

Practical Spiritual Warfare in ISM: Helping ISM workers & internationals experience freedom from bondage to evil

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Spiritual Warfare: the intersection between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan, where Satan's control is removed and God reigns in power.

I. What would you do?

- A. An international student is returning to a remote part of China to do research and share the gospel. She reports that last time she visited, she was tormented by demons who enticed her to stop sharing the gospel and kill herself. She suffered greatly. How can you prepare her to be victorious this time?
- B. An international is having night terrors every night. She senses a presence in her room that would sometimes touch her on the side and was seeking to get inside of her. As a result, she is staying awake all night until the dawn comes, when she sleeps a few hours. How can you help her?
- C. A staff person calls you, asking for counsel of how to deal with a fellow staff member who, having just returned from visiting returnees in a Muslim country, is making bizarre statements and believes she has committed the unpardonable sin. How will you respond?
- D. An international student shows interest in studying the Bible with you. Every time he comes to the Bible study, he feels sick and spends most of the time in the restroom. How can you tell if it is just a nervous condition or a demonic interference?
- E. Charlene, a small group Bible study leader in your ministry comes to you for counsel. She says that one of her group members, Shakila, has told her that she is being tormented by evil spirits. She comes to you to ask what to do. What would you tell her?

II. The challenge of the "excluded middle," finding balance, & facing realities

- A. Western Christianity, under the influence of secularism and Naturalism, has tended to avoid the reality of spiritual warfare in people's lives, thereby focusing mainly on two of the three enemies identified in the Bible. Matthew 4:1-11; Ephesians 2:1-3

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" [Flesh]

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written:

"He will command his angels concerning you,
and they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."

Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" [

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" [Satan]

Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him. Matthew 4:1-11

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. Ephesians 2:1-3

- B. Evangelicals have had a tendency to link dealing with the demonic to Pentecostal theology.
- C. Excessive focus on demonic activity has led some to totally reject this area or at least be highly skeptical.
- D. International students come from cultural contexts where the reality of the spiritual world is strong or where rituals and traditions recognize the importance of protection from spirits that can harm them. In other words, many internationals do not have the excluded middle. They may come with demonic spirits at work in their lives or return to contexts where they will need training to overcome the attacks of Satan.
- E. ISM workers are also exposed to diverse spiritual influences in the course of working with international students.

III. The importance of spiritual warfare in evangelization. 2 Corinthians 4:4; Acts 26:17-18; Matthew 16:17,23

"The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." 2 Corinthians 4:4

“I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.” Acts 26:17-18

“Jesus replied, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.’” Matthew 16:17

“Jesus turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.’” Matthew 16:23

IV. The importance of spiritual warfare in discipleship.

- A. Those who come to Jesus have God’s Spirit living in them, but are not yet totally under the control of God’s Spirit. Sanctification involves both learning how to live by the Spirit and the ongoing process of breaking strongholds. Galatians 5:24-25; Ephesians 4:27; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

“Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.” Galatians 5:24-25

“and do not give the devil a foothold.” Ephesians 4:27

“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

- B. Those who return home will return to an environment of overt spiritual influence and encounter strongholds that keep people in bondage. Therefore, part of re-entry training should equip people in spiritual warfare.
- C. A significant part of Jesus’ ministry was freeing people oppressed by Satan. Mark 1:34; Matthew 8:16

“and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.” Mark 1:34

“When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick.” Matthew 8:16

- A key aspect of his role as “the Anointed One.” Luke 4:18-19

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Luke 4:18-19

- A clear demonstration of God’s kingdom. Luke 11:20, Matthew 12:28

“But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.” Luke 11:20

“But if it is by the Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.” Matthew 12:28

- A summary statement of Jesus’s ministry. Acts 10:38, I John 3:8, Colossians 2:15

“... how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.” Acts 10:38

“The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.” I John 3:8

“And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” Colossians 2:15

- D. Jesus emphasized spiritual warfare in the discipleship he practiced. Mark 3:14-15; Luke 9:1; Luke 10; Matthew 10:1

“He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons.” Mark 3:14-15

“When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases,” Luke 9:1

“Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.” Matthew 10:1

- E. The disciples practiced what they learned from Jesus in freeing people from demonic control. Luke 10:17-20; Acts 5:16; Acts 16:18

“The seventy-two returned with joy and said, ‘Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.’

He replied, ‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.’ Luke 10:17-20

“Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by impure spirits, and all of them were healed.” Acts 5:16

“She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, ‘In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!’ At that moment the spirit left her.” Acts 16:18

F. Early church history reflects a continued practice of spiritual warfare.

- “Until about A.D. 200, baptism was often preceded by a rite of exorcism. Beginning about 200, the exorcism and formal renunciation of Satan were incorporated into the baptismal rite.”

Satan, The Early Christian Tradition by Jeffery Burton Russell, page 101

- “In 258 AD the ‘Seventh Counsel of Carthage viewed exorcism as a preliminary step toward the re-baptism of heretics. Exorcism also appears before baptism in the *Apostolic Tradition*.”

Possession and Exorcism in the New Testament and Early Christianity by Erik Sorensen, page 200

G. The principle of engaging in spiritual warfare, including freeing people from demonic control, is clearly taught for all believers. Ephesians 6:10-20

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people. Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Ephesians 6:10-20

- No direct command in teaching letters (similar to no command to make disciples), but principle stated clearly. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (“strongholds”); Ephesians 4:27 (“foothold”)

“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

“... and do not give the devil a foothold.” Ephesians 4:27

- Practiced by other believers besides apostles. Acts 8:6-7

When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said. For with shrieks, impure spirits came out of many, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. Acts 8:6-7

V. What is demonization?

- A. The Greek word used is “daimonizomai” (used 13 times in NT) meaning to be under the power or influence of certain demons in certain areas. It can also mean to have a demon.
- B. This does not usually mean possession. The KJV translation of this word is misleading since “possessed” or “possession” implies total ownership of something.
- C. The influence or power of demons can occur in a person’s soul (mind or emotions) or body but not in the spirit of one belonging to Jesus. (Luke 13:16, Acts 5:3)
- D. There are levels of demonization. Not everyone is equally demonized.
 - a. Mild. Acts 5:3
 - b. Strong. Mark 1:21-26
 - c. Severe. Mark 5:20
- E. There is a difference between having a demonic thought and being demonized. (Matthew 16:21-23)
- F. There is a difference between psychological problems, physical problems, and demonic problems although they interrelate to each other.

VI. How does demonization occur?

- A. Main access is through deception (Genesis 3:1-13; 2 Corinthians 11:3, 2:11; 2 Timothy 3:13; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12) (warfare in mind)
- B. Ancestors (Exodus 20:5, 34:6-7; Deuteronomy 5:5-10; Jeremiah 31:27-30)
- C. Being sinned against (wounded in soul) in early childhood or early youth (Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 9:14-29)
- D. Habitual sin (Ephesians 4:27)
 - Any sin practiced over time can yield ground to Satan
 - Bitterness – lack of forgiveness – is mentioned specifically by Jesus (Matthew 18:33-34) and Paul (Ephesians 4:27)
 - Thoughts lead to choices, leading to habits, leading to loss of control, finally leading to bondage
 - Lists such as Galatians 5:19-21; I Corinthians 5:9-11, 6:9-10; Mark 7:21-23; Matthew 15:19; James 4:1-4 can help to gain understanding of the places of bondage that can come from habitual sin.

E. Occult activity / objects (Acts 16:16-18)

Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a female slave who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved." She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" At that moment the spirit left her. Acts 16:16-18

VII. What are the signs of demonization?

- A. Restlessness (Mark 5:5, Luke 11:24, Isaiah 48:22)
- B. Tormented mind – attacking, destructive, confusing, accusing thoughts (Matthew 18:34)

- Satan is characterized as an Accuser (Revelations 12:10):

C. Driven to do things (compulsions) (Acts 16:16-18)

- a. Desire to curse
- b. Desire to attack
- c. Uncontrollable anger
- d. Overpowering guilt despite confession of sins
- e. Addictions
- f. Desire to punish self

D. Inability to concentrate on Scripture (Matthew 13:20)

E. Often a person will be aware of another voice speaking into their mind.

VIII. How to help internationals get free from demonic strongholds.

A. When there is a problem, don't start with demons but deal with the flesh. If the problem is demonic in nature it will not yield simply to spiritual disciplines or crucifying the flesh.

B. Study the life of Christ as a pattern for dealing with demons.

C. The general approach is to deal with each of the following areas with a person who recognizes a problem and wants help to be free:

- Ancestors
- Ungodly beliefs
- Patterns of sin. Call the person to repentance and a necessary response to the gospel. 2 Timothy 2:24-26

"The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will."

- Unhealed emotional wounds
- D. Study and explain the scriptural basis for the authority of the believer in Christ and the total defeat of Satan.
- E. Help the person identify the area(s) above where the greatest bondage is found.
- F. Don't focus on learning a specific method but on applying the principles ("resist", "pull down", "cast out", "attack.") with the direction of the Holy Spirit in prayer:
- Invite the Holy Spirit's presence and protection.
 - Use the authority of Christ to bind fear in the person's life. (Make sure you have first dealt with any fear in your own life!).
 - Ask the person to confess any sins to God, ask forgiveness, and renounce.
 - Invite God's Spirit to identify any demons present.
 - Ask the person to share any impressing thoughts and deal with them according to the Word of Truth.
 - If the demons manifest, command them in the name of Jesus Christ.
 - It is helpful to pray as a team and have one person take notes.

IX. Follow-up

- A. Give key Scriptures in areas of weakness for memorization and meditation.
- B. Learn how to put on the full armor of God
- C. Help the person to recognize the environment that led them into bondage or companions that need to be avoided. Make sure they get rid of objects that link them to the demonic activity that was present in their life.
- D. Teach them how to apply James 4:1-8 on a daily basis
- E. It may take several sessions for complete deliverance

X. Sample Case Studies

- 1) Soo, a young woman from Malaysia comes from a strong Buddhist family. While studying in the USA, she is befriended by Christians and commits her life to Christ. Shortly after her conversion she begins to have dreams in which Buddha appears to her telling her that she must renounce Christianity and return to Buddhism. She feels threatened. There is also an accompanying sense of dread of some evil that is about to happen to her or her family. She wakes up in a cold sweat, screaming. It has reached the point where the dreams are occurring almost nightly. She comes to you for help:
 - a. What information will you want to find out from her?
 - b. How will (can) you help her?
- 2) Simbo is an international student from a West African country. He occasionally attends IFI sponsored events, including the Friday night fellowship. You notice that when in his presence your spirit is heavy. There is a sense of gloom. You also notice that he smirks whenever anything

spiritual is presented or discussed. One night after the fellowship he tells you that his god is more powerful than the Christian "god". He boasts of having special power given to him when he was dedicated to his god and that he carries a special holy cloth given to him by the priest (witch doctor). It both gives him the power to hurt other people and curse them. He claims that under the influence of this power, several missionaries in his country have become sick and died. He challenges you to a contest. He will pray to his god for you to become sick. If you do, it will prove that his god is greater than yours. Will you accept the challenge? If so, what will you do? If not, why not and how will you ever be able to share the power of the gospel?

- 3) Charlene, a small group leader (for Bible study) comes to you for counsel. She says that one of her group members, Shakila, has told her that she is being tormented by evil spirits. She comes to you to ask what to do. What would you tell her?

You agree to meet with Charlene and Shakila together. Beginning with Revelation 12 you explain that Jesus has power over Satan and his demons. At this, Shakila falls to the floor and another voice cries out from her in a loud, piercing cry, "Leave me alone." What will you do?

- 4) Students from various countries who visit your home bring gifts with them. What of the following gifts will you keep in your house, eat or use? Do you believe that objects can have spiritual influence? How will you decide?

- an incense holder used in worship to other gods
- an Indonesian god figure
- a mask used in ancient Korea during a dance to frighten evil spirits away
- "good luck" tea
- food from one of their religious festivals
- statues of unknown origin or use
- a CD of Hindu songs, some of which are songs of praise to various Hindu gods
- a gift of jade that is given to wear around your neck as a type of protection against bad things happening to you

If you decide to get rid of any gift, what will you tell the student(s) if the student(s) ask about the gift upon their next visit?

- 5) A Christian international student comes to you in despair because of thoughts he/she is having. The student says, "I have spent so much time in tears, hours of searching, hours of sleeping – yet so much restlessness! I only hear 'Pharisee' yelled at me again and again. Everything comes into question when I am faced by such condemnation, restlessness, and the awful feeling of being a wicked human being came to my mind. I think that I am Judas. I am sure you think this is outrageous, but this is what is in my heart day after day. I have no power to stop doing it. I hate being under him... Satan. Help me not to lose to Satan's power in my heart. Please pray for me and ask God to drive out all that imprisons me."

How can you determine if this person is demonized? What approach would you take?

- a. Agree to pray with the student
- b. Send the student to a counselor
- c. Send the student to your pastor
- d. Encourage this person to practice spiritual disciplines to overcome this problem
- e. Other:

Why would you take the approach you chose? If you choose option a, how specifically would you pray for this person?

- 6) An international student reveals that he/she was sexually abused as a child and now is hyper sexually active (compulsive sexual habits). What is the likelihood of a demonic presence in this person's life? How could you know for sure? He/she is not willing to go to a counselor for help but he/she does recognize that he/she needs help? Without specialized training in sexual abuse is it wise to try and help this student (assuming you are the same sex)? If so, how would you try to help?
- 7) Sarupa is an Indian student and young believer in your discipleship group. Over the past year of knowing her, you notice a constant pattern of relational difficulties, hurt and overreaction to situations, followed by anger and immediate cutting of those relationships. She is usually a happy and social person with a bright affect, but when she talks about people who have hurt her, her facial expression, tone of voice, and demeanor changes significantly. Rage, anger, hardness, and defensiveness overtake her, and she does not seem to accept anything you try to say to her. After a weekend church retreat, Sarupa wants to meet with you. She tells you that God showed her at the retreat that she needed to forgive her father. However, she is distressed because she feels unwilling and unable to forgive him. Her father had cheated on her mother, brought shame and unnecessary hardships to her family, and physically abused her and her sister when they were children. As she talks about her past, you can visibly see her pain but also her coldness and anger towards her father.

What steps would you take to help Sarupa begin the path of forgiveness? What might be the connection between Sarupa's unforgiveness towards her father and her present relational difficulties? Are there any signs of demonization or spiritual strongholds in her life? If so, what might have been a possible "entry point" for the demonic?

- 8) During prayer for a Chinese student, Chen, the student remembers that during boarding school she made up a story in her head about being a beloved daughter of Satan who had an ability to kill angels. She used her power for revenge on people who mistreated her such as those who bullied her. This story gave her a sense of power and comfort when she felt lonely and rejected by others and forgotten by her parents (especially after their divorce). At the same time she was powerless to stop trying to kill herself. She would regularly cut herself. She was often alone and did not have a single friend.

What root issue do you see at work in Chen's life and how can you tell if it is demonic in nature? What would you do to further help her?

- 9) A student from Indonesia, Siti, became a believer in your Bible study group, but shortly after she claims that you and others in the group are "out to get her" and she stops coming to the Bible study. Sometime later she writes to you the following email:

"This is Siti who used to come to your Bible study group. We are in need of deliverance help. We will be able to serve Christ again if Siti's deliverance is complete and her favoritism cured. This favoritism was observed and renounced, but it is still there since it is caused by the evil spirits in her body. This spirit called Yong Choy Nyet is scared by different types of people. She has been hiding in Siti's body for years and has caused her to be nasty in her words and she got upset easily. Another spirit leads her into sexual sin. Her glory in Christ is a stake." Can you accept her self-assessment? Why do you think she switches from first person to third person? How would you try to help her?

- 10) A student from Albania shares with you that she is afraid to go out of her apartment without her husband. She says that she has a profound fear of being sexually attacked. She claims no sexual abuse in her background. Her paralyzing fear is negatively affecting her life. How can you determine if this fear is psychological or demonic? How could you help her?
- 11) Hui a PhD student from China is a strong Christian leader who believes God loves her objectively but has no inner sense of God's love. During public or private worship times she has no sense of God's presence. She knows not to operate based on feelings and her faith is strong but describes a wall or block in her relationship with God that seems to make God distant from her. She comes to you for help because she says her Christian life is principled but not full of life. What would you want to explore with her so you could help her?

In talking with her you learn that before becoming a Christian that she was a Buddhist who also engaged in ancestral worship. You also learn that she experienced severe rejection from her father. As you share with her the Father heart of God and help her to renounce any ties to past idols she begins to cry out (scream). Should you:

- Comfort her because she is in emotional pain
- Ask her why she is screaming
- Discern whether a demonic spirit is present that needs addressing
- Tell her to stop screaming because it will be OK.
- Something else _____

- 12) Jun is a PhD student from China who is depressed and has thoughts of suicide. She is a Christian but is quite confused about God and believes that God is punishing her. She feels isolated and her eyes are full of "darkness." Her father was emotionally abusive when she was child and committed suicide. She alternates between anger toward her father and sorrow in missing him. Her father was an angry and hopeless man. One of the things he often said is "Life is hopeless." Her religious background was ancestor worship. While you encourage her to seek professional counseling, you also offer to pray with her. As you do, she begins to experience emotional healing as she begins to really believe that God is for her and not against her and that what her father did to her was not God's will. But there still are intrusive thoughts of sadness, anger, and suicide that assail her. Would it be proper to ask if you can pray to drive out any evil spirits that could be bothering her?
- 13) Min from China is addicted to playing a violent computer game. It is affecting his studies. While he knows it is wrong he is powerless to stop. He is driven to play. In exploring his background you learn he has suffered rejection from others in a significant manner (stepfather, girlfriend, friends) and then when he could not find a job after graduation he also rejected himself as a worthy person. You can see that his computer addiction is related to his feelings about himself – including shame and unworthiness. He is also depressed. Could the addiction be demonic in nature? If so, how could you help him?
- 14) An international student is returning to a remote part of China to do research and share the gospel. She reports that last time she visited, she was tormented by demons who enticed her to stop sharing the gospel and kill herself. She suffered greatly. How can you prepare her to be victorious this time?
- 15) An international is having night terrors every night. She senses a presence in her room that would sometimes touch her on the side and was seeking to get inside of her. As a result, she is staying awake all night until the dawn comes, when she sleeps a few hours. How can you help her?

- 16) A staff person calls you, asking for counsel of how to deal with a fellow staff member who, having just returned from visiting returnees in a Muslim country, is making bizarre statements and believes she has committed the unpardonable sin. How will you respond?
- 17) An international student shows interest in studying the Bible with you. Every time he comes to the Bible study, he feels sick and spends most of the time in the restroom. How can you tell if it is just a nervous condition or a demonic interference?

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Main Book as a Reference:

Murphy, Ed. *The Handbook for Spiritual Warfare (Revised & Updated)* Thomas Nelson, 2003

APPENDIX 1

Identifying the Lies we Believe

LIES ABOUT OURSELVES

Theme: Rejection, Not Belonging

1. I don't belong. I will always be on the outside (left out).
2. My feelings don't really count. No one cares what I feel about things.
3. I will always be lonely. I don't think I will ever find a marriage partner.
4. The best way to avoid more hurt, rejection, etc., is to withdraw from close relationships with people.
5. I do not fit in my own culture and I will never fit in another culture.

Theme: Unworthiness, Guilt, Shame

1. I am not worthy to receive anything from God.
2. When something is wrong, it is usually my fault. The reason people have a problem with me is that there is something wrong with me.
3. If you knew the real me, you would reject me because I am really a messed up person in side.
4. It is better to wear a mask and not reveal my thoughts and feelings because then people won't find out how bad I am and reject me.
5. I have messed up so badly that God will not really be able to use me much.
6. I have missed God's best for me.

Theme: Doing to achieve Self-worth, Value, and Recognition

1. My value is primarily determined by what I do. The more "successful" I am, the more valuable I am.
2. Even when I try my best, it is not good enough. I will never be able to meet the standard others have for me.
3. I will not get credit for what I do. What I do is overshadowed by people more important than me.
4. I can avoid conflict that would risk losing others' approval by being passive and not doing anything that others would not like.
5. I can have a "secret life" as long as others see me as good.

Theme: Control (seeking to avoid hurt)

1. I have to plan every day of my life.

2. I have to continually plan. If I relax bad things will happen to me.
3. The perfect life is one in which no conflict is allowed, and so there is peace.
4. My children must obey me immediately or I am a bad parent.
5. I need to make sure I know where my family is all the time because something bad might happen to them.

Theme: Appearance

1. I am unattractive to others and myself.
2. It is impossible for me to make changes to my physical appearance.
3. I am not a real man because_____.
4. I am not a real woman because _____.
5. I need to spend a lot of time changing my appearance.
6. Without "Looking good" I will never be successful.

Theme: Character/Personality Traits

1. I will always be _____ (jealous, angry, shy, insecure, fearful, lustful, argumentative, etc.)
2. My personality is not as valuable as others. I do not have as many strengths as others.

Theme: Identity

1. I should have been a boy (girl). Then my parents would have valued/loved me more, etc.
2. I will never know my specific calling in life or what God really wants me to do.
3. I will never be known or appreciated for my real self.
4. I was adopted so I will never really know who I am.
5. I will never really change to be the person God wants me to be.

Theme: Miscellaneous

1. I have wasted the best years of my life and therefore I cannot fulfill God's will
2. I will always have financial problems.
3. My life will always be in turmoil

LIES ABOUT OTHERS

Theme: Safety/Protection

1. I must be very guarded about what I say, since anything I say may be used against me.

2. I have to guard and hide my emotions and feelings. I cannot give anyone the satisfaction of knowing that they have wounded or hurt me. I'll not be vulnerable, humiliated, or shamed.
3. People are out to get me. They want to get ahead of me. They want to use me.
4. People can never be trusted because they always prove to be untrustworthy.

Theme: Retaliation

1. The correct way to respond if someone offends me is to punish them by withdrawing and/or cutting them off.
2. I will make sure that the person who hurt me hurts as much as I do.

Theme: Victim

1. Authority figures will humiliate me and take advantage of me.
2. Authority figures will use their authority to hurt me.
3. Other views of me are more important than my own view of myself.
4. When those in authority tell me what to do, I have no choice of my own.
5. Because I was mistreated by my parents I will never be able to have healthy relationships.
6. Men (women) will always take advantage of me sexually.
7. If I am in trouble, no one will want to help me.

Defective in Relationships

1. No one will ever be able to love me for a lifetime.
2. Others accept me based on my performance. I should do things perfectly.
3. People say things to manipulate me. I cannot really trust what they tell me.
4. People correct me because they do not like (love me). People who love me would never correct me.

LIES ABOUT GOD

1. God loves other people more than He loves me.
2. God loves some ethnic groups more than others.
3. God only values me for what I do. If I mess up he rejects me.
4. God is not good. He keeps things from me that I want and allows things to hurt me that I don't want to happen.
5. God's Words cannot be trusted. They do not always come true.
6. God is absent when I am suffering.
7. God made women inferior to men.

8. God's promises are tricks to make me keep hoping for things that will not or do not take place.
9. God is capricious (unpredictable and unreliable) and does not always act the same – sometimes He is for me and sometimes He is against me.
10. God is only concerned about my behavior and not my secret life.
11. God can be fooled.
12. God is not just – he lets some sinners get away with their bad lives.
13. God made a mistake when he made me.
14. God's power is not enough to deliver me from this temptation that I am facing or the sin I am battling.
15. God has expectations of me that are unrealistic and cannot be followed.
16. God is waiting for me to make a mistake.

Adapted from *Restoring the Foundations* by Chester and Betsy Kylstra. Used with permission.

Writing Truth Statements (Godly Beliefs)

Write out the lie.

Write out God's Truth.

List Scriptures the Truth is based on.

Example:

The lie: God wants me to work all the time. I cannot take time to rest or play.

The Truth: God is holding the universe together. It will not fall apart if I rest or play. Even God rested on the 7th day, even though he was not tired. He desires for me to have a balanced life as pictured by Jesus so I can enjoy Him and His creation, as well as to do satisfying and fulfilling work.

Scripture: Ephesians 2:11, Hebrews 4:1-11

The Lie:

The Truth:

Scripture: