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## Win worley's books on spiritual warfare

### Books by win worley. Spiritual warfare book.

Copyright 1991 by Bob and Gretchen Passantino. Spiritual warfare: Images of demonic battle, satanic destruction, and angelic triumph spill from the display racks and shelves of our local Christian retailers in doctrinal treatments, novels, Bible studies, children's stories, prayer manuals, and Christian living handbooks. A new awareness of satanic influence in daily life has spurred Christians to learn how to combat the unseen evil influences that seem to sabotage our growth in Christ. The concept behind spiritual warfare, that is, the adversarial relationship between Christians and demonic power manifested in the world, is certainly biblical (Ephesians 6:10-20; 1 Peter 5:8; and 2 Corinthians 11:4-14). Christians throughout the centuries have grappled with the tension between the omnipotence of God and the limited, destructive power of the demonic. The ancient church uniformly required candidates for baptism to renounce Satan openly, a practice still preserved in Eastern Orthodoxy, the Roman church, and other sacramental denominations. Martin Luther expressed the tension well in the words of A Mighty Fortress Is Our God, saying, "Though hordes of devils fill the land/All threaten'g to devour us,/We tremble not, unmoved we stand;/They cannot overpower us./Let this world's tyrant rage;/In battle we'll engage./His might is doomed to fail;/God's judgment must prevail!" Earlier in this century conservative writers such as Jesse Penn Lewis (War on the Saints), Donald Grey Barnhouse (The Invisible War), and Ruth Paxson (The Wealth, Walk and Warfare of the Christian) explored the Christian's struggle with evil. C. S. Lewis framed the battle within fictional contexts, including the classic The Screwtape Letters and The Space Trilogy. However, as a genre, spiritual warfare literature emerged over the last four years, owing its explosive popularity initially to the fiction of Frank Peretti (This Present Darkness, Piercing the Darkness). There is even a fiction series for children, "The Spirit Flyer Series" by John Bibee (InterVarsity Press, 1983-1991 — seven volumes), which is actually one of the best and most doctrinally conservative. Today spiritual warfare has become a label for almost any Christian book that has as its theme the Christian's struggle with sin and evil, including books on Satanism, dysfunctional families, compulsive behavior, immorality, demonic activity, and end times Antichrist speculation. Everybody is fascinated with spiritual warfare, and nobody wants to be a battle casualty, but clear definitions and doctrinal expositions are scarce. Thomas B. White, in The Believer's Guide to Spiritual Warfare (Servant, 1990), says to engage in spiritual warfare is "to learn to detect and deal with the subtleties of Satan." Wrestling with Dark Angels (Regal, 1990) classifies spiritual warfare as everything "within the context of this cosmic-earthly spiritual warfare dimension of reality." Most spiritual warfare books affirm the intensity of the Christian's struggle with evil, such as Kay Arthur's assertion in Lord, Is It Warfare?, "I believe many Christians live in defeat, because they don't understand that once they become children of God, they enter into war with the devil himself." The current crop of spiritual warfare books often contribute positively to understanding Christian maturity in the midst of evil. Most of the books encourage readers to rely on the power of God, strongly exhort readers to abstain from sinful activities (which make one vulnerable to spiritual attack), and affirm the reality of the spiritual world. Evelyn Christenson's Battling the Prince of Darkness (Victor, 1990) opens with a strong focus on the triumph of Christ over Satan, Two opposite rulers — but certainly not equal rulers! In the spiritual battle of the universe Satan always has been the loser, and Jesus always has been the winner. And those we win to Jesus are not only rescued from the doomed kingdom of the Prince of Darkness — but are citizens of the kingdom of Jesus. Eternal winners! Quin Sherrer and Ruthanne Garlock, in A Woman's Guide to Spiritual Warfare (Servant, 1991), break into three parts how abstaining from sinful practices impacts the believer's life: "to become aware of our vulnerabilities, to renounce the sins we've yielded to in our areas of weakness, and then with the help of the Holy Spirit to strengthen our defenses against the evil one." Edward Gross, in Miracles, Demons, and Spiritual Warfare (Baker, 1990), points out the necessity of recognizing the reality of the spiritual world and spiritual power, both the demons' and God's: Paul states that the nature of our battle is spiritual, not physical (Eph. 6:12). Therefore, its weapons also are not physical, but spiritual (2 Cor. 10:3,4). It is as foolish for a soldier to oppose a squadron of bombers with a sword as it is for the Christian to fight against spiritual enemies with dependence upon human wisdom or strength. Only the spiritual armor that God has provided is sufficient for victory in these battles (Eph. 6:10-18). Along with the good principles gleaned from the current crop of spiritual warfare books are, unfortunately, some tares. First, because this is a relatively new trend, authors have little previous commentary to learn from, and consequently there is more speculation, supposition, and sometimes outright error than there would be in literature about a subject already comprehensively explored. C. Peter Wagner, in Territorial Spirits (England: Sovereign World, 1991) notes, "The growing interest among scholars, pastors, missionaries, evangelists, and lay Christians in strategic-level spiritual warfare cries out for research and teaching." Second, readers caught up in the demonic drama of spiritual warfare are tempted to attribute to the demonic what is actually due to personal moral irresponsibility. "The Devil made me do it" is a still-popular cliché, because, although people recognize its fallacy, they believe it anyway. Writers tend to present teachings about "territorial spirits," "demonization," "generational sins," etc. with the same dogmatism as well-developed historical and biblical theology. Neil T. Anderson, in The Bondage Breaker (Harvest House, 1990), expresses his belief that personal sin can devolve into spiritual bondage, explaining, "Repeated acts form a habit, and if you exercise a sinful habit long enough, a stronghold will be established in your mind. Once a stronghold is established you have lost the ability to control your behavior in that area. A third vulnerability in this genre is the sensationalism usually associated with the demonic. Books focusing particularly on Satanism make some of the most sensationalistic, unsubstantiated claims. Mark Bubeck, in The Satanic Revival (Here's Life, 1991), reports unsubstantiated, subjective testimonies of satanic activity as though they were documented, officially validated facts. Jerry Johnston, in The Edge of Evil (Word, 1989) uses a nationally discredited story of supposed satanic involvement as documentation for his sensationalistic claims about satanic power and activity. Finally, many contemporary books on spiritual warfare, including Johnston's, Bubeck's, White's, and Anderson's, promote the controversial, minority view that Christians can be controlled against their wills by demons. Whether this is called demon possession, demonization, demonic oppression, or something else, such a view has never been the majority view of the evangelical Church. All of the contemporary books advocating the minority view rely heavily (in some cases almost entirely) on personal experience rather than comprehensive biblical exegesis. Thomas Ice and Robert Dean, in A Holy Rebellion (Harvest House, 1990), as well as Edward Gross, support the traditional theology, arguing well from scripture that Christians cannot be controlled by demons. In addition to general treatments on spiritual warfare, there are also specialty books. Wagner's book deals specifically with "territorial spirits." Arthur's and Sherrer & Garlock's are especially for women, and John Bibee's are excellent action stories for children. Is the value of studying spiritual warfare equal to its popularity in today's Christian market? A survey of the available books shows the question can't be answered the way it's asked. Of course whatever the Bible teaches, including "spiritual warfare," is valuable for each Christian to study (2 Timothy 3:16-17), and to neglect an area of biblical doctrine is to be spiritually malnourished. However, today's popular, often sensationalistic, and trendy books on spiritual warfare seem overall to contain more empty calories than balanced nutrition. Read a few of the books, especially the less sensational such as Michael Green's Exposing the Prince of Darkness (Servant, 1981) or Richard Mayhue's Unmasking Satan (Victor, 1988). Using your Bible as your guide, take the nutritional wheat and leave the abundant tares. "Enemy-occupied territory — that is what this world is," commented C. S. Lewis, "Christianity is the story of how the rightful king has landed. . . . and is calling us all to take part in a great campaign of sabotage." Let's be prepared for the battle, but let's do it with the tested and true weapons of biblical armament (Ephesians 6:10-14) rather than the untried plastic prototypes of contemporary designer weapons. Bob and Gretchen Passantino are the directors of Answers In Action and award-winning journalists and authors. See also their book When the Devil Dares Your Kids (Servant, 1991) Cultwatch would like to thank Answers In Action for the use of this text. Answers In Action P.O. Box 2067, Costa Mesa, California 92628 Phone US (949) 646 9042 Answers In Action email: aia@answers.org TOPICSHelpCONTACTSIGN UP to be © 2019 by Impact Christian Books