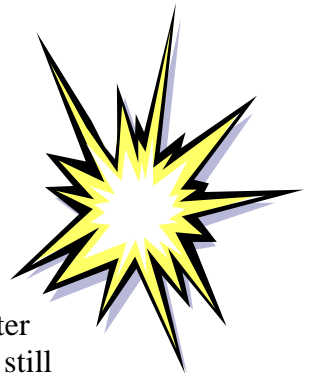


## Lesson #9 – Gifts of Signs and Wonders



We worship “the God of wonders.” The same Almighty God who created the heavens and the earth; who separated the waters of the Red Sea; who brought water from a rock; cast out demons, healed the sick and raised the dead - *that God* - is still alive and well in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We believe that the risen and enthroned Lord Jesus Christ has poured out His Spirit on the church and invested her with authority to continue the miraculous work he began during his earthly ministry. These miracles should serve as “signs” to point humanity to the living God, and teach us to fear Him. God chooses some believers to move in this miraculous anointing of the Holy Spirit with exceptional power and regularity. We will consider this amazing, controversial, and *under-utilized* constellation of gifts in this chapter.

**Faith**

**Miracles**

**Healings**

**Tongues and Interpretation**

**Exorcism**

### The Gift of Faith

*“Faith does not operate in the plane of the possible. There is no glory for God in that which is humanly possible. Faith begins where human power ends.” George Mueller*

*Jesus replied, “Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and it will be done.”<sup>22</sup> If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer, Mt. 21:21-22*

<sup>20</sup> *He replied, “Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.” Matthew 17:20-21*

<sup>1</sup> *Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. Hebrews 11:1*

### ***Evidence that you may have the gift of faith***

#### ***Ask yourself...***

- Do you have a child-like trust in God – almost “gullible?”
- Does a positive and optimistic attitude come naturally to you, even in the midst of negative circumstances?
- Do you easily believe God’s promises?
- Do you inspire others to trust in God in radical ways?
- Do you like to take risks in the Lord and then watch Him “come through in the clutch?”
- Do you feel confident and even “sure” when you pray for healing or financial provision?
- Do you pray specifically and then celebrate God’s amazing answers?



**Definition:** *An exceptional anointing to believe that God will move in specific and practical ways, in spite of circumstances to the contrary.*

**Purpose:** *To help God's people to see beyond their human circumstances and trust in God to do the impossible.*

**Clarification:** **The gift of faith is not the same as general Christian faith.**

- **Christian faith** *trusts God for salvation.*

<sup>6</sup> *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.* Hebrews 11:6

<sup>8</sup> *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—* Ephesians 2:8

- **The gift of faith** *is a certainty that God will move in a particular situation.*

## **Examples**

### ***Peter and the healing of the lame beggar***

<sup>8</sup> *In Lystra there sat a man who was lame. He had been that way from birth and had never walked.* <sup>9</sup> *He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed* <sup>10</sup> *and called out, “Stand up on your feet!” At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.* Acts 14:8-10

### ***Abraham and Sarah conceive Isaac miraculously***

**Read Romans 4:16-25.** How do we observe the gift of faith in the life of Abraham?

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## ***Potential pitfalls associated with the gift of faith***



***Watch out! If you have this gift, be careful...***

- Not to use “faith” as an excuse to improvise in life, neglecting the type of planning and practical preparation taught in the book of Proverbs
- Not to scold others for not having sufficient faith when going through an illness or some sort of trial

## *Questions*

What are some indications that someone may have the gift of faith?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

What is the difference between Christian faith in general and the specific gift of faith?

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What are some potential problems for a person who has this gift?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Mention some situations in the ministry of the church when this gift must be exercised.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever observed this gift in action? What happened?

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## Gift of Miracles

<sup>12</sup> Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. <sup>13</sup> And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup> You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. John 14:12-14

### ***Evidence that you may have the gift of miracles***

#### ***Ask yourself...***

- Have you seen God heal people dramatically and consistently in response to your prayers?
- Do you simply expect that God will do miracles?
- Have you on certain occasions asked God to do extraordinary things and seen vivid, clear responses? (calm a storm; fix a car; multiply oil; raise a dead person?)
- Do you sometimes feel led to “command” someone to be healed in Jesus’ name rather than request it in prayer?



### ***Perhaps you have the gift of miracles!***

***Definition:*** A special anointing to perform supernatural acts by the power of God.

***Purpose:*** To change or alter the normal course of nature to convince others of the truth of the gospel and extend God’s fame and glory in the world.

### ***Miracles also can serve to validate an apostolic ministry -***

*2 Cor. 12:12; Rom 15:18-19; Matt 10:7-8; Lu. 4:16-21; Acts 2:22; 1 Cor. 2:1-5*

<sup>12</sup> I persevered in demonstrating among you the marks of a true apostle, including signs, wonders and miracles. 2 Cor. 12:12

### ***Examples:***

- *The plagues upon Egypt – Exodus 7-12*
- *The destruction of the walls of Jericho – Joshua 6:1-21*
- *Daniel in the Lion’s den*
- *Jonah swallowed by a great fish- Jonah 1:17*
- *Jesus changes the water into wine – John 2*
- *Jesus calmed the storm – Mark 4:35-41*
- *Jesus walked on the water – Matthew 14:22-32*
- *Jesus multiplied the loaves and the fishes – Mark 5:21-43*
- *Jesus raised the dead – John 11:1-44*
- *Peter and Paul raised the dead – Acts 9:40-42; 20:7-12*
- *People experienced healing and deliverance through exposure to the shadow or a cloth that belonged to the Apostles – Acts 5:15; 19:11-12*





## ***Potential pitfalls associated with the gift of miracles***

***Watch out! If you have this gift, be careful...***

- Not to see yourself as some sort of “guru” or superhero! Spiritual pride can be fatal.
- Remember that the power comes from God, and not you.
- Not to make a spectacle of God’s power – putting on a “show” to promote yourself
- Not to manipulate and control others based on your “special spirituality.”
- Not to use this power for financial gain
- Not to exaggerate testimonies of past miracles
- Not to shove people over when praying for them
- Not to become addicted to that which is “spectacular” and neglect the day to day details of faithfulness to the Lord

### ***Questions:***

Define the gift of miracles \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

What are some purposes of the gift of miracles?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

List some Biblical examples of this gift.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

What are some potential pitfalls associated with this gift?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_.
4. \_\_\_\_\_.

## The Gift of Healings

<sup>14</sup> Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup> And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. James 5:14-15



### ***Evidence that you may have the gift of healings***

#### ***Ask yourself...***

- Have people been healed when you pray for them?
- Do others seek you out to pray for healing?
- Does it come easy to you to believe that God will answer a request for healing?
- Can you sometimes discern when emotional and even spiritual problems (ie. Demons) are associated with a health problem
- Do people share about profound emotional new beginnings they have experienced through your influence in their lives?

#### ***Perhaps you have the gift of healing!***

***Definition:*** A special anointing to minister physical or emotional healing by the power of God.

***Purpose:*** To express the holistic love of God for humanity (emotional, physical and spiritual) and to extend the fame and Glory of Jesus on earth.

### ***Healings proclaim the presence of the Kingdom***

<sup>20</sup> When the men came to Jesus, they said, “John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?’” <sup>21</sup> At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. <sup>22</sup> So he replied to the messengers, “Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy<sup>[a]</sup> are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Luke 7:20-22

In this text, what is the purpose of miracles of healing?

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## ***There are many varieties of healing!***

1 Corinthians 12:9 refers to “gifts of healings” (plural). This indicates that this gifting is multiform in nature, expressing itself in a variety of ways to cure a variety of ailments.

**1. Deliverance of those who are demonized** – Sometimes Jesus cast out demons associated with sickness. He “rebuked” certain illnesses.

<sup>25</sup> *When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the impure spirit. “You deaf and mute spirit,” he said, “I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.”* Mark 9:25

**2. Forgiveness of sins** – Sometimes Jesus discerned and addressed sins associated with an illness.

*Paralytic – “Take heart son, your sins are forgiven...”* – Mark 2:1-12

He warns the paralytic with a sinful attitude –

<sup>14</sup> *Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, “See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.”* <sup>15</sup> *The man went away and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well.* John 5:14-15

**3. Sickness and emotional pain** - At times Jesus discerned and addressed emotional trauma associated with an illness.

*He touched the leper* – Mark 1:40-42

*He looked for the woman with the flow of blood and called her “my daughter”* – Mark 5

**4. Healing as a prophetic sign** - Sometimes Jesus used healing to teach a message. For example, physical blindness sometimes reflected spiritual blindness. Similarly, the priest Eli’s blindness reflects his spiritual insensitivity. (1 Sam. 4:15) Jesus teaches about himself as he heals: (John 9) *“while I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”*

## ***Potential pitfalls associated with the gift of healing***

***Watch out! If you have this gift, be careful...***



- To remember from whence comes the power to heal.
- Not to make people feel guilty if they are not healed – as if their lack of faith or hidden sin is blocking the healing.
- To remember that sometimes God chooses not to heal.
- Not to use certain phrases or actions as types of magic formulae to invoke healing
- Not to minimize the value of doctors and medical science
- To be patient and persevering in prayer even if healing does not occur immediately
- To work with others, especially counselors, doctors, pastors, those with the gift of discernment, and those who minister deliverance

## ***Questions***

Define the gift of healings: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

What is the purpose of the gifts of healings? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

List some different types of healing?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Mention an example of Jesus healing not only the body, but the spirit and/or emotions as well.

\_\_\_\_\_.

List some warnings for the person who has this gift.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

## ***True or False?***

If a person takes medicine, they must not have sufficient faith. \_\_\_\_\_

If a person is sick and is not healed right away, they must have a hidden sin. \_\_\_\_\_

If a person is sick, there could be a demon associated with the illness. \_\_\_\_\_

If a person prays and does not experience healing, they must not have enough faith. \_\_\_\_\_.

A sickness can have emotional roots. \_\_\_\_\_.



## The Gift of Tongues

*"I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding." 1 Corinthians 14:15*

**Definition:** *A special anointing to pray, worship or prophesy in a language which is unknown to the speaker.*

**Purpose:** *To intercede and glorify God with one's spirit.*



### Clarifications

- ***As with all gifts, love is fundamental.***

*If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 1 Corinthians 13:1*

- ***The most common use of this gift is to communicate with God and edify one's self***  
The spirit of the believer communicates directly with the Spirit of God in a manner which transcends the intellect.

*<sup>14</sup> For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. <sup>15</sup> So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding. <sup>16</sup> Otherwise when you are praising God in the Spirit, how can someone else, who is now put in the position of an inquirer,<sup>1</sup> say "Amen" to your thanksgiving, since they do not know what you are saying? <sup>17</sup> You are giving thanks well enough, but no one else is edified.*

*<sup>18</sup> I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. <sup>19</sup> But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue. 1 Corinthians 14:14-19*

- ***The use of the gift of tongues is usually not associated with emotional sensations or "ecstasy."***
- ***The one who speaks in tongues has control of him or herself and can choose when, where and how to exercise this gift.***
- ***As with all the gifts, one must practice and develop this gift.***
- ***One must use this gift in an orderly and respectful fashion***  
(1 Cor. 14:26-28; 1 Cor. 14:5-8) In a public gathering one should only speak in tongues using an audible voice if the speaker believes that the message is meant to be interpreted into a prophetic message for the benefit of the community. Otherwise the person ought to pray in tongues in a quieter voice or whisper. During periods of generalized "crying out" to the Lord, however, speaking of tongues can be appropriate, as long as the speaker is not calling attention to themselves and distracting others from prayer.

- ***This gift is more general than many others...***

Tongues seemed to be a frequent manifestation when new believers received the gift of the Holy Spirit in the early church. (Acts 10:45-46; 19:6)

- ***Tongues is generally imparted through the laying on of hands***, but not necessarily.

Each person experiences the Spirit in their own way.

- ***The language being spoken is usually unknown.***

On the day of Pentecost the disciples were given the miraculous ability to speak in foreign languages that were known to the pilgrims who had gathered in Jerusalem. In the majority of the cases in the New Testament, however, and in the experience of the modern church, the languages being spoken are unknown and only translated by the miraculous revelation of the Holy Spirit.

- ***What about the argument that this gift is no longer present in the church today?***

Some Christians use the verse in 1 Corinthians 13, “*When the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away,*” to argue that all miraculous gifts, including tongues, (the imperfect) have passed away now that the Biblical canon (the perfect) has come. We do not concur with this interpretation. Rather, we believe that the “perfect” state of affairs referred to in this text has to do with the mature knowledge of God that believers will experience when we see Him face to face in our heavenly resurrection. Obviously, in the new heaven and new earth there will be no need for healing, for there will be no illness. There will be no need for prophecy, since our understanding of God’s will shall not be lacking, as it is now ....etc. Until *that time* of perfection, however, we need these gifts in order to serve God more effectively.

### ***Pitfalls associated with the gift of tongues***



***Watch out! If you have this gift, be careful...***

- *Not to think that this gift is the only manifestation of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.*
- *Not to over-emphasize this gift and insist that everyone speak in tongues. “Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?” 1 Corinthians 12:30*
- *Not to speak in tongues loudly during a worship service, unless....*
  - It is during a time of general “crying out” to God, and even then, to do so in a way that joins the overall expression without distracting others.
  - You believe the message in tongues is meant to be translated for the edification of the entire gathering
- *Not to try to “teach” others how to speak in tongues by having them use gibberish.*  
While we do believe that a person needs to “step out in faith” to begin speaking, we need not fabricate this gift to “jump start” the Spirit.

## ***Questions***

Define the gift of tongues? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

What is the purpose of this gift? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

How do we address the argument that 1 Corinthians 13 teaches that spiritual gifts have ceased because “the perfect” canon has arrived?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

## ***True or False:***

If someone does not speak in tongues, they do not have the Holy Spirit. \_\_\_\_\_

When a person speaks in tongues they always experience intense emotion. \_\_\_\_\_

When a person speaks in tongues, this language is always a known language in the world. \_\_\_\_\_

The person who speaks in tongues loses control of themselves and cannot stop, let alone adjust the volume. \_\_\_\_\_

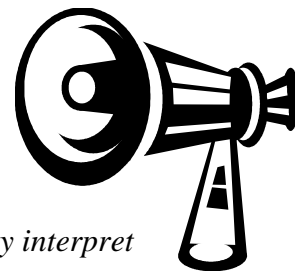
It is impossible to receive this gift without the laying on of hands. \_\_\_\_\_

When a person begins to speak in tongues, they enter into a type of trance in which the Spirit takes control of their tongue and moves it for them. \_\_\_\_\_.

The gift of tongues is exclusively meant for intercession. \_\_\_\_\_

It is not Biblical ever to speak in tongues during a service. \_\_\_\_\_

Those who speak in tongues are more spiritually mature than those who do not. \_\_\_\_\_



## The Gift of Interpretation of Tongues (*A type of prophecy*)

<sup>13</sup> For this reason the one who speaks in a tongue should pray that they may interpret what they say. 1 Corinthians 14:13

**Definition:** A special anointing to interpret a message from God that has been expressed originally in tongues.

**Purpose:** Serves the same purpose as prophecy – to edify, exhort and comfort God's people.

### **Evidence that you may have the gift of interpretation of tongues:**

**Ask yourself....**

- Do you sometimes have a sense of what you are saying when speaking in tongues?
- Do you feel the presence of God in a special way when someone speaks in tongues?
- Has the following ever happened to you: Someone speaks a public message in tongues, clearly expecting God to provide an interpretation for the group? The beginning of a message pops into your mind, but you hold back, unsure if the message comes from God, rather than from your own thoughts. Then someone else speaks up and delivers the exact same message!

**Perhaps you have the gift of interpretation!**



### **Warnings: Potential pitfalls that come with the gift of interpretation**

**Watch out! If you have this gift, be careful...**

- To remember that you are fallible! One must always recognize that your interpretation can be partially (or entirely) incorrect.
- Submit to spiritual leadership. Do not be offended if the pastor or presiding leader offers correction to your interpretation or waits for another message to complete it.

### **Questions:**

What is the purpose of the gift of interpretation of tongues? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

Mention some warnings for the person with this gift to keep in mind.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

# The Gift of Exorcism

*And Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases.” Luke 9:1*

**Definition:** *A special anointing to cast demons out of or away from another individual.*

**Purpose:** *To minister healing and freedom to God’s people who suffer from demonic oppression, promoting the advance of God’s kingdom.*

## ***Evidence that you may have this gift***

- Can you discern when a person’s problems have a demonic component?
- Have you felt certain that someone has participated in occult activity, and then had this suspicion confirmed?
- Do you feel at ease guiding a person through a process of renouncing and confessing associations with the demonic?
- Do you feel comfortable taking authority over evil spirits in the name of Jesus; witnessing vivid results?

*Perhaps you have the gift of exorcism?*

## **Some Clarifications**

### ***Spiritual warfare is a reality we inhabit!***

- **Genesis 3:15** – As a result of the curse on human sin, a state of “enmity” exists between the seed of the woman (Jesus) and the seed of the serpent (Satan). We know that one day the serpent will strike the heel of this descendant (at the cross), but this individual will prevail, crushing the serpent’s head. Humanity lives “in the crossfire,” so to speak, of this spiritual battle that rages throughout the centuries.
- **John 10:10** – Jesus said that “*the thief comes only to steal, kill and destroy, but I have come that you may have life and have it more abundantly.*”
- **Jesus regularly cast out demons from people**, both in the open air as well as within the walls of the synagogue.
- **Jesus conferred authority to preach, heal and cast out demons upon the disciples.** (Luke 9:1) They exercised this gift regularly both during the human ministry of Jesus as well as after Pentecost, as recorded throughout the book of Acts.

### ***There are various degrees of “demonization.”***

- **Some suffer almost complete domination** by multiple demonic beings (The Gadarene Demoniac – Mark 5)
- **Some illnesses are inflicted by demonic malevolence.** Jesus said the following of a woman stooped over with scoliosis:  
*Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?* Lu 13:16
- **Some levels of demonization can be subtle and go largely unnoticed.** In Jesus’ ministry some demons manifested in people who otherwise “blended into the crowd” in the synagogue. When in the presence of Jesus, however, they were “flushed out” and forced to make their presence known. (Mark 1:23-24)

### ***Demonic contamination can come through a variety of means.***

- Occult practices – Acts 19
- Generational “inheritance”
- Bitterness and un-forgiveness. *“Do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil a foothold.”* Ephesians 4:26-27
- Sexual “transference” (Mary Magdalene delivered of 7 demons; “one flesh” union.)

### ***Deliverance and Christian counseling go together***

- **Deliverance from demons, in the absence of repentance and Christian growth, can be counter-productive.** A person can end up being “seven times” more demonized if his life (house) is clean and swept, but *empty*! (Matthew 12:43-44)
- **We must specifically renounce our associations with Satan,** as if breaking legal contracts. The word “satan” means “accuser” in Biblical Hebrew, reflecting the legal role that the evil one plays in his battle against believers. Jesus’ blood likewise functions in a legal way, taking away the accuser’s case. In light of the enemy’s use of spiritually legal means to act in peoples’ lives, the early church required new converts to “renounce Satan” as a matter of course before their baptism.
- **Deliverance should (normally) not be administered “Rambo style,”** but rather in dialogue with the person involved, guiding them through a process of personal change.



### ***Pitfalls that accompany the practice of this gift.***

***Watch out! If you have this gift, be careful...***

- **To stay humble and submitted to spiritual authority!** Do not become an arrogant “ghost buster” who believes he has magical power! Deliverance ministers move in a charged environment of spiritual warfare. If they stray from spiritual authority and become proud, they are vulnerable to profound demonic reprisals. Comparison: A soldier who wanders in the battlefield as a “lone ranger.”
- **To protect the dignity of those to whom you minister.** Be extremely careful not to allow a person to become publicly debased in the process of their deliverance. Such experiences can traumatize and shame the individual involved, driving them away from the Christian community.
- **To pay attention to follow up!** The delivered person must grow in Christ to prevent “re-contamination.” Consider the parable of the swept house, which later is contaminated by seven worse demons.
- **Not to make a spectacle of your ministry.** Deliverance is an extremely intimate and sensitive matter, and not to be used as a “show” to bolster your own spiritual ego.
- **To walk in holiness.** Your own inconsistencies allow “chinks” in your armor that the enemy can capitalize upon in spiritual battle.
- **To stay “heaven centered.”** When the disciples rejoiced that demons submitted to them in Christ’s name, Jesus warned them not to delight in this authority, but rather in the fact that their names were written in the Book of Life. (Luke 10) Thus we see the principle that we should not become overly focused on spiritual evil as we do this ministry, but rather on Jesus and our heavenly hope.

## **Review Questions**

How can you respond to the argument that Spiritual Warfare is not a Biblical concept?

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Mention some different ways, or degrees to which, a person can be demonized?

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How do counseling and deliverance go together?

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Mention some guidelines and warnings for one who practices this ministry.

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