

# Seated with a Purpose

EPHESIANS 1:15–2:10

*You don't have to outshout him or outmuscle him to be free of his influence. You just have to outtruth him. Believe, declare, and act upon the truth of God's Word, and you will thwart Satan's strategy.*

—NEIL ANDERSON, *The Bondage Breaker*

**M**any people have a picture of spiritual warfare that is filled with exotic and frightening battles with demons. Certainly we see such encounters in the gospel accounts that show powerful evidence of Jesus' work in disarming Satan. But is that the only image of spiritual conflict portrayed in Scripture? It helps to realize that demons or evil spirits are mentioned only five times in the entire book of Acts, which covers some thirty years of the early church's history. There are no rituals or exact formulas to be followed, nor are there exhortations to establish ministries that deal explicitly with demonized people. Paul's epistles also omit any explicit instructions regarding demonic encounters. Rather than finding methodologies for contests of power, we see a focus on truth as a foundation for spiritual warfare, truth that is to be known and lived out in real-life settings.

In the book of Ephesians, Paul sets forth what might be

called a bird's-eye perspective on the Christian life. He presents to us what we should know about God, what we were and what we have now become, and how that fits into God's design in calling us to Christ. Paul lays the doctrinal foundation necessary for us to see how spiritual warfare fits into the larger context of Christian living.

1. How do you think spiritual warfare fits into the whole of the Christian life?

**READ EPHESIANS 1:15-23.**

2. What three things did Paul pray that the believers in Ephesus would *know* (verses 18-19)?

3. Why is knowing each of these things important for us as Christians?

4. What is the scope and effect of Christ's position (verses 20-21)?

What are the implications of this fact for spiritual warfare?

**READ EPHESIANS 2:1-10.**

5. How did Paul describe unbelievers (verse 1)?

Do you think most non-Christians see themselves this way? Explain your answer.

6. Paul used several terms for Satan in verse 2. What clues do these give us about Satan's character and authority?

- ✎ 7. Identify the three ways Paul observed that unbelievers are influenced by evil (verses 2-3).

Discuss some ways each of these areas can lead us away from Christ.

8. In contrast to what we were, what have we become as a result of God's power working on our behalf (verses 5-6,10)?
9. Why has God "seated us with [Christ] in the heavenly realms" (verses 6)?

What do you think this spiritual reality means?

- ✎ 10. What are some of the implications for spiritual warfare of *our* being seated *with* Christ (verses 5-10)?
- ✎ 11. Summarize the main points of Ephesians 1:15–2:10. Find one application for your own life right now and share it with the group.