring deliverance to more than two thousand Christians—and dealing with many thousands of demons in the process—I want to share with you what God has been teaching me, for He wants many who read this book to get involved in just such a ministry, too.

Deliverance is probably one of the healing gifts that God gives believers (see 1 Corinthians 12:28). But we only discover

what gifts we have by experimenting with them. Jesus did not ask His followers what gifts they had. He sent them all out to experiment with His authority and power (see Luke 9:1; 10:1). They came back marveling at what God had done through them (see Luke 10:17). They experimented with God's power and found that God backed them up. I believe we should all conduct the same experiment, especially since Jesus promised that whoever has faith in Him will be able to do what He had been doing (see John 14:12).

But most of us do not know that bringing deliverance is the privilege and responsibility of every Christian. Few experience the joy of seeing people freed from the grip of demons. I pray that this book will supply enough information to accomplish these things: allay your fear of challenging the enemy; increase your confidence in the awesome power of God; develop your boldness to launch out with God in freeing people from demons; motivate you to do the works Jesus promised we would do in the authority and power He has given us (see John 14:12; Luke 9:1); and, in the process, draw you into a deeper, more intimate relationship with Him. You can be used to bring freedom to demonized people. Jesus said you could!

People frequently ask me whether I enjoy this kind of ministry. They seem to have the idea that every deliverance is a knock-down, drag-out affair in which all the participants end up beaten and battered. To enjoy something like that strikes them as rather masochistic—so they wonder about me!

But my deliverance sessions do not include violence because we deal with the emotional and spiritual “garbage” first. Nor do the sessions depend on gifting, for, as John Wimber taught us, obedience precedes gifting, and Jesus expects all of us to obey His mandate to set captives free, as He did, without reference to our gifting.

Do I enjoy it? Well, I think I really do, but not so much for the process as for the results. Yet the process of openly defeating

the enemy can be a lot of fun, too. The crux of the matter is that God really loves people. He loves people so much that He is not satisfied until every bit of the rest that Jesus promised in Matthew 11:28, the freedom Paul speaks about in Galatians 5:1 and the new creation Paul points to in 2 Corinthians 5:17 are being experienced by His people. And that is what deliverance is all about: bringing people into all of the freedom that Jesus desires for His chosen ones.

The Bible Takes It Seriously

The personal experiences Ed Murphy and I and many others have had serve to authenticate our guidebook, the Bible.

When Jesus started His public ministry, He affirmed the existence of Satan's dark angels by announcing His purpose in the words of Isaiah 61:1–2:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people.”

Luke 4:18–19

Jesus came to set captives free from the bondage imposed on them by the enemy, whose aim is to keep people from experiencing the freedom God grants to those who get into a personal relationship with Him.

Jesus was affirming a view we see throughout the Old Testament, where we see the evil kingdom constantly lurking in the background and affecting what goes on in the human realm. In the Garden of Eden, the enemy's activity is obvious. In Job, we see another of Satan's overt challenges to God's authority. In each of Israel's wars, and on each occasion when its people

choose to follow false gods, both overt and covert interference from the enemy is apparent.

In the New Testament, we can see Satan behind the plot to kill the baby Jesus (see Matthew 2:16–18). His activity is overt when he confronts Jesus in the wilderness (see Luke 4:1–13) and whenever Jesus casts out demons. He is undoubtedly behind the opposition the Jewish leaders demonstrated toward Jesus, plus His trial and crucifixion. We see Satan behind many of the events recorded in the book of Acts, such as what transpired with Ananias and Sapphira (see Acts 5:1–11) and the demonized slave-girl (see Acts 16:16–18). We see this reality throughout the epistles; for example, we read about a table of demons (see 1 Corinthians 10:21), the blinding of the minds of those who do not believe (see 2 Corinthians 4:4) and the teachings of demons (see 1 Timothy 4:1). Satanic activity runs throughout the book of Revelation.

Satan asserted his authority over the earth when he said to Jesus, “I will give you all this power and all this wealth. . . . It has all been handed over to me, and I can give it to anyone I choose” (Luke 4:6). He is referred to by Jesus as “the ruler of this world” (John 14:30), by Paul as “the ruler of the spiritual powers in space” (Ephesians 2:2), by Peter as one who “roams around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8) and by John as the one who rules the whole world (see 1 John 5:19).

We Needn't Fear These Activities

Despite such statements concerning the impressive position of our enemy, neither Jesus nor the other New Testament characters seemed alarmed by Satan's activities. They dealt with him and his demons matter-of-factly, knowing that God's power is infinitely greater than our enemy's.

Scripture makes it clear, however, that Jesus and His followers took demons seriously. While they were not afraid of them, they acknowledged their existence and used the power of the Holy Spirit to fight them. Over and over again, references to demons and Satan's kingdom appear in the gospels. In the gospel of Mark, for example, more than half of Jesus' ministry is devoted to delivering the demonized.

No one seemed to doubt the existence of demons or the supernatural realm in these biblical accounts. Jesus' critics questioned the source of His power (see Luke 11:14–22), but, unlike those influenced by contemporary Western worldviews,² they never questioned the existence of demons that indwelled and harmed people. My own growing experience convinces me they were right and that Paul spoke insightfully when he warned that our real battle is not “against human beings but against the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world” (Ephesians 6:12).

The Bible is clear that Satan has a powerful kingdom with which Christians must reckon at every turn. And we are living in the midst of it—in enemy territory. To understand demonization, it is critical that we understand Satan's kingdom and how it operates. In Paul's day, he could state, “We know what [Satan's] plans are” (2 Corinthians 2:11). In our day, we need to be taught the enemy's strategy if we are to be prepared for battle.

Churches Should Be Involved

Jesus makes an interesting statement in Luke 11:20, where He is being challenged by some of the Pharisees, who accuse Him of doing His miracles by the power of Satan (Beelzebul). Jesus says, “But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you” (CJB). Is this, then, a sign of the Kingdom? Are Kingdom people and churches to

be doing deliverance ministry to demonstrate that they are of Jesus' Kingdom? I think so.

There are many signs of the Kingdom of God. Jesus told many parables of the Kingdom. Things like loving and forgiving are Kingdom virtues. But another of the signs of the Kingdom is that demonized people are being freed of their demons and Satan is being defeated not only by love, but also by power. This part of Kingdom experience is not to be neglected.

When demons are cast out in Jesus' name, then we know that Jesus' Kingdom is here. But what do we know about churches where no demons are challenged? I think we know that those churches are not Kingdom churches! If demons are cast out, they are Kingdom churches; if no demons are cast out, I think we can say that Jesus' Kingdom has not come near them.

Or can we? Is it enough for churches to be loving and accepting and forgiving? No doubt, these are important signs of the Kingdom, too. And maybe it is enough for churches to be manifesting these other Kingdom values and virtues without dealing with the demons in their midst. Is it okay to leave this part out?

I think Jesus is saying that an important sign of the Kingdom is to be working in His power to free people as well as to love and forgive them. So, to be a complete Kingdom church, a church must deal with demons, not ignore them.

Maybe we need to distinguish between *Whole Kingdom churches* and *Partial Kingdom churches*. Partial Kingdom churches do many good and helpful things, but they ignore an important part of Jesus' teaching and ministry. It is only when the many things Jesus taught are being practiced and demons are also being cast out in the power of God that we know we have a Whole Kingdom church.

New Testament scholar James Kallas points out that approximately 80 percent of the gospels show Jesus' concern for power (Kallas calls this the "Satanward view") and only 20

percent show His focus on love, peace and the other “Godward” characteristics of our faith.³ A church that would emphasize Jesus’ power would be a Whole Kingdom church.

This book is written to help us and our churches become Whole Kingdom churches. I pray that you will decide to follow Jesus in doing Whole Kingdom ministry. Our churches are full of people in bondage, many of whom do not even know that believers are called by Jesus to set captives free (see Luke 4:18–19; John 14:12; 20:21). When demons are cast out in the power of Jesus, we know that the Kingdom has come near.

The Satanic Kingdom Is Real

Satan has a kingdom. Of what does the satanic kingdom consist? At the top is Satan himself. He appears to be a high-ranking angel (perhaps at or near the level of the archangels Michael and Gabriel). He apparently asserted himself in opposition to God, becoming the adversary of all that is good, right and godly. Though the passages in Isaiah 14:12–15 and Ezekiel 28:11–19 are explicitly directed to the kings of Babylon and Tyre, they also appear to describe what happened in the heavenlies when Satan lost his position with God.

In Ezekiel it is said, presumably of Satan, “You were once an example of perfection. . . . Your conduct was perfect from the day you were created until you began to do evil” (Ezekiel 28:12, 15). In the Isaiah passage, Lucifer (Satan) is described as “determined to climb up to heaven and to place [his] throne above the highest stars . . . and be like the Almighty” (Isaiah 14:13–14). Both passages speak of Satan being cast down and humiliated because of his rebellion.

The widely held belief is that when Satan fell, he took a large number of angels with him. Some interpret Revelation 12:4 as an indication that one-third of the angels in heaven sided with

Satan. Though I seriously doubt the validity of that interpretation, there seems to be a *very* large number of satanic beings in the world. And many believe all of them are to be thrown out of heaven with Satan at the end (see Revelation 12:7–9). Until God terminates things, however, Satan and his dark angels (demons or evil spirits) will be active on earth. And we see from many biblical passages that demons can inhabit people (see Mark 1:23; 5:1–20; 7:25; Acts 16:16).

Above demons, there seems to be a hierarchy of principalities and powers (see Ephesians 6:12) working under Satan’s authority. Within the hierarchy, these evil beings take orders from those with greater power who rank above them. Release from their assignments, therefore, can only be granted by higher-level spirits or by the power of God.

Satanic beings are involved in every kind of disruptive human activity. They can hinder earthly endeavors and even delay answers to prayer (see Daniel 10:13). They seem to have authority over places and territories, such as buildings, cities and temples. Additionally, they appear to have authority over social organizations and groups and can influence sinful behavior, such as homosexuality, drug addiction, lust, incest, rape and murder.

The fallen angels we call demons or evil spirits (I make no distinction between those terms) seem to be the “ground level” troops, as opposed to the “cosmic level” principalities, powers and rulers spoken of in Ephesians 6:12. These ground-level troops are the ones we encounter most often during spiritual warfare. Scripture tells us that demons seek people to live in (see Matthew 12:43–45). They apparently envy us our bodies. They have different personalities, are destructive (see Mark 9:17–29) and differ in wickedness and power (see Matthew 12:45; Mark 5:4).

Satan, unlike God, is not omnipresent. He can only be in one place at a time, though he apparently can get from place to place very quickly. The other members of the hierarchy, including ground-level demons, therefore, carry out his schemes through-

out the universe. In addition to their broader assignments, it is apparently the task of evil spirits to bother humans—especially Christians. Satan does not like anything that God likes. He, therefore, picks on God’s favorite creatures (human beings) and assigns his underlings to harass us.

We can assume that the demons’ primary concern is to disrupt and, if possible, cripple anything or anyone that might be a threat to Satan’s domination over the world. Their guns are aimed at individuals, groups and organizations that seek to advance God’s purposes. They produce “strongholds” in people’s minds (see 2 Corinthians 10:4). They attack Christian ministries and are agents of doctrinal aberrations (see 1 Timothy 4:1). They affect health (see Luke 13:11), perhaps affect weather (see Luke 8:22–25) and even have “the power over death” (see Hebrews 2:14), though they have no power except that allowed them by God.

The Reality of the Battle

We are at war! Just about every page of the New Testament indicates this fact. As Christians, like it or not, we are participants in the war between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. Furthermore, we are living in enemy territory.

But we are on the winning side. There is absolutely no doubt about the outcome. Not only have the enemy and his dark angels been defeated, but they have also been humiliated—for Jesus, at His resurrection, “made a public spectacle of them by leading them as captives in his victory procession” (Colossians 2:15). My friend Ken Blue writes:

The fight is real. The victory of Christ through his cross and resurrection is final, but not yet fully realized. Evil continues to exercise its bounded, though significant, power till Christ returns in his glory.⁴

I cannot explain why we are still at war. But time lags like this, between certain victory and the final mop-up, are not unknown in human history. For example, though the Emancipation Proclamation freed about four million slaves in 1863, two more bloody years of fighting followed before they could claim their freedom in 1865.

A similar kind of delay occurred during World War II. In June 1944, Allied troops landed successfully on the European mainland, sealing the doom of Hitler and his troops. Though that event assured the defeat of the Nazis, the war did not end until eleven months later, when the Axis powers signed the unconditional surrender in May 1945. Though victory was assured, we are told more Allied soldiers were killed in Europe during those eleven months than in all the preceding years of World War II.

A third, and in some ways better, illustration comes from the history of Israel. Even before Israel entered the Promised Land, God had given it to them. It was *their* land—God had given it to Abraham—but enemies occupied it. Israel owned the land as soon as God gave it to them, but they did not possess what was theirs for some time, and only then after much struggle.

Just as with the Emancipation Proclamation, D-Day and God's giving of the land to Israel, so it is with the death and resurrection of Jesus. Victory is assured, but the enemy remains at large. The wrap-up, the final capitulation of the enemy, the freeing of the remaining prisoners of war and the banishing and locking up of the enemy are yet to come. We live in the time between Jesus' "emancipation proclamation" and the freeing of the remaining captives.

The interim period in all these cases was to be used for the ongoing advance into enemy territory. In other words, title to the land was not the same as occupation of it. During the interim time, one group held the title but another occupied it. The challenge for the group with the title was to take possession

of what was legally theirs. But this meant the wars continued. Battles had to be fought, territory remained enemy-occupied and prisoners were yet to be released.

We Christians live, therefore, in a period of spiritual warfare. We need to be aware of this and equip ourselves to fight. We dare not assume, as some do, that the territory has been delivered from enemy occupation or that the power of the enemy has been broken.

Jesus said, “As the Father sent me, so I send you” (John 20:21). He thus enlisted His followers to join in His commitment to “proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed” (Luke 4:18). The time had come, He said, to enter the enemy’s territory and announce that God wanted to rescue the people He passionately loves (see verse 19).

Like Jesus, we need to fight against Satan’s kingdom in the power of the Holy Spirit. Most importantly, we need to fight for the same reason Jesus did—obedience to our Father.

The Bible presents us with the paradox of being on the winning side even as we live in a world where the loser, Satan, has power. Demons are free to harass and trouble people. Evil continues to abound.

I am often asked, “Why does the enemy still have so much power over people—even Christians? It doesn’t seem fair!” Day after day, people who are wounded by the enemy come to me. I regularly minister to those who have been emotionally, physically and sexually abused; to children who have been demonized; and to people who have been “beaten up” by the enemy. It makes me sad and angry to see God’s people so deeply hurting and wounded.

I do not know why God has given Satan such a long tether (and I often feel angry that I cannot explain it). But I do know the battle is real, and I intend to fight it and free people from the enemy, in the power of Jesus. As Christians, we have been

chosen and are blessed to be on the winning side. The victory is sure, but we are fighting a continuing war.

Three Reasons We Need This

God desires that Christians work with Him to minister to the captives and the wounded. The call to minister in power—freeing the demonized and healing the wounded—is part of our inheritance as children of God. Not only are healing and joy brought to the ones suffering from attack, but also to those who minister with Jesus.

With a sense of excitement, I invite you to join those who have learned to free people from demons in Jesus' name. Let me share with you, quoting from Ken Blue, three reasons why we should minister to the demonized:

Initially, I wanted to learn about healing and deliverance to authenticate the gospel in evangelism and carry on effective pastoral care. These original motives were soon joined by others. I found that common human compassion became a compelling reason to pray for the sick. It was also exhilarating to be God's agent in relieving illness and pain. Praying for the sick and seeing them helped was and is intensely gratifying.

Gradually, however, I came to what for me is the essential motive to pray for the sick. I had read the Bible for fifteen years but had never noticed that *when Jesus told his followers to preach the kingdom of God, he also commanded them to heal the sick and to cast out demons* (Lk 9:1–2; 10:8–9; Mt 10:7–8; Mk 6:12–13). I preached the gospel because I saw that the Lord commanded this. Now I realized that in the same breath, he also commanded me to heal the sick and cast out demons. Whether or not healing aids in evangelism, or whether or not this ministry is enjoyable or even works, I do not intend to ever stop. *I understand now that the command to pray for the sick is one which I cannot explain away or ignore.*⁵

Blue's three reasons are obedience, compassion and personal gratification. Let's consider each of these a bit more.

1. God expects us to free people.

We've seen that the battle is real. We understand that, as Christians, we are on the winning side. But are we *all* called to minister to the demonized? Are we *all* called to bring healing to the wounded and to set captives free? Yes, if we seek to be what God wants us to be and to do what He wants us to do.

"If you love me, you will obey my commandments," Jesus said (John 14:15), and then, "If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love" (John 15:10). Jesus' ministry was one of obedience to the Father. He provided His disciples with a three-year course of instruction, by deed and word, concerning how to follow God obediently as He followed Him. Declaring, "As the Father sent me, so I send you" (John 20:21), Jesus launched the disciples into the world in the power of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 1:8) to do and say what He Himself modeled.

His teaching of the disciples stressed what I call power ministry, as He gave them "power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases" and sending them out "to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick" (Luke 9:1–2). He later instructed them to teach their own disciples "to obey everything [He had] commanded [them]" (Matthew 28:20), including the ministry of freeing people from the enemy.

But, you may be asking, what about gifting?

First of all, there is no gift of delivering people from demons. Apparently every believer is empowered to do that without special gifting. Second, the list of gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 speaks of gifts of healings (see verse 9). Evidently, as we obey Jesus' command, we will discover that each of us is gifted in different

ways to bring healing to those to whom He has led us. This has certainly been my observation of the people I have seen move in obedience. Those who pray for healing find that God backs them up. But they also vary in effectiveness, with some having greater success with certain ailments than with others.

On the basis of Scripture, experience and observation, I conclude that obedience is to precede gifting and that experimentation is the way to discover gifting. We, like Jesus and His disciples, are to obey God by experimenting with freeing people from the enemy. We will discover in that obedience and experimentation, then, what our special gifting may be.

As we have obeyed, God has provided my colleagues and me with the authority, power and gifting necessary to release people from demons. Those who simply observe, without launching out in obedience, never discover the authority, power and gifting God gives. These come only as a person moves out with God.

2. We should be motivated by compassion.

Demonization is common in every part of our world today. The enemy and his emissaries are active and successful at getting into people. A steady stream of people, far more than we can handle, come to me and my colleagues for help. Sadly, many people have found no help in their churches or from psychologists and counselors. This is not because their churches and counselors do not want to help. They just do not know how. Or they are afraid.

Unfortunately, most churches and counselors allow people to assume that demons do not exist today. They allow those tormented by these evil spirits to believe they are crazy or very sinful, adding further to their pain and guilt. Often, demonized persons ask me, “Do you think I’m crazy?” Not infrequently, their pastors or counselors have given up on them or simply

let them keep coming to see them, even though nothing has helped. Often, these individuals have lost hope that Jesus can bring healing and freedom.

The statistics are sobering, especially since we are told nearly the same percentages apply to Christians as non-Christians. It has been estimated that one-third of all children are sexually abused before the age of eighteen and that this figure represents 40 percent of all females and 30 percent of all males.⁶ *Dysfunctional* describes most American families. It is even probable that a majority of missionaries and pastors, especially those who are younger, also come from dysfunctional homes.

Even more startling is the increase of New Age practices, satanism and other occult activities in the United States. New Age centers have been established across the country, especially in resort areas like Santa Fe, New Mexico; the Colorado mountains; Flagstaff, Arizona; and (as you would expect) many places in California. New Age concepts are infiltrating school curricula. In Los Angeles, for example, a recent third-grade experimental curriculum taught the children to call for spirit guides to come help them.⁷ Fortunately, the system abandoned it, under pressure. Novelist Frank Peretti details in fictional form a similar case and its results.⁸

Blood rituals are, to an increasing degree, coming to the attention of those who deal with crime. Those involved in these rituals, whether criminals or not, usually are severely demonized. Sadly, the police are often more aware and better informed on these matters than pastors and church leaders. Many are convinced that some type of evil is behind much of the gang crimes and drug traffic.

A certain number of Christian converts come out of occult backgrounds. Marvelous conversion experiences prompt them to seek church membership. Unfortunately, we have lost the early Church tradition of cleansing new converts of demonic infestation before they join, so they usually come into our churches

carrying some or all of the demons they once served. Although the demons are weakened because they have lost the spiritual center of the person, they hang on in mind, body, emotions and will (see chapter 3). From those positions, they can continue to disrupt both the life of the convert and the lives of those with whom the convert relates.

Whether as a result of general dysfunction or occult involvement, the Lord's children are bleeding and broken. The enemy has attacked them throughout their painful lives, and many still carry demons. As Christians, we cannot turn these people away. We need to be as compassionate as Jesus, working in love and power to bring healing and deliverance. Today, possibly more than ever before, it is critical that we learn how to bring the light of Jesus to those in pain and need.

3. This can increase our faith.

All of us who have moved in this direction have experienced tremendous renewal in our own spiritual lives. It is an incredible thing to be involved in doing what we know we cannot do in our own power. We cannot cast out demons by ourselves. If the Holy Spirit does not “show up” to do the job, we are sunk! So, the very fact that demons are regularly cast out, never to return, constantly humbles, excites and enriches us. It proves over and over again that God is present and doing His work through us.

When the Lord pours out His Holy Spirit on the wounded, He splashes blessings on everyone else, too. It is like getting too close to a waterfall—you get sprayed just being there! Through this ministry, my life has been dramatically changed and God has become much bigger. I have felt, for the first time, an answer to Paul's prayer that his readers will experience the “incomparably great power” available to “us who believe” (Ephesians 1:19 NIV). As I have sought to walk in obedience in this ministry, the

Lord has led me deeper and deeper into intimacy with Jesus and excitement over my relationship with Him.

Such a fact should come as no surprise. Doesn't God often work in this way? The Lord is not simply concerned with what we are doing for Him. As with the apostles, He chose us first to *be* with Him, and only then to go witness and cast out demons (see Mark 3:14–15). His primary concern is for our relationship with Him. This ministry benefits both the demonized and you. Jesus desires for you to know the incredible joy of seeing Him move in power through you.

How to Get Started

One of the main purposes of this book is to get more people started in this important ministry. The number of Christians who need to be freed from demons is alarming. I have no idea how high to estimate the percentages, but I will risk criticism and suggest that in many churches, at least two-thirds of those who attend carry demons.

What if my figure is high? Or low? How many demonized people do you think it would take to cripple a church? Half the membership? I doubt it. One or two in prominent positions? That is probably enough. The pastor? The music director? Experience leads me and my colleagues to believe that many in church leadership positions carry demons. Many of those people come to us.

If you were Satan, on whom would you spend your time? What kind of priority would Satan likely give to disrupting the lives and ministries of church people? High priority, I should think, for these are the ones who could hurt the satanic kingdom if they got free.

My point is, there is a lot of work to do with today's equivalent of "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 10:6;

15:24 κϋν). And many of God's people need to learn how to minister freedom to them, if the Church is to become what Jesus intended it to be.

To move into this ministry, here are steps that I and those who work with me recommend:

1. Choose a team of three and begin with prayer, letting God know that you are open to whatever He chooses to bring your way. Pray for opportunities to engage in Jesus' freeing ministry and for the necessary guidance, authority and power.
2. Read everything you can get your hands on. Listen to audio materials, attend seminars and discuss deliverance with anyone who has experience.
3. Seek opportunities to participate with those ministering deliverance. Learn, watch and help. Continue to minister with others, even after you have begun to lead ministry.
4. Begin to offer seminars to a variety of church groups, sharing with them what you have been discovering. An important component of our instruction is that we demonstrate as well as lecture. Bringing people to freedom in Christ and teaching others how to do likewise require that we imitate the Master. He not only talked; He did the works, as well. In our seminars, we want people to participate as much as possible, to learn to do what Jesus did and to do what we do—not simply talk about it.
5. Share with others what you are learning. Each of us is led by the Spirit to do different things, with the result that each of us has a distinctive style. This enables us to provide insight and learning to each other.

Read on to learn more about what God has helped me and my colleagues discover. Read other books, as well. (A list of

resources has been provided in the bibliography.) And listen to audio resources—mine and those of others.

Remember that deliverance is only a part of the overall aim of getting people well. People need to be *completely* freed—physically, emotionally and spiritually. So read, too, on physical healing and in the area usually referred to as “inner healing” or “healing of memories.” One who ministers to a person needs to be equipped to deal with every aspect of that person.

Along with the reading and listening, practice, practice, practice!