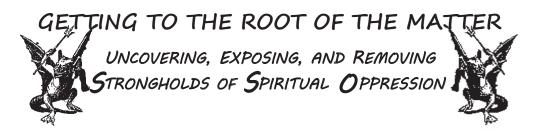


TONY GARRETT

ROOT OF THE MATTER

Our adversary can influence and affect us in many ways; in our minds (strongholds), in our bodies (sicknesses and worldly lusts), and in our hearts (offenses, bitterness, hurts from neglect and abuse). But no matter the strategy or how he attacks; his intent is to adversely affect our ability to receive from God, obey God, and serve God effectively. Contrary to popular belief, our adversary focuses on long-term results and not temporary short-term consequences. The purpose of his temptations and influences is to snare, entrap and imprison us into permanent yokes and bondages (addictive habits, harmful behaviors, sinful lifestyles, and vicious cycles that cannot seem to be broken or overcome). Not only are his yokes and bondages for our enslavement but they intend to adversely affect the lives of those around us and even develop vicious cycles upon generations that will come after us!

Let's begin our spiritual journey thru the Word of God. We will find out what the Bible says about our adversary (his origin, methods, and what he can and cannot do). We will examine how his influences create vicious cycles in our behaviors and family lineages. We will then examine the Scriptures to discover who we are as believers. Finally, we will examine some of these ungodly influences by name (their effects on man, their manifestations, their patterns, and their goals). We will cite examples from Scripture to learn how various Biblical characters overcame these influences or yielded and fell to them. We will then analyze each example to recognize its' operation in our lives and how to overcome them through prayer, self-examination, confession, and declaration of God's Word in Jesus' Name.



STRONGHOLDS - Sinful/Negative Behavior Patterns, Beliefs, Views, and Opinions. Oppression to Harmful and Destructive Habits, Attitudes, and Lifestyles

FEAR - Anxiety-Stress, Nightmares, Doubt-Unbelief, Panic Attacks, Untrusting, Phobias (fear of objects, events, situations, dying), Fear of Rejection (insecurities, controlling, manipulative)

DIVINATION - Rebellion—Witchcraft, Idols, Charms, New Age Spiritualists, False–Religions

HEAVINESS - Depression, Hopelessness-Overwhelmed, Oppressed-Weighed down, Excessive Mourning, Extreme sadness, Excessive sleeping, Spiritually/Emotionally drained, Loneliness-Isolation, Low Self Esteem, Feeling of Rejection, Self-Pity, Self-Hatred, Suicidal

NFIRMITY - Physical/Mental Sicknesses and Disorders, Generational Sicknesses/Disorders

LYING (SEDUCING) - Hypocritical–Religious, Deception, Flattery, Delusion, False Teachings, Apostasy

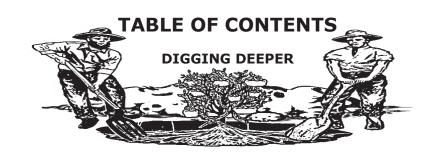
LUST (SEDUCING) - Greed, Love of Money, Love of things—Idolatry, Being Excessive, Fornication, Adultery, Pornography, Sexual Perversions

JEALOUSY (ENVY AND COVETEOUSNESS) - Revenge, Spite, Hatred, Insecurity, Distrust, Competition, Strife, Contention, Divisions, Discord

ANGER - Wrath, Rage, Temper, Violence, Abusive, Controlling, Rebellious, Bitter, Strife, Easily Offended, Jealousy, Murder

PRIDE (HAUGHTINESS) - Arrogant, Scornful, Self-Deception, Self-Righteous, Critical, Always Right-Unteachable, Rebellious, Rejection of God

BITTERNESS - Un-Forgiveness, Resentment from Past Hurts, Spiteful, Holds Grudges, Easily Offended, Easily Angered, Strife, Discord, Rebellious



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INTRODUCTION

(1 Timothy 6:12 AMP) Fight the good fight of the faith [in the conflict with evil]; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and [for which] you made the good confession [of faith] in the presence of many witnesses.

(2 Timothy 4:7 AMP) I have fought the good and worthy and noble fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith [firmly guarding the gospel against error].



Imagine stepping blindly into a boxing ring with a professional fighter. Imagine being untrained, unknowledgeable of your opponent's strengths and weaknesses, and the boxing game itself. Imagine being knocked down repeatedly due to the inability to see your opponent, his movements, or tactics. Visualize receiving punishing blows and bruises but not knowing how to fight back defensively or offensively. You are in the fight of your life and unable to fight back! Unfortunately, this is the reality for many of God's people today.

The Bible declares, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6). As believers, we often say that we believe in God, His angels, and His influence (God's power and guidance). Still, ironically, many of us will readily reject or dismiss the adversary's (the devil's) influences and operations in our lives. Our thoughts, behaviors, emotions, and family lineages are subjectable to the enemy. Consequently, many of us suffer from Satan's bruises and beatings simply because we refuse to believe a spiritual fight is happening! While others of us recognize we are in a fight but have convinced ourselves that we are supposed to suffer at our opponent's hand. We accept it as

God's will and refuse to fight back! These false belief systems are some of the greatest weapons of the adversary.

Why would the Bible say that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal/physical (2 Cor 10:4), to put on the whole armor of God (Eph 6:11), to fight the good fight of faith (1 Tim 6:12), and keep the faith (2 Tim 4:7) if we were not in a spiritual battle? Why would the Bible say that we are contending/wrestling against powers, evil spirit forces of darkness (Eph 6:10-13) if they are non-existent? If the Word of God states that Satan desires to sift us (all believers as well as Peter) as wheat (violently tear us apart from God) because of our faith (Luke 22:31-32), then why aren't more believers arming themselves in the Spirit? Why aren't we contending for our faith (building up our confidence/trust/assurance in the Lord) or contending for the faith (maintaining/declaring/defending the Truth of the Gospel)?

As believers, we can no longer live by religious clichés. The first being, it is God's will for me to be like this., Next, it is God's will for me to go through this. Lastly, it is God's will for me to live like this. Many of us use these clichés as crutches (excuses) not to take responsibility for our actions. The Bible states that it is not God's will for any to perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). If it is not God's will for any to perish, then why will people still perish and go into eternal judgment (Rev 20:11-15, Rev 21:8)? The answer is CHOICES! THEY CHOSE NOT TO REPENT!

God gave us several weapons and tools to fight with and to be successful in spiritual battles. If we fail to use these tools and weapons given to us, can we truly say it is God's will for us to remain in many situations, or is it our CHOICE? The Bible states in 2 Chronicles 7:14 NIV that "if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land." However, if we fail to humble ourselves, pray, seek, and turn from our wicked ways - is it God's fault for not hearing, answering, forgiving, and healing? No, the blessing (the healing of the land) is based upon a condition of correct CHOICES (humbling, praying, seeking, and turning)! God gives us a CHOICE between life and death as well as prosperity and disaster (Deut 30:15-20). We Must Choose To Fight the good fight of faith and use the tools and strategies given to us!

So, let us begin our spiritual journey thru the Word of God. First, we will search the Scriptures to find out What the Bible Says About our Adversary (his strengths, weaknesses, origin, methods, and what he can and cannot do). Next, we will focus

on three areas of demonic influences cited in Scripture: Spirit Forces of Wickedness (the Adversary's hierarchy and some demonic names), Strongholds (ungodly influences to the human mind), and Bitter Roots (ungodly influences to the human heart). We will examine how these influences form Vicious Cycles in our behaviors and family lineages. Next, we will search the Scriptures to Clearly See who is on our side and what the Bible says about our Lord and Savior (His Authority, His Dominion, and His Supreme Rule).

We will then examine the Scriptures to discover Who We Are as believers. What are our rights and privileges as citizens of the Kingdom and the children of God? Finally, we will examine some of these ungodly Influences by Name (their effects on man, their manifestations, patterns, and goals). We will cite examples from Scripture and learn how various Biblical characters either overcame these influences or yielded and fell to them. We will then analyze each example to recognize its' operation in our lives and how to overcome them through prayer, self-examination, confession, and declaration of God's Word in Jesus' Name.



1.	According to <u>Hosea 4:6 AMP</u> : (a) Why are God's people destroyed? (b) Where does God reveal his will? (c) What are the consequences of rejecting God's knowledge?
	(a)
	(b)
	(c)
2.	According to 2 Corinthians 10:4 AMP , KJV : What is the purpose of our weapons of warfare?

3. According to **Ephesians 6:10-13: (a)** How do we become strong in the Lord (verse 10)? **(b)** What is the purpose of God's Armor (verses 11,13)? **(c)** What (or who) do we wrestle (contend) against (verse 12)?

	(a)
	(b)
	(c)
4.	According to 1 Timothy 6:12 and 2 Tim 4:7: How did Paul define a good fight of faith?
5.	Christ prayed for Peter in Luke 22:31-32 : What did Christ pray for, and why did He pray this prayer?
6.	God gave us several weapons and tools to fight (war) with. What is the purpose of each weapon or tool
	(a) The Name
	(b) The Blood
	(c) The Word of God
	(d) The Mind of Christ
	(e) The Holy Spirit
	(f) The Heavenly Angels
	(g) The Body of Christ
	(h) The Armor of God
	(i) The Spiritual Gifts
	(j) The Garment of Praise (Praise and Worship)
7.	According to Deut 30:15-20 NLT : (a) What did God give Israel? (b) What was the key to life?
	(a)
	(b)
8.	According to <u>2 Peter 3:9</u> : (a) What is God's Will (desire) concerning mankind? (b) Why will people perish and go into eternal judgment?
	(a)
	(b)