

# **WARFARE WITNESS** STUDY GUIDE

## Preface and Introduction

1. What is a 'worldview'? How does a worldview work to integrate and direct our lives? Why is a spiritual dimension integral to a biblical worldview? What dangers are there in stepping outside the lines traced by us in Scripture, especially in relationship to spiritual warfare? What are some ways these lines are transgressed in popular writing on the subject of spiritual warfare?
2. What part does spiritual warfare play in your Christian walk and service? What has been the main source of your understanding?
3. Why do you suppose the spiritual dimension in general and of spiritual warfare in particular are such neglected subjects in Reformed writings? What books can you think of devoted to the topic of spiritual warfare in sanctification (discipleship, counseling) or service (evangelism, ministry)? How would you define spiritual warfare? How would you describe how to conduct it?
4. How widespread is the subject of spiritual opposition in the Bible? Summarize each of the following in respect to that opposition: Gen. 3:1-7; Job 16-13; Zech. 3:1-5; cf. 2 Sam. 24:1 with 1 Chron. 21:1; Mark 4:3-9, 14-20; Eph. 6:10-20; Heb.2:14-18; 1 Pet. 5:8-9; Jas. 4:6-10; 1 Jn. 3:8; Jude 9.
5. What profile of spiritual warfare can we pull together from Paul's second letter to the Corinthian church? 2 Cor. 2:11; 4:3-6; 6:14-15; 10:3-5; 11:14; 12:7-10. What do you know about the church in Corinth that would relate to spiritual warfare?
6. Martin Luther interpreted Psalm 46 in terms of spiritual warfare in his hymn, 'A Mighty Fortress.' Read that hymn and note the elements of spiritual conflict. Why do you think Luther made this connection?
7. How might a biblical worldview that involved us in spiritual warfare affect our understanding of mission as Christ's church in the world? How might it affect our understanding of Christ's mission for His church?

## Chapter 1—Commissioned for Service

1. Why is Matt. 28:16-20 called the 'Great Commission'? Is this commission applicable to us today or only to the Apostles? How does seeing this commission in military terms affect our understanding of our spiritual calling and activity?
2. What parallels are there between Christ's commission of us in Matt. 28 and the commission of prophets such as Jeremiah? In what way do we stand in

the prophetic line as instruments of God? How is our prophetic commission different from the prophets of old?

3. What authority is Jesus referring to in Matt. 28:18? How does that authority relate to our commission as witnesses? How does the world try to strip us of that authority or limit it?
4. How is the work of Christ characterized militarily throughout Scripture? What does this have to do with Christ's work as Messiah?
5. How is the work of the church couched in military terms? What does it mean to be an 'inviting' church? An 'invading' church? What is the distinction between the church militant and the church triumphant? What dangers are there in confusing or neglecting that distinction for the mission of the church today?
6. What point does John Bunyan make in the quote from *The Holy War*? What is the result of the church adopting a peacetime mentality versus a wartime mentality? As you look at your own church, which mentality is prevalent? How can you tell? What needs to happen for the church to return to a mentality of active duty?
7. In what ways are we Christian soldiers? What is counter-intuitive about the metaphorical uniform we wear? How does the military model speak to our identity? To our activity? To our motivation? To our methods? To our mandate? To the role of our church officers? To the role of church members?

### Chapter 2—This Present Evil Age

1. Read Gen. 4:1-7. How does this account serve as a case study for life in a post-fall world? In what areas do we see sin intruding? What battle lines are drawn, particularly in v. 7?
2. In what way can this fallen world be called the 'valley of the shadow of death'? How does this understanding, versus seeing the shadow as that time just before physical death, color our reading of Ps. 23 and the role of Christ as our shepherd? If Christ is not our shepherd, who or what is according to Ps. 49:14? What does that say to Christ's role as anticipated in Luke 1:76-79?
3. The promised seed of Gen. 3:15 enters the environment of Gen. 4 for what purpose? How is the work of this seed described in Heb 2:14-15, Gal. 4:4-5 and Gal. 1:1-3?
4. What does it mean that Christ entered into and delivered us from 'this present, evil age'? In what way is the world in which we live 'evil'?
5. What does the Bible mean by the metaphor of darkness as seen in such passages as John 12:35-36, Eph. 5:8-16 and 1 Thess. 5:1-10? How is Jesus the light of the world in this understanding of John 1:1-13 and 8:12?

6. What is the relationship of Satan to this world characterized as fallen, death and darkness? What do the titles of Satan as 'prince of this world' and 'god of this age' communicate in respect to this present age?
7. Read Jesus' high priestly prayer in John 17. How is spiritual conflict presented? What does Jesus pray for us in that regard? Why does He not pray that believers be taken out of the world instead of protected from the evil one? How is this to affect our alertness and activity in our walk with Christ and work for Him?

### Chapter 3—Kingdom Conflict

1. Why is reformation not the answer to the problems of this fallen world? What sort of power is needed for our work of evangelism in this present, evil age?
2. Define 'kingdom of God'. What characterizes any kingdom? How is the kingdom related to Christ's work as Messianic King? How is the kingdom of God described in the NT Gospel accounts?
3. Read Dan. 2:19-45. How many kingdoms does Daniel note? How are they different? Similar? In what ways does the kingdom from above differ from the other kingdoms? What does it suggest that the kingdom from above is a subduing kingdom?
4. In what ways is the kingdom of God characterized as a counter kingdom to that of this world? As a combative kingdom? How is this expressed in Mt. 12:22-28? What does it mean that the kingdom of God advances at the expense of the kingdom of Satan?
5. What is a 'sovereign'? What does it mean for God to be sovereign, as only God can be? How is the extent of God's sovereignty described in Scripture?
6. How would you respond to the statement, 'Hasn't God always been king?' In what way is Jesus as God king now that He was not prior to His saving work in the establishment of His kingdom? How is this seen in passages like Mt. 28:18 and Eph. 1:19-22? What does it mean that the kingdom of God has been inaugurated but not yet consummated?
7. How does the church relate to the kingdom? In what way is the church where the kingdom of God is most visible? What is the church's role in the kingdom? Who are the subjects of the kingdom of God? Of the kingdom of this world? How do these subjects relate to Christ in Col. 1:12-14 and 1 Pet. 2:8-9?
8. What exactly is the power of the kingdom of God to bring transformation rather than mere reformation according to Eph. 1:15-21? In what way is our evangelism 'power evangelism'?

9. How does the gospel relate to the kingdom as seen in Matt. 24:14 and Luke 4:43? What response does the gospel call for in respect to Jesus as king? How is this seen in Phil. 2:6-11 and Acts 26:17-20?

#### Chapter 4—Unmasking the Enemy

1. Why is it important to know our foe for spiritual warfare? What danger is there in inattention to our enemy? What danger is there in obsession with him? How might we glamorize Satan? What balance is in order that we might be sober and alert?
2. How would you describe Satan? How is he different from God? How is he different from you?
3. In what way does Satan rebel against the will of God? In what way does he serve the will of God? How does Deut. 29:29 help us to make this distinction? What example can you give from the Bible of Satan serving God's will?
4. What does it mean that Satan is a counterfeiter? How does Satan counterfeit God? What parallels can you draw in Rev. 12-13 between Satan as a rival god inviting false worship and offering pseudo-salvation and the true and living God?
5. How can people be instruments of Satan according to passages like 1 Tim. 4:1-2 and 2 Cor. 11:13-15? What aspects of the relationship between Satan and those at home in this fallen world can you draw from John 8:42-47, 1 Thess. 5:4-9 and the comparison of Rev. 20:10 and 20:15?
6. What are the various titles for Satan and what does each mean? What are his tactics identified for us by God in Scripture? How do these titles and tactics provide a reconnaissance report of our enemy, as we would contend with him? What bearing does each title or tactic have for us in spiritual opposition?
7. What Scriptures suggest there may be a hierarchy among spiritual beings? Why is identifying this hierarchy not important for our conduct of spiritual warfare in evangelism? Why does God limit His inspired reconnaissance report just to Satan and not to his demonic minions?
8. What sorts of encouragement do we have as we face demonic opposition in our walk with Christ and service to His kingdom?

#### Chapter 5—Plundering Christ's Spoils

1. What specific terms does the Bible use to describe the warfare work of Christ? How is the spiritual warfare we conduct different from what Jesus did? What does it mean that 'ours is to plunder the spoils of His victory'? How does this relate to the strategy of conducting spiritual warfare in the Lord and in the power of His might?

2. Read Ex. 15:1-18. What incident of physical warfare was in view? To whom does the song of Moses attribute victory? How might this relate to the cross and to the greater deliverance through the greater Moses? How is the song of Moses returned to in Rev. 15:1-4 on this side of the cross?
3. What key does Rom. 5:19 provide to understanding the unique role of Jesus in spiritual warfare? How can this key be applied to the outset of Christ's messianic mission in Luke 4:1-13? What parallels can you draw between Christ as the last Man and Adam as the first man in their respective confrontations with Satan?
4. Read Matt. 12:25-29. Does this give us our model for conducting spiritual warfare in the binding of the strong man? How does Col. 2:13-15 suggest that the work of binding, defeating and disarming Satan was uniquely that of the God's Messiah and not ours? How do these passages relate to us?
5. What does it mean that Christ's binding of Satan is not our model but our motivation in warfare witness? In what way do we face demonic opposition in our witness because of the work of Christ? What does it mean to fight *in* victory rather than *for* victory?
6. How is the power at work in our evangelism not only *divine* power but particularly *redemptive* power? How is this power expressed in passages such as Rom 1:4, Acts 1:8, 1 Cor 2:4, 1 Thess. 1:5? If the power of the gospel to liberate from the shackles of sin and Satan is redemptive, then whose discretion or purpose governs the effectiveness of that power? Explain your reasoning.
7. Jesus gave His apostles power to cast out demons. In what way was the apostolic era unique in expression of the kingdom of God? How is our role different from the apostles'? How is it the same?
8. God's direction to us in respect to our spiritual enemy is not to bind or rebuke but to resist. What does it mean to resist the devil? How do we resist according to Eph. 6:10-20? What would *not* resisting look like (e.g., Eph. 4:26-32)? Do you think it appropriate ever to address the devil? Why or why not?

### Chapter 6—Spiritual Weapons

1. How does Paul describe the weapons of our warfare in 2 Cor. 10:3-5? How are spiritual weapons to be contrasted with physical weapons of conventional warfare?
2. In what way is the Holy Spirit *the* weapon of our spiritual warfare in evangelism? How is that expressed in the catechism's definition of effectual calling and seen 1 Cor. 2:14-16 and John 1:12-13? What does this say about your conversion and the conversion of others? How does the effectiveness of

our weapons hinge on the work of the Holy Spirit and testify to that work (see 1 Cor. 2:3-5)?

3. How does our God outfit us for spiritual warfare for our protection, perspective and progress? How does faith function as part of our kingdom clothing? What does it mean to walk in a 'strategy of stewardship'?
4. What two categories of weapons are sorted out for us? What does it mean to live a counter-kingdom life and how does this function in the general assault of spiritual warfare? What does it mean to seek the kingdom of God and serve Christ as our king? How is this expressed in Mt. 16:13-23 in Jesus first calling Peter 'blessed' and then calling him 'Satan'?
5. How does kingdom character function in spiritual warfare? What are some examples of this character? How is this expressed in combative terms in 1 Tim. 3:7? How does this kingdom character serve the same function of signs and wonders as evidence of the kingdom of God in the face of the kingdom of Satan?
6. What weapons of direct assault on the kingdom of Satan does our God lay out for our use? How does truth function as a spiritual weapon in view of the character and tactics of our enemy? Where is the deposit of this truth with which God arms us? How are the battle lines for the employment of this truth mapped out for us in Col. 2:6-8 and 2 Tim. 4:1-5 on the heels of 2 Tim. 3:15-17? Why can we be confident that the armory of our truth is sufficient and that new revelation is not required?
7. What does it mean to be part of a company of Christian soldiers? How does this reflect God's wisdom for our safety, diligence and activity? How does this kingdom community function according to Heb 3:12-13 and 10:19-25?

### Chapter 7—The Weapon of Prayer

1. How can prayer be described as a wide-ranging weapon of spiritual warfare? How would you define prayer? How does prayer relate to our relationship with God as our Father and Christ as our King?
2. How would you describe your prayer life? What characterized your prayer life at its best? At its worst? What does it mean to pray without ceasing? What does it mean to get a grip on prayer for the work of witness as the 'active communication of purpose and not passive communication of presence'?
3. In what way is prayer an instrument of impotence? How does prayer relate to us as God's instruments? To our message as God's ambassadors? To our hearers as God's field?
4. Why pray if God already knows our requests and the desires of our hearts? What does our Lord inform us about prayer in the following passages: Jas.

4:2-3; John 16:24; Luke 11:9-13? If God is our father and knows our needs, why would He make us ask before supplying our need or wait to dispense His resources until we ask?

5. What is kingdom prayer? How is it different from what we ordinarily think of in praying? How can prayer in which we unburden our hearts to our God or intercede on behalf of the temporal needs of others be wielded as a weapon of kingdom prayer?
6. What is noteworthy about Paul's prayers as kingdom prayer in Eph. 1:15-23, Phil. 1:9-11 and Col. 1:9-14? What are the goals of kingdom prayer? Whose goals are they? How can your prayers be more kingdom prayer?
7. What does it mean that prayer is God's means for God's ends? How is this seen in James 5:14-18? How does prayer engage us in God's accomplishment of His goals? What does it mean to say that God will do something He would not have done had we not prayed? How does this exalt God rather than limit Him? If the power of prayer is not in the prayer itself or the one praying, in what does the power of prayer reside? Does God always answer our prayers? What answers might God give to our prayers?
8. What role does faith play in prayer according to Matt. 21:21-22 and James 1:6-8? Is the effectiveness of our prayer contingent on the strength of our faith? Why or why not? What does faith expect in respect to prayer? How does faith as a weapon aim through the sight of God's will and not our own?

### Chapter 8—Wielding Spiritual Weapons

1. Why is the Christian life in general and Christian witness in particular a life on edge? How is this seen in passages like 1 Pet. 5:8, 2 Cor. 2:11 and Eph. 6:16?
2. How is prayer established as a weapon in Eph. 6:10-20 as part of this state of alertness and readiness? What complementary relationship between prayer and alertness do we find by comparing Mark 14:38 and Col 4:2-4?
3. With what does our spiritual alertness need to be programmed (cf. 1 John 4:1)? What are some ways we can become callous, desensitized and apathetic to our spiritual foe on which we are to be on guard? How can we fall prey to this spiritual lethargy and indifference, especially over time?
4. What instruction does Heb. 5:14 give us for wielding spiritual weapons? What does it mean for us to wield spiritual weapons in weakness and wisdom? What role does humility play in our spiritual warfare according to Jas. 4:6-10 and 1 Pet. 5:5b-11? How does pride blind us and make us vulnerable to spiritual harm? Cf. 1 Cor. 10:12

5. Paul in 2 Cor. 12:7-10 describes a fundamental principle and posture of spiritual warfare. What is it? What does this say about conducting spiritual warfare?
6. What is wisdom? How is it contrasted with foolishness? What serves as the focal point of wisdom? Cf. Prov. 1:7, 3:5-8, 8:12-14; 1 Cor. 1:18-25. How will wielding God's spiritual weapons in wisdom keep us from superstitious use of them?
7. When it comes to petition, what is the difference between Jesus and a genie? What is the scope through which we must aim our weapon of prayer? Cf. 1 John 5:14-15; Mt. 6:10.
8. What principles direct our use of prayer as a spiritual weapon? What does it mean for prayer to be conducted 'in knowledge'? 'In the Spirit'? 'In faith'? What does it mean to labor in prayer? How does God encourage us to labor?
9. What is corporate prayer as opposed to private prayer? What sort of blessing does God affix to corporate prayer? How do we know the power of prayer is not in numbers or volume but in Christ's promise and purpose to numbers, as He speaks of two or more being gathered in His name for the sake of His kingdom?

#### Chapter 9—The Theater of Operations

1. Where is the kingdom of God? How does the metaphor of the wheat and weeds in Mt. 13:24-30 illustrate the boundaries of the kingdom of God and kingdom of the evil one? What does that mean for us as we look to engage others for the cause of our King? How is this expressed in the Great Commission of Mt. 28:18-20?
2. In what way is the church a fortress? How is this image an encouragement but also a danger to the church's mission? What are examples of fortresses of the world that we encounter in engaging others for Christ? What is strongest fortress of the inner sanctum of people that we are incapable of breaching ourselves?
3. How does relationship serve to break down barriers and give us right of access? How can we use those relationships for the cause of Christ? How can we misuse them?
4. What does it mean for us to be strategically positioned in the theater of operations at the providence of God? What are our life-spheres? How are these spheres of influence? How does stewardship relate to our involvement in these life-spheres?
5. What is life-sphere mapping? How does this exercise help us to be more aware and engaged among those around us for the sake of the gospel? Take time to map your life-spheres and identify some for whom you will begin to



pray and draw near, as God has positioned you as Christ's witness in their lives.

6. What mentality of mission do we need to cultivate as an attitude of our hearts? How is this mentality colored by Paul's warning and directive in Eph. 5:15-16? In what ways does our enemy the devil try to disengage us from faithfulness in our role as witnesses in our life-spheres? How is this expressed in 2 Tim. 2:3-4?
7. What characteristics of contemporary Christianity militate against the calling of our Lord to serve Him in this military model? How would you describe the militancy of the church today? Of your church? What can you do to restore a sense that we are at war and established by our Lord in the theater of operations?

#### Chapter 10—Rules of Engagement

1. Read the story at the beginning of the chapter. How was this an example in what not to do as a witness for Christ? What cardinal rules were broken, recognizing the spiritual nature of the battle?
2. What function does communication play in relationships? What important point is made in the book title, *How Will They Hear If We Don't Listen?* Why do you suppose listening is such hard work? What benefits are there in listening, especially as we would wield the weapons of our spiritual warfare?
3. What principles of communication can you find in Proverbs 18? How can each of these relate to your communication of the gospel? In what way is communication more than imparting information?
4. How is the way something is said as important as what is said? What governing principle of communication protects us from being manipulative and makes us constructive? How is this principle described in the following passages: Col. 3:12-17; Eph. 4:25; Rom. 12:14-21; cf. Luke 6:27-36.
5. Four features flow from love that govern our communication of the truth. What two are found in 2 Tim. 4:1-2? What two are found in 1 Pet. 3:15? Describe how each of these features is a product of love and how each enhances communication. How do these features reflect a dependence on the Holy Spirit?
6. Is gentleness the absence of force? Why or why not? What force is found in what we communicate? Why is it so easy for us to be argumentative or to talk at people instead of with them?
7. What metaphor does Paul give us in 1 Cor. 3:6-7 for the work of the gospel? How does this metaphor provide us relief in our work of witness? How does it emphasize our responsibility? What does it mean that evangelism is not an event but a process?

8. What principles for evangelism do we find in Peter's first epistle? How is our conduct a conduit for witness? Why is our behavior, our Christian lifestyle, inadequate for witness? What does explanation bring to interpret our behavior?
9. What is the difference between being a spiritual salesman and being a spiritual midwife? What differing approach might each take to gospel proclamation? What posture does each take in respect to the Holy Spirit?

### Chapter 11—Flying the Colors of the Cross

1. What message of freedom do we bear? How does that message relate to the kingdom of God and work of Christ? How is our message captured by the expression 'life, liberty and the pursuit of holiness'?
2. Why is it important for us to be prepared to unfurl a presentation of the gospel? What does it mean for the gospel to be logical but grace to be illogical? How does our presentation of the gospel convey both the logic and the illogic?
3. What does Luke record in the book of Acts? What is its relation to Luke's Gospel account? What two ways does Acts lay out for our communication of the gospel?
4. Read Acts 17:16-34. How is the God Paul proclaims different from what the Greek philosophers might embrace? How do we know that Paul is not just describing his own designer god? Why does Paul not issue an altar call or urge some response at the close of his message? Should we press for response each time we present the gospel? Why or why not?
5. What is a personal testimony? What three sections do we see in Paul's personal testimony in Acts 26:9-23? How does each of these sections line up with the theology Paul expresses in Eph. 2:1-10? To what does a personal testimony point? Why is there no dull testimony?
6. What does it mean for the gospel to be a record, not a blueprint or battle plan for what do in respect to it? How would you summarize the gospel? Why would Paul summarize the gospel as he does in 2 Tim. 2:8? What is the difference between the gospel proper (the good news of what God did in Christ) and the gospel in its broader strokes the presents the context of creation, fall and response?
7. If you were designing a flag that represented the gospel, what might it look like and why? What context do we find in John 3:16 and Rom. 5:8-10 for the glory and grace of God's love? How would you respond to someone who said that God was a God of love, not wrath; or that the God of wrath was the Old Testament God?

8. What does it mean for us as ambassadors for Christ not to be brokers of peace in some sort of shuttle diplomacy but to announce peace? What exactly is the peace we announce? How is change of kingdom allegiance expressed? In what way do we repent of our own saviorship? Of our own lordship?
9. Why is our goal as ambassadors for Christ to be communication not conversion? What is the ground for the faith we call people to express? Why shouldn't we be afraid of doctrine? What danger is there in a rush to a 'decision for Christ'?

### Chapter 12—Battle Ready

1. What is morale? How does morale affect motivation? What is the relationship between morale and mission? How can our spiritual enemy work to dissuade, distract and discourage us from mission?
2. Jesus prepares His disciples for His departure in the Upper Room discourse of John 13-17. How does Jesus' prayer in John 17 relate to our morale and our staying engaged in the mission He has given us?
3. What does it mean for us to fight in victory instead of for victory? How is this communicated in the book of Revelation? How is this an encouragement to us in persevering in mission despite all the hardship and suffering we endure in this world as we stand up and stand out for Christ?
4. On the heels of the faithfulness of faith portrayed for us in Hebrews 11, flowing out of the persecution suggested in Heb. 10:19-39, how does Heb. 12:1-3 focus our faith and bolster our morale? In Heb. 12:1-3 how is Jesus held up as our example? As our Emancipator? How is His victory held up for us in Rev. 5:2-6? What does it mean for Jesus to be on the throne as one slain?
5. How does the gospel affect morale? In what way does the gospel revive us in our complacency, refresh us in our weariness and restore us in our mission? How can the gospel possibly become old hat to us and grace become ordinary? How can the gospel become encrusted with self-glory and corroded with self-righteousness? What can we do to prevent this from happening?
6. What role does repentance play in our spiritual fitness? What is repentance? How does repentance relate to us if our sins have already been forgiven and removed from us as far as the east is from the west? What differing intentions and goals do God and Satan have for us in gazing upon our sin?
7. How does Isaiah 6:1-7 portray the gospel? What means of morale and motivation for mission is showcased? How would you characterize Isaiah's willingness for being sent by God? What do you see in your life that would rob you of eagerness to be sent by God in your life-spheres?

8. What four staples does God provide to give us the nutritional supply of His grace that oxygenates our existence and animates our mission? How does prayer work to assimilate God's Word to our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace? Why is community so important to the exercise of our role as witnesses?