

The War You Cannot See

Strength for the Battles you Face



Home Group Series

September – November 2025

Member Notes

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OVERVIEW

THE WAR YOU CANNOT SEE

HOME GROUP SERIES

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil."

Ephesians 6:10–11 (ESV)

A. INTRODUCTION

In today's world, we often turn to natural solutions when problems arise. We look for rest, new strategies, professional advice, medication, money or even mindfulness. While these can help, they do not explain why some struggles seem to cling, why destructive patterns repeat or why lasting breakthrough feels just out of reach. The Bible points to a deeper truth: there is a war we cannot see. Ignoring it does not make it go away.

The Bible describes this unseen battle clearly. Jesus cast out demons. Paul wrote about strongholds that need tearing down. Peter warned of an enemy who prowls like a roaring lion. And Ephesians 6 commands us to put on the full armour of God, for "we do not wrestle against flesh and blood."

The **War You Cannot See** is a call to wake up and stand firm. Over five sessions we will explore how to recognise the spiritual reality behind everyday struggles, understand the enemy's tactics, and walk in the power of the Holy Spirit. We will learn how to put on the armour of God, use the weapons He has given us, and live in freedom and strength. You are not called to live defeated or unaware. In Christ, you are called to stand in truth and victory.

B. ABOUT THE SESSIONS

The War You Cannot See is a five-part study series presented by Pastors Chris & May Yen Ong. Rooted in Paul's call in Ephesians 6 to "be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might", this series explores the reality of spiritual warfare and equips believers to live with clarity, balance and victory.

Across five sessions, members will learn to live fully in both the natural and spiritual realms, recognise the enemy's strategies and rely on the Holy Spirit as our Helper in the fight. They will discover how to put on the armour of God, use the spiritual weapons we have been given, and find freedom from entrenched strongholds. Sessions 1–4 establish a foundation for understanding and readiness, while Session 5 focuses on victory in specific battles.

This is a practical and biblical guide to standing strong in Christ, alert to the unseen battle, and confident in the victory He has already won. The following table summarises each of the sessions.

SESSION	TITLE	KEY VERSE
Session 1	Living in Both Worlds	Ephesians 6:10

Life has both natural and spiritual dimensions. Ignoring either leaves us unbalanced. Jesus modelled living wisely in both realms. This session helps participants to recognise their bias and avoid extremes in spiritual realities that shape everyday struggles.

Session 2	Know Your battle and Your Enemy	Ephesians 6:12
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The enemy is real, and his greatest weapon is deception. He works through lies, temptation, accusation, distraction and division. This session exposes his strategies, highlights the true battleground of our hearts and minds and shows how to resist with discernment and God's truth.

Session 3	Our Helper in the Fight	Ephesians 6:18
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We cannot fight spiritual battles with our own strength. The Holy Spirit empowers, guides, and equips us daily. This session explores being filled with the Spirit, praying in the Spirit and relying on His presence for strength, comfort, conviction and victory.

Session 4	Strong Where it Matters	Ephesians 6:11
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God gives us spiritual armour and weapons to stand firm. This session unpacks the armour of God: truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, faith and the Word. It also explores additional weapons like prayer, worship, unity, testimony and forgiveness. Participants are encouraged to consciously put on the armour in daily life.

Session 5	Victory Over Strongholds	2 Corinthians 10:3-4
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Some struggles run deep and require persistence, prayer and God's power to overcome. This session explains spiritual strongholds, how they form and how they can be demolished through prayer, fasting and Spirit-led deliverance. Jesus has already won and believers can expect to walk in His victory and freedom.

Keywords: Spiritual Warfare • Ephesians • Deliverance • Victory • Strongholds

F.A.I.T.H. emphasis: H – Holy and Set Apart

SESSION 1

LIVING IN BOTH WORLDS

All warfare is spiritual, but we are called to live fully in both the spiritual and natural realms

Key Scripture: *"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might."* Ephesians 6:10 (ESV)

A. INTRODUCTION

The Christian life is not meant to be lived in extremes: either overly spiritual and disconnected from reality, or completely natural and unaware of the unseen realm. Jesus came in the flesh, ate, walked, slept, wept, but He also healed, cast out demons, and walked in divine authority. He didn't compartmentalise the spiritual and natural. He lived fully in both.

Yet many of us do the opposite. Some believers "tap out" when spiritual matters are mentioned, thinking it bears little relevance to their own lives or assume they're only for the ultra-spiritual or the "ministry people." Others become so focused on the spiritual that they ignore their natural responsibilities like work, emotions, relationships and stewardship of daily life.

But here's the truth: ***You live in two realms (seen and unseen) and you're called to engage both.***

B. WATCH VIDEOS

Watch the Series Introduction and Session 1 video.

C. READ SCRIPTURE

[Ephesians 6:12](#), [2 Corinthians 5:16-17](#), [Ephesians 2:6](#), [1 John 5:19](#), [John 1:14](#)

(for greater context, read these as they are referred to in the Main Points below)

D. MAIN POINTS

Point 1: The Natural and Spiritual Are Intertwined

You can't separate your natural experiences from spiritual reality. The Bible constantly reveals how spiritual forces influence natural situations and how natural obedience influences spiritual outcomes.

Many Christians live as though the spiritual realm isn't real, or at least has no real impact on their daily lives. [Ephesians 6:12](#) tells us plainly: the real battle isn't what's naturally seen. What we face externally often has invisible roots.

A strained relationship, ongoing fear, unshakable fatigue... any of these may have spiritual components even if they appear entirely natural.

Point 2: Your Identity in Christ Grounds You in Both Realms

You're not just a human trying to be spiritual. You are already spiritually alive, a new creation in Christ ([2 Cor 5:17](#)), seated with Him in heavenly places ([Eph 2:6](#)), yet still living in a natural body.

[1 John 5:19](#) reminds us that though we are God's children, the world around us is influenced by evil. This means you are in Christ, but also in the world where there's a tension you're meant to navigate, not ignore.

John Stott said, *"Everyone belongs either to us or to the world... There is no third category."* You either belong to Christ, or you are not of Christ and belong to the world. Neutrality isn't an option. Don't subcontract spiritual warfare to your pastor or "spiritual" friends. And addressing the other extreme, don't become so "heavenly minded" that you ignore your practical responsibilities such as finances, emotions, physical health or community.

Point 3: Jesus models the spirit-empowered earth-rooted living

Jesus is not just our Saviour and Lord, He is also our role model. The Word became flesh and lived among us ([John 1:14](#)). Jesus walked dusty roads, ate with sinners, faced spiritual attacks, got tired and even cried.

Yet He also moved with kingdom authority by healing the sick, confronting demons, speaking truth. He lived grounded in heaven but active on earth.

To live like Jesus is to live anchored in the Spirit, aware of the unseen, but fully present and engaged in your natural life. He showed us what it means to live in the overlap of the spiritual and natural. It's the place where real victory happens.

Conclusion

Not every difficulty is demonic, but every battle has a spiritual dimension. Whether you're navigating conflict, temptation, discouragement or distraction there is a war behind the scenes, and you are not a neutral bystander.

E. DISCUSSION

1. Which realm do you tend to lean toward more, the natural or the spiritual? Why do you think that is?
2. How does seeing Jesus as both spiritual and natural challenge your view of what "spiritual maturity" looks like?
3. What's one way you can become more intentional about engaging both the spiritual and natural aspects of your life this week? What area can you grow more in?

F. APPLICATION & PRAYER

Thank God that he is awaking you to the natural and the spiritual realms in a way that brings a healthy balance to your life. Pray for each other to be open to what God wants to teach you through the series and lay any concerns before Jesus and trust him to lead you.

G. LOOKING FORWARD

The next session will lead us deeper in understanding the battle and the enemy.

SESSION 2

KNOW YOUR BATTLE AND YOUR ENEMY

"One of the biggest mistakes we can make is fighting the wrong battle against the wrong enemy"

Key Scripture: *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places." Ephesians 6:12 (ESV)*

A. INTRODUCTION

In this Home Group series, we are studying the unseen spiritual battle so we can be equipped to stand strong and live victoriously through the challenges of life.

Genesis 3 records Satan's first appearance, not just as the start of spiritual warfare, but as a pattern for how he continues to attack, making it the blueprint for all future battles. In Eden, the enemy didn't come with a sword, but with a question:

"Did God really say...?"

From the beginning, Satan's primary weapon has been deception. He didn't overpower Adam and Eve physically; he misled them mentally and spiritually. This ancient strategy still works just as well today. As Derek Prince said,

"Satan's power is in the lie. As long as we believe his lies, we are under his control. But when we expose the lie and embrace truth, his power is broken."

If you want to fight spiritual warfare well, you need to know what kind of battle you're in, and what your enemy is like.

B. WATCH SESSION 2 VIDEO

C. READ SCRIPTURE

[Ephesians 6:12](#), [1 John 4:1](#), [Genesis 3:1](#), [Revelation 12:7-12](#), [2 Corinthians 11:3](#)

(for greater context, read these as they are referred to in the Main Points below)

D. MAIN POINTS

Point 1: Know the Battle, It's Not Against People

Paul reminds us in [Ephesians 6:12](#) that our battle is not against “flesh and blood.” That means your boss isn’t your enemy, your spouse isn’t your enemy, your children are not your enemy, your friends are not your enemy, and your own self-condemnation may have deeper roots.

You’re not just battling situations; you’re battling spiritual forces that exploit those situations. This is why discernment is so critical. [1 John 4:1](#) tells us to “*test the spirits to see whether they are from God.*” When we face struggles, have certain thoughts, or feel strong emotions, we need to pause and ask:

- Is this from the Holy Spirit: is it leading me into truth and life?
- Is this from my flesh: is it rooted in selfish desires or woundedness?
- Or is this from the demonic: is it aimed at stealing, killing or destroying?

Discerning the source shapes the right response. You don’t “crucify” the Holy Spirit, you yield to Him. You don’t try to “cast out” your flesh, you crucify it ([Gal 5:24](#)). And you don’t “counsel” demons, you resist and command they leave in Jesus’ name.

When we can accurately identify the source, we can respond in the Spirit’s wisdom rather than reacting in the flesh.

Point 2: Know the Enemy. He is Deceptive, Defeated, Yet Dangerous

Satan is real, personal, and strategic. He is not a symbol of evil, he was an angel cast out from heaven who now commands a demonic kingdom of other fallen angels ([Rev 12](#); [Mat 12:24](#)). His ultimate fate is sealed, but until Jesus returns, he continues to resist God’s purposes in our lives.

Satan’s authority is limited, but his deception is dangerously effective. His tactics include:

Deception: “Did God really say?” ([Gen 3:1](#))

Temptation: Appealing to natural desires outside of God’s boundaries ([Jam 1:14](#))

Accusation: Making you feel condemned even after repentance ([Rev 12:10](#))

Distraction: Keeping you busy, numb or complacent ([Mat 13:22](#))

Division: Turning people against each other ([2 Cor 2:10–11](#), [2 Cor 11:3](#))

Satan and his demonic forces attack through open doors like unrepented sin, unforgiveness, trauma, and generational footholds. These become spiritual strongholds that must be broken through prayer, repentance, and truth.

Point 3: Satan's Primary Battleground is the Mind and Heart

The enemy rarely begins his attacks with dramatic manifestations. His most common and effective strategy is a subtle, deceptive influence over our thoughts, emotions and desires.

In Genesis 3, Satan didn't overpower Eve, rather he questioned God's Word, stirred doubt and redirected her desires - *"Did God really say...?"* ([Gen 3:1](#)). Satan went on to tempt the desires of Eve's heart...*"The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it."* ([Gen 3:6](#)).

Satan and his demonic forces aim to:

- Distort truth ([2 Cor 11:3](#) "your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ")
- Stir fear, shame, lust or pride residing in you
- Draw you into agreement with lies about God, others or yourself.

Spiritual warfare isn't just about resisting external forces but also ***identifying and rejecting the internal footholds*** the enemy uses to gain influence such as bitterness, unforgiveness, selfish desires, jealousy or hidden pride.

E. DISCUSSION

1. Genesis 3 shows Satan attacking through deception, not domination. Can you think of examples in your life where deception rather than obvious attack was the enemy's tactic? What kinds of lies do you often struggle with?
2. If the mind and heart are the battleground, how do you open doors to the enemy's attack?
3. How can we grow in discernment to recognise what is influencing our thoughts, emotions or desires? What are some things you do to figure out if it's the Holy Spirit, the Flesh or Demonic?

F. APPLICATION & PRAYER

Thank God for his protection and constant love and grace. Pray that God would reveal any areas of deception in your life. You may like to join King David by praying:

*Search me, O God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
Point out anything in me that offends you,
and lead me along the path of everlasting life. (Ps 139:23-24)*

G. LOOKING FORWARD

The next session will learn how the Holy Spirit empowers and comforts us in spiritual battles.

SESSION 3

THE HOLY SPIRIT – OUR HELPER IN WARFARE

*We are never meant to fight spiritual battles in our own strength.
The Holy Spirit empowers, guides, and equips us for victory in spiritual warfare.*

Key Scripture: *"Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests."* Ephesians 6:18 (ESV)

A. INTRODUCTION

We Do Not Fight Alone

Spiritual warfare can feel overwhelming. The enemy is invisible, the battle is relentless and we often feel weak or unsure. But the good news is we are not alone. Jesus promised us a Helper, our ever-present Helper in spiritual warfare. The Holy Spirit guides us, empowers us, reminds us of truth and prays through us when we don't know how.

"The Holy Spirit is not a feeling, a force, or a concept. He is a Person (God Himself) who walks with you through every battle."

In [Ephesians 5:18](#), Paul commands believers to *"be filled with the Spirit"*. Being filled with the Spirit includes being able to pray in the spirit. But for many Christians, this command has been too narrowly interpreted. Sometimes we can mistakenly think that praying in the Spirit is just speaking in tongues. While tongues are a biblical and powerful spiritual gift (and one to be desired), it is not the whole picture of what it means to be Spirit-filled.

Being filled with the Spirit is not a one-time experience, nor is it limited to a single gift. It is a continual, Spirit-led lifestyle marked not just by power, but by the fruit of the Spirit ([Gal 5:22–23](#)), intimacy with God and discernment in spiritual battle.

B. WATCH SESSION 3 VIDEO

C. READ SCRIPTURE

[Galatians 5:22–23](#), [Ephesians 5:18](#), [1 Corinthians 12:10-11](#), [Romans 8:26](#), [Jude 1:20](#)

(for greater context, read these as they are referred to in the Main Points below)

D. MAIN POINTS

Point 1: Be Filled with the Spirit – A Lifestyle, Not a Moment

Being filled with the Spirit is an ongoing call ([Eph 5:18](#)). It means yielding to the Spirit's leadership daily, to be empowered, convicted, comforted and transformed.

Evidence of being Spirit-filled isn't just found in spiritual gifts, it is seen in the fruit of the Spirit, such as love, peace, self-control and joy. These are critical in warfare: a believer who walks in peace and self-control can withstand the schemes of the enemy ([Gal 5:22-23](#)).

Being Spirit-filled gives us the inner strength and spiritual sensitivity needed to stand firm in battle. Sam Storms, from his book *"Understanding Spiritual Warfare"* teaches that the Holy Spirit doesn't just empower you with gifts, He equips you to stand strong in truth and resist temptation at the heart level.

Furthermore, the spiritual armour in Ephesians 6 ends with this command: *"Pray in the Spirit on all occasions..."* It's not optional, it's essential!

Point 2: What Does It Mean to Pray in the Spirit?

"Praying in the Spirit" is often misunderstood or narrowly defined. ***It doesn't only refer to praying in tongues***, though that can be a beautiful and powerful expression. To pray in the Spirit means:

- Praying with the Spirit's help and leading, not just your own understanding.
- Praying in line with God's heart and truth, directed by the Spirit, not just your emotions, opinions or fleshly desires.
- Praying with surrender, not striving.
- Prioritising intimacy and sincere prayers over religious routines or outward displays.

In [1 Corinthians 14:15](#), Paul says *"I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding"*. Both matter and are effective. And significantly, when we don't have the words, the Spirit can pray through us. *"The Spirit helps us in our weakness... He intercedes for us through wordless groans."* ([Rom 8:26](#)).

This is a vital weapon against confusion, discouragement, or mental and emotional fatigue in warfare. Derek Prince noted that praying in the Spirit brings us into alignment with God's will, especially when we don't know what or how to pray.

Point 3: The Spiritual Gift of Praying in Tongues

Praying or speaking in tongues is one of the spiritual gifts given by the Holy Spirit,

"To another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as He wills." [1 Cor 12:10-11](#)

It is one of the expressions of praying in the Spirit. Scripture teaches that when we pray in tongues, we are built up and strengthened spiritually.

[Ephesians 6:18](#) instructs us to “*pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers*”. This teaches us that praying in tongues is one of the powerful spiritual weapons we have in strengthening us for spiritual warfare. At times we may find ourselves at a loss for what or how to pray for a person or situation. This is when praying in tongues is very helpful. When we pray in tongues we’re praying in the Spirit, in accordance with His will, even when we may not yet know what that is or what we are praying.

Vlad Savchuk encourages believers to desire the gift of tongues, not as a mark of spiritual superiority but as a tool:

“Speaking in tongues is not a badge of spirituality, it’s a tool for intimacy and power. If you’re fighting spiritual battles, you need spiritual weapons”.

See [Appendix I](#) for a guide to receive the gift of tongues.

E. DISCUSSION

1. What’s your current understanding or experience of “praying in the Spirit”? How does this teaching clarify or challenge that?
2. Have you ever experienced the Spirit helping you pray when you felt weak or didn’t know what to say? What was that like?
3. How can you grow in relying on the Holy Spirit in your daily battles emotionally, mentally, spiritually or relationally? How can you hear the Holy Spirit better in your life?

F. APPLICATION & PRAYER

For this prayer time, try the following Spirit-led strategy to help people hear from the Holy Spirit and to encourage one another.

1. Pray for one another in small groups (3 people is ideal)
2. As one person to share what they would like prayer for.
3. Begin your prayers by inviting the Holy Spirit to lead you in your prayer time.
4. Spend a few minutes waiting on God to show you how to pray.
5. Share any prophetic word or impressions. Pray positively over the person.
6. After praying, ask them for feedback. How did God speak to them and encourage them through the prayers?

Repeat for each member in the small group so everyone has a chance to give and receive prayer.

G. LOOKING FORWARD

The next session will teach us how to be strong in the fight, knowing your identity and walking in authority.

SESSION 4

STRONG WHERE IT MATTERS

*Knowing who we are and what we have in Christ
is the strongest weapon in warfare*

Key Scripture: *"Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes."* Ephesians 6:11 (ESV)

A. INTRODUCTION

The first three sessions of this series have explored how to navigate both a natural and spiritual worlds which are intertwined and may appear confusing.

Many Christians approach spiritual warfare with a mindset of fear, defeat or uncertainty akin to grasshoppers facing giants ([Num 13:33](#)). But Scripture tells us we are not victims but victorious sons and daughters of God, raised and seated with Christ in heavenly places ([Eph 2:6](#)). In Jesus, we have a new identity and real authority over all the power of the enemy ([Luke 10:19](#)).

The real battle often lies in remembering who we are and walking in that truth. God has also given us powerful spiritual weapons to fight the battles and secure the victory that is already ours in Christ Jesus. Spiritual warfare isn't about striving harder, it's about standing firmer in your God-given identity and exercising our spiritual authority, wielding our God-given spiritual weapons as led by the Holy Spirit.

B. WATCH SESSION 4 VIDEO

C. READ SCRIPTURE

[Luke 10:19](#), [Ephesians 6:10-18](#), [Romans 8:15](#), [2 Timothy 4:7](#), [2 Corinthians 10:4-5](#)

(for greater context, read these as they are referred to in the Main Points below)

D. MAIN POINTS

Point 1: Don't See Yourself as a Grasshopper

The biblical experience by the Israelites facing the enemy is an apt description even today. *"When the Israelite spies saw the giants in Canaan, they said: "We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them."* ([Num 13:33](#))

This grasshopper mindset of fear, inferiority and powerlessness can cripple believers in spiritual battle. But God didn't save us to remain weak and defeated. He saved us and empowers us to walk in the authority and boldness of His Spirit.

Instead of being a grasshopper, know yourself in Christ to be:

A Child of God ([John 1:12](#))

A New Creation ([2 Cor 5:17](#))

Redeemed ([Eph 1:7](#))

Chosen ([1 Pet 2:9](#))

Holy ([Col 3:12](#))

Loved ([Rom 8:38–39](#))

Forgiven ([Col 1:13–14](#))

Free ([Gal 5:1](#))

Righteous ([2 Cor 5:21](#))

Sealed ([Eph 1:13](#))

Adopted ([Rom 8:15](#))

An Heir ([Rom 8:17](#))

Temple ([1 Cor 6:19](#))

An Ambassador ([2 Cor 5:20](#))

Light ([Mat 5:14](#))

Salt ([Mat 5:13](#))

A Friend ([John 15:15](#))

A Servant ([Phil 2:7](#))

Citizen of Heaven ([Phil 3:20](#))

More Than Conqueror ([Rom 8:37](#))

Point 2: Our Spiritual Authority in Christ

One of the greatest deceptions the enemy uses is to convince believers that they are powerless. Yet Scripture makes it clear that, in Christ, we have been given real authority *"to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you"* ([Luke 10:19](#)). The authority we have is simply delegated power. It is not only the responsibility, but also the "spiritual power to enforce compliance" under the authority of Christ. Jesus has given every believer authority to trample on demonic powers. This authority flows from our standing with God ([Rom 5:1–2](#)), our relationship with Him ([John 15:5](#)), and our dependence on the Holy Spirit ([Matt 12:28](#)). It is on this Biblical truth that we wage spiritual warfare. We don't fight for victory, we fight from victory.

Our spiritual authority is not rooted in how spiritually mature we are, nor in our emotions or experiences, it is rooted in our position in Christ and our obedience to Him. Exercising spiritual authority, then, requires us to step into what God has already given us. It means rebuking lies with truth, resisting temptation with God's Word, and confronting the powers of darkness in the mighty name of Jesus.

Point 3: Ways to Exercise our Spiritual Authority

Exercising our spiritual authority requires faith in our standing with God as His children ([Rom 8:15-16](#)), humility to submit to God and resist the devil ([Jam 4:7](#)), revelation from God so we know what He wants to accomplish ([John 5:19](#)), and boldness in using our voice to speak strong, faith-filled commands ([Mark 11:2](#); [Acts 16:18](#)).

God has given us mighty spiritual weapons to wage warfare and enforce victory. The full armour of God is described in [Ephesians 6:10-18](#) as a metaphor for the spiritual resources and defences that Paul urges Christians to “put on” to stand firm against the devil’s schemes and spiritual opposition. Each piece of spiritual armour is grounded in our identity and authority in Christ: belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, helmet of salvation, sandals of peace, shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit (which is the word of God) and meant for active use in battle. See [Appendix II](#) for a detailed explanation.

There are many other spiritual weapons we can draw upon to fight spiritual battles including:

1. **Prayer (Praying in the Spirit):** While not depicted as armour, Paul adds in [verse 18](#) that prayer is crucial: “Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.” Ongoing, Spirit-led prayer sustains and empowers every other piece of armour, keeping believers alert and connected to God’s will.
2. **Praise and worship:** Ascribing worth to God and declaring His goodness strengthens faith and drives back spiritual oppression. If words fail you pray Psalms.
3. **The Name of Jesus:** You can, by faith in Christ’s victory, stand against evil in Jesus’ name ([Luke 10:19](#), [Matt 28:11](#)).
4. **The Blood of Jesus:** Standing on Christ’s sacrifice as protection and victory over the enemy ([Rev 12:11](#)).
5. **Our Testimony:** Testimonies declare the reality and power of Christ’s redemptive work ([Rev 12:11](#)). They strengthen faith and remind us of God’s faithfulness.
6. **Fasting:** Fasting is a discipline that brings clarity, increased receptivity to the Holy Spirit, and intensified prayer. By denying the flesh, you can become more attuned to God’s voice and power, enabling breakthroughs in areas of bondage, resistance or guidance.
7. **Faith:** Declaring God’s promises for you out loud. Standing in faith. Pray the Word.
8. **Unity and Community:** Spiritual battle is not fought alone. Standing together with others in agreement releases faith and encouragement.
9. **Forgiveness and Repentance:** These counter the enemy’s accusations and close doors to demonic footholds ([2 Cor 2:10-11](#)).

E. DISCUSSION

1. Do you ever feel like a grasshopper in the face of spiritual challenges? What would change if you saw yourself carrying the same victory that Jesus has?

2. Which piece of the armour of God do you most need to “put on” or strengthen right now, and what would that look like practically in your life this week (See [Appendix II](#))?
3. Have you ever used spiritual weapons (e.g. praise, prayer, fasting, the Word) in a time of warfare? Share a time it helped you break through or a situation you need to apply it to now.

F. APPLICATION & PRAYER

Thank God that he is awaking you to the natural and the spiritual realms in a way that brings a healthy balance to your life. Pray for each other to be open to what God wants to teach you through the series. Lay any concerns before the Lord Jesus and trust him to lead you

G. LOOKING FORWARD

The next session will lead us deeper in understanding the battle and the enemy.

SESSION 5

VICTORY OVER STRONGHOLDS

Some battles are harder, but God gives us power to break strongholds and advance His Kingdom.

Key Scripture: *"For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds." 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 (ESV)*

A. INTRODUCTION

Over the previous four sessions we have grown in awareness of a spiritual understanding and have been challenged to enter spiritual battles with confidence and wisdom. In this final session we will share how to apply these specific battles you may be facing.

In ancient warfare, strongholds were fortified towers or walls where the enemy could hide and control the surrounding territory. Spiritually, strongholds are mental or emotional "fortresses" where lies have gained a place of influence in our life.

Strongholds are not simply bad habits, they are deeply entrenched patterns of thinking, mindsets, value systems or reasoning that contradict the truth of Scripture and keep us in bondage. They can be spiritual, emotional or mental fortresses built over time. They often prevail through unrepented sin, wounds and trauma, lies we've believed, family history or direct occult involvement.

Strongholds are sustained by pride - believing we know better than God's word, fear and unbelief - trusting our feelings or circumstances more than God's promises, and idolatry - placing anything above God in our affections or priorities. Derek Prince teaches that strongholds often have a demonic element and may require deliverance to break. The good news is that Jesus came to destroy every stronghold ([1 John 3:8](#)). Through His power, we can not only break free but walk in lasting victory.

In this session, we will explore how to identify and tear down strongholds, experience freedom through deliverance, and walk in sustained victory by living in the power of the Holy Spirit.

B. WATCH SESSION 5 VIDEO

C. READ SCRIPTURE

[John 8:36](#), [Rom 8:5–8](#), [1 John 2:15–17](#), [John 8:44](#), [James 4:7](#), [1 Corinthians 10:13](#)

(for greater context, read these as they are referred to in the Main Points below)

D. MAIN POINTS

Point 1: Recognising strongholds and exposing the lie

Personal strongholds begin with lies: something we believe about God, ourselves, or others that is contrary to Scripture. They often operate subtly, disguised as “just the way I am” or “my personal weakness”. Over time, that lie becomes a mental fortress. We just put up with it.

These lies could come from our flesh; old sinful patterns we haven’t surrendered ([Rom 8:5–8](#)), the world; cultural beliefs that oppose God’s truth ([1 Jn 2:15–17](#)), or the demonic – lies and accusations planted by Satan ([Jn 8:44](#)).

They may show up as “I will never change,” “God has abandoned me,” “I’m worthless,” or “This sin is too strong to overcome.” As an individual example, as a child, an authority figure, perhaps even a parent, told you that you were worthless. Though it was a lie, you believed it because of who said it, and it’s shaped your life ever since. The enemy has used this lie repeatedly, influencing your career, marriage, parenting and relationships. God says He loves you and sent His Son to die for you, but this truth feels impossible to accept because the stronghold of worthlessness has taken root in your heart.

Strongholds also occur on a cultural level. They take the form of a social belief, cultural practice or public idea that opposes God. Rooted in deception, these cultural strongholds often go unexamined or unopposed. Examples of cultural spiritual strongholds are the self-reliance mindset, anti-authority spirit and comfort-driven living.

One sign of a spiritual stronghold is the flight from reason e.g. when someone becomes irrational, overly emotional, defensive, or hypocritical about an issue. This often happens because a lie is at the root of their belief or behaviour.

In our own lives, strongholds are revealed through the flight from accountability. We excuse or justify sinful actions instead of facing them e.g. “I deserve this bottle of wine,” “Yelling is fine, I turned out okay,” or “Porn doesn’t hurt anyone.” When we dismiss, rationalise, or ignore conviction, we give lies a hiding place. The areas where we refuse accountability are where strongholds live.

A list of common strongholds and ways to address them are listed in [Appendix III](#). The Shalom ministry is specifically suited to help people overcome issues and help people to encounter and walk in freedom (shalom@fgam.org.au)

Point 2: Pulling down strongholds

Breaking spiritual strongholds is a process that involves both personal responsibility and the power of God. Obtaining freedom often comes in three key steps.

1. **Repentance:** turning away from sin and deliberately renouncing any agreement you have made with the enemy's lies, whether knowingly or unknowingly.
2. **Renewal:** replacing those lies with the truth of God's Word, allowing His truth to reshape your thinking and identity – this can take some time ([Rom 12:2](#)).
3. **Resistance:** standing firm and actively opposing the enemy's attempts to rebuild the stronghold, using the authority given to you in Christ ([Jam 4:7](#), [1 Cor 10:13](#)).

Certain strongholds, especially those with deep spiritual roots, may require deliverance. This can involve renouncing any involvement in sin, occult practices, or ungodly covenants; verbally breaking agreement with them; and rebuking or casting out the spirit behind the bondage in the name of Jesus. Deliverance also means receiving God's freedom by faith, trusting that when the Son sets you free, you are free indeed ([Jn 8:36](#)).

It is crucial to remember that deliverance is not about obsessively chasing demons or focusing on the enemy. True deliverance flows from complete surrender and submission to Jesus, our Deliverer, whose authority breaks every chain. The goal is not merely to get free but to stay free. We can do that by walking daily in truth, prayer and fasting, guarding your mind, being in a Christian community and in accountability to mature Christian leadership, and cultivating intimacy with Christ so that no fortress can be rebuilt.

Point 3: Advancing the Kingdom

God does not break strongholds simply to make life easier. He sets us free so we can join His mission. Freedom from lies, fear, and sin enables us to stand in Christ's authority and advance His kingdom.

Paul reminds us in [2 Corinthians 10:4–5](#) that our weapons have divine power to demolish strongholds. This power is not just for personal deliverance but for pushing back darkness and making room for God's truth, peace and righteousness in every area of our authority. Every lie dismantled, fear overcome, and chain broken becomes a testimony and an opportunity for the light of Christ to shine.

Jesus gave His disciples authority to heal, cast out demons, and proclaim the good news ([Lk 9:1–2](#)). That same commission is ours. Personal victory is never the end. It fuels a wider witness so the kingdom expands one life, one family, and one community at a time.

E. DISCUSSION

1. What do you think a stronghold could be in your life (this can be past or present)? What has been particularly hard to overcome? Maybe something that is recurring or has formed into a habit. How does it contradict God's truth?

2. **What should we be doing to address strongholds in our lives, or even to help others overcome strongholds?**

Key reminder: Strongholds are not broken by willpower but by God's power. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the root. Is it fear, unforgiveness, pride, shame, addiction, or control? Name it honestly before God. Renounce any agreement with the lie. Stay rooted in Scripture, prayer, and community, trusting Christ's victory.

3. **It's not enough to just remove a stronghold, you need to fill the void that it leaves in your life with something else. How can you fill your life with God's presence so the enemy cannot regain a foothold?**

F. APPLICATION & PRAYER

Look through [Appendix III](#) and see what types of strongholds maybe relevant in your own life. Spend some time praying about them and seek out spiritual counsel if you need assistance.

G. WRAP UP

This series is designed as a basic foundation for spiritual warfare and knowledge of how the spiritual realm operates. It will take time, patience and potentially prayer from those experienced to help bring lasting breakthroughs.

If you would like to know more as to what that may mean for you please contact the Shalom Ministry (shalom@fgam.org.au) or speak to one of our pastors who will be able to see if it's the best approach for your specific situation.

APPENDIX I

THE GIFT OF TONGUES

About the Gift of Tongues – Session 3

- Tongues are given for prayer, worship, and edification ([1 Cor 14:2, 4](#)).
- They are a gift of grace, not proof of spiritual maturity.
- You're invited to ask ([Luke 11:13](#)).
- You're encouraged to desire the gift of tongues.

Receiving the gift of Tongues

- Spend some time in worship or quiet. Invite the Holy Spirit to search your heart. Confess any known sins or barriers (unbelief, fear, or overthinking are common barriers). After confession, invite God's peace.
- Ask in faith for the Father to give you the gift.

Yield to the Holy Spirit

- Tongues involve your spirit praying while your mind doesn't fully understand ([1 Cor 14:14](#)).
- Be willing to let go of control and trust the Spirit's leading.
- Often, God won't "take over" your mouth: you begin to speak as the Spirit enables ([Acts 2:4](#)).
- Start with simple sounds of worship, letting the Spirit shape it into language.
- It may start with a few sounds and akin to a baby learning language, your heavenly vocabulary expands over time.
- Practice regularly to strengthen your spiritual being

Receive in Fellowship

- Sometimes the gift is stirred when others lay hands in prayer (Acts 19:6).
- Trusted leaders or friends can pray with you.

What if I haven't received the gift of tongues?

Don't let that become a point of fear, shame, or disqualification. Paul says, "Eagerly desire spiritual gifts" ([1 Cor 14:1](#)), including tongues. That means you're never condemned or excluded if it doesn't happen immediately.

This gift is not a requirement for salvation or worth, but it is a gift of great value that strengthens your prayer life, increases your sensitivity to the Spirit, and equips you for deeper spiritual battles.

Remember, the focus of praying in the spirit is not tongues itself but deeper fellowship with God. If God gives tongues, it's for His glory and your strengthening.

Application:

- Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you afresh and empower you every time you pray.
- If you've received the gift of tongues, use it regularly and intentionally, especially in times of pressure, intercession or spiritual warfare.
- If you haven't yet, open your heart to the Lord with expectation, not pressure. Ask Him to release that gift in His timing, and keep praying in the Spirit with what you do have (faith, truth and hunger).

Reference: Sam Storm's 12 reasons Christians are ignorant of spiritual warfare (p. 11)

APPENDIX II

THE ARMOUR OF GOD

The full armour of God is described in [Ephesians 6:10-18](#) as a metaphor for the spiritual resources and defences that Paul urges Christians to “put on” to stand firm against the devil’s schemes and spiritual opposition. Each piece of spiritual armour is grounded in our identity and authority in Christ and meant for active use in battle:

1. **Belt of Truth** – God’s truth holds the believer together and protects from deception. Standing on God’s truth counters the enemy’s lies about your identity, worth, or future. This refers to both doctrinal truth and personal integrity.
2. **Breastplate of Righteousness** – This is the righteousness given through Christ, not our own. It protects the heart (seat of emotions and decisions) from accusations and attacks. Walking in obedience and holiness guards us against the enemy’s attempts to condemn or shame.
3. **Sandals of the Gospel of Peace** – Having “feet fitted” means being ready to move with the good news, to share Christ’s message and ready to stand firm. This peace comes from being reconciled with God and gives stability and readiness for every challenge.
4. **Shield of Faith** – Faith acts as a shield against “flaming arrows” such as doubt, fear, temptation, and lies. Trusting in God’s character and promises extinguishes these attacks, allowing believers to persevere.
5. **Helmet of Salvation** – Salvation guards the mind, reminding us of our secure position in Christ and hope of eternal life. It protects against spiritual discouragement and the enemy’s effort to sow doubt or confusion about our salvation.
6. **Sword of the Spirit (Word of God)** – God’s Word is both a defensive and offensive weapon. Like Jesus did in the wilderness, believers wield Scripture to expose and defeat temptations, lies, and spiritual opposition.

APPENDIX III

IDENTIFYING STRONGHOLDS

Common Types Of Strongholds

A **stronghold** is a mindset, habit or spiritual pattern that resists God's truth and keeps a person from fulfilling their God-designed purpose. Strongholds often form through lies we believe, sins we repeat, wounds we carry or fears we nurture. The good news is that Jesus has already won the victory, and His power can bring down every stronghold (2 Cor 10:3–5) and we experience victory as our minds are renewed.

Common strongholds and everyday self-talk

Stronghold	Common Self-Talk Statements	Scriptures for Truth
Fear / Anxiety	"What if it all goes wrong?" "I don't think I can pull this off." "Something bad is going to happen." "If I don't control this, it'll all fall apart." "If it fails, it all my fault"	Isaiah 41:10 ; Philippians 4:6–7
Unforgiveness / Bitterness Unresolved anger	"I don't deserve to be treated like that." "I would never do something like that to them." "They should pay for what they did." "If I forgive, they'll just get away with it."	Matthew 6:14–15 ; Ephesians 4:31–32
Shame / Condemnation	"I deserve what's happening to me." ""What if people really knew who I am?" "Am I too broken for God to use?" "I hate myself."	Romans 8:1 2 Corinthians 5:17
Pride / Self-Reliance	"It's alright, it doesn't really harm anyone." "Just this once won't matter." "If I don't take control, who will?" "I am rich, I have made it?"	James 4:6–7 Proverbs 3:5–6

Addiction / Compulsion	"Will I ever be free?" "This is just a part of who I am" "This doesn't hurt anyone" "Every does it so no big deal"	1 Corinthians 10:13; Galatians 5:1
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SPECIFIC STRONGHOLDS

We've spoken to our prayer ministry and talked about the kinds of open doors and strongholds we typically deal with when we're ministering to people who are struggling with strong oppression or in need of deliverance. This list below is not comprehensive, and it's not meant to be in order of importance, it's just things that we see more than others.

Involvement with Occult/Witchcraft

All types of Occult or Witchcraft are against God's will for your life. The Scripture speaks very strongly against our involvement with them. Two examples in scripture are:

"Let no one be found among you who sacrifices their son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord..." [Deuteronomy 18:10-12](#)

*"The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; **idolatry and witchcraft**; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage..... those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God."* [Galatians 5:19-21](#)

Common occultic activities that can cause demonic bondage

- Fortune telling, including following your star sign
- Receive healing from healers, crystals or prayers not offered in Jesus name
- Some Martial Arts, Yoga
- Being dedicated to another God as a child
- Any temple rituals
- Indigenous smoking ceremonies
- Using an amulet or charm for good luck or protection
- Ouija boards, seances, speaking to or summoning the dead/ghosts
- Imaginary friends (even as a child)
- Healing stones, crystals, chants, meditations

This list of possible occult involvement is not exhaustive, and not every activity automatically results in demonic oppression. However, each one should be carefully examined before God. Many will require you to cease, repent, and seek His forgiveness, breaking spiritual ties in the name of Jesus and by the power of His blood.

Sexual Activities And Sexual Addiction

Sex in the right context is a gift from God and forms a healthy part of a relationship between a husband and wife. God designed it so they become one flesh, united both physically and spiritually ([Gen 2:24](#), [Mark 10:7-8](#), [Matt 19:5-6](#), [Eph 5:31-32](#)).

God designed sexual intimacy as both a delight and a gift within marriage. It can bring joy, comfort, and even release from stress but always in the context of covenant love with your spouse. When taken outside of marriage, sex becomes distorted. Instead of strengthening godly union, it creates unhealthy and ungodly ties. That is why Scripture treats sexual sin as unique: it misuses a sacred gift, bonding people in ways God never intended:

Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.” [1 Corinthians 6:18](#)

Wrongful sex leads to ungodly soul ties ([1 Cor 6:16](#)) and often need to be addressed through prayer as it often damages your own body, soul and emotions.

Specific type of sexual activities prohibited in Scripture

- Premarital sex ([1 Thes 4:3-5](#), [1 Cor 6:18](#))
- Promiscuity, orgies ([Rom 13:13](#), [1 Pet 4:3](#))
- Adultery ([Ex 20:14](#), [Heb 13:4](#), [Prov 6:32](#))
- Incest, homosexuality, bestiality ([Lev 18:6-18](#), [Rom 1:26-27](#))
- Prostitution ([Lev 19:29](#), [Deut 23:17-18](#))
- Lustful thoughts ([Mat 5:27-28](#), [Col 3:5](#))
- Rape/non-consensual sex even within a marriage relationship, sexual molestation ([Deut 22:25-27](#), [1 Tim 1:9-10](#), [Matt 18:6](#))

Hedonism, Consumerism, and Love of the World

Scripture warns us against being consumed by the pleasures and possessions of this world. Jesus, in the parable of the sower, described a seed that fell among thorns: “This is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful” ([Mat 13:22](#)). John puts it plainly: “Do not love the world or the things in the world... For all that is in the world the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions is not from the Father but is from the world” ([1 John 2:15-16](#)).

The danger isn't in enjoying good things. God provides us with everything for our enjoyment ([1 Tim 6:17](#)). The danger comes when pleasure, wealth, or possessions become idols that rule our hearts and drive our choices. Paul warns that in the last days, people will be “lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God” ([2 Tim 3:4](#)).

Common manifestations of this stronghold:

- Obsessive pursuit of wealth or status ([Luke 12:15](#)).
- Greed or covetousness, which the Bible calls idolatry ([Col 3:5](#)).
- Addictive pursuit of pleasure (food, entertainment, or substances) that dulls hunger for God ([Phil 3:19](#)).
- Dealing with problems by buying or consuming things instead of seeking God
- Compromising faith for worldly pleasures ([Jam 4:4](#)).

This stronghold often looks respectable because it hides under the guise of “normal life.” But it can choke out faith, leave people spiritually barren, and blind them to eternal realities. Deliverance involves repentance, breaking agreement with the idol of possessions or pleasure, and learning contentment and joy in God’s presence.

Ungodly Soul Ties

Relationships are a gift from God, but they can also become a snare when they take the wrong place in our lives. Scripture reminds us that “we do not wrestle against flesh and blood” ([Eph 6:12](#)). The battle is not against people themselves, but against the ways the enemy can use unhealthy attachments to draw us away from God.

Often, this has less to do with the other person and more to do with us and how we prioritise them in our own hearts. Obsession, idolisation, or unhealthy dependency can give a relationship power it was never meant to have. For example, an ex-girlfriend or boyfriend may no longer be in your life, but if they still live in your mind and heart, Satan can use that foothold to rob your joy or limit your future.

It’s important to nuance this. We are not saying you can only have godly friends, or that every negative influence is automatically a stronghold. The issue is when loyalty, admiration, or desire for someone outweighs your devotion to God. That imbalance can bind you rather than bless you.

Common manifestations of this stronghold:

- Romantic or sexual ties outside of God’s design ([1 Cor 6:16](#)).
- Loyalty to a person outweighing loyalty to Christ ([Luke 14:26](#)).
- Needing approval or fearing rejection so much it drives your decisions ([Prov 29:25](#)).
- Being unable to move on from a past relationship that still holds your heart.

Freedom comes by recognising misplaced ties, repenting of giving them priority, and inviting God to take His rightful place as your first love.