

THE LIGHT AND THE NIGHT:
AN ETHNOGRAPHIC EXAMINATION OF
SPIRITUAL WARFARE

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**The Light and The Night:
An Ethnographic Examination of Spiritual Warfare**

By

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Abstract

This thesis explores spiritual warfare, a term that in Evangelical culture refers to the perceived conflict with evil, and, among most practitioners, specifically to a conflict with demons. Spiritual warfare beliefs are based primarily on pneumatological assumptions as well as on eschatological views. Based on a field study using anthropological methodology, this study examined spiritual warfare beliefs and practices at the Anchor Fellowship in Nashville, Tennessee, and placed the findings in a broader Evangelical intellectual context. The observation portion of this study occurred between May 2009 and February 2010.

Interviews with individuals claiming to have experienced conflict with demonic forces, observation of exorcism practices, and an analysis of the beliefs and activities relevant to demonological conceptions demonstrate how pneumatology and eschatology merge to effect spiritual warfare beliefs and practices. This research also addresses how people conceive of spiritual warfare, why they practice it, and its function within the culture.

Individuals subscribing to a doctrine of the Holy Spirit that emphasizes the active, miraculous power of God in the present time and who also accept an eschatological position that includes the ultimate defeat of Satan and demons, adhere to an aggressive understanding of spiritual warfare, which advocates that Christians confront and defeat demons. The alternative position is a defensive posture, which advocates that Christians simply try to avoid or resist demonic influences.

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Chapter I – Thesis Argument, Existing Research, and Methodology

The following chapter is divided into four sections: A) Identification of the terminology and the scope of the study, B) the thesis argument, C) a review of existing academic literature, and D) an explanation of the methodology used for this research.

A. Identification of Terms and Scope

"Spiritual warfare" is a topic that has been explored very little in academic research. In brief, Evangelical Christians believe there is a cosmic war waging between God and Satan and that the battle is over human souls. There is debate among Evangelicals on how, and to what extent, they are to participate in this war, and which rituals and approaches are valid. A widely discussed phenomenon in Evangelical circles, spiritual warfare is pervasive in its influence on religious thought and practice. It is manifested through at least four different approaches: 1) the avoidance/resistance and cessationist approaches, where people passively resist sin and the devil, 2) the systematic approach, which is highly ordered and theologically-focused, 3) the Charismatic/deliverance approach, which is intuited, and based more on interpreting perceived divine guidance than upon theology, and 4) the obsessive/fringe approach, in which demons are exorcised with great frequency (daily, sometimes hourly), often using ritual and incantations to ward off evil spirits, and holding beliefs uncommon to the first three approaches.¹

Using an ethnographic approach, I have studied how spiritual warfare occurs in a specific "real world" situation, by analyzing it as it exists at the Anchor Fellowship in

¹ Andrew Monteith, "Spiritual Warfare in Contemporary American Evangelicalism: Beliefs, Approaches, and Motivations," unpublished essay, 2009.

Nashville, Tennessee. This study is unique, since very little has been written about spiritual warfare academically, and most of those who have researched it have done so only because a tangentially-related study required that the topic be introduced. Additionally, some researchers who have examined the topic have made what I would consider to be significant errors in understanding the concept. Two common examples of such errors are: 1) confusing "spiritual warfare" as being entirely synonymous with political action, or 2) attempting to assign one unified doctrine of spiritual warfare to all of Evangelical Christianity.

B. Thesis Statement

Spiritual warfare plays a significant role in Evangelical thought and practice and is a phenomenon that has hitherto remained largely unanalyzed. The effects of spiritual warfare upon a specific community or individual are dependent upon two things: 1) pneumatology, and 2) eschatology. Regarding pneumatology, when an individual or community accepts the idea that Christians have authority over demons and are empowered by the Holy Spirit to engage demons in a spiritual battle, it prepares the community or individual for an aggressive form of spiritual warfare. Conversely, when this pneumatology is not present, the spiritual warfare assumes a purely defensive position. Regarding premillennial eschatology,² when the individual or community looks forward to the apocalypse and applies the concept of "identity in Christ"³ to eschatology, it contributes to the understanding that the teleological defeat and judgment of Satan

² Premillennial eschatology usually refers to the belief that an antichrist will emerge, lead the world into evil, and that Jesus will then return and assume rule over the world in what is known as the Millennial Kingdom. This concept is currently the predominant viewpoint in contemporary Evangelicalism.

³ The concept of "Identity in Christ" is the idea that what is true of Christ is credited as true of the believer as well. For example, because Jesus is "blameless before God," so is the believer. Because Jesus will reign in the millennial kingdom, so will the believer, etc.

authorizes action in the present as well. Historically, postmillennial eschatology has led less towards conflict with demons and more towards attempting to establish "holiness" and "righteousness" and thus the expectation that the millennial kingdom will be established through spiritual progress. Postmillennialism is less conducive to spiritual warfare, at least in the sense that term is typically understood. In postmillennialism, the approach of the millennial kingdom rests more on human piety or activity than on the defeat of an evil being. Additionally, postmillennialism evolved into a substantially liberal theology, which often rejects the literal reality of demons.

When a particular pneumatology and a specific eschatology combine, an individual or a community adopts an aggressive version of spiritual warfare, which manifests itself throughout their worldview, daily routines, artistic expressions, and personal interactions.⁴ Using an ethnographic approach, this research will demonstrate how this occurs in a "real world" situation, by analyzing spiritual warfare as it exists at the Anchor Fellowship in Nashville, Tennessee.

C. Review of Academic Literature

There is very little scholarly research on this topic, which is surprising given the wide-spread popularity of the concept among Evangelicals. A few articles on the topic exist, and it has occasionally been addressed as part of other studies – most commonly interpreted through the lenses of either sexuality or politics.

⁴ Initially, I had thought spiritual warfare only functioned in premillennial eschatology. The Anchor Fellowship subscribes, however, to an eschatology known as "Kingdom theology" that combines elements of both pre- and postmillennialism. I will fully explain this eschatology in chapter III.

1. General Analyses

Paul Bramadat's discussion of Satan in his ethnography, *The Church on the World's Turf*, may currently be the most complete scholarly assessment of spiritual warfare. The strength of Bramadat's analysis lies in his theoretical explanations that account for spiritual warfare's popularity and function. He notes several motivations for spiritual warfare that I have found present in my own analyses as well. First, he observes:

The dichotomy between the heavenly realm's will for individuals and the demonic sphere's less powerful but undeniable ability to interfere with this plan appears to diminish causative mystery and to leave God's sovereign and purely benevolent will for individuals intact. In short, the references to barely metaphysical enemies may help to explain and contextualize a wide range of theodical issues.⁵

This contextualization is indeed one function of spiritual warfare that is observable across nearly all Evangelical perspectives. The existence of demons who attempt to interfere with God's work creates a ready explanation for why God's plan, as perceived by a church or individual, does not always come to fruition. This conception does, however, become complicated when Evangelicals also adhere to an understanding of sovereignty that requires Satan to ask permission of God before accosting someone.⁶ In other words, on a surface level, sin, deviations from God's plan, and ministerial failure can be attributed to Satan, yet on a tacit level this explanation simply shifts the problem of causation rather than solve it. Sometimes, Evangelicals attribute God's permission of Satanic attack to an unknowable divine plan, and at other times, the responsibility falls to

⁵ Paul Bramadat, *The Church on the World's Turf: An Evangelical Christian Group at a Secular University* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2000), 112.

⁶ Joe Kirkendale, "[sic] Angles and Demons: Week 3," http://video.newlifechurch.org/db_files/081708Angles_and_Demons_-_Week_3.mp3 (accessed Mar 10, 2009).

the believers who were not vigilant in their spiritual warfare.

Bramadat also posited that it is identity-forming:

The sense of living among, if not being besieged by, often demonically cozened infidels contributes to what Martin Marty has described as a form of "tribalism" which unites the group...in short, because spiritual warfare discourse is based on a sharp dualism between the saved and the unsaved, it helps believers to retrench their sense of superiority (since that is what it amounts to) and to accentuate the fundamental otherness of non-Christians.⁷

While to an outsider spiritual warfare may appear to be simply prayer, or perhaps a perceived ethereal war, to the adherents of spiritual warfare it is just as real as physical warfare, and with that belief comes a sense of unified purpose, and a sense of duty.⁸

While the previous observations of Bramadat's work will prove to be useful to this study, there are several minor points he makes that will contrast with this ethnographic research. First, he observes an ubiquitous fondness for Frank Peretti's novel, *This Present Darkness*, and notes that InterVarsity Christian Fellowship students are "more likely to cite Peretti than they are the Bible."⁹ He also cites Robert Guelich's 1991 article, "Jesus, Paul, and Peretti," and presents Peretti's writings as "the Bible of spiritual warfare."¹⁰ Given the importance of Peretti to this particular IVCF chapter, and given Guelich's presentation of Peretti's importance, it is understandable that Bramadat came to the conclusion he did. However, Guelich's work is dated. Peretti is important in a *historical* understanding of spiritual warfare, as his writing helped popularize a particular conception of it outside of Charismatic circles, and when Guelich wrote his article in 1991, Peretti was still significant. Peretti is no longer central to spiritual warfare

⁷ Paul Bramadat, *The Church on the World's Turf: An Evangelical Christian Group at a Secular University*, 115.

⁸ Bramadat observed that the IVCF students "feel a duty to wage war for the souls of their non-Christian peers at McMaster." Ibid, 117.

⁹ Paul Bramadat, *The Church on the World's Turf: An Evangelical Christian Group at a Secular University*, 104.

¹⁰ Ibid.

discourse.

Though focused on contemporary exorcism, Michael W. Cuneo's *American Exorcism* probably fits best into a general discussion of spiritual warfare. Exorcism is the extreme end of what "spiritual warfare" entails, and Cuneo's work is a valuable asset to this study. Though most of what was observed at the Anchor Fellowship was more ordinary, the concepts behind the various forms of exorcism Cuneo discusses are relevant.

Much of Cuneo's focus is on Roman Catholic exorcisms – a valuable examination, but it lies outside the scope of this work. But since he has dedicated considerable attention to deliverance ministries as well, *American Exorcism* is valuable to this research. In fact, it is the most academic attention given to the topic of deliverance ministry. Cuneo has an interest in demonstrating that an increased focus on exorcisms in the last forty years is inextricably linked to cultural representations, particularly *The Exorcist* and Martin Malachi's book *Hostage to the Devil*.¹¹ Through interviews and observation, Cuneo presents well how commonplace the attachment to cultural representations of possession is, and how these cultural representations of the demonic manifest themselves in exorcisms. While in this research I did not specifically find *The Exorcist* or *Hostage to the Devil* to be prominent, his overarching argument about cultural representation of the demonic seems to be true. Generally, in the groups examined during this study, cultural reference points exist, they just more frequently seem to be Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and occasionally, Smith Wigglesworth. Cuneo's point about cultural representations factoring into perceptions of the demonic seems valid, though the cultural

¹¹ Michael W. Cuneo, *American Exorcism: Expelling Demons in the Land of Plenty* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 70.

reference points vary more than what his research depicts.

Perhaps the most valuable part of his work are his theories about *why* people adhere to these cultural representations of the demonic. Cuneo cautiously avoids denying or affirming the veracity of the demonic,¹² but he has observed that what has been presented to him as genuine demonic activity often falls into line with cultural representations. In other words, the demons typically behave as people expect them to behave. Often, he argues, this phenomenon is because of psychological issues, and people who realize that they have these significant, psychological issues find an explanation in demons.¹³ Having found a solution to these psychological problems in the demonic, such individuals then proceed to behave as they expect a demonized person would behave.

Another motivation may be the need to validate an existing conception of the cosmos. Cuneo writes concerning disparities between his first-hand observation of particular exorcisms and the participants' observations, as follows.

People tend to be so keyed up during an exorcism, so eager to sink their fingers into something preternatural, that they easily convince themselves they're seeing, hearing, or feeling things that simply aren't there.¹⁴

Again, Cuneo's point here is not to invalidate the possibility that demons exist, but to suggest that people perceive reality differently, and cultural understandings of demons can inform the participants' experience of an exorcism in ways other than what an outside observer (in this case, himself) may experience during the same event.

¹² Ibid, 274.

¹³ Ibid, 136-137, 162-164

¹⁴ Specifically, in this case, he is referring to people insisting someone had levitated several feet off of a chair at an exorcism at which he was present. He never saw such levitation. Ibid, 275

2. Spiritual Warfare and Sexuality

Tanya Erzen has discussed spiritual warfare briefly in her book, *Straight to Jesus*, though in this instance, spiritual warfare has been understood in relation to her ethnographic study of an ex-gay ministry in San Rafael, California. In Erzen's work, one sees the connections that emerge between spiritual warfare and the larger body of Evangelical belief and behavior. For example, when she first arrived at the New Hope Ministry in San Rafael, a director questioned her extensively. One of the first questions asked was "Who do you serve?"¹⁵ The question was intended to identify whether she was in God's camp or Satan's. Underlying the question is the tacit assumption that if one is not a Christian, by default one is loyal to Satan. This is a sharp dichotomy, and one which is present not just in the New Hope Ministry, but among many other Evangelical churches and organizations. In this question there is also the explicit belief that the individual chooses between God and Satan, an assumption which is heavily tied to the Arminian understanding of free will.

Elsewhere in her ethnography, she makes some connections between spiritual warfare and addiction, which are relevant to my ethnography. She posits that "in the language of New Hope, the individuals are "strugglers," or dealing with "sexual brokenness."¹⁶ There is a match in terminology between New Hope and the Anchor Fellowship. Helping people "work from a place of brokenness" is one of the major themes of the Anchor Fellowship, and, at times, is even referenced in their worship

¹⁵ Tanya Erzen, *Straight to Jesus: Sexual and Christian Conversions in the Ex-Gay Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 6.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 54

music.¹⁷ There is, however, no major focus on sexuality at the Anchor Fellowship, and if any ex-gay agenda exists, I never encountered it. The connection between "brokenness" and spiritual warfare is made apparent when Erzen explains that the program teaches that addiction is useful to Satan and is often instigated by satanic suggestion.¹⁸ This belief was characterized by a member of the New Hope ministry as Satan's presentation of "a distortion of God's plan."¹⁹

In the context of the greater body of Evangelical theology, this juxtaposition between "God's plan" and "Satan's distortion" draws attention to a major theme in spiritual warfare: the idea that Satan offers "counterfeits" to God's plan, strategies, and values, in order to lead people astray. This is a major concept that pervades most, if not all, Evangelical demonology. The specifics of Erzen's example also illustrate another point which is relevant to this study of the Anchor Fellowship, that there is a choice presented between God and Satan, and a belief that God will help "minister" to people who are "in a place of brokenness."²⁰

Amy DeRogatis recently published an article titled "'Born Again is a Sexual Term': Demons, STDs, and God's Healing Sperm," in the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. In this article, DeRogatis analyzes an obscure deliverance manual, which, she concedes, "most readers of mainstream evangelical sex manuals" would

¹⁷ The Glorious Unseen, "Hear Our Prayers," track one of *Tonight the Stars Speak*, CD. Bec Recordings, 2007.

¹⁸ Tanya Erzen, *Straight to Jesus: Sexual and Christian Conversions in the Ex-Gay Movement*, 166.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Joshua Stump, "The Terror of Christ, Part 2: The Justice of a Creator," http://web.me.com/monkstump/Anchor_New/Podcast/Entries/2008/8/24_Part_1_The_Terror_Of_Christ%E2%80%9CBirth_of_Spiritual_War%E2%80%9D_1.html (accessed March 2, 2009).

reject.²¹ The sex manual she discusses is *Holy Sex: God's Purpose and Plan for Our Sexuality*, which combines two bodies of literature: evangelical sex manuals and deliverance manuals. The book depicts sexually transmitted diseases as literal demons lodged in genetic material, and gives advice for avoiding and being delivered from sex demons.

While focused mainly on sexuality, DeRogatis introduces some important topics within the wider sphere of spiritual warfare, so that the study is valuable beyond its intended main focus. While she does not identify the more common terms typically used by Charismatics, she does identify the concepts of generational sin (discussed in chapter II), theophostics (chapter IV), and the relationships thought to exist between sin and demonic affliction (chapter II). Furthermore, she identified some key trends within Charismatic Christianity: first, that the relationship between the physical world and the spiritual world is often static and permeable, allowing spiritual beings to affect the physical world and vice versa, and, second, that there is a touch of animism within some deliverance approaches (chapter II), in that specific objects and locations can house demons. The main focus of her work is outside the scope of this study, as *Holy Sex* and the Anchor Fellowship share similarities only on a very basic level. They are more different than they are alike.

3. Spiritual Warfare in the Context of Politics

Another understanding of spiritual warfare can be found in Donald Mathews' 1993 article, "'Spiritual Warfare': Cultural Fundamentalism and the Equal Rights

²¹ Amy DeRogatis, "'Born Again Is a Sexual Term': Demons, STDS, and God's Healing Sperm," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 77, 2 (2009): 275-276.

Amendment."²² In this work, Mathews discussed spiritual warfare as a metaphor for Fundamentalist politics. While this proposal is not wrong *per se*, it is an incomplete explanation of the phenomenon. Spiritual warfare is first and foremost an understanding of the believer's role in the cosmic battle between God and Satan. While Fundamentalists sometimes interpret this war as having political implications, these politics should be understood as a *product* of spiritual warfare, and not synonymous with the metaphysical foundations of spiritual warfare.

Philippe Gonzalez' article in the March 2008 edition of *Terrain* has a better insight into the relationship between spiritual warfare and politics. Additionally, the piece is in general a valuable explanation of spiritual warfare concepts. While Gonzalez' main purpose is to establish a link between spiritual warfare and politics in France and Switzerland, he also offers what is one of only a very few ethnographic depictions of territorial spiritual warfare currently existing. Territorial spiritual warfare refers to an aggressive position Christians take against demons believed to control regions and/or institutions. Through his analysis, he offers insight into how some Charismatics view proselytizing as a form of spiritual warfare, the destruction and opposition to "false" religions as spiritual warfare, opposition to homosexuality and Catholicism as "demonic," as well as the political ramifications of these views.²³ Gonzalez also explains certain practices and rituals used in this kind of warfare that he personally observed, including the use of music, prophecy, prayer, praise, speaking in tongues, laying on of hands, and

²² Donald G. Mathews, "'Spiritual Warfare': Cultural Fundamentalism and the Equal Rights Amendment," *Religion and American Culture* 3, 2 (1993): 133-144.

²³ Phillipe Gonzalez, "Lutter contre l'emprise demoniaque: les politiques du combat spirituel evangelique" in *Terrain*, 50 (2008), 48-50.

what is in English usually referred to as "falling out" or "being slain in the spirit" (*s'écrouler dans l'Esprit*).²⁴

Gonzalez has also uncovered what seems to be the main tension between academic treatments of spiritual warfare as being political and the views of adherents on the matter, namely the tension between the cultural interpretation of practices by "outsiders" and that of "insiders." Gonzalez is probably right to view the use of Swiss flags and standards during prayer as politically motivated. The participation of officials from the *Parti évangélique suisse* in a prayer meeting focused on bringing the Kingdom of God to Geneva and Switzerland is understandably suggestive of politics.²⁵ Evangelical opposition to homosexuality often takes the form of political action; the notice Gonzalez takes of a cognate form of opposition in spiritual warfare²⁶ appears to provide another link. What is worthwhile to note is that while Gonzalez certainly draws political connections between territorial spiritual warfare and politics, the participants are reticent to make this same connection.²⁷ He refers to one participant as rejecting "political" as an appropriate term, and later on the same page, another participant draws the distinction: they are not being political, they are praying for their nation (*On ne fait pas de politique: on prie pour la nation*).²⁸ Thus, while spiritual warfare sometimes has political implications, it is not generally understood as being synonymous to politics by those who participate in it. Nationalism and "praying for the nation" may seem political to outsiders but not to insiders.

²⁴ Ibid., 55-58.

²⁵ Ibid. 56

²⁶ By this statement I am referring to Gonzalez' understanding of the "*exorcisme de la Gay Pride et de la Lake Parade*". (Ibid. 56, 59.) While an exorcism is not itself political, there are implicit links between spiritual opposition and political opposition. I will expand on this point further in Chapter VI.

²⁷ "Il semble dubatif quant à la pertinence du terme «politique» pour désigner ce que se déroule lors de soirées PTL." Ibid, 59.

²⁸ Ibid., 59

While Sara Diamond's book *Spiritual Warfare: The Politics of the Christian Right* is labelled as sociological, the dogmatism and "spin" that saturate the text are more indicative of Diamond's interest in investigative journalism.²⁹ Furthermore, the piece demonstrates little to no understanding of the nuances and complexity of Evangelical thought, and reveals, in the end pages, Diamond's own political agenda.³⁰

As for spiritual warfare, Diamond appears to understand what the concept actually entails, and I would not dispute the definition she provides in the glossary.³¹ However, the glossary is one of only four passing references made to spiritual warfare in the book, and the connections between the concept of spiritual warfare and Fundamentalist politics are never successfully established. The title of the book seems to have been chosen for the shock value the term can carry, rather than any real connection between spiritual warfare practices and politics. Oddly, there actually are some connections that can be drawn between spiritual warfare and politics, yet Diamond neglects to actually make these connections.

D. Methodology

I initially had difficulty in choosing a methodology for examining the topic of spiritual warfare. Since the scholarship on the subject is sparse, merely assessing work by

²⁹ Diamond is described as both a sociologist and an investigative journalist on the unpaginated "About the Author" page. The self-identification of the work as "Sociology/Politics" is found on the back cover. Sara Diamond, *Spiritual Warfare: The Politics of the Christian Right* (Boston: South End Press, 1989).

³⁰ Diamond outlines what she views as appropriate responses and actions against Fundamentalist politics. While on a personal level I actually agree with much of what she proposes, my point here is that this book is itself propaganda, not sociology. Ibid., 232-234.

³¹ She defines it as "A form of intense prayer - often accompanied by 'charismatic' practices such as speaking in tongues - intended to change either a material or supernatural situation. Practitioners consider "spiritual warfare" to be a direct confrontation with the source of all evil, Satan. Often 'spiritual warfare' is used in groups where the desired goal is political, such as when 'prayer warriors' focus on a particular public figure or piece of legislation or an entire nation believed to be under attack by Satan." Ibid. 241

others was an entirely untenable proposition. After considering a number of approaches, I settled on ethnography (participant-observation). I searched through sermon podcasts on the internet looking for churches that 1) had something significant to say about spiritual warfare, and 2) might be open to participating in an ethnography. In February 2009, I contacted pastor Joshua Stump at the Anchor Fellowship in Nashville, Tennessee, about the possibility of undertaking my study at his church. He not only seemed willing to participate, but enthusiastic about the project. In May 2009, I moved to Nashville and began my study.

While some research occurred prior to arrival (analysis of online sermons, websites, etc), most of the data came from the period of participation-observation between May 2009 and February 2010. Twenty-six formal interviews were conducted, although some data were derived from additional, informal conversations. I also observed two deliverance sessions (exorcisms). There were few difficulties with these; the members of the Anchor Fellowship seemed eager to share their views and experiences with an outsider. I had anticipated some resistance to my presence there, but there seemed to be little.

I also was permitted to observe many of the pastoral meetings that took place, as well as all aspects of community life, including: prayer before services, worship nights, ministry training sessions, lectures, home groups, fundraisers, and long-distance events, such as the stage the Anchor Fellowship runs at the Cornerstone Music Festival and the fundraiser trip to Sturgis, South Dakota. As for my own participation during the course of this research, I acted only in what my own conscience would allow.

Ethnography is not the sole approach of this study, however. How can one explain

spiritual warfare at the Anchor Fellowship when there is no suitable corpus of scholarship by which to contextualize the findings? Furthermore, many ethnographies are aimed at understanding a culture in its entirety,³² whereas this study examines one topic within a particular religious culture (The Anchor Fellowship).

The most appropriate method for this thesis is to take a two-pronged approach: while the bulk of the research has been ethnographic, this study frames the ethnography within the greater body of Evangelical thought on spiritual warfare. In other words, the primary goal has been to study spiritual warfare within the Anchor Fellowship, but in order to clearly explain *the particular way* in which it is understood and manifested, it is best to compare the Anchor Fellowship's views with those of the Evangelical world at large, using literature and sermons.

For this thesis, I observed the Anchor Fellowship for nine months. While most ethnographies typically take a year, nine months is not unreasonably short.³³ Initially, I merely observed the culture, ritual, beliefs, and behaviors of the members of the Anchor Fellowship. While I asked questions in this initial observation period, I mostly did so sporadically as opportunity allowed. According to anthropologist Russell Bernard, much can be learned from merely "hanging out."³⁴ It is in periods of "hanging out" where an ethnographer may observe or suddenly be made privy to information that she or he may not have even known to inquire about.

After this period of observation, I began to conduct "unstructured" interviews with willing participants, which were open-ended, i.e., having no set schedule, and

³² "An ethnography attempts to be holistic - covering as much territory as possible about a culture, subculture, or program - but it necessarily falls far short of the whole." David M. Fetterman, *Ethnography: Step by Step*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 1998), 11.

³³ H. Russell Bernard, *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods*, 3rd ed. (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2002), 329-331.

³⁴ Ibid, 346.

without questionnaires or a script.³⁵ I did have some specific topics I asked about in these interviews, but by avoiding a script or questionnaire, I attempted to create a more "conversational" interview, which I believe was more comfortable for the interviewees. Also, by avoiding the imposition of an inadvertently rigid framework on the conversation, it allowed for useful and unanticipated information to emerge.

I have tried to avoid the "reflexive" ethnographic approach, although it presents some important issues. While at times my own reactions and observations may be relevant to this study, on the whole I am interested in presenting what the Anchor Fellowship believes, not what I think about their beliefs. Arguing for reflexive ethnography, Kenneth Lieberman has asked:

Perhaps an even more important question regarding objectivity here is "how can I discover anything meaningfully accurate about the people I am living with if I refuse to make myself open to being transformed by them?" What sort of ethical practice would it be to banish the practices of people with whom I interact on a face-to-face basis to a location that is a priori beyond the pale of my own possibilities?³⁶

This question seems like a philosophical concern disguised as a methodological one, and it seems to be thematic to reflexive ethnography. Is it impossible to understand another culture as an outsider? Lieberman's main argument is predicated on the benefits of "going native," which for him meant adopting Tibetan practices and behaviors. There is certainly a strategic benefit to adopting such practices in that it reduces some discomfort for the culture being scrutinized and therefore produces a more open environment for study.³⁷ Actually absorbing and appropriating those cultural practices

³⁵ Ibid, 204-205.

³⁶ Kenneth Lieberman, "Ethnographic Practice and the Critical Spirit" in *Toward Reflexive Ethnography: Participating, Observing, Narrating*, eds. by David G. Bromley and Lewis F. Carter (Oxford: Elsevier Science Ltd, 2001), 95.

³⁷ Overcoming the limitations of being an "outsider" is one of the reasons ethnographies typically take so long. H. Russell Bernard, *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods*, 3rd ed., 330.

and beliefs as one's own, however, should not be considered requisite to understanding another culture, since it assumes one cannot understand other people unless they agree with one another on some level. I was not "closed" to adopting certain practices of the Anchor Fellowship, but I approached them openly as a non-Christian. They were very good-natured about this difference in our beliefs (as a joke, they even gave me my own email address: atheist@theanchorfellowship.com), and I do not believe this difference has in any significant way limited my ability to understand what they have shared with me.

At the same time, I am not oblivious to the "crisis of representation"³⁸ that methods like reflexive and collaborative ethnography³⁹ attempt to meliorate. As Fetterman has observed:

One danger of ethnography is that it can produce a stereotype of a group, subculture, or culture [...] As long and detailed as most ethnographies are, they typically represent only a fraction of what the ethnographer learned and saw.⁴⁰

Similarly, James Clifford has argued that "even the best ethnographic texts—serious, true fictions—are systems, or economies, of truth. Power and history work through them, in ways their authors cannot fully control."⁴¹ The gist of this statement is that in studying cultural groups, ethnographers inevitably create partial truths, misrepresenting subjects either through omission or simply through limited understanding.

I feel these issues of representation can be addressed in two ways. First, by

³⁸ Rosalind I. J. Hackett, "Anthropology of Religion," in *The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion*, ed. by John R. Hinnells (New York: Routledge, 2005), 149.

³⁹ Luke Eric Lassiter has proposed that in order to get a legitimate cultural portrayal, one should give the subjects the power to add their writing to the results, as well as to veto the researcher's writing. Luke Eric Lassiter, *The Chicago Guide to Collaborative Ethnography* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 16.

⁴⁰ David M. Fetterman, *Ethnography: Step by Step*, 2nd ed., 24.

⁴¹ James Clifford, "Introduction: Partial Truths," in *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, eds. Clifford and Marcus (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 7.

contrasting the Anchor Fellowship with the Evangelical world as a whole, I believe I can avoid stereotyping Evangelicalism, or at minimum, mute it. Such stereotyping is a sizable problem when addressing topics within Evangelicalism, and some are unashamed to do so.⁴²

Second, I have shared my writing with those about whom I have written before I submitted this thesis. Of course, I retained the final authority on what was written in this thesis, but by sharing it with members of the Anchor Fellowship, I have tried to avoid misrepresenting their beliefs and practices.

I may be limited to "partial truths" as Clifford said, but by remaining open with members of the Anchor Fellowship, and by being vigilant against stereotyping and projecting my own ideas upon them, I hope I have presented the largest possible portion of partial truth.

Before leaving for Tennessee, I submitted an ethics proposal for this study to both the Religious Studies department and the university. My proposal was approved by both the Committee on Ethics in Human Research of the Department of Religious Studies and by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research at Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Lastly, it is common in ethnographies to refer to participants by pseudonyms. However, this becomes an issue when some people prefer to be identified (many Evangelicals consider their testimony an act of faith), and when some people are difficult to mask. Even if I were to refer to pastor Joshua Stump by some fictitious name, any

⁴² For example, Ira Chernus blatantly categorizes Evangelicals as a uniform group with a set, structured theology in order to make his argument that Evangelicals are responsible for the War on Terror. While there is a kernel of truth in his argument in that a particular subset of Evangelicalism can indeed be linked to the ideologies that the War on Terror is predicated upon, the attributing of this subset to the whole is incorrect, and, frankly, irresponsible. Ira Chernus, *Monsters to Destroy: The Neoconservative War on Terror and Sin* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2006), 106-107.

curious party could find the Anchor website and discover his real name. With two exceptions (Pastor Joshua Stump, and Tommy Green, frontman for a Christian metalcore band called "Sleeping Giant"), I offered anonymity to all participants in this study.⁴³ Some chose to take anonymity, and I have masked their real names with fictitious ones. Others preferred that I use their real names. To distinguish between the two, I have kept all pseudonyms in quotation marks throughout this text, and all real names without quotation marks.

E. Chapter Summary

Spiritual warfare is the term Evangelical Christians use to describe the conflict understood to exist between God and Satan, in which humans are also believed to be active participants. Few studies have been done on the topic, and many of the studies that do exist tend to either treat spiritual warfare as a subtopic within a larger study, or focus narrowly upon one facet of spiritual warfare, such as politics or sexuality.

In order to understand spiritual warfare autonomously, this study endeavors to do so by examining it in a "real world" setting using ethnographic methods. By contrasting spiritual warfare as it is practiced at the Anchor Fellowship in Nashville, Tennessee, with spiritual warfare practices and beliefs of the larger Evangelical world, a clear and detailed depiction will emerge.

⁴³ The use of real names can sometimes lead to unforeseen problems. After the film *Jesus Camp* was released, the summer camp featured in the documentary had to be shut down due to vandalism and backlash from people angry about some of their controversial practices. While this thesis is unlikely to have mass circulation and public exposure like *Jesus Camp*, it seemed important to offer people the opportunity to use pseudonyms, and in several cases, I specifically recommended anonymity to an individual. See Religion News Service and Associated Press, "Pastor Will Shut Down Controversial Kids Camp," *Seattle Times*, 8 Nov 2006, <http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/nationworld/2003365311_jesuscamp08.html> (accessed 20 July 2010).

Chapter II - Introduction to Spiritual Warfare and Demonology

The first chapter provided a general definition of spiritual warfare and discussed existing academic research on the topic. It also identified the methodology for this thesis research, including the assertion that in order to understand what spiritual warfare means practically, one must attempt to understand it both in an individual case study as well as what exists within the broader Evangelical milieu (more specifically, the “Western” Evangelical milieu). This chapter will explore the latter point by introducing the specific demonological topics that are important to Evangelical discourse, and by outlining the general approaches Evangelicals take in spiritual warfare practices.

A. Introducing the Devil

From the very beginning, the existence of the devil as a powerful force of evil has been a main tenet of Christianity. In modern times, some Christians' understanding of the devil has shifted more toward a conception of evil as a vague force or an idea, though for most of Christian history, the devil has been understood as a created entity, replete with a personality and agenda.⁴⁴ Within contemporary Evangelical theology, the existence of a personal devil remains the predominant viewpoint.

It is to be expected that with the diversity of beliefs within contemporary Evangelicalism, there will likewise be a diversity of beliefs regarding Satan. Indeed, this

⁴⁴ Historically this position has not been the sole view, but it has, since the beginning, been an important view. See Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Satan: The Early Christian Tradition*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), 23, 27-28.

is the case, though there is less discord than one might initially anticipate.

1. Concordant Views

It seems unlikely that any point of theology is uniformly held by all Evangelicals, and that holds true regarding issues of Satan and theodicy as well. However, there are some points which are, on the whole, generally agreed upon by a strong majority.

a. Origins

While there are no fully universal tenets within Evangelical Christianity, the origin of Satan does come close to being uniformly accepted among all Evangelicals. Nearly all believe that Satan was an angel created by God. *In illo tempore*, the angel Satan initiated a rebellion against God, and was subsequently expelled from heaven.⁴⁵ From that point forward, the devil has waged an aggressive war against heaven and the created world.⁴⁶

Evangelicals generally draw upon several biblical passages when proposing this viewpoint. First, they look to Genesis 1 for the understanding that all things were created by God (reinforced by John 1:1-5). Generally this is understood to include angels as part of the created order.⁴⁷ Matthew 25:41 refers to "the devil and his angels" and 2 Peter 2:4

⁴⁵ "From that time [the fall of Satan] onward the conflict of the ages has raged between God and Satan for the souls of men." Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, *Charting the End Times: A Visual Guide to Understanding Bible Prophecy* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2001), 32.

⁴⁶ Barclay, for example, connects the "primeval war in heaven" with the eschatological war in heaven, implying that they are the same war. Pride is considered the reason for Satan's fall. This is a standard viewpoint among Evangelicals. William Barclay, *The Revelation of John*, Volume 2, revised ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), 80-83.

⁴⁷ "No one knows for sure when Satan was created. But we can be sure of this: he is a created being." Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, *Charting the End Times: A Visual Guide to Understanding Bible Prophecy*, 31.

asserts that God sentenced sinful angels to hell.⁴⁸ Revelation 12:7-9 refers to "war in heaven" and asserts that Satan was "hurled to the earth." Though a less common interpretation, Ezekiel 28:12-19 is occasionally understood as a poetic description of Satan's origin and downfall.⁴⁹

b. The Demonic Agenda

The origin of Satan and the war in heaven are the only points that generally go unchallenged within the Evangelical discourse. The belief in a demonic agenda is very widely accepted, though it is challenged more often than the belief in Satan's beginnings, most commonly by those who adhere to the avoidance/resistance and cessationist approach (discussed later in this chapter).

The broadest explanation of the demonic agenda is drawn from John 10:10, which says "the thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy" (contrasted in this passage with Jesus as the good shepherd).⁵⁰ The thief is widely interpreted to be Satan. Additionally, John 8:44 refers to Satan as a liar, and Matthew 4 depicts him as the tempter. Within Christian interpretations of Genesis 3, the serpent who tempts Eve is understood to be Satan, an interpretation reinforced by Paul in 2 Corinthians 11:3. Zechariah 3:1-5 and Revelation 12:10 depict Satan as one who accuses humans of sin.

⁴⁸ Ed Murphy, for example, uses all of these references to support his view on the cosmic war between God and Satan. Other Evangelicals use these same verses as well, but for this specific example, see Ed Murphy, "We are at War," in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, ed. C. Peter Wagner and F. Douglas Pennoyer (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), 55-57.

⁴⁹ Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, *Charting the End Times: A Visual Guide to Understanding Bible Prophecy*, 31.

⁵⁰ This passage is one which is frequently cited to explain Satan's aims and goals. See, for example, Joe Kirkendale, "[sic] Angels and Demons: Week 3" on 17 Aug. 2008. <http://video.newlifechurch.org/db_files/081708Angles_and_Demons_-_Week_3.mp3> (accessed 10 Mar. 2009).

From these passages, Evangelicals typically reach the following conclusions: first, that Satan's fight with God has spilled over onto all of creation and that humans are subject to his attentions. Second, those attentions are malicious: Satan deliberately leads people to believe falsehoods, tempts people to sin, burdens them with guilt, and attempts to destroy anything good. These conclusions are widely accepted as generalities, but the Evangelicals disagree on specifics.

c. Overt and Covert Activities of Satan

Common within spiritual warfare discourse is the idea that Satan works both with covert methods and overt methods. Particularly within the systematic approach (covered later in this chapter) there is an interest in distinguishing between the two. These are also sometimes called the "ordinary demonic" and "extraordinary demonic."⁵¹ "Covert demonic" or "ordinary demonic" are terms that refer to subtle tactics the devil is believed to use, such as deception or temptation. "Overt demonic" or "extraordinary demonic" are terms that refer to dramatic tactics which Satan might employ, such as demon possession or apparitions. Most believers in the demonic believe that Satan works by using both strategies, though it is thought that the overt and extraordinary are employed less in the "Western" world.⁵² It is often argued that the modern Western world has become scientifically-oriented and naturalistic, and by not manifesting in obvious ways, demons keep the Western world pointed in an atheistic direction.

⁵¹ Mark Driscoll, "Spiritual Warfare Lecture Notes," <http://assets.marshallchurch.org/media/misc/spiritual-warfare_document.pdf> (accessed 13 Jan. 2009).

⁵² John Wimber, "Power Evangelism Definitions and Directions," in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, 29-30, 38-39.

2. Disputed Views

While there are a few points about the devil that are agreed upon, there are far more points that are disputed. Some of these disagreements are addressed in this section.

a. Powers of Satan and Demons

If the most contentious question regarding demons is how Christians should deal with them, the second most contentious question is what exactly can demons do? As would be expected, opinions on the matter cover a wide spectrum.

Among Evangelicals, and especially Charismatics, the majority view is that demons are active today. Their main functions are believed to be that of tempters, deceivers, and intimidators.⁵³ Based on personal observation, it appears that when Evangelicals speak of demons interfering in the lives of people, they are usually describing issues that can be classified under one of these three activities. For example, an Evangelical may say "demons encouraged me to lust," a statement which can be filed under the rubric "temptation."

Some Evangelicals believe that demons have an extreme measure of power. Neal Frisby of the Capstone Cathedral in Phoenix, Arizona, attributed his wife's suicide to demonic possession and asserts that he himself suffered alcoholism, drug abuse, and madness because demons willed it.⁵⁴

The question of whether Christians can be demonically possessed is prominent

⁵³ This is based on my own observation, as well as that of other observers. Bramadat, for example, notes all three of these same points. Paul Bramadat, *The Church on the World's Turf: An Evangelical Christian Group at a Secular University* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2000), 103-111.

⁵⁴ Randall Balmer, *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory: A Journey into the Evangelical Subculture of America* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2006), 79.

within the Evangelical discourse. One side claims that it is impossible, asserting that a Christian is filled with the Holy Spirit, and that the Holy Spirit will not allow demons to cohabitate. A further complaint is that "the idea of a true believer being inhabited by a demon also erodes the biblical concept of salvation and peace."⁵⁵ In other words, the scriptural promises of salvation and peace are difficult to reconcile with the idea of God allowing Christians to be possessed.

On the other side of the argument, we see some argue that anybody can be demonically possessed. This position is mainly found within the extremes of the Charismatic/deliverance approach and the obsessive/fringe approach, addressed later in this chapter, and appears to be a minority position. Those who argue for this position typically validate their view with experiential evidence. For example, one proponent claims that "Christians can be possessed. I have seen it, personally, with my own eyes."⁵⁶ He then continues to recount the story of a 10 year old boy, raised in a devout Christian family, who was demonically possessed. After three days, he claims, they were able to deliver the child from the demon, but the family never recovered from the event.

Another view—possibly the majority view—regarding the question of possession is that the question itself is misleading and that there is a semantic problem involved. It has been suggested that technically a Christian cannot be possessed, because "possessed" implies ownership and total control. Instead, some Evangelicals have taken to using the term "demonized" in lieu of "possessed."⁵⁷ This replacement term is used to refer to

⁵⁵ Assemblies of God, "Can Born-Again Christians Be Demon Possessed?" <http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/Position_papers/pp_downloads/pp_4176_posessed.pdf> (accessed 17 Mar. 2009).

⁵⁶ Demon Slayer, "Can Christians be Possessed?" <<http://www.demon-slayer.org/can-christians-be-possessed/>> (accessed 4 Jan. 2010).

⁵⁷ Ed Murphy, "We are at War," in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, 56.

Christians who are being significantly oppressed or tormented by demons but stops short of suggesting that a Christian can be owned or controlled by demons.⁵⁸ The usage of "demonized" has been appropriated by many prominent spiritual warfare theologians: e.g., Clinton Arnold⁵⁹ and Mark Driscoll.⁶⁰ Beyond the actual semantic debate of "possession" versus "demonization," the position is fuelling this widely held argument (that Christians can be afflicted, oppressed, and deluded by demons, but neither owned nor fully controlled by them). For example, Kurt Koch, who holds the position that Christians can actually be possessed wrote in a conciliatorily manner:

Perhaps we are confusing the two ideas of possession and obsession. It may be that a Christian we consider to be possessed, is actually only obsessed, and that instead of indwelling him, the demons are only surrounding him.⁶¹

b. Organization of Demons

It is often proposed that demons are organized into a structured, bureaucratic fashion like an army. Satan is always at the top of this chain, but under him are levels of demons with various levels of authority or power. This hierarchy is generally based on a literal interpretation of Ephesians 6:12, which refers to "powers, principalities, and rulers of the darkness," and a metaphorical interpretation of Daniel 10:4-13, in which an angel

⁵⁸ It should be noted that the common usage of "demonized" in contemporary English is to refer to a person or people group who have been made a scapegoat; "demonized" does not mean this when used in the context of spiritual warfare.

⁵⁹ Clinton Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1997), 101.

⁶⁰ Mark Driscoll, "Spiritual Warfare: Part 3: Christus Victor," <http://assets.marshillchurch.org/media/2008/02/05/20080205_christus-victor_audio.mp3> (accessed 17 Dec. 2008).

⁶¹ Kurt E. Koch, *Occult Bondage and Deliverance* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1970), 69

is impeded by "the Prince of Persia," who is understood to be a high ranking demon.⁶²

Out of this concept has arisen the idea of "territorial spirits." Territorial spirits are demons believed to control a particular region or institution. C. Peter Wagner, a prominent advocate for "territorial warfare," quotes Timothy Warner as having said

I have come to believe that Satan does indeed assign a demon or corps of demons to every geopolitical unit in the world, and that they are among the principalities and powers against whom we wrestle.⁶³

This demonological model appeals to spiritual warfare advocates because it provides an explanation for why evil appears to triumph.

Satan and his hosts are organized. If only believers could be united in their defense and their warfare, Satan would not win so many victories. Sad to say, Christians too often are so busy *fighting one another* that they have no time for fighting the devil.⁶⁴

This quote summarizes the territorial mindset; the difficulties in advancing God's kingdom are rooted in Christian disorganization and disunity, whereas Satan's army is disciplined, unified, and aggressive. Satan's army is also believed to be strategic. This understanding has prompted the creation of what is known in Charismatic circles as "Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare," which is warfare aimed at high-ranking demons believed to hold authority over other, weaker demons.

The major dispute over these points lies in the spiritual warfare approach taken with territorial spirits. Regarding the hierarchy itself, there do not seem to be any literature or sermons which dispute it. One might conjecture that any disagreement on this point is expressed through quiet omission rather than open dispute. For those who

⁶² Charles Kraft, for example, proposes this structure, and even includes a chart contrasting the angelic hierarchy with the satanic one. Charles H. Kraft and David M. DeBord, *The Rules of Engagement: Understanding the Principalities That Govern The Spiritual Battles in Our Lives* (Colorado Springs: Wagner Publications, 2000), 103-106.

⁶³ C. Peter Wagner, "Territorial Spirits" in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, 74.

⁶⁴ Warren W. Weirsbe, *The Strategy of Satan* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1979), 144.

accept the idea that Satan is literal, real, and active, whether or not he has organized the demons into an army is not an important enough point to argue about.

Similar to the concept of territorial spirits are demons of specific sins or ailments. For example, one may refer to "a spirit of infirmity," "a demon of homosexuality," etc. There are no taxonomic terms like "territorial spirit" for classifying these demons, except for the term "vice spirits," which Charles Kraft uses.⁶⁵ The category is broader than just vices, however, because these spirits function in demonology as instigators and perpetrators of specific sins *or* ailments. Perhaps the term "assigned spirits" should be applied to this classification.

Assigned spirits are sometimes presented as either being attached to individuals⁶⁶ but they are sometimes presented as another version of a territorial spirit, encouraging a particular evil within a region or people group.⁶⁷ In some demonologies, there is no distinction made between territorial and assigned spirits. For example, because of the long-standing patterns of poverty and crime in Detroit, a believer in territorial or assigned spirits might propose that Detroit is afflicted by a spirit of despair. Individuals in Detroit might also be afflicted by lesser spirits working under the auspices of the territorial spirit of despair.⁶⁸ The concept itself is nebulous and ill-defined, but very common within demonology, and especially in Charismatic circles.

Conceptually similar to territorial spirits are household spirits. In some strands of

⁶⁵ Charles H. Kraft and David M. DeBord, *The Rules of Engagement: Understanding the Principalities That Govern The Spiritual Battles in Our Lives*, (Colorado Springs: Wagner Publications, 2000), 106.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Wagner tells a story about a pastor who was unable to do ministry in Evanston, IL, until he confronted a territorial spirit of witchcraft. After commanding the spirit (who appeared as an apparition) to give up a specific amount of territory, the pastor's ministry became effective. Most of the converts "came out of witchcraft." C. Peter Wagner, "Territorial Spirits" in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, 82.

⁶⁸ This vaguer model is what is used at the Anchor Fellowship.

Charismatic religion, there is a belief that houses, rooms, or objects can be possessed by demons.⁶⁹ With houses and rooms, an exorcism of the property is generally advised, whereas with specific objects (especially idols or occult objects, like magic books), destruction of the item is often proposed.⁷⁰

While the concept and perceived conflict with territorial spirits may seem a modern innovation, there actually are parallels to be found in antiquity. After pagan temples began to be abandoned in the post-Constantine era, Coptic monks would occasionally go in and cleanse them of demons, which they believed had been drawn in through the old pagan practices.⁷¹

c. Witchcraft, False Religions, and Generational Sin

There is a strong belief within Evangelicalism that non-Christian, and especially non-monotheistic religions,⁷² are evil. Practitioners of such religions are thought to be more strongly exposed to demonic influences. At the top of "evil" religions lie witchcraft, New Age religion, and paganism, an observation also made by other researchers.⁷³ Opposing Christian sects are often viewed as counterfeit and Satanically-inspired, on the

⁶⁹ Chuck D. Pierce and Rebecca Wagner Systema, *Ridding Your Home of Spiritual Darkness* (Colorado Springs: Wagner Publications, 2000), 17-19.

⁷⁰ Ibid. 17-24.

⁷¹ David Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk: Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 223.

⁷² For example, Joe Kirkendale of the New Life Church in Colorado Springs said in one of his teachings: "I think of religions that have all these gods, and I don't think I'm too far in saying this, but I think like a religion like the new age religion or even some aspects of Hinduism where they're worshiping their own personal little god, maybe in some ways that little god does have some sort of spiritual power, and that spiritual power may just be a demon." Joe Kirkendale, "[sic] Angles and Demons: Week 3" on 17 Aug. 2008. <http://video.newlifechurch.org/db_files/081708Angles_and_Demons_-_Week_3.mp3> (accessed 10 Mar. 2009).

⁷³ Paul Bramadat, *The Church on the World's Turf: An Evangelical Christian Group at a Secular University*, 110.

grounds that heresy is demonic.⁷⁴

Such beliefs are predicated on three things: first, the concept that Satan actively promotes false religion;⁷⁵ two, that Satan attempts to counterfeit the divine activities and actions of God, producing corrupt versions of holy things;⁷⁶ and three, that there are only two sides in the spirit world, God and Satan.⁷⁷ From this principle, Evangelicals often account for the fact that many religions claim the same results that are theoretically reserved only for Christians or God. For example, there is a belief that fortunetellers, tarot readers, and psychics may have legitimate supernatural knowledge. However, since the knowledge comes through agencies other than the Holy Spirit, the knowledge must be coming from demons. Any communion with demons is believed to "open doors" for stronger demonization, including the possibility of full possession. It is sometimes proposed that those who follow false religions are entranced by the demonic power imbued within counterfeit scripture, that just as the Bible is powerful because of the Holy Spirit, the texts of false religion are powerful because of "demonic inspiration."⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Clinton Arnold is one prominent proponent of this, citing Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, and Christian Science as examples. Clinton Arnold, *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare*, 53-55, 62-63.

⁷⁵ For example, Charismatic Christians in Ghana assess traditional religion as being demonic. "The deities of African traditional religions have survived in Pentecostal hermeneutics as "principalities and powers", that is, agents of the devil in the world whose influence on believers must be subdued. So, salvation in the African context involves not just repentance through the confession of personal sins but also the renunciation of intended and unintended participation in "demonic" cultural practices, such as "rites of passage", and the repudiation of the effects of generational sins and curses upon a person's life." This interpretation of competing religions as Satanically-inspired religions is standard. J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "Mission to 'Set the Captives Free': Healing, Deliverance, and Generational Curses in Ghanaian Pentecostalism," *International Review of Mission* 93, no 370/371 (2004): 391.

⁷⁶ "His work is characterized by 'counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives.' This will be especially true in the time just prior to Christ's return, but I understand the passage to say that such deceptive shows of power are his standard mode of operation." Timothy M. Warner, "Deception: Satan's Chief Tactic," in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, 109.

⁷⁷ This is implicit in virtually every text advocating spiritual warfare. Satan (and demons) and God (and angels) are discussed as being in opposition to each other, with no ground left for other cosmic powers.

⁷⁸ F. Douglas Pennoyer, "In Dark Dungeons of Collective Captivity" in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, ed. C. Peter Wagner and F. Douglas Pennoyer, (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, Inc, 1990), 264.

Some Evangelicals believe that demons can be transmitted along family lines. This concept is often referred to as "generational sin" or "generational curses"⁷⁹ and is thought to work in the following way. If one's grandmother was a witch, she may have acquired demons through her witchcraft. These demons may have been passed on to one's parents, and then finally on to oneself. Some believers in generational demons will create what are known as "genograms," a genealogical chart that outlines specific issues and "generational curses" afflicting a family, and which an individual may need to deal with.⁸⁰

B. Approaches to Spiritual Warfare

The method of how to deal with demons is the most contentious topic within Evangelical demonology. There is no uniform way to do it, no single approach that is accepted, and the approaches themselves are difficult to classify. Four general themes can be traced in spiritual warfare methods, but they are only that: themes. In an individual case study, the approach taken to spiritual warfare will not likely align neatly with one category; it will likely contain elements of another approach as well.

Before explaining these approaches fully, it is useful to identify them briefly. The approaches can be classified thus: 1) the avoidance/resistance and cessationist approach, in which adherents try to avoid and resist demonic influence; 2) the systematic approach, in which adherents attempt to construct a theological model for spiritual warfare and tend to formalize general methods; 3) the Charismatic/deliverance approach, in which

⁷⁹ This nomenclature is common, this website is merely one example. Spiritual Warfare Ministries Online, "Breaking Generational Strongholds," <http://www.sw-mins.org/gen_curses.html> (accessed 25 Jan. 2010)

⁸⁰ Michael W. Cuneo, *American Exorcism: Expelling Demons in the Land of Plenty* (Doubleday: New York 2001), 151-152.

adherents are less prone to formalized methods and theological models but prefer an intuitive approach; and 4) the obsessive/fringe approach, which is like the Charismatic approach, but prone to paranoia, a taxonomic interest in specific types of demons, and which often has methods that involve incantations and sympathetic magic. This title is not meant to be a pejorative classification, and the nomenclature will be explained more fully later in this chapter.

Regarding sources, for this section I have largely drawn upon sermons published online (“podcasts”) and written internet sites. These are now, I believe, the main avenue of publication for most churches, due to the affordability of online publication and the audience accessibility provided by the internet. In describing these categories, I have attempted to use mainly well-known proponents in order to best describe what is “mainstream” thought in each category, except the “fringe/obsessive” category, which by definition does not have “mainstream” views. I believe this is a good strategy for approaching broad overviews as this chapter attempts to do, though for the ethnographic study of the Anchor Fellowship (Chapters III-VII), I have mainly relied on oral sources.

1. Avoidance/Resistance and Cessationist Approaches

Though the theologies of the avoidance/resistance approach and the cessationist approach are quite different, the end result of these positions is the same: Christians ought not to engage significantly in spiritual warfare.

a. Avoidance/Resistance

This approach covers two similar methods for spiritual warfare, both of which are

based on the premise that most Christians should not be engaging spirits in cosmic combat. This hesitancy is sometimes based on a view that Christians are not powerful enough to be engaging spiritual forces and should instead be praying to God when dealing with a demonic issue. Other times, it is based on an interpretation of 1 Peter 5:8-9 that says that the way to deal with demons is to resist their influence by focusing on God, by which they will be defeated and leave. In other words, it is God alone who should handle demonic issues, and the individuals should remove themselves from the conflict.

Many people try to fight the enemy under their own power. This is particularly dangerous for people who are not skilled nor developed nor consecrated to the point that you have the level of anointing to fight the enemy. [...] If you want to win, my brothers and sisters, and want to win every time, simply do not get in the ring. If you want to win, and win every time, simply do not get in the ring. At the risk of sounding negative, I need to tell you that if you get in the ring with the enemy, he is going to put your lights out. If you get in the ring with the enemy, blow for blow, punch for punch, you are not ready for the level of warfare you're going to be hit with. He'll hit you in your finances, then uppercut you through your marriage, he'll come back and put you in a full-nelson in your emotions... -T.D. Jakes, pastor of The Potter's House in Dallas, TX ⁸¹

Referencing Jude 9, Jakes says that the proper method for engaging in spiritual warfare is to simply say "Satan, the Lord rebuke thee." In this way, spiritual warfare is avoided by the individual, but is instead left to God.

In a different way, the position of the Assemblies of God also suggests a resistance motif. In an official position, the denomination writes:

Our everyday Christian walk is not to be a litany of rebuking the devil at every turn, but rather a standing firm in the faith and resisting the temptations that Satan slyly brings against believers. To do more is to give greater credit to Satan than he deserves.⁸²

⁸¹ T. D. Jakes, "How to Fight with Devil?" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAN_F_Y4j74> (accessed Mar 16, 2009)

⁸² Assemblies of God, "Spiritual Warfare (Attacks of Satan)" <http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/sptlissues_spiritual_warfare.cfm> (accessed 17 Mar. 2009).

And elsewhere:

Jesus defeated Satan by quoting the Word of God (Matthew 4). We too must take our stand on God's Word and resist Satan and his demons, in faith (James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8,9). Then the shield of faith will quench every fiery dart of the enemy (Ephesians 6:16).⁸³

It should be noted that there is, in my experience, a disconnect between this official position of the Assemblies of God and the actual members. Christians I have met from this denomination tend to fall more in line with the Charismatic/deliverance approach than the avoidance/resistance approach officially espoused by the Assemblies of God.

b. Cessationist

Cessationism typically refers to the position that spiritual gifts—especially prophecy and speaking in tongues—ceased with the Apostles and New Testament authors.⁸⁴ A less prominent aspect of this position is that demonic activity (or at least, most demonic activity) also ceased with this era. Peter Masters, for example, holds that Satanic power is limited to temptation and influence, and that demons have no power to sicken, possess (except in situations where a person deliberately seeks possession), inflict psychological damage, reveal or manifest themselves.⁸⁵ He asserts that there is no authority given for exorcisms or interaction with demons, stating "God has forever

⁸³ Assemblies of God, "Can Born-Again Christians Be Demon Possessed?" <http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/Position_Papers/pp_downloads/pp_4176_posessed.pdf> (accessed 17 Mar. 2009).

⁸⁴ "Cessationism involves the belief that the NT [New Testament] miraculous sign gifts (cf. Acts 2:22; 2 Cor 12:12; Heb 2:3-4) ceased with the apostles' passing and the NT canon's completion. In general, noncessationists hold that all NT spiritual gifts have remained operative, even until today." Richard L. Mayhue, "Cessationism, 'the Gifts of Healing,' and Divine Healing," *The Masters Seminary Journal* 14, no. 2 (Fall 2003): 264.

⁸⁵ Peter Masters, *The Healing Epidemic* (London: The Wakeman Trust, 1988), 83, 85, 88, 106.

forbidden verbal interaction between His people and demons."⁸⁶ Similarly, specifically addressing John Wimber and the signs-and-wonders movement, John F. MacArthur Jr. writes "We are not commissioned to confront satanic power with miracle power. We are commissioned to confront satanic lies with divine truth."⁸⁷

As demonstrated by these examples, the avoidance/resistance approach has some significant adherents. The cessationist approach appears to have fewer but remains an important voice.

Additionally, the other three approaches agree with the avoidance/resistance approach in affirming that resisting sin and demonic lies is a legitimate method, yet they do not believe it is the *only* legitimate method.

2. Systematic Approach

The systematic approach is characterized by 1) a tendency towards formalizing general methods (if not specifics), especially through taxonomy, and 2) a validation of their views by frequent recourse to theological exegeses. This does not mean that people employing the other approaches do not also validate their positions through exegesis or do not have general methods. What makes the systematic approach unique is that it is *consciously preoccupied* with these characteristics and is wary of approaches that do not share this preoccupation. A systematic approach to spiritual warfare also takes a very structured format. A good example of the systematic approach is found in Mark Driscoll's recorded four-part lecture series on spiritual warfare, a series which lasts for four and a

⁸⁶ Ibid., 94.

⁸⁷ John F. MacArthur Jr., *Charismatic Chaos* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 135.

half hours and comes with thirteen pages of lecture notes.⁸⁸

Driscoll first begins his lecture with a discussion of who Satan is, what he is after, and how he came to be. He states that in order to understand Satan and spiritual warfare, he began by reading the entire bible, and studied all of the verses that discuss demons (the lecture notes contain the entire list). He also references many theological texts that range from modern writers like Clinton Arnold and C. S. Lewis to classical Puritan writers such as William Gurnall and John Owen, and to patristic authors like Augustine.⁸⁹

In the second part of the series, Driscoll discusses the ordinary demonic. He systematizes the varying ways the devil subtly attacks Christians—dividing it by subcategories, and giving examples for each.⁹⁰ He occasionally details how certain people are more susceptible to particular kinds of attack. For example, women are more prone to "idle gossiping and busy-bodying," and citing Romans 1, he links monism, pantheism, and panentheism to causing homosexuality. He repeats this process with the extraordinary demonic.

What best illustrates the systematic nature of this approach, however, is Driscoll's method for handling demonization.⁹¹ He prescribes certain actions and proscribes others,

⁸⁸ Mark Driscoll is the lead pastor of the Mars Hill Church in Seattle, Washington, and is one of the pastors at the forefront of popular contemporary Evangelicalism.

⁸⁹ Mark Driscoll, "Spiritual Warfare: Part 1: Introduction to Spiritual Warfare," <http://assets.marshillchurch.org/media/2008/02/05/20080205_introduction-to-spiritual-warfare_audio.mp3> (accessed 17 Dec. 2008).

⁹⁰ For example, he asserts that Satan likes to work primarily through heresy, then provides myriad examples of how this happens. Mark Driscoll, "Spiritual Warfare: Part 2: The Devil," <http://assets.marshillchurch.org/media/2008/02/05/20080205_the-devil_audio.mp3> (accessed 17 Dec. 2008).

⁹¹ Driscoll dislikes the term "demon-possessed" because he considers it unbiblical, and instead prefers the term "demonized." He holds the view that both Christians and non-Christians can be demonized. Mark Driscoll, "Spiritual Warfare: Part 3: Christus Victor" <http://assets.marshillchurch.org/media/2008/02/05/20080205_christus-victor_audio.mp3> (accessed 17 Dec. 2008)

and the lecture notes contain what one might consider to be an exorcism guide.⁹² For example, he proscribes direct communication with the demons afflicting a person, saying:

there are two ways to deal with someone who has demonic issues. One is to speak directly to the demon. If you do, the demon takes over the person, this is where their eyes roll back in their head, this is where their voice changes, this is where they demonstrate supernatural strength, this is where things go nuts. Don't ever do that. People need to be self-controlled and alert [1 Peter 5:8]. You don't allow a demon to take over a person. You don't speak directly to a demon.⁹³

Instead, Driscoll prescribes establishing a trial for a demon or demons. Since talking directly to a demon is proscribed, the demonized individual will act as an interpreter, telling the questioner what the demon tells them or shows them.⁹⁴ The basic premise is that the questioning Christian assumes an authority over Satan and demons that is given to them by Christ. The Christian appoints himself as an attorney, asks Jesus to be the judge, and asks the Holy Spirit to serve as a bailiff enforcing the rules. The rules are established by the Christian, and include asserting authority and "binding the strongman,"⁹⁵ ordering the demons not to change their command structure (they are thought to function as a military unit), and the highest-ranking demon is the one to be questioned. The demons are ordered to speak "clearly, concisely, and truthfully," and after each answer the demon provides, the question is to be asked "Will that stand as truth before the White Throne of the Lord God Almighty?"⁹⁶ In the end, the demon is ordered

⁹² Mark Driscoll, "Spiritual Warfare Lecture Notes,"

<http://assets.marshillchurch.org/media/misc/spiritual-warfare_document.pdf> (accessed 13 Jan. 2009).

⁹³ Mark Driscoll, "Spiritual Warfare: Part 3: Christus Victor"

<http://assets.marshillchurch.org/media/2008/02/05/20080205_christus-victor_audio.mp3> (accessed 17 Dec. 2008).

⁹⁴ There is an expressed assumption that the demonized person is already hearing the demons afflicting them. Ibid.

⁹⁵ This phrase is common in spiritual warfare, and refers to spiritually restraining demons. The language is derived from Mark 3:27. Ibid.

⁹⁶ Driscoll believes that a demon cannot answer this question untruthfully. The White Throne referenced is the White Throne of Revelation 20:11. This presents an interesting conception of time, as it binds the demon to swear by an event which occurs in the future. Ibid.

to descend immediately to the pit without entering into or afflicting anyone else along the way. Driscoll claims "We are going to judge the angels in the end; it's perfectly fine to judge a few in the middle as well."

He also states that the purpose of questioning the demon is so that the demonized person can 1) learn how they first acquired the demon (always through sin) and then "kick them out and lock the door forever" and 2) learn exactly what damage that demon has wreaked in their life.

The purpose of the trial and the rules are to help someone be freed of demonic influence in the most controlled way possible. Driscoll also states that this procedure should only be done by experienced leaders, and only for Christians.⁹⁷

3. Charismatic/Deliverance Approach

The Charismatic/deliverance approach affirms that Satan exists, interferes with human life, and that there is something that Christians can do about it. While there are concrete concepts and explanations for what that "something" is, these concepts and explanations typically avoid the rigorous taxonomies characteristic of the systematic approach. Like the systematic approach, the Charismatic/deliverance approach will also reference theologians or authors, but there is a pronounced difference in purpose in that these references seem to be made more for didactic purposes than for theological validation. To borrow the language of Meyers-Briggs, if the systematic approach is "thinking," the Charismatic/deliverance approach is "feeling."

The Charismatic/deliverance approach can take many forms. It can be orderly,

⁹⁷ Driscoll interprets Matthew 12:45 to mean that exorcising demonized non-Christians makes things worse.

with an adherent calmly reprimanding spirits and telling them to leave. It can be chaotic, with multiple people rolling around on the floor screaming during a group deliverance.⁹⁸ There are also cases where the Charismatic/deliverance approach takes the form of an almost shamanistic conflict.⁹⁹ One example can be found in a recounted story about mission work in Tibet, where two missionaries were confronted by demons in their hotel room. These demons came as apparitions, one of which threw "fiery darts" at one of the missionaries, who shouted the name of Jesus, at which point the demon "died."¹⁰⁰

The next day they had a stand-off with a Buddhist monk who was under the influence of demons. They had been praying in the temple courtyard, which agitated the monk. They turned around and "prayed scripture at him," which agitated him further. After he summoned the help of another monk, they felt that they should leave. The monk followed them down the mountain, attempting to put a curse on them, at which point the missionary asked God to get rid of him. God told her "you do it," and she was given a vision of Gandalf facing down the balrog in the mines of Moria, commanding the balrog "you shall not pass." Based on this vision, she faced the monk and said "in the name of Jesus, you will come no further." According to the missionary, the monk quit hexing them and turned around.¹⁰¹

What we see in this case is that the account relies heavily on experiential evidence. There is not a concern raised about whether or not demons can actually "die" or

⁹⁸ An example of this can be found in Cuneo's research. Michael W. Cuneo. *American Exorcism: Expelling Demons in the Land of Plenty*, 141.

⁹⁹ Others have already noted significant similarities between Pentecostal healing and shamanism. For a more thorough discussion, see Holwatt's work, especially 132-33 which discusses visions, angels, and "soul flight." Karin Holwatt, "The Shamanistic Complex in the Pentecostal Church," *Ethos* 16, no 2, (June 1988): 128-145.

¹⁰⁰ Pam Hall, untitled speech given at New Heights Church in Fayetteville, Arkansas, on 16 Sept. 2007, taken from an mp3 recording formerly posted at <<http://www.newheightsfamily.com/>> (accessed 5 Oct. 2008).

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

if the apparition of "fiery darts" is literal or metaphorical.¹⁰² The inspiration for the showdown with the monk came from J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, rather than from a theological source. The point here is that it is experientially-driven, rather than knowledge-driven. In other words, in this setting, the validation for the speakers comes from the belief that through the agency of the Holy Spirit, God had given them visions and insight that were easy for them as individuals to understand, and their actions were based on intuitive guidance rather than pre-established doctrine. Obviously, there is a theology behind their actions. There is a theological belief that the Holy Spirit offers guidance, that God is stronger than demons, that they as Christians have authority to confront demons, and that people (in this case, the monk) can be possessed and in league with demons. Related to the last point, there is also a blurring of the boundaries between human and demon. In their tale, the monk was portrayed as a human, yet the missionaries approached and commanded him as they would a demon, and in their story, he obeyed them as a demon would.

It is within the Charismatic/deliverance approach that one finds the most interest in assigned and territorial spirits. If an assigned spirit is believed to be afflicting either them or another person, an individual may choose to rebuke or command it away. Regarding territorial spirits, there is some debate. Some adhering to this approach believe that territorial spirits should not be confronted unless God specifically ordains it, because the individual may be getting into a conflict with an entity far more powerful than they

¹⁰² "Fiery darts" is drawn from the King James Version of Ephesians 6:16, which reads "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." It is usually interpreted as a metaphor, though in the context of the missionary's vision, it appears to have been understood more literally.

and who may have some spiritual claim to that territory.¹⁰³ Others propose "spiritual mapping," a procedure that attempts to identify the particular spirits governing an area.¹⁰⁴ "Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare" is sometimes performed by rebuking territorial spirits,¹⁰⁵ by "binding" them,¹⁰⁶ or by praying to God for their removal. Assigned spirits are approached by the same methods.

It should be noted that deliverance ministries are often focused on physical and emotional healing as well, rather than just exorcism. Demonic influences are usually seen as just one aspect of a person that requires divine healing. Randall Balmer's description of a deliverance ministry at the Capstone Cathedral, for example, focused far more attention on medical healing than it did on casting out demons.¹⁰⁷

4. Obsessive/Fringe Approach

The obsessive/fringe approach is the most difficult of the categories to define. Individuals or groups taking this approach often claim the label of deliverance ministry. What makes this approach different? It is the emphasis placed upon demonic ubiquity. A deliverance ministry that casts out demons of people because they manifest a particular "symptom" (suicidal tendencies for example) fits best within the Charismatic/deliverance approach. A deliverance ministry that casts demons out of someone because they believe

¹⁰³ Claims to territory are thought to arise through past sin that occurred there. Chuck D. Pierce and Rebecca Wagner Systema, *Ridding Your Home of Spiritual Darkness* (Colorado Springs: Wagner Publications, 2000), 35, 37-38

¹⁰⁴ Charles H. Kraft and David M. DeBord, *The Rules of Engagement: Understanding the Principalities That Govern The Spiritual Battles in Our Lives* (Colorado Springs: Wagner Publications, 2000), 108.

¹⁰⁵ Kraft calls this "Cosmic-level" warfare, though "Strategic Level" is the more common term. Ibid, 109.

¹⁰⁶ Wagner refers to the ritual of "binding" spirits, but does not actually advocate it. "Binding" is when a Christian makes a proclamation that a demon is "bound" and from that point forth supposedly unable to cause more trouble. The language is drawn from Matthew 12:29. C. Peter Wagner, "Territorial Spirits" in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, 86.

¹⁰⁷ Randall Balmer, *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 73-77, 79.

that all people have demons all the time fits better into the obsessive/fringe approach. The label of "obsessive" or "fringe" is, of course, subjective. It is not intended to be pejorative; "obsessive" refers to those approaches that emphasize a model of daily or hourly exorcisms, and "fringe" refers to those ministries which feature qualities that would be rejected by most Evangelicals ascribing to the other three categories. Examples of such features include an intense preoccupation with demons, rituals that suggest sympathetic magic, incantations, or charms, or listing demons with proper names and what they do, suggesting specific rituals for each one. The obsessive/fringe approach typically maintains a position that Evangelicals with other viewpoints (or "wrong" viewpoints) are also under demonic influence.¹⁰⁸

The "Demonbuster.com Deliverance Manual" is the consummate example of obsessive/fringe warfare. Claims made by the manual include statements such as:

Everyone has demons, no exceptions (so this includes all Christians). For those of you who demand to see a Scripture before you can believe something, there are NO scriptures that say YOU do NOT have demons. That should settle it!¹⁰⁹

The manual goes on to prescribe prayers that need to be said daily, more often than daily, or in specific situations. For example:

BOYCE and BOICE are two demons that interfere with any electronic equipment, i.e., phone, computer, printer, automobile. If something malfunctions, command these two demons to leave your equipment, in the name

¹⁰⁸ For example, Denise Jeter of "Hidden Manna Revealed" claims she and her husband felt sluggish and spiritually tainted after attending a church which possibly had a tangential connection to John Wimber, stating that "if they are lined up with John Wimber, they are definitely not of God." In this same 18 minute video, she also criticizes a friend of hers for being into "health and wealth," complained about pastors who have humor in their sermons, and also complained about not being able to stand up in church and accuse a preacher of not being of God. Though the specifics change, criticism often has a prominent role in this approach. Denise Jeter, "Hidden Manna Revealed: Familiar Spirits" 1 Aug. 2007, <http://www.tangle.com/view_video.php?viewkey=1dba8957dd0803393350> (accessed 16 Mar. 2009).

¹⁰⁹ Demonbuster.com, "Free Delivery (Deliverance) End-Time Deliverance Ministry," <<http://www.demonbuster.com>> (accessed 16 Mar. 2009)

of Jesus. We get many emails saying this worked.¹¹⁰

The demonbuster.com manual also contains a list of demonic names, which, when printed, comes to fourteen pages.¹¹¹ A similar example can be found at the "Real Deliverance Ministries" website, which has a page dedicated to the five most commonly sighted demons, complete with pictures. It also lists what they do and why they show up. For example, the most commonly sighted demon, The Top Hat Demon

appears as a man figure with a top hat and a trench coat. Mostly seen as a black figure, but at times shows a lighted face. Often the face is like a joker on a playing card. It will laugh and mock you as well. They often stand still staring or rocking back and forth as [they] stand over you.¹¹²

According to the website, the demon is associated with "occult, false religions and doctrines, new age, witchcraft, children's toys, games, and books that are connected to the occult, such as 'Harry Potter Books' and Digi'mon."

Under the obsessive/fringe approach, the methods for removing demons often resemble sympathetic magic, incantations, and warding charms. For example, the demonbuster manual states that

any sharp pain that comes on you suddenly is almost always witchcraft. When this happens, pray this immediately as you use your index finger and thumb on the spot of the pain, like you were pulling out a voodoo pin: In Jesus name, I pull out all fiery darts, pins, needles, spears, voodoo, all witchcraft and curses and anything else, and I return it to the sender, one hundredfold. (Then motion with your hand towards a window or door like you were throwing it out.) If it is witchcraft, the pain will go immediately. This is a highly effective Spiritual

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Demonbuster.com, "Demon List of Names," <<http://www.demonbuster.com/demonlist.html>> (accessed 16 Mar. 2009).

¹¹² I suspect this demon's appearance is probably a subconscious appropriation of "The Joker" from the Batman movies, or possibly the voodoo figure of Baron Samedi, which was brought into popular consciousness through the James Bond film "Live and Let Die." Real Deliverance Ministries, "Common Demon Sightings," <<http://www.realdeliverance.com/demonpics.shtml>> (accessed 11 Mar. 2009)

Weapon.¹¹³

It also includes incantations for such things as preventing demons from travelling through computer lines, removing "walls of protection" from around witches, breaking the power of witches, and controlling weather demons.¹¹⁴ It also prescribes placing signs above all doors which have the phrase "whoever or whatever enters this home is covered with the blood of Jesus" printed on it four times.

The use of incantations, charms, or ritual motions are not themselves marks of the obsessive/fringe approach. Incantations, for example, are common within the other three categories. The use of the phrase "in Jesus' name"¹¹⁵ functions as an incantation, and is used in prayer by individuals and churches within all three of the other approaches.

Driscoll's prescription of the question "Will that stand as truth before the White Throne of the Lord God Almighty?" could be considered a type of charm, since it is intended to bind demons to veracity. When "cleansing" houses of demons, it is common for someone to pray over rooms and anoint lintels with oil.¹¹⁶ Obviously that is ritual.

Here is where the issue of subjectivity with the obsessive/fringe approach becomes most apparent: in judging the ubiquity of a practice. "Obsessive" is somewhat easy to categorize, as it requires less knowledge of the range of spiritual warfare practices, but rather a general knowledge of how much emphasis is placed upon demons. "Fringe" is harder to identify, as it requires a knowledge of what is generally acceptable

¹¹³ Demonbuster.com, "Spiritual Warfare Prayers," <<http://www.demonbuster.com/daily.html>> (accessed 16 Mar. 2009).

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ This appears to be drawn from John 14:14, which records Jesus as saying "You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."

¹¹⁶ I have encountered this in conversations mainly with Charismatics. The practice is prescribed in some deliverance literature. Chuck D. Pierce and Rebecca Wagner Systema, *Ridding Your Home of Spiritual Darkness*, 66-67.

to the other three approaches. The deliverance sex manual that DeRogatis analyzed (see chapter I) is only identifiable as "fringe" because the overwhelming majority of spiritual warfare practitioners do not consider sexually transmitted diseases to be genetic demons. Many would consider such diseases a product of "living in a fallen world," but they would not assert that the viruses were themselves demons.

What should be considered "fringe" is not always obvious. If an individual prayed against the demon Leviathan, is that fringe? Leviathan could refer to the beast found in ancient Near Eastern mythologies, in which case it could easily be fringe. It could also be symbolic, perhaps a reference to Hobbes' *Leviathan*, in which case the individual is probably praying against evil government, a very standard practice among Evangelicals (though they don't usually reference *Leviathan*). What would most likely be the case in this scenario is that the individual is praying against a kind of demon. In some Charismatic circles, specific territorial and assigned spirits have been given names for easier reference; "Leviathan" refers to a particular demon believed to cause discord and division. Placing an approach under the "obsessive/fringe" should be done with care.

C. Chapter Summary

Spiritual warfare and demonology are complex topics of which there exists little agreement among Evangelicals. The few matters upon which they do agree are generalities such as Satan is evil, he is a creation, and he aims to destroy humans. To a lesser degree, most Evangelicals also agree that Satan operates in both covert and overt ways, though the covert is thought to be more prevalent.

The approaches to addressing perceived demonic attack vary from community to

community, and even from individual to individual. These approaches usually align thematically with one of four patterns, though on specific points the approach may contain elements of more than one. These approaches can be identified as the resistance/avoidance and cessationist approach, which is characterized by resisting demonic influences and avoiding conflict altogether. The systematic approach can involve aggressive spiritual warfare (as opposed to just resisting) and tends to be rigorously defined by theological models. The Charismatic/deliverance approach also allows for aggressive spiritual warfare, but it often lacks strictly defined boundaries for belief and practice, relying mainly upon the intuition and guidance believed to be provided by the Holy Spirit. The obsessive/fringe approach tends to emphasize frequent anti-demon rituals, highly detailed taxonomies of demons, and generally promotes beliefs and practices that would be dismissed by the other three approaches.

Chapter III - Introduction to the Anchor Fellowship

Having analyzed the range of views and doctrines associated with spiritual warfare within the broader evangelical context, I now feel it is appropriate to turn attention specifically to the Anchor Fellowship. Issues within Evangelicalism will still be addressed when it is appropriate, though the next five chapters will focus on the Anchor Fellowship. The purpose of this focus is to demonstrate in depth how spiritual warfare exists in a real world scenario.

A. Basic Information

To begin to understand the Anchor Fellowship, it is necessary to establish the basic facts about the group, such as the history of the organization, its authority structure, demographic information, and the local culture of the group.

I. The History of the Anchor Fellowship

The beginning of the Anchor Fellowship is rooted in a small Vineyard

congregation in Antioch, Tennessee.¹ In 1994, by connections made through his Christian rock band, Joshua Stump encountered some teenagers attached to that group, in particular Chris Hayzlett and Christy Brooks (nee Hughey). At that time, according to Hayzlett, there were very few members of the Nashville Vineyard Christian Fellowship under the age of 30.² Because having younger members was desirable to the congregation, Stump was invited to join the group as a youth pastor, an offer which he accepted.

It was during this time that Stump opened "The Plunge" music venue under the auspices of the Nashville Vineyard Christian Fellowship. The youth group burgeoned to a few hundred people, though, as Hayzlett says, most were not firmly attached to the church, and that it was more of a "social gathering." Being the only music venue in Antioch at that time, The Plunge was a natural draw for local teenagers. However, because these teenagers lacked a firm attachment to both the Vineyard Association and Christianity, the head pastor opted to shut down the venue. The youth group diminished after The Plunge closed.

The culture of the core group was immersed in Nashville's art and music scene,

¹ The Vineyard movement (the American association is now called Vineyard USA) is an association of churches. The association was founded in the 1970's, and largely influenced by the leadership of John Wimber. Wimber was at the forefront of the "signs and wonders" movement. "John Wimber," *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Rev. ed, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Maas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 1199-1200. Additionally, Poloma has described the Vineyard as part of the larger third-wave Charismatic movement. Poloma characterizes third-wave Charismaticism, saying "This worldview is a curious blend of premodern miracles, modern technology, and postmodern mysticism in which the natural merges with the supernatural. Signs and wonders analogous to those described in the premodern biblical accounts are expected as normal occurrences in the lives of believers. Rejecting a Cartesian dualism that separates body from spirit, supernatural phenomena are regarded to be a "natural" experience for the P/C [Pentecostal/Charismatic] Christians." This statement seems to be a good description of the culture. Margaret M. Poloma, *Main Street Mystics: The Toronto Blessing and Reviving Pentecostalism* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2003), 17, 22.

² Antioch, Tennessee is a suburb of Nashville. While the Vineyard Nashville was not technically in Nashville, it was geographically close enough to take the name.

and due to this interest, the members opted to begin an outreach endeavour to the art and music communities in downtown Nashville. This organization was named "The Tribe" and has been described as a college group that evolved from the Nashville Vineyard youth group. "Art and Worship Nights" occurred monthly in a warehouse, and, soon after, The Tribe began a weekly home group within the city. In 2001, the Nashville Vineyard Christian Fellowship went through a church division, with most of the pastoral staff and much of the congregation separating. In 2002, The Tribe officially split off from the Vineyard Association. Stump formed a leadership team that included both Chris Hayzlett and Christy Brooks. After a gay nightclub named "Tribe" opened in Nashville, "The Tribe" changed its name to "The Anchor Fellowship" to avoid confusion.³

As the Anchor Fellowship grew, three attributes marked its congregational culture: first, the congregants had a strong interest in art and music;⁴ second, many of the members had become disenchanted with the American church, with many also bearing personal resentments toward specific churches;⁵ and third, the congregational culture was marked by permissiveness regarding lifestyle choices and traditional evangelical conceptions of morality.⁶ These three factors have been very influential in the cultural development of the Anchor Fellowship, and, while abated, continue to be characteristics immediately observable within the group today.⁷

From 2002 to 2005, the Anchor Fellowship convened within a coffeehouse at Rocketown, a Christian music venue and skatepark in Nashville. The interest in music developed a strong emphasis on what is known as "worship music." In this atmosphere

³ Chris Hayzlett, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 11 Jan. 2010.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Brady Lane, interview with author, Westerville, OH, 23 Sept. 2010.

⁶ Chris Hayzlett, casual conversation, Nashville, TN, 28 May 2009.

⁷ Personal observation.

the Anchor Fellowship's best-known vestige began: an internationally-known worship band called The Glorious Unseen. The band comprised the original worship musicians for the Anchor Fellowship.⁸

The band's first album held an important six-minute section of one of Josh Stump's sermons.⁹ Though the album was released in 2005, the clip was taken from a 2004 sermon delivered near the end of the Anchor Fellowship's time at Rocketown.¹⁰ On this track, Stump passionately challenges the Anchor Fellowship to give up debauchery and shallowness. This sermon was a major marker for the history of the Anchor Fellowship and began a period of redefining Anchor culture, where the leadership of the church deliberately began to emphasize devotion to God over devotion to music and subculture "scenes," admonishing the members against licentiousness. It is at this point that the Anchor Fellowship underwent a church division. Many of the members attached to the group were displeased with the new direction and chose to leave.¹¹ The explanations offered by the Anchor pastors for why this happened center on the proposition that as the Anchor transitioned from a cultural focus to a spiritual one, the individuals who only wanted entertainment chose to leave rather than "be challenged." This moment, however, can be considered the beginning of the Anchor Fellowship.

In 2005, the Anchor Fellowship moved out of Rocketown into the historic church building at 629 S. 3rd Street in Nashville. Originally, the building was built by the Primitive Baptists in the 1850s, and has functioned not only as a church, but as a Civil

⁸ "The Glorious Unseen," *Christianity Today* (Online content posted 19 Aug. 2009)

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/the_glorious_unseen/24016.htm> (accessed 20 Jan. 2010).

⁹ The Anchor Fellowship, "The Message" on *Embracing the Call*, independently released, 2005.

¹⁰ Ben Crist, email with author, 13 Jan. 2010.

¹¹ Chris Hayzlett, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 24 Jul. 2009.

War hospital,¹² a silverplating company,¹³ a photography studio, and an adult nightclub. The building also survived a Molotov cocktail firebombing during its time as a nightclub and the floor still shows the marks left by the flames.

In 2005, the Anchor formally rejoined the Vineyard Association, returning to the parent organization from which it first emerged. This association, however, does not play a major role in how the Anchor operates, and in fact, early in 2010, the Anchor Fellowship again separated from the Vineyard Association.

2. Authority Structure of the Anchor Fellowship

Because of the unusual way the Anchor Fellowship has developed historically, the authority structure of the Anchor is atypical. Initially, Stump had intended to form a leadership team of coequals; for reasons of practicality, however, it evolved into a leadership team with Stump as the lead pastor (a common structure within evangelical churches). This organization is better suited to decision making in situations where coequals would be at an impasse.¹⁴ Currently, the Anchor Fellowship has Stump as a lead pastor, joined by four associate pastors and two lay pastors.

There are neither elders nor deacons within the Anchor Fellowship, but there are two ambiguously defined bodies of leadership below the pastors. First, there is the "ministry team," a group of church members who, at specific times during church services, pray for individuals, give "words of prophecy," serve communion, and

¹² James A. Hoobler, *Cities Under the Gun: Images of Occupied Nashville and Chattanooga* (Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press, 1986), 64.

¹³ *Polk's Nashville Suburban (Tennessee) Directory*, vol. 1959 (St. Louis: R.L. Polk & Co. Publishers, 1959), 875.

¹⁴ Chris Hayzlett, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 11 Jan. 2010.

"intercede"¹⁵ for the church as a whole. The second group consists of "home group leaders" and "small group leaders." Home group leaders oversee home group meetings much like the one from which the Anchor Fellowship emerged. "Unveil" and "Prevail" groups are small gender-specific meetings for members of the Anchor Fellowship, comparable to the old Wesleyan bands.¹⁶ Unveil groups are for women, Prevail groups for men.

3. Demographics and Cultural Milieu

Today, the Anchor Fellowship exists as a mostly younger congregation. There are a few members in their fifties and sixties, but most of the group ranges in age from 18 to 35, including the pastoral leaders. Most of the congregation is white, though during the second half this study, the group appeared to be shifting toward greater ethnic diversity.¹⁷ Most of the congregation belongs to the working or middle-classes.¹⁸ A large number of members are students at Belmont University.¹⁹ There is no formal membership at the Anchor, which makes it difficult to determine exactly how many members belong to the church; the best estimates place it between 300-450 people.

Culturally, the Anchor Fellowship trends toward the artistic and music

¹⁵ Intercession is a kind of prayer in which the person praying is praying on behalf of a third party.

¹⁶ The Wesleyan bands (a concept borrowed from the Moravians) were small groups reflecting "gender, marital status and degree of fervor." The concept has continued on into most of contemporary Evangelicalism in the form of "cell groups," "small groups," and other such terms. Wesley's intention was to help worshipers "retain their commitment" to God. The concept is the same, though it is explained differently. At the Anchor Fellowship, Prevail and Unveil groups are intended to facilitate spiritual growth and provide an intimate setting for people to pray with each other. Roy Hattersley, *The Life of John Wesley: A Brand from the Burning* (New York: Doubleday Publishing, 2003), 129.

¹⁷ Personal observation.

¹⁸ Personal observation.

¹⁹ Belmont University is a Christian liberal arts college in Nashville. Many students who wish to work in Christian music choose Belmont, and because of the Anchor Fellowship's strong music community, some of those Belmont students attend the Anchor Fellowship. There are also students from Vanderbilt University, Trevecca Nazarene University, David Lipscomb University, and Watkins Arts College, but the majority of college students at the Anchor Fellowship are students at Belmont.

communities, which makes sense when one considers the historical development of the Anchor Fellowship. From this core group of artists and musicians, culturally-related communities have also been drawn in. For example, there is considerable overlap between the "hipster" and the "artists" communities, as well as the "hardcore" and "straight-edge" communities with the broader "musicians" community. After the Anchor Fellowship began a church service on Sunday mornings (initially the only services were on Sunday evenings), the community also attracted members who would fit the profile of a more traditional Charismatic churchgoer. That has created a tangible difference between the morning church service and the evening church service. The morning service tends to be gentler and more restrained, whereas the evening service typically has louder music, more emotiveness, and bolder language.²⁰ It is common for the evening service to climax with dancing, a fever pitch of voices, and prophetic words during ministry time, whereas it is very rare for the morning service to culminate this way.²¹

The current Anchor Fellowship community has another attribute that can be historically traced to the original core group. All accounts provided for this study indicate a strong dissatisfaction with traditional American Christianity among the members. The original licentious characteristic of the early years of the Anchor Fellowship was, in part, a reaction to the common problems sometimes found in churches, which most of the early members had experienced first-hand.²² As Brady Lane phrased it, "most of us had

²⁰ Personal observation.

²¹ Prophetic words during ministry time does happen in the morning services as well, but it is less frequent and carries less visible emotion.

²² Examples that were given included authoritarianism, rigid dogma, and hypocrisy.

been burned by the church." The other point of dissatisfaction with "the church"²³ was sectarian division; the early years of the Anchor Fellowship were marked by ecumenical sentiments.²⁴

This history has led to an unusual tension within the Anchor Fellowship: there are, at times, scathing reviews of "the church" as a whole, while at the same time, emphasis is placed on ecumenical unity. It has also led to two of the distinguishing features of the current group. One is the diverse religious backgrounds of the members (including Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Anglican, Pentecostal, Independent Fundamentalist, Independent Charismatic, Pagan, Eastern Orthodox, Methodist, Baptist, etc.) The second is a peculiar mission of the Anchor Fellowship, which is an emphasis on helping those who have been psychologically or emotionally damaged by past experiences with "the church." It is fitting that the first thing one sees when one walks into the church building is a vinyl banner with the Anchor Fellowship's logo, and print reading "We have been called to heal wounds, to unite what has fallen apart, and to bring home those who have lost their way. –St. Francis of Assisi." This focus on "healing wounds" is a major theme of the Anchor Fellowship and part of how they understand spiritual warfare; healing as spiritual warfare will recur throughout this study.

However reluctantly, the Anchor Fellowship has also developed to a point where they should be considered as part of the Emerging Church movement. The Emerging Church movement defines itself as a movement that is attempting to understand and

²³ "The church" in this case refers to the whole of Christianity. Usually when a theologically-conservative Christian refers to "the church" it is necessary to understand context; it can either refer to a specific church, or to the church as the whole of Christianity. In context, when used this way, the speaker is typically referring mainly to Western Christianity (as opposed to global Christianity). Brady Lane, interview with author, Westerville, OH, 23 Sept. 2010.

²⁴ Chris Hayzlett, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 24 Jul. 2009.

interact with what they believe is "a postmodern, post-Christian world."²⁵ Such churches are marked by engagement with postmodern concerns, including the subjective nature of interpretation and understanding;²⁶ the ephemeral nature of cultural norms (particularly in areas of gender and sexuality); an openness toward plurality,²⁷ and a rejection—at least nominally—of metanarratives.²⁸ Emerging churches also commonly embrace what is known as "alternative worship." The premise of alternative worship is the belief that humans are multi-sensory creatures, and that the worship of God should therefore involve multiple senses. Thus, in alternative worship, worshippers are engaged through multiple stimuli.²⁹

Another prominent feature of the Emerging Church movement is "new monasticism." New monasticism is a form of monasticism designed for Protestants. In new monasticism, individuals reside together, live spartanly, and typically adhere to a monastic rule. Shane Claiborne's "Simple Way" community in Philadelphia is sometimes considered the model for the movement, though other groups such as Jesus People USA in Chicago could also be considered part of the new monasticism. The movement largely consists of Evangelicals adherent to the Emerging mindset.³⁰

When describing the Anchor Fellowship as an Emerging Church to Josh Stump, he responded disapprovingly by saying "that's what people tell me." His dissatisfaction with the Emerging Church movement stems from one of his dissatisfactions with

²⁵ Dan Kimball, *The Emerging Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 13.

²⁶ Rob Bell, *Velvet Elvis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 56.

²⁷ F. Leron Shults, "Reforming Ecclesiology in Emerging Churches", *Theology Today* 65, (2009): 429.

²⁸ Scot McKnight, "The Five Streams of the Emergent Church," *Christianity Today*, (February 2007): 36.

²⁹ Dan Kimball, *The Emerging Church*, 128-129.

³⁰ They are adherent to the emerging mindset in that they embrace the reappropriation of old traditions in contemporary forms, alternative worship, ecumenism, and social justice. See the description of new monasticism in Rob Moll, "The New Monasticism: A Fresh Crop of Christian Communities is Blossoming in Blighted Urban Settings all over America," *Christianity Today* (Sept. 2005): 39-46.

Christianity in general, the constant wrangling over doctrine and dogma. Brian Ban (another pastor) also rejected the label, holding the position that the Emerging Church movement denies truth with their "flippant" interpretation of scripture.³¹

Despite this displeasure with the movement, the Anchor Fellowship has many of the characteristics of an Emerging church. Though Josh Stump himself (and most of the other pastors) adhere to a more traditional view of biblical interpretation, a minority of members agree that everyone interprets scripture and theological knowledge through the lens of their own cultural biases, and that when scripture was written, it was colored by ancient culture. When pressed, some of the more traditionally-minded pastors will agree that is true. It is true that some churches within the Emerging Church movement do hold scripture a creation of Greek and Jewish culture, and therefore not binding, though this characteristic is by no means a requisite mark of an Emerging church.³² If it were, Ban's refusal of the label would be correct.

Secondly, the role of Christy Brooks as a pastor at the Anchor Fellowship breaks free from the traditional ban on female pastors. While there have been female pastors within the Evangelical movement for some time now, there is a significant stigma in modern Evangelicalism on female leadership. During this study, there were several instances where more traditionally-minded Christians took issue with her holding such a

³¹ Brian Ban, casual conversation with author, Nashville, TN, 14 Jan. 2010.

³² There is no one characteristic that makes a church "emerging." Emerging churches are typically labelled "emerging" because they are in some way responding to traditionalism and embracing postmodern concepts and practices. This can mean rejecting a tradition asserting that the scriptures are literal truth and are not products of ancient culture, but this alone is not a sure marker of an emerging church. As Scot McKnight phrased it, "Emerging catches into one term the global reshaping of how to "do church" in postmodern culture. It has no central offices, and it is as varied as evangelicalism itself." Scot McKnight, "The Five Streams of the Emergent Church," *Christianity Today*, (February 2007): 36.

position.³³ While the Anchor Fellowship holds to the standard evangelical view that homosexuality is forbidden by scripture, there is a significant gay minority within the congregation, and in a particularly candid moment, Stump mentioned "I will *never* ask them to leave." The Anchor Fellowship actively tries to accept homosexuals while at the same time affirming the traditional view of scripture. As Brooks phrased it, "We affirm people, not lifestyles." Furthermore, there is a minority of lay members who affirm same-sex commitment as valid.³⁴

The third mark of the Emerging movement on the Anchor Fellowship is the appropriation of manifold religious traditions. It is common for a Roman Catholic liturgical reading to be followed by Charismatic healing, and the liturgical calendar is maintained. The sanctuary has many candles and Byzantine iconography. Occasionally, incense is also burned. The Anchor Fellowship also has strong ties to three monks and two monastic communities: a tie-in to new monasticism.

Lastly, the Anchor Fellowship undeniably practices alternative worship. Apart from the music, someone at an Anchor worship service is engaged by candlelight, iconography, scented oil, and, occasionally, incense. During "ministry time," when people pray for each other, they engage the sense of touch by the laying on of hands.³⁵

B. Basic Doctrine

Having established the demographic and cultural characteristics of the Anchor Fellowship, it is now appropriate to discuss its theological characteristics. This, however,

³³ Christy Brooks, casual conversation with author, Nashville, TN, numerous occasions mainly occurring between July 2009 and January 2010.

³⁴ There are several examples, but this specifically came up during an interview with one member. Joel McNulty, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 11 Nov. 2009.

³⁵ Personal observation.

is somewhat difficult to do, for the congregation is unified experientially, not doctrinally—a natural result of its ecumenism. There is, however, theological concord among the pastors. Therefore, the best way to establish the Anchor Fellowship's doctrinal profile seems to be to explain the doctrine of the church leadership and then contrast it with dissenting views wherever appropriate.

1. Soteriology and Christology

The Anchor Fellowship holds most of the soteriological and christological positions typical within contemporary Evangelicalism: salvation is in Christ alone, through the sacrifice on the cross and the resurrection. The Anchor Fellowship maintains both the divinity and humanity of Christ, and the virgin birth.³⁶ Also, Evangelical understandings of grace are held in that salvation is found through Christ's sacrifice and by turning to God in repentance. Salvation, however, is understood as an arrangement between God and the individual, and the pastors take a position of refusing to affirm or deny someone else's salvation on the grounds that "only God knows the heart." Salvation is a process to be pursued through the entirety of one's life. Josh Stump claims "I'm not into the 'once saved, always saved' mentality."³⁷ There is some disagreement on this point among the lay members. Most adhere to the pastors' view on salvation, though some do accept the "once saved, always saved" position, and at least one member, a theology student at Vanderbilt, who believes in universal atonement.

Soteriology is not a primary focus for most individuals within the Anchor

³⁶ The Anchor Fellowship, "Theology of the Anchor Fellowship," <<http://www.theanchorfellowship.com/about/>> (accessed 12 Jan. 2010).

³⁷ By "once saved, always saved," Stump is referring to the doctrine of eternal security, which claims that once a person has crossed from the "unsaved" category into the "saved" category, it is generally irreversible.

Fellowship—at least, not a vocalized focus. The Anchor congregation's notion of temporality tends to be one which focuses on the present and near future. The distant future of heaven is recognized, but not heavily emphasized in everyday life. In other words, while one's future salvation is an important topic, it is the present time that concerns individuals. Exhortations to turn to God are not often predicated on what God will do for someone after they die, but are based on what God wants to do in the present.³⁸

2. Eschatology

The Anchor Fellowship subscribes to an eschatological position known as "Kingdom Theology." Kingdom Theology posits that the kingdom of heaven is both here and now, and yet to come when Jesus returns at the end of the age.³⁹ This eschatological paradox is what the Anchor Fellowship is referring to when they discuss "the tension between the now and not yet." In other words, the Kingdom of God is considered to be both already existing and in conflict with the Kingdom of Satan, but it will not be consummated until Jesus returns. The Anchor Fellowship draws heavily upon Wimber's conception of the kingdom for this position. Chapter VII will focus on how this eschatological position affects spiritual warfare views.

Such a position leads to the Anchor Fellowship's primary focus on the present, rather than on an indeterminable future point of apocalypse or life in heaven. This present kingdom is a major focus of the community. During the research period for this thesis, a young woman within the group even had the lyrics "the kingdom of the heavens is now

³⁸ Personal observation.

³⁹ John Wimber, "'Power for a Purpose' An Excerpt from The Way In is the Way On: A Compilation of the Talks and Writings of John Wimber," <<http://www.vineyardusa.org/site/node/32>> (accessed 19 Mar. 2009).

advancing" tattooed on her forearm.⁴⁰ It is thought that all of God's actions within the current world are just as much the kingdom of heaven as the tangible kingdom of heaven will be after Christ's return.

3. Pneumatology

The pneumatology of the Anchor Fellowship is particularly pronounced, as would be expected within a Charismatic church. The Holy Spirit is believed to dwell in Christians after the point of conversion. He is also believed to be actively engaging non-Christians as well, in order to lead them to Jesus. The Holy Spirit is believed to be the source of power in the church. Good worship music occurs when the musicians are "engaging" the Holy Spirit,⁴¹ and the healing of physical, psychological, or spiritual trauma is also understood to be because of the Holy Spirit. The Anchor Fellowship also believes that the Holy Spirit provides believers with spiritual gifts (*charismata*), and members are encouraged to exercise such gifts.⁴²

An important point needs to be made regarding Anchor pneumatology. Like most Charismatics, the prevailing view is that spiritual gifts are provided to believers for the work of community edification and "advancing the kingdom." Because the Holy Spirit is the source of these gifts, and every Christian has the Holy Spirit, every Christian also has the power to perform any of the functions if needed. It is thought that each Christian is

⁴⁰ The lyrics come from Jon Foreman, "Your Love is Strong," track one of *Limbs and Branches*, CD, Credential Recordings, 2008.

⁴¹ Josh Stump, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 4 Nov 2009.

⁴² Recognized spiritual gifts include: prayer, faith, administration, tongues, deliverance, knowledge, wisdom, prophecy, leadership, apostleship, pastoring, teaching, exhortation, discerning of spirits, giving, hospitality, helps, mercy, missionary, evangelist, leadership, miracles, interpretation of tongues, voluntary poverty, celibacy, intercession, and leading worship. The spiritual gifts test used is the Wagner-Modified Houts Questionnaire, taken from C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow: Small Group Guide*, expanded ed. (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2005), 68-78.

"designed" differently, to be naturally adept with particular functions of the Spirit.⁴³

Thus, one person is thought to be gifted with healing, another with prophecy, another with deliverance. In this way, God is believed to design each community to function as a whole, with different members fulfilling different needs. Such plurality of gifts in the community is a common interpretation of the church based on 1 Corinthians 12.⁴⁴

To determine how an individual is gifted, the first approach is just simple observation. If members observe another member fulfilling a particular role (prophet, for example), and fulfilling it well, that person is thought to have this gift. A secondary approach is to administer a "spiritual gifts test." Such a test was administered at a ministry team training meeting, though taking that test is not a frequent event.⁴⁵

The Anchor Fellowship believes that it is the power of the Holy Spirit that is used in spiritual warfare. It is thought that if someone attempts to confront demons without this power, they will be overwhelmed and defeated. With the power of the Holy Spirit, the believer is thought to be assured of victory. It is also necessary to mention that the authority to engage in spiritual warfare is actually thought to be derived from Jesus' ordination of it. In other words, spiritual warfare is authorized by Jesus and given power by the Holy Spirit. The spiritual gift of deliverance is the ability to detect and defeat the demonic. These views are common in contemporary Charismatic Christianity.⁴⁶

⁴³ Sometimes it is argued that one becomes naturally gifted after receiving the Holy Spirit, and sometimes it is argued that this is true from birth.

⁴⁴ For example, Carson makes the argument that Paul's purpose is to demonstrate God's love of diversity within a unified body. See D. A. Carson, *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12-14* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 1987), 31-32.

⁴⁵ This ministry team training session occurred on 18 Aug. 2009. The spiritual gifts test used was the aforementioned Wagner-Modified Houts Questionnaire. The test is done by self-evaluation, then graded at the end of the questionnaire. Afterwards people discussed their results with each other.

⁴⁶ "Spiritual Warfare," *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, rev. ed., 1091-1096.

4. Demonology and Angelology

The Anchor Fellowship subscribes to the typical view about Satan's origin: that he was an angel in heaven who launched a rebellion against God, that he was the original tempter of Eve, and since that time, has continued to violently assault God and the creation.⁴⁷ Though because of "the fall," humans are believed to be naturally inclined to sin, Satan is believed to be the original author of sin.⁴⁸ The rebellion of man against God is thus the continuation of Satan's rebellion against God. Demons are evil angels who have rebelled and serve under Satan.⁴⁹

It is believed in the Anchor Fellowship that the aim of Satan and demons is to prevent people from knowing God and to disrupt his plans. He also has a sadistic goal of inflicting pain and damage. Sometimes this goal is obvious. One Anchor member told a story about how he witnessed a case where an invisible hand grabbed someone by the ankle and tripped the person, "breaking their ankle." He continued the story by explaining how the ankle had been healed through prayer.⁵⁰

More often, however, demons are thought to work subtly. They are thought to be more effective in their goals if they can cause psychological damage that keeps people from encountering or "having intimacy" with God. For example, it is thought that a demon is more likely to try to convince somebody that God does not actually love them than it is to invisibly trip them. Tripping someone is thought to be an intimidation tactic that does little real damage besides inciting a temporary fear. Convincing people to believe lies, on the other hand, is thought to cause long-term damage to someone's life

⁴⁷ Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, *Charting the End Times: A Visual Guide to Understanding Bible Prophecy* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2001), 32.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Josh Stump, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 31 Dec. 2009.

and ability to function in one's God-authored destiny.⁵¹

The Anchor Fellowship believes in territorial spirits, though only a few people claimed to having engaged in spiritual warfare with them. The leadership of the church discourages "demon hunting" in general. Demons are to be defeated when they get in the way and interfere with God's plan or when people require healing from demonic afflictions, but people ought not to go seeking the conflict. Engaging territorial spirits is even more discouraged, since they are thought to have more power and some legitimate claim to the territory they possess.

The angelology of the Anchor Fellowship is vague. Angels are thought to have a role in spiritual warfare, but all of the interviewees I engaged on this topic confessed that they did not know what a battle between an angel and a demon was like. What is proposed, however, is that angels are "ministering spirits" who come to help with God's work. In a spiritual warfare context, they can be called upon for assistance. For example, after learning that I often have bad dreams or difficulty sleeping, one member began to frequently pray for angels to protect me and my house from demons. In one sermon podcast, Stump prayed for God to send "warring angels to this congregation."⁵² A few individuals informed me that they have seen angels, sometimes with their eyes or sometimes in spiritual visions. It is also thought that angels occasionally come to the Anchor Fellowship to receive ministry themselves.⁵³

Finally, a special topic concerns the biblical nephilim. Genesis 6:2-4 refers to demonic beings known as the nephilim. In traditional lore, the nephilim are considered to

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Josh Stump, Untitled Sermon, 30 Mar. 2009.

<http://web.me.com/monkstump/Anchor_New/Podcast/Archive.html> (accessed 13 Apr. 2009)

⁵³ Josh Stump, "End of the Age Conference: Sermon 3" 21 Oct. 2008.

<http://web.me.com/monkstump/Anchor_New/Podcast/Archive.html> (accessed 16 Mar. 2009)

be the offspring of angels and human women. For centuries this obscure and unusual passage has caused much speculation, and with the esoteric Zeitgeist of modern Charismatic culture, the nephilim have been revived as a topic of concern. The Anchor Fellowship shares this interest, and, while the nephilim play no significant role in their demonology or day-to-day affairs, they do come up in their discourse. There is some speculation that the nephilim still exist today and may have a role in the end times. Pastor Josh Stump shared with me a recording of a radio program called "Coast to Coast," in which conspiracy theorist Steve Quayle proposed that the nephilim were giants roaming the earth today and are occasionally spotted. He also said that they had "Stargate" technology, were in league with the New World Order and the American military, while also being imprisoned beneath volcanoes.⁵⁴ Stump was intrigued by the concept, and considers the current existence of the nephilim to be a possibility, but was not proposing it as fact. He also agreed that there is a certain discord between nephilim running wild with their stargates while simultaneously being shackled beneath volcanoes like the titans. Thus, the nephilim warrant mention in a discussion of Anchor demonology, but most members hold no firm opinions as to their nature or current existence.⁵⁵

C. Mission of the Anchor Fellowship

As previously discussed, the Anchor Fellowship's historical development has strongly influenced their mission. The statement "we have been called to heal wounds, to unite what has fallen apart, and to bring home those who have lost their way" defines their mission to "heal" those who have suffered because of past experiences with

⁵⁴ Steve Quayle on *Coast to Coast with George Noory*, "Illuminati, Giants, and Dead Microbiologists," <<http://www.coasttocoastam.com/show/2009/08/10>> (accessed 10 Aug. 2009.)

⁵⁵ Personal observation.

churches (section A-1). The influence of this mission cannot be underestimated when considering the local culture, theology, and practices of the Anchor Fellowship.

The other major mission of the Anchor Fellowship is to serve artists and musicians. This mission is stated verbatim on their website:

Nashville is home to thousands of musicians, ministers, and artists. Our mission is to actively provide them with a local connection to the Body of Christ. We seek to be a witness of God's love for His creation as demonstrated through His son, Jesus. We believe God has a mission unique to Nashville that is inherently connected to its musical, artistic, and theological heritage. We believe that God has a purpose and passion for the creative people who live here. Our goal is to give them a place where they can be trained and equipped to become active and intentional members of the body of Christ.⁵⁶

This mission to musicians and artists perpetuates the local culture of the Anchor Fellowship. Just as the origins are found in the artistic and musical subcultures, the mission to serve artists and musicians maintains that original milieu. It also affects the manner in which their religion is expressed. Chapter VI will focus on the relationship between spiritual warfare and the arts.

Beyond these two specific missions, the Anchor Fellowship maintains a general view on mission shared by most Evangelicals, that of promoting conversion and devotion to Jesus. While the biblical basis of this position usually comes from an interpretation of Matthew 28:18-20,⁵⁷ the Anchor Fellowship prefers to frame it in the context of Matthew 22:37-40, where Jesus states that the two greatest commandments are to love God and love one's neighbor. At the Anchor Fellowship, this is the dominant passage for scriptural

⁵⁶ "The Anchor Fellowship," <<http://www.theanchorfellowship.com/>> (accessed 13 Jan. 2010).

⁵⁷ Matthew 28:18-20 is often referred to as "the Great Commission." It reads: "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'" (NIV)

interpretation, and for understanding their missions.⁵⁸ Consequently, the Anchor Fellowship does support various missionary activities, both nationally⁵⁹ and internationally.⁶⁰

D. Chapter Summary

The Anchor Fellowship is a Charismatic church in Nashville, Tennessee, which was born out of the Vineyard movement in the 1990s. The development of the group historically has led to its current cultural focus on art and music. It also developed with a conscious concern about abuses perceived to exist in the modern church. This focus is indelibly linked to the mission to artists and musicians, and its mission to help those who have “brokenness” because of past experiences with Christianity. The Anchor Fellowship is also an “emerging” church, despite reservations about being labeled as such.

The authority structure of the Anchor Fellowship consists of Josh Stump as the lead pastor, and at the next tier, four associate pastors. After these are two other leadership groups: home group and small group leaders, and the ministry team.

The Anchor Fellowship holds to traditional understandings of Jesus as the only route to salvation, and that he has coequality with God. The Holy Spirit is particularly significant to the Anchor Fellowship, not just doctrinally, but also in practice. Most religious activities, including spiritual warfare, are considered invalid or dangerous if not done “in the Spirit.” The Anchor Fellowship believes that demons are maliciously active today, and should be opposed when they attempt to harm people. Members sometimes

⁵⁸ Personal observation. In conversations and presentations, Matthew 22:37-40 is the passage most referenced.

⁵⁹ The Anchor Fellowship has domestic missions in Chattanooga, TN, Baltimore, MD, Harrisburg, PA, and New Orleans, LA.

⁶⁰ The Anchor Fellowship has international missions in Lima, Peru, and Hlinsko, Czech Republic.

speculate about the nature and abilities of demons, such as with theories about the nephilim. Angels are also thought to be active today as well.

IV - Spiritual Warfare in Practice at the Anchor Fellowship

This chapter will focus upon the actual practices of spiritual warfare at the Anchor Fellowship in a Christian setting, while chapter V will focus on spiritual warfare in a non-Christian setting. First, several points about the Anchor Fellowship's approach need to be reiterated in order to best understand its practices.

A. The Charismatic/Deliverance Approach

The Anchor Fellowship takes a position in the Charismatic/deliverance approach to spiritual warfare. While there are some basic theological tenets which establish some boundaries to spiritual warfare practices,¹ in general, the Anchor Fellowship considers each situation on a case-by-case basis. Spiritual warfare is not rigorously checked against a developed theological model.

Because the believer is thought to be imbued with the power of the Spirit and the authority of Jesus, members of the Anchor Fellowship believe that they engage demons victoriously in spiritual warfare. The power for combat is drawn from God as water flows through a conduit; thus, it is not the believer who confronts the demons, but the Spirit channelled through them. These battles are the edge of the greater war, which will continue as long as time continues.² According to Anchor Fellowship theology, after Jesus returns, he will definitively end evil forever.

¹ An example of such a tenet would be the idea that Satan cannot read people's minds. Omniscience is believed to belong to God alone (this position is drawn from interviews). Thus, to pray that Satan would be prohibited from reading people's minds would be beyond the pale of practice. As a counterexample, such a limit would not necessarily exist in the obsessive/fringe approach.

² It is not deeply entrenched within Evangelicalism, nor is there much theology on the matter, but many Charismatics with whom I have spoken view the current flow of time as ephemeral. After the apocalypse, time will no longer flow at a steady rate as we know it. Occasionally, this position is supported by citing 2 Peter 3:8, which reads: "But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day." (NIV)

B. Spiritual Warfare in Practice - The Individual Context

In defining demonic activity for an individual context, Matt Burrowes, a member of the Anchor Fellowship, explained it thus:

I think spiritual warfare just goes right down to your daily thoughts, what's going on in your mind, what you're thinking about. It can be a very subtle thing, but sometimes it can be a very overt thing. So it's a pretty broad spectrum, right? It could be something as simple as the enemy putting a thought in your head to stare at a girl the wrong way, or to do something that you know you shouldn't, or it could go as far as something like demons manifesting.³

This explanation is very representative of the Anchor position, and would likely be acceptable to most Christians who believe in spiritual warfare. The question, then, is how do people at the Anchor Fellowship respond when they feel they are being plagued by demonic affliction?

It should be noted that even within an individual community like the Anchor Fellowship, there is disagreement as to what is legitimately spiritual warfare and what is not. Speaking on the subjectivity of determining spiritual warfare in an individual context, "Isabel" said:

There are a lot of people I have encountered that deal intensely with spiritual warfare within themselves, and it's certainly not all just emotional. But there are times when people just don't understand themselves [...] Certain actions that they have, or certain impulses that they have, they assume that it is demonic because they don't know that part of themselves, and then, the more strict you get in your puritanical view of morality, the more likely you are going to have to term something demonic for you to really be able to live with yourself.⁴

Perhaps this is why within these interviews, so many of the data are derived from a communal context rather than an individual one. Interviewees were attempting to

³ Matt Burrowes, interview by author, Nashville, TN, 24 Oct. 2009.

⁴ "Isabel," interview with author, Nashville, TN, 14 Sept. 2009.

present narratives of what they considered to be legitimate examples of spiritual warfare, and as far as legitimacy is concerned, seem to be more common in situations where there are corroborating witnesses.

1. Lies and Deceit

The predominant area in which demons are thought to attack is in the arena of truth. Truth, in this case, is determined first by scripture, and second by observation. For example, if someone believed that God was going to destroy them because they were a vegetarian, someone would likely refute such a position by explaining how Romans 14 says otherwise. If someone were convinced that nobody loved them because they were obese, but yet they weighed 110 pounds, someone would likely refute such a position by observing that because they were not fat, this thought could not actually be true. This is more of a communal approach for dealing with lies, but the individual approach is virtually the same. Instead of one person instructing another in truth, the individuals tell themselves the truth. (In this context, "truth" usually refers to an interpretation of scripture.)

A subset of the "lies and deceit" category is "accusation." It is often proposed that one role demons play in attacking Christians is to accuse them of sin, or evil, or something else of that nature. Accusation is related to "lies and deceit" in that it is believed to be a distortion of God's character. This distinction is fine but important. The Holy Spirit is believed to inform Christians about sin, but when the Holy Spirit does so, it is believed to bring both a solution and the promise of mercy. It is believed that when demons inform a Christian of their sin, they imply condemnation and fatalism.

This point leads to an important facet of spiritual warfare: the need for discernment of spirits. Because the concept of truth is so paramount to Christian morality, practice, and belief, it is natural that those who believe in spiritual warfare would ascribe primacy to the battle for truth. In fact, nearly every aspect of spiritual warfare, whether it is temptation or fear or demonic apparitions, can be, and often is, framed as a battle for truth. 1 John 4:1-6 instructs Christians to "test the spirits" because "many false prophets have gone out into the world." This passage is drawn upon frequently to support the concept of "discerning spirits."⁵

2. Fear

Within the Anchor Fellowship, fear can be represented in three ways. First, it can be a natural fear, based on apprehension of real tensions, debacles, or impending change. Second, there can be a kind of fear that is inspired by demons, either a vague fear or an inordinately strong natural fear. Third, the Anchor Fellowship does subscribe to the concept of assigned spirits, and the concept of "a spirit of fear" is recognized as a member of the dark pantheon.⁶

Natural fear is usually dealt with ordinarily. People recognize it, and may pray about it, but there is no special procedure for handling the situation.

If the fear is believed to be demonic in origin, there are several ways one might employ spiritual warfare at the Anchor Fellowship. First, if a demon is believed to still be present, one may rebuke the demon and command it to leave. Typically there is also a declaration of truth made, intended to counteract the fear. For example, if someone was

⁵ Personal observation indicates that this view is common. Chris Hayzlett affirmed this statement. Chris Hayzlett, casual conversation with author, 8 Feb. 2010.

⁶ Rachel Smith, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 19 Jan. 2010.

afraid that their house might catch fire, and that fear was thought to be demonic in origin, they might counteract this fear not only by commanding away the demon, but by declaring that God has sovereign authority over the home.⁷

It should be noted here that even more than other spiritual warfare practices, dealing with fear is mainly done communally. There is a good explanation for this approach. Most people believe that when they are afraid, they are afraid for logical reasons. Since sometimes houses do catch fire, to be afraid of that might not seem irregular. But what if that fear is entirely disproportionate to the likelihood of the fear coming true? To identify an "abnormal" fear requires perspective, which often (though not always) means that one requires an outside view of things. Because gaining perspective so often requires the assessment of a second person, there are in most of these situations at least a second person there to assist in the problem. Every case of fear perceived to be demonic that was encountered in this study (through interviews or observation) took place in a community context.⁸ (Section C contains an ethnographic example of this type of situation.)

3. Physical Manifestations and Demonic Apparitions

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of spiritual warfare within an individual setting is the occasional experience Charismatic Christians have in which they perceive a demonic presence either physically afflicting them (such as with experiences of being pinned down or the inability to breathe) or apparitions, where people report seeing

⁷ For example, Sara Burgers asserted in an interview that her home is not prone to demonic activity, because she has asked God to have sovereignty over it. Sara Burgers, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 4 Nov. 2009.

⁸ Personal observation.

demons with their eyes, or, "in the spirit." Related phenomena include demonic auditory phenomena and nightmares. These phenomena can be addressed on an individual level or a communal level, though these are not often approached through the same means.

a. Physical Manifestations

Excluding possession phenomena (which will be addressed later) and apparitions (demonic manifestations lacking physicality), only three people report being physically touched by demons. There was a fourth case which did not involve being physically touched by demons but was nonetheless another variant of physical phenomena. This distinction will be best made clear through examples.

First, to explain the physical touching, I would like to use the example of "Thomas." "Thomas" recounted a dream he had experienced. In this dream, he had employed martial arts in fighting a monstrous figure of a demon. The description he gave in this case matched the descriptions of other demonic phenomena he experienced in other situations. He and the demon both landed strikes on each other during the dream. He reported that when he woke up, he had bruises shaped like hoofmarks on his back that remained for a week. Recounting a separate dream, "Thomas" reports kicking a demon through the screen door of his house. When he arose the next morning, the screen door had been torn free from the home.⁹

Brian Ban also reported a similar event. He said

I woke up in my bed and I was paralyzed, and my room was in a purple haze – kind of foggy, a totally different color than it should have been. And, all of a sudden, I felt two distinct hands or arms on the end of my bed, shaking my bed. And then I was able to be released from this state of whatever – paralyzed, or whatever. All I could do [while paralyzed] was open my eyes and move my eyes

⁹ "Thomas," interview with author, Nashville, TN, 18 Jun. 2009.

around during it. I sat up and dismissed whatever it was in the name of Jesus. And then I felt a tug on my heart, and I kind of fell back into a sleep and finished the rest of the night's sleep.¹⁰

These types of experiences are usually explained in academic literature as “hypnopompic hallucinations,” which are a product of sleep paralysis, a phenomenon in which a person partially wakes from an REM dream state and senses the physical presence of a fear-invoking entity.¹¹ This experience can also be accompanied by respiratory difficulties and has been identified cross-culturally and in different historical periods as being caused by demons, witches, hags, goblins, or other unpleasant creatures.¹² While these experiences are identified as sleep paralysis and hallucinations by medical science, Christians may dispute this conclusion by claiming that this view is just an atheistic dismissal of demonic phenomena and merely “guessing.”¹³

It is a peculiarity that the vast majority of demonic phenomena reported occur at night. Similarly, most of the experiences that people report as having with God also occur mainly at night. In some cases, such as with “Thomas,” people claim they were dreaming during the event. In most cases, however, the person has insisted that they were awake.

An unusual example of a physical manifestation that does not involve actual contact (as well as occurring during daytime hours) was recounted to me by “Isabel.” In this situation, she reports that once during her childhood she was inside a church building while her mother was outside.

¹⁰ Brian Ban, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 18 Sept. 2009.

¹¹ Owen Davies, “The Nightmare Experience, Sleep Paralysis, and Witchcraft Accusations,” *Folklore* 114, no. 2 (2003): 182.

¹² Dahlitz, M., and J.D. Parkes, “Sleep Paralysis,” *Lancet* 341, no. 8842 (13 Feb. 1993): 406.

¹³ “Stop Sleep Paralysis” <<http://stopsleepparalysis.org/article.html>> (accessed 3 Feb. 2010).

My mom and I were trying to leave, and I was in the lobby which was completely surrounded by windows. She was standing outside the whole time and I was standing right by the door. I couldn't get out, and she couldn't get in. She couldn't see me, and I couldn't see her. And just bizarre stuff. We had apparently been standing at the same door knocking on it and yelling, but we couldn't see each other. So you know, that's just weird.¹⁴

In this particular situation, there really was no "spiritual warfare" component to the event, though it establishes an important principle within Anchor Fellowship demonology: that Satan can, and does, interfere with the physical realm. "Isabel" also reported in the interview that she had been choked by invisible hands and seen scratches appear on other people in her family.¹⁵ She also claims that the level of demonic activity which occurred within her family literally drove some people to insanity. She connected this unusually high-level of demonization to her grandfather's involvement in a sect of Freemasonry, and to satanic ritual abuse. (The evangelical distrust of Freemasonry will be more directly addressed in chapter V.)

b. Demonic Apparitions

Demonic apparitions are much like physical manifestations in their nature. They are typically interpreted as a demonic "scare tactic."¹⁶ Usually apparition phenomena are thought to be malicious beings lacking a physical presence. Occasionally, however, apparition phenomena are accompanied by physical manifestations as well. These apparitions are sometimes highly anthropomorphized (at least within the Anchor

¹⁴ "Isabel", interview with author, Nashville, TN, 14 Sept. 2009.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ One example of someone proposing that demonic apparitions are a scare tactic comes from the New Life Church in Colorado Springs, CO, in which a demon is depicted as rattling cans and appearing as a menacing figure. Joe Kirkendale, Sunday 17 Aug. 2008 "[sic] Angles and Demons: Week 3" delivered to theMILL, <http://video.newlifechurch.org/db_files/081708Angles_and_Demons_-_Week_3.mp3> (accessed 10 Mar. 2009).

Fellowship). Considering all of the data from conducted interviews, about half of the apparitions described were more monstrous in appearance, and the other half of these were described as having human forms. While apparitions are sometimes addressed in an individual context, I found it was more common for these to be handled by the community.

One example of an auditory apparition that was handled in an individual context is that of Mikey Brackett. While attending a college in Georgia, Brackett had participated in a week-long, campus ministry event. After returning home from playing worship music, he told me, "It felt like a ton of bricks just landed on me, and then, all of a sudden, I hear this real... very kind of normal voice, but something very sinister about it, say my name." Brackett thought that there was something weird about it, and investigated whether his roommates were "up to something." He reported that he heard the voice again, which made him feel "bizarre and confused about what was going on." Coming from a Baptist upbringing, he did not have the Charismatic background that typically contextualizes these phenomena. He felt like his ministry was being accosted and he was being personally accused. He called a pastor, who advised him that it was probably spiritual warfare and that Satan was trying to oppose God's work on that campus. Following his advice, Brackett listened to Christian music and spent the night in prayer. Around 2 or 3 am, he finally had enough peace to fall asleep.¹⁷

C. Spiritual Warfare in Practice - the Community Context

Most of the ethnographic data for this study have come in the context of community. Individual spiritual warfare is an important part of the whole, but it is not the

¹⁷ Mikey Brackett, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 15 Dec. 2009.

main approach at the Anchor Fellowship. Community is also the main context for spiritual warfare at the Anchor Fellowship.

This focus on community suggests a pneumatological point. The Holy Spirit is believed to dwell within all believers, and, thus, all believers are thought to have access to the power of God.¹⁸ There is thought to be a compounding effect when the power of God is being accessed in a community setting.¹⁹ This thought is not usually stated, and it is not clear how this proposition would be received by most of the Anchor Fellowship. When asked about this compounding effect, two home group leaders disagreed on the point. One said yes, she thought that there was a compounding effect, and the other said that he did not believe that there actually was a compounding effect.

The dissonance here comes from the rift between doctrine and practice. The Anchor Fellowship has no formal doctrine on this point. For many people, it is improper to suggest that God requires more than one person to work fully – God's Spirit is neither limited nor enhanced by numbers. For others, it is a perfectly legitimate position to hold, and they interpret Matthew 18:20 to be applicable to spiritual warfare.²⁰ Because it is not a point of doctrine that is often discussed, it is natural that there should be diverse opinions on the matter.

There is considerable unity in practice, even if people disagree doctrinally on this point. Nearly every Sunday, people are encouraged to seek healing in one form or another. Whoever is preaching contrasts God's ways against Satan's ways. Regularly,

¹⁸ The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a cardinal doctrine for most Christians, and Stump affirmed that the Anchor Fellowship does promote this idea. Josh Stump, casual conversation with author, 27 Jan. 2010.

¹⁹ Personal observation.

²⁰ Matthew 18:20 reads "For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them." I have mainly heard this used to support the concept of corporate prayer. There is a heavy prayer component to spiritual warfare practice, so perhaps it is natural that this verse should be so applied. Joel McAnulty specifically referenced this verse in an interview. Joel McAnulty, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 11 Nov. 2009.

individual members join with ministry team members for prayer to pursue what is considered to be God's will. All of these activities are cast as spiritual warfare. In our first conversation, Pastor Josh Stump explained to me that "the battleground for spiritual warfare is in healing, in your emotional healing, in your spiritual healing."²¹ This position is shared by most of the Anchor Fellowship.²² The practice of seeking this healing mainly during ministry time suggests that regardless of whether or not Anchor members formally accept the doctrinal position inherent in the action, they are at least in practice agreeing that the Spirit works more strongly in a corporate setting.

Another major reason why spiritual warfare occurs more frequently in a corporate setting is pragmatism. There is an overt corporality to spiritual warfare when the pastor invites members of the congregation to come forward for healing. When Stump prays for the Holy Spirit to come and engage the entire body, that, too, is overtly corporate.²³ Additionally, when he prayed for "warring angels" to come to the Anchor Fellowship, that, too, was overtly corporate.²⁴ There is a practicality in being able to address everyone at once.

The preceding discussion on individual context phenomena easily falls into categories like "fear" or "apparitions," because people typically only deal with these issues as individuals when they believe that they can confidently identify the problem. Often the matters that are dealt with corporately are more complex and can overlap several demonological categories at once. Because of the overlap, the corporate section is

²¹ Josh Stump, telephone interview with author, 13 Feb. 2009.

²² Personal observation.

²³ This happens nearly every service. Personal observation.

²⁴ Josh Stump, "Desert Detox," sermon delivered on 2 Apr. 2008.

<http://web.me.com/monkstump/Anchor_New/Podcast/Archive.html> (accessed 28 Mar. 2009).

divided differently. Three specific situations illustrate important features of corporate spiritual warfare, rather than "symptoms" as was done with the individual approach.

1. "Melinda"

Late in August of 2009, on a Friday morning, I was invited to witness a deliverance counselling session in Josh Stump's office. A young woman within the Anchor Fellowship, "Melinda," had been suffering from frequent apparitions and demonic influences, which were leading her to behave abnormally. The more prominent behaviors deemed abnormal included: a distrust of God, a distrust of her friends, and pride. "Melinda" had already gone through one deliverance session with three other Anchor members, and this session was a follow-up to that. I was present in this situation mainly as an observer sitting quietly in the corner with a notepad, though at times, Josh Stump paused to explain to me the nuances of things he thought I might not understand. Several friends of "Melinda's" who had been involved in the previous attempt at deliverance with her were also present, as well as Chris Hayzlett, an associate pastor at the Anchor Fellowship.

"Melinda's" story begins with three apparitions. These apparitions had persisted since childhood. Sometimes she saw them with her waking eyes, sometimes in dreams. Recently, they had become particularly active. One was a man, tall, bald, wearing a button-up shirt and black slacks, who mainly stood in the corner of her room (all of her apparitions remained stationary). She found him terrifying. The second was an amorphous blob, a dark shape. She linked this shape to a canine demon that bothered her during childhood. She had no recollection of the third demon's form, but identified it as a

"lying spirit," which had a male voice.

The other three Anchor members whom she had initially consulted had prayed for her and identified the "lying spirit" after she became rigid and opposed to their suggestions. "Melinda" claimed a loss of memory during this particular part of the session. She said that these particular demons had not afflicted her after the session; however, a new one had appeared. She had also left this session frightened, though there was confusion between her and the other three people as to why this had happened; the other three expressed surprise at this point.

This new demon was a woman who looked like "a druggie" and who "hung out" like the man had. This demon had appeared in her dreams. She woke up terrified and dealt with the situation by turning on a Glorious Unseen album and praying. My first reaction to this statement was that the music was intended as a ward against evil spirits, since that method is sometimes practiced in charismatic approaches. When asked about this point in an interview, however, "Melinda" said that she had turned on the Glorious Unseen because it was "a declaration."²⁵ She believes that demons cannot read thoughts, and therefore it is important to give voice to one's position. By turning on this music, she felt she was voicing her connection to God even while she slept.

Since "Melinda" had undergone deliverance once already, and yet demonic manifestations had continued, it was understood that the first session had been incomplete and something had been missed. Stump declared that God had given him the key when he woke up that morning, and that the key was the kind of spirit with which they were dealing: it was a problem of a "religious spirit."

Stump claimed that this "religious spirit" could be traced back to "Melinda's"

²⁵ "Melinda," interview with author, Nashville, TN, 4 Oct. 2009.

childhood, when she perceived that her parents favored her sister over her. The religious spirit, he said, ushers in "false intimacy" and that some can create a false trinity. This kind of spirit can also claim that one's relationship with God is "phoney," that the church cannot be trusted,²⁶ and other similar things.

During this deliverance session, Stump interacted with the others present (besides Stump and "Melinda," there were five people present) as a doctor would with medical students. He would choose someone and ask a question of them regarding some symptom that "Melinda" had identified. On this topic of the religious spirit, Stump asked Sara Burgers to identify more characteristics of the religious spirit. She asserted that the religious spirit is prideful, and that it is hypocritical in that it decries legalism in others, yet promotes legalism itself.

This legalism, Stump claims, is a generational problem for "Melinda's" family. Some members of her family "connected" with this religious spirit, and he told "Melinda" that she had no concept of a life without it.²⁷

Stump encouraged "Melinda" to assert the authority given to her by Jesus, and seek the real Jesus out over the false Jesus. He gave a visualization exercise for her to perform in order to help her focus. She had some difficulty with this exercise, and said that she could not reach Jesus. At that point, Stump commanded any interfering spirits to desist.

Stump provided some prayers for her to repeat after him. Although the liturgical nature of this procedure seemed at odds with the experiential environment, it proved its

²⁶ The attitude toward trust is paradoxical . In one sense, the Anchor Fellowship recognizes that churches often err and need to be checked, on the other hand, there is a thought that the church is the community of God and that Christians should live within it, being "vulnerable" with each other.

²⁷ He mentioned specific situations as evidence of this position, though for ethical reasons they cannot be disclosed here.

applicability. When “Melinda” hesitated to repeat a portion of it, Stump determined that there was still something amiss, and this point was then readdressed. In the end, all spirits were believed to have been forced out, and in an interview at a later date, “Melinda” claimed that she felt it had been a success.²⁸

Through this whole session, two themes were prevalent: one was the invocation of the Holy Spirit to guide, instruct, and provide power. The second was the authority given to believers by Jesus.

2. House Deliverances

The previous example explains how an individual who felt afflicted by apparitions and demonic influences addressed her problem corporately. Another variation is corporate affliction approached through corporate means.

During my first month with the Anchor Fellowship, a young woman named “Stacy” told me about how she and her roommates had cleansed their house of demonic apparitions. “Stacy” first began seeing a shadowy, masculine apparition, and soon after, others began seeing him as well. She was not frightened, she said, “I was just annoyed.”²⁹

Because this apparition was affecting multiple people, it was interpreted as something which had attached itself to the house. Another resident, Heather, asserted that they thought the previous tenants had been involved in witchcraft, and that there was one room of the home where sleeping people experienced horrible nightmares. She also said that she never experienced any of the phenomena herself.³⁰

The situation was approached differently because of this history. First, the

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ “Stacy,” casual conversation with author, Nashville, TN, 22 May 2009.

³⁰ Heather Millington, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 4 Oct. 2009.

residents of the house confessed their sins to each other, in order to remove any obstructions to cleansing the home. The residents, then joined by another woman in the church, listened to worship music and began praying over the house, and anointing the lintels with olive oil. "Stacy" said she thought that spirits can pass through any material, but that doors and windows were symbolic. By anointing these lintels with oil, they were symbolically establishing limits for the spirits.

Stump also commented on the practice of anointing lintels with oil. "We don't have a theological reason for using it," he said, "and my own personal belief is that there isn't anything [supernatural] in the oil."³¹ The supernatural aspect of it, rather, is in the prayer. He compared the use of oil to other rituals, such as baptism, the sign of the cross, etc. Stump claims that the power in these is "the unseen spiritual elements," rather than "the outward rituals" that accompany them. His position is that anointing with oil is a ritual that frames a powerful prayer. In the Anchor Fellowship, people are often anointed with oil during prayer as well. This practice occurs in other sects of Charismatic Christianity as well.³²

The concept of "house deliverances" as Stump calls them also illustrates the overlap between the demonological foundations for territorial spirits and common practice. The term "territorial spirit" usually conjures up an idea of something large, a spirit controlling a great area. The concept, however, is foundational to the idea of a house possession.³³ In a house deliverance, the participants invoke the Holy Spirit and

³¹ Josh Stump, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 31 Dec. 2009.

³² Chuck D. Pierce and Rebecca Wagner Systema, *Ridding Your Home of Spiritual Darkness* (Colorado Springs: Wagner Publications, 2000), 67.

³³ It should be noted that this may be a "chicken and egg" situation. I believe that territorial spirits are the conceptual foundation for house possession, though it may be the reverse, that the concept of house possession begat the concept of territorial spirits. The ideas are inextricably linked, but it is difficult to say which was the progenitor of the other.

their God-given authority to exorcize a perceived demonic spirit from a specific geographic location.

3. "Surprise" Deliverances

Occasionally, situations will occur where a deliverance session arises unexpectedly. The Anchor Fellowship is home to a large number of musicians, including some who use their musical talents for Christian ministry. The most common situation for a "surprise" deliverance to arise is on tour; the musicians encounter large numbers of people whom they have never met, and most of the surprise deliverances among Anchor Fellowship members have occurred in this setting.³⁴

One specific example of a surprise deliverance comes from outside of a tour setting. One member of the Anchor Fellowship, Chad Johnson, also leads a non-profit music collective called Come&Live! Johnson described how during one of Come&Live!'s "Fast Friday" prayer meetings, an unexpected deliverance occurred.

In this case, it was someone going from totally normal, totally cool, just talking to this dude literally shrieking and just coming out of his chair - not actually coming out of his chair - but trying to come out of his chair, and [...] he kind of shielded his eyes from ours, and didn't want to look at us. [...] When someone is oppressed or possessed, [...] they will not look in your eyes.³⁵ It's a weird thing. So he started doing that and covering [his eyes with his hand]. There was nothing that a physical eye could see, but it's like "spidey senses." All of a sudden your whole back is just tingling and you're like "whoa dude, this is intense." And so I was behind the guy just praying, Graham was in front of him. And Graham is like look in my eyes. And Graham starts rebuking the demon, "in the name of Jesus, I cast you out." And so, at one point, I felt the Lord give me a word of knowledge over a spirit of...maybe it was a spirit of shame? I can't remember which spirit, but I remember it was the specific name of a spirit. [...]

³⁴ David Lim, Matt Burrowes, and Jason Belcher, interviews with author, Nashville, TN, (DL) 9 Dec. 2009, (MB) 24 Oct. 2009, (JB), 21 Oct. 2009.

³⁵ Some other interviewees agreed with this, some disagreed. Johnson was clear in his explanation that he considered it a generality and not a stead-fast rule. Chad Johnson, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 3 Feb. 2010.

This guy he would give us the impression that everything was cool, that we were done, [...] and I just didn't feel peace in my spirit. [...] So then I just stepped out in boldness and started rebuking this specific spirit and felt that I was supposed to recite that story. And I was saying to the spirit "we pray and fast every Friday and have all year."³⁶

Johnson continued the story by explaining that the spirit submitted to the authority of Jesus and that the deliverance ended in success.

The demonization in this situation was unexpected; the troubled man was a Christian who had seemed perfectly fine at the beginning of the prayer meeting. The behavior exhibited (shrieking, thrashing, and lack of eye contact) provided observable cues for Johnson and others present that the man required deliverance.

What is integral to Johnson's narrative is the belief in the Holy Spirit. Though the observable cues being given by the demonized man suggested that deliverance was complete, Johnson's reliance on "spidey senses"³⁷ led them to continue the deliverance session. "Words of knowledge" are a phrase referring to prophecy, which Charismatics believe is also a function of the Holy Spirit. This is another example of deliverance being addressed in the context of community.

D. Chapter Summary

Members of the Anchor Fellowship believe that through the power of the Holy Spirit and through authority given to them by Jesus, they can successfully defeat demons in spiritual warfare. They believe that demons can plague Christians with minor or major

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ "Spidey senses" is a phrase sometimes used at the Anchor Fellowship. It is derived from the fictional story of Spiderman. After being bitten by a radioactive spider, Spiderman developed heightened environmental awareness, particularly regarding external threats. "Spidey senses" in this context refers to the spiritual awareness of unseen hostile demonic entities.

afflictions, which can be approached individually if the problem is obvious and simple. When someone is afflicted in a serious or complex way, the spiritual warfare is handled with the help of the community. It is believed that spiritual warfare can be waged against demons afflicting people or places. Often, during "ministry time" at church services, the power of the Holy Spirit is treated as if it is compounded because of the communal nature of the situation.

Rituals may be employed during spiritual warfare, but these are viewed as an outward expression of a spiritual action.

During deliverance sessions, members of the Anchor Fellowship believe in defining reality through perceptions of the Holy Spirit. Observation may be ignored if one believes the Holy Spirit is declaring something contrary.

Chapter V - Spiritual Warfare and the World

The last chapter discussed how members of the Anchor Fellowship practice and understand spiritual warfare in an individual context and within the context of their community. But how do spiritual warfare practices and beliefs approach the matter of the "other?" In other words, how do these beliefs and practices inform understandings of non-Christians, or of secular society?

There are three specific topics that will be engaged. First, how does the Anchor Fellowship approach the issue of specific "others?" In other words, how do members of the Anchor Fellowship engage in spiritual warfare in a situation involving individual non-Christians? Second, how do members of the Anchor Fellowship engage in spiritual warfare within the context of communities thought to be non-Christian? Third, does spiritual warfare have ramifications for secular, social concerns, and, specifically, politics?

A. Individual Non-Christians and Spiritual Warfare

Spiritual warfare is understood as an endeavour that can affect more than just Christians. The most obvious example is Christians praying for non-Christians. Since the thrust of these prayers is usually for the non-Christian to discover God, it is construed as a "good versus evil" situation, and, thus, it fits within the Anchor Fellowship's conception of spiritual warfare. Furthermore, there is often some component of asking God to defend the non-Christian from demonic influences and oppression, which is overtly spiritual warfare.

"Non-Christian" is a difficult term to define and the Anchor Fellowship does not

attempt to concretely identify the scope. Pastor Josh Stump once said he suspects that many of the members of the Anchor Fellowship are “non-Christian” because even though they have claimed the title of “Christian,” they do not live or think in a way that suggests an actual conversion experience. On the whole, however, the leadership (including Stump) prefers to leave determining who is a Christian to God. In certain situations, they deviate from this principle, especially when discussing communities that seem to them to be non-Christian. For example, the trip to Sturgis, South Dakota was viewed as a journey into a non-Christian environment. Usually, however, if someone self-identifies as a non-Christian, it is taken to be true.³⁸ If someone self-identifies as a Christian, this is also usually taken to be true.

Spiritual warfare extends beyond prayer, however. By definition, most Evangelical communities engage in some type of evangelism. These exchanges can create situations that seem to the Christian parties involved like a direct conflict with the demonic. Many of these situations were discussed during interviews, and in a few cases, I witnessed situations that were understood to be a demonic conflict.

1. Spiritual Oppression

There are situations where Christians and non-Christians are believed to be oppressed by demonic beings, yet this oppression falls short of demon possession. These situations are given the same gravity as possession but are considered to be slightly less volatile. When Christians approach such an issue with other Christians (chapter IV), it is somewhat different than when Christians approach this issue with non-Christians.

³⁸ This is not always true, however. I self-identified as a non-Christian during this study, yet most of the leadership disagreed with me, saying that I actually was a Christian and just didn't realize it.

Perhaps the clearest practical example of this approach in practice at the Anchor Fellowship is with Morning After Ministries (henceforth "MAM"). MAM is a branch of the women's ministry, led by Christy Brooks. The stated goals of MAM include:

Affirming women as God's creation, bringing health to the body, spirit and soul (mind, will, emotion), helping women understand their true value, educating women about spiritual and sexual health, meeting women where they are and giving them the tools to move toward sexual wholeness and responsibility, revealing the value that God places on every part of a woman's identity.³⁹

In a Christian context, Brooks attempts to help women deal with body image issues, sexuality issues, and health issues. Summarizing spiritual warfare in this context, Brooks said:

I deal with people every day that don't really believe or haven't come to the realization that their body is valued by God as much as their soul and their mind and their emotions [...] I think that there is mostly just lie-based attack that would come as far as spiritual warfare would go, it would mostly be not believing that your body is valuable. [...] And so they will engage in promiscuous meaningless sex that harms them mentally, emotionally, and a good amount of the time, physically as well.⁴⁰

In more extreme situations, Brooks claims she has counseled Christian women who believe they have been sexually assaulted by demons.⁴¹

However, spiritual warfare changes slightly in a non-Christian context. With Christian women, Brooks can rely on truth as it is defined by biblical interpretation, and the counseled women are themselves believed to be linked to God through the Holy Spirit. With non-Christian women, there is no guarantee that the Bible will be accepted as truth, nor is there the assumption that they possess the Holy Spirit. Thus, different

³⁹ Morning After Ministries, "About MAM" <http://www.morningafterministries.com/?page_id=2> (accessed 28 Jan. 2009).

⁴⁰ Christy Brooks, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 10 Dec. 2009.

⁴¹ This phenomenon has been discussed in other texts as well. See Michael W. Cuneo, *American Exorcism: Expelling Demons in the Land of Plenty* (Doubleday: New York 2001,) 31-33.

methods are used.

In September 2009, MAM began planning an outreach strategy to "the women that participate in the nightlife of Nashville," which includes "anyone from teenagers or college students going to dance clubs, or working in them, to strippers and sex shops."⁴² Thus far, there have been two main approaches to this goal. First, MAM sponsored a women-only "prayer walk" through the city. They prayed outside of specific places within the city, including night clubs, adult stores, and a center that assists women coming out of incarceration. Brooks identified it as territorial warfare, and expanded on that, saying:

I do believe that Nashville has a very strong spiritual climate, and Nashville has a really strong sexual addiction; sexual issues are very prominent in Nashville - that's been here forever. And I do believe that it is something that is definitely guarded by demons and that the demons like it.⁴³

The purpose of this prayer walk was threefold. First, it was an appeal to God to "prepare the way for ministry" and to "move on people's hearts." Second, it was to "get the lay of the land" and gain "an awareness of the spiritual climate." Third, it was also about asking God for guidance in the undertaking.⁴⁴ It is important to distinguish that it was not a cleansing endeavour. Often in territorial warfare, Christians will attempt to remove powerful demons they believe are present,⁴⁵ but Brooks believes that territorial

⁴² Christy Brooks, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 10 Dec. 2009. All accounts of MAM activities were explained to be by Brooks; as a male, I was ineligible to attend the prayer walk or the Valentine's Day outreach (explained on the next page).

⁴³ Christy Brooks, casual conversation, Nashville, TN, 29 Sept. 2009.

⁴⁴ Christy Brooks, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 10 Dec. 2009.

⁴⁵ Gonzalez writes "La cité et ses dépendances constituent donc un objectif de conquête spirituelle. Le territoire devient une unité pertinente pour l'activité missionnaire, afin d'envisager l'action divine en un lieu précis, sur un modèle similaire, mais inverse, à celui de l'emprise démoniaque sur la région." This is done through prayer, music, and declarations of God's authority. Phillipe Gonzalez, "Lutter contre l'emprise démoniaque: les politiques du combat spirituel évangélique," in *Terrain*, no. 50 (2008): 49-52.

deliverance is usually both dangerous and unwise.⁴⁶

The second way MAM is working to reach the women of Nashville's nightlife is a Valentine's Day project. On 14 February 2010, the women of the Anchor Fellowship who are involved in MAM plan to take gift baskets of chocolates, lotions, and cosmetics to women working in strip clubs. The intention is not so much about preaching God's love as it is about demonstrating God's love.

It is important to remember that the definition of spiritual warfare is often admittedly less stringent at the Anchor Fellowship than in other segments of Evangelicalism.⁴⁷ Brooks' own definition is that

spiritual warfare is anytime that you take an action that is opposite of an action of Satan. For example, if you were to say that "hate" is something that's from Satan, anytime that you would take an action in love, that would be spiritual warfare. Spiritual warfare is not just angels fighting demons and praying in tongues.

The desired goal of these actions is that the women MAM encounters will realize God's love for them and reject the damage demons attempt to inflict.

B. Demon Possession

The previous example drawn from MAM's activities demonstrates how the Anchor Fellowship approaches the perception of demonic oppression on non-Christians. The last level of demonization believed to exist—demon possession—is considered to be

⁴⁶ Her position is that there are authority issues because "the sex industry was invited here [Nashville] at its [Nashville's] foundation, and it doesn't necessarily have to leave. For someone to just walk in off the street and start 'commanding' isn't effective." As evidence, she said that many Christians have engaged territorial spirits in Nashville and yet the sex industry still remains. She also felt that taking young, inexperienced Christian women into aggressive conflict with territorial powers was a bad idea. Christy Brooks, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 10 Dec. 2009.

⁴⁷ The broadness of the definition is linked to the Kingdom eschatology. Since the Kingdom of God is not just an imminent future event but also a current undertaking, spiritual warfare includes anything that ushers people into this kingdom. See Chapter VII.

rarer and more volatile. During interviews, several cases of possession were recounted to me, and there was one instance where I witnessed an exchange between a Christian and someone they thought to be significantly demonized.⁴⁸ Of the eight cases reported to me, each was handled differently. The following two cases have been selected for their illustration of the role the Holy Spirit is believed to play in these encounters. The third case was selected not for its illustrative purposes, but rather because it was the only exchange I witnessed firsthand.

1. Houston, Texas

In 2008, Jesse Kevon went with the Anchor Fellowship to Houston, Texas, for a missions trip. The then existing Anchor School of Ministry⁴⁹ had joined with the Houston branch of Youth With a Mission (YWAM) to work with transvestites, prostitutes, and the homeless in a downtrodden neighborhood. Jesse Kevon and Chris Hayzlett were leading the Anchor contingent of the outreach efforts, but one evening, Kevon was asked to go with another group of people who were there from another church. He described them as being naive, overdressed and carrying Bibles through a rough neighborhood at 2 am, approaching people whom they passed and asking if they could pray for them. Kevon felt that this strategy was poorly thought out and born of an extreme disconnection with the culture they were attempting to reach.⁵⁰

Late into the night, the group encountered a drunk man. Kevon described him as

⁴⁸ It was not specifically clear if they thought this a case of full-fledged possession.

⁴⁹ This was a training program the Anchor Fellowship implemented for several years, but which is now defunct.

⁵⁰ Jesse Kevon, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 23 Jun. 2009.

bug-eyed, "metro,"⁵¹ combative, and flamboyant. Espying the group, the man approached them and asked what they were doing. When he found out they were praying for people, he said "Well, what about me? I'm gay." Kevon said the group didn't know how to answer him. The exchange continued, and ended with the man saying "I hate Christians, I don't like any of you guys, I don't like what you're doing, I think it's dumb." After this, Kevon said the man walked to the other side of the street and stood there, staring at them. Kevon said he was then staring back at the man, and that there was some "connection."

The YWAM group was discussing how they should go over and approach the man again, which Kevon thought was a terrible idea. He told the group that he felt that he should go over there himself, and that he felt that was what God wanted.

After talking to him for ten minutes, Kevon said that "his persona changed." The man lost the drunkenness, and his voice changed, deepening and losing the flamboyant edge. Kevon said the man spoke to him, saying "you realize you're going to get hurt out here; you realize that there are demons all around you right now," and other similar things.

At that moment I realized that something had entered him and started talking to me, and as he was talking to me, I started to pray in my mind because I knew what was going on. [...] I knew what was going on, so in my mind I'm just praying, "God I need you to speak through me because you know this is not our war, this is not me talking to this guy. I want you to talk to whatever is in him that is talking to me that is talking to my flesh."

The man continued threatening Kevon with demonic retribution, telling him he was going to be hurt. Kevon, however, felt his prayer for God's intervention was answered, saying:

⁵¹ "Metro" is short for metrosexual, and refers to a particular style of dress that came into popularity earlier in this decade.

God started speaking through me, and I just looked at him in the eyes, and said "no, I'm not. Because I'm covered by the blood of God, by the blood of Christ, and I have spiritual authority here. You [the demon] are not welcome here," and he just was kind of like, "okay."

The man went "back to normal" and they politely parted. Kevon told the man that he would be there for another week if he wanted to talk again.

This exchange illustrates several important points about spiritual warfare. First, it illustrates the difference perceived to exist between demonized Christians and demonized non-Christians. With a demonized Christian, there is usually an effort made to exorcise the demon from the afflicted person. With a demonized non-Christian, deliverance is usually discouraged. The scriptural foundation commonly cited for this position is Luke 11:24-26,⁵² which quotes Jesus as saying:

When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, "I will return to the house I left. When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first. (NIV)

The belief here is that because a non-Christian does not have the Holy Spirit, an exorcised demon will return to an "empty house" undefended and free to be taken. A second position that is sometimes advanced is that the demons in a non-Christian have a "legal right" to occupy that person.⁵³ During an interview, Sara Burgers described how she had once witnessed a non-Christian friend of hers be unwillingly subjected to an

⁵² One specific example is Mark Driscoll. Mark Driscoll, "Spiritual Warfare: Part 3: Christus Victor" <http://assets.marshillchurch.org/media/2008/02/05/20080205_christus-victor_audio.mp3> (accessed 17 Dec. 2008).

⁵³ Matt Burrowes described this relationship between a demon and the possessed in legal terms. Matt Burrowes, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 24 Oct. 2009.

exorcism. She reported that he dropped to the floor and shouted "I'm not going to come out," and that this deliverance was unsuccessful.⁵⁴

This theological position effects a very different kind of spiritual warfare. In place of deliverance, the spiritual conflict with a demonized non-Christian becomes two things: first, there is a defensive action taken on the part of the Christian. In Kevon's account, the demoniac in Houston was threatening him with some vague attack. Were this threat to occur in a deliverance session with a Christian, the threats would have been quickly silenced.⁵⁵ Under the circumstances Kevon described, the proper response was to deny the demon had the capacity to fulfill the threats, because he was "covered by God" and "had spiritual authority here." This posture is defensive.

Second, there often remains an attempt in these situations to still display the love of God to the person who has a demon. Kevon's parting words to the man were to invite him to talk again. There is a thought that sometimes, even in the throes of a demonic manifestation, the human personality beneath is subdued yet conscious of what is occurring and therefore still able to receive God's love.⁵⁶

It is prudent to reiterate here that the purpose of this thesis is neither to validate nor disprove the existence of demons, possession, or other such categories, but rather to explain how and why people understand them as they do. Religious phenomena are impossible to measure, and therefore impossible to prove. Accounts like Kevon's are out of the ordinary for most people, and all readers must decide for themselves how best to

⁵⁴ Sara Burgers, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 4 Nov. 2009.

⁵⁵ Josh Stump, casual conversation with author, 28 Jan. 2010.

⁵⁶ "Isabel" and "Thomas" both thought this depended on a case-by-case situation. Casual conversation with author, 28 Jan. 2010.

interpret them. Regarding this account, I can only validate that: 1) what I have described is what Kevon told me, and 2) it was my impression that Kevon believed he was telling me a true story.

2. Auckland, New Zealand

A far different account than that of Kevon's comes from Auckland, New Zealand. Jason Belcher is a native of New Zealand, but emigrated to the United States with his worship band, the Ember Days. In October of 2009, the band decided to settle in Nashville, Tennessee, specifically because Nashville is home to the Anchor Fellowship.

During an interview, Belcher recounted how while proselytizing with a church group in Auckland, they had encountered a possessed woman. This woman had approached them at a busy intersection, screaming profanities about them and Jesus. The pastor, originally from Argentina, ordered the woman in Spanish to crawl away like a snake. Belcher said the pastor had been inspired to this course of action by a passage of scripture, though he could not remember which one. Emphasizing how few New Zealanders speak Spanish, Belcher described how the woman had fallen silent and then crawled across traffic on Queen Street, a large, busy road in downtown Auckland, and into the flax bushes, whereupon the police had arrested her.

Belcher emphasized that the pastor had not ordered her to go across traffic, but just to "crawl away" in general—the demon had chosen the path to crawl along. He said they had simply wanted to be rid of her because she was harassing them and distracting from their mission.

This illustrates several things. First, it illustrates the theological diversity within

the Anchor Fellowship.⁵⁷ Though this event occurred independent of the Anchor Fellowship, it is part of the experiential background of one of its individual members. The Anchor Fellowship is a "melting pot" of experiences and theologies.

Second, there seems to be an assumption in many (if not most) Charismatic circles that demons speak many (if not most) languages.⁵⁸ This assumption is more of a curiosity than a major demonological principle, but the point has worked its way into many accounts.

Third, it illustrates the futility perceived in exorcizing a non-Christian. Kevon's account hinted at this idea, but Belcher's account is a better example of this position. The demoniac in this story was judged to be beyond convincing and intent on destroying their efforts. The response was to send the demoniac away, and, while it is possible that the command to "crawl away" may have just been meant metaphorically, the demoniac opted to do so in a literal (and dangerous) way.

Fourth, it illustrates the power Christians at the Anchor Fellowship believe they have over demons. This power is thought to be rooted first in the Holy Spirit, and second in the authority thought to be granted to Christians by Jesus.

3. Nashville, Tennessee

For several years, the Anchor Fellowship has operated the Anchor Stage at the Cornerstone Music Festival in Bushnell, Illinois. A Christian metalcore band called

⁵⁷ By this, I mean that the demonological assumptions in this action are rare enough to count as "fringe." While most proponents of spiritual warfare believe that Christians have authority over demons, most would not try commanding a demon in any action apart from exorcism. Ordering the demoniac to crawl away tacitly assumes that Christians have the authority to command demons in nearly any action, not just those actions immediately necessary for the "advance of the Kingdom" as it is commonly phrased.

⁵⁸ Personal observation suggests this view is widespread. A specific example in the literature can be found in Koch. Kurt E. Koch, *Demonology Past and Present: Identifying and Overcoming Demonic Strongholds* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1973), 44.

Sleeping Giant performed on the Anchor Stage in 2009. During their set, I observed an extraordinary example of using music as spiritual warfare. Two weeks after the Cornerstone Music Festival, Sleeping Giant came through Nashville on their "Scream the Prayer" tour, and I had the opportunity to interview frontman Tommy Green about their set on the Anchor Stage. That content will be discussed in the next chapter, but during the interview, we were approached by a panhandler who asked for spare change so he could buy alcohol. Serendipitously, this interaction was the only exchange that I personally witnessed between a Christian and someone they perceived to be demonized.

Even if this encounter had been limited only to visual observation, it would be understandable how one could interpret the panhandler as being demonized. His movements were stiff and uncoordinated; the closest comparison that can be made is that the man moved like a zombie from a 1960s movie. He was also unable to focus his eyes on any one point.

The interaction between Green and the panhandler seemed very normal. He was friendly and cordial to the man and told him that unfortunately he had already given his change to another panhandler. It was only after the man left that I learned Green thought he was demonized. There was never an indication as to whether he thought the man was fully possessed or not, nor whether he thought the man was non-Christian or Christian.⁵⁹

Green explained why he thought the man behaved as he did, saying:

There's an old Greek word for drug addiction and alcohol addiction: *pharmakeia*. People used to engage in it, and there's contemporary religions now where people do it [...] there's certain religious practices where you will take certain substances to open yourself up to the spirit realm. So one of the things that I see a lot with people that are homeless, is that it's not just addiction, but I

⁵⁹ I have interpreted the situation as one between a Christian and a non-Christian based on the way that Green responded. I have generally tried to avoid placing myself in this text, but as much of this particular scenario relies on my personal interpretation, it is unavoidable here.

believe that there's actually spiritual stuff on some people that – it almost energizes that natural thing on the inside of them. [...] And so with that guy that came up, you can see that on some level that he's not in his right mind. And so, with some people maybe there's just psychological things. [...] But what I can see on some level, and what I can sense in my heart, is that its not just addiction, and its not just that he's been up for a little bit, there's some extra stuff. [...] He's packing heat, he's got some visitors with him. There are some other things energizing his behavior.⁶⁰

There are several observable features of this interaction that are worth mentioning. First, Green treated the man with the same civility he had given to the people who were helping him unload the band equipment when I had first met up with him. There was no hostility or stiffness toward the panhandler, which I found surprising. Most encounters I have read about or heard from Christians who are describing exchanges with demoniacs suggest that there is at least some nervousness or discomfort with the person. It also demonstrates the position that kindness in itself is spiritual warfare. Second, there was no attempt to draw out the demons believed to be present with the man. This event matches the position that demons should not be exorcized from those who are not ready to give them up. The point being made here is that in the only interaction I was able to observe between a Christian and a non-Christian who was thought to be demonized, Green demonstrated the positions that Kevon was putting forward.

Beyond explaining the practice of spiritual warfare, Green's explanation of this encounter illustrated a significant demonological position held by many contemporary Charismatics. Green linked substance abuse to demonization, though he has been more thoughtful about that link than what is typically found in spiritual warfare literature. Koch, for example, also linked drugs to demonization, but he never explained the

⁶⁰ Tommy Green, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 18 Jul. 2009.

connection other than to say that "The devil is so good at disguise that he can make religious capital out of drug abuse,"⁶¹ and that "the drug epidemic is an eschatological problem. Satan has begun his final battle."⁶² Driscoll's spiritual warfare guide and lecture series also imply a connection between alcoholism, drug abuse, and demonization, yet do not explain what the causal link is.⁶³ Within the broader Evangelical milieu, drugs and alcohol are typically understood to be sinful without further explanations required.⁶⁴ For those who actually offer an explanation, there are some who posit that because drugs are illegal, to use them is to disobey governing authority, and also that drug use can be interpreted as "getting drunk," which is considered sinful.⁶⁵ The causal link between these actions and demonization, however, is almost never established, despite the frequency of the position that they are indeed linked.

Green's position regarding the causal link between chemical substances and demonization demonstrates a thoughtful insight, that by psychologically altering oneself, a person can "open themselves up" to "the spirit realm," including demonic influences. It make sense that for somebody who holds the position that demons exist and can afflict people, that one way to "connect" to demons would be through drugs. There is, after all, scientific evidence that entheogenic drugs can indeed incite diverse spiritual experiences in people. In a psychiatric study of psilocybin effects (a hallucinogen found in certain mushrooms), 67% of the "hallucinogen-naive" participants ranked the experiment as

⁶¹ Kurt E. Koch, *Occult ABC* (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, 1978), 56.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Mark Driscoll, "Spiritual Warfare: Part 3: Christus Victor," <http://assets.marshallchurch.org/media/2008/02/05/20080205_christus-victor_audio.mp3> (accessed 17 Dec. 2008) and Mark Driscoll, "Spiritual Warfare Lecture Notes," <http://assets.marshallchurch.org/media/misc/spiritual-warfare_document.pdf> (accessed 13 Jan. 2009).

⁶⁴ Personal observation, based on past conversations with Evangelical Christians.

⁶⁵ Personal observation, based on past conversations with Evangelical Christians.

being among the five most spiritually significant experiences of their lives.⁶⁶ While most of the users reported experiencing peace, transcendence, and occasionally, encounters with God, some reported experiences such as "I confronted my shadow and yelled 'What do you want?' and it disappeared in a puff of smoke" as well as "the profound grief I experienced [was] as if all of the pain and sadness of the world were passing through me cell by cell tearing me apart."⁶⁷ For someone operating from a Charismatic position, these experiences would quickly be classified as demonic. Considering that these experiences occurred in a controlled, safe environment, one can imagine what recreational drug users might experience when using psilocybin in uncontrolled environments. It is a reasonable assumption that most hallucinogenic drug users whom Christians encounter are not getting their mushrooms in a laboratory setting, and certainly many of them have had experiences that would seem demonic.

Moving beyond hallucinogens, when people become addicted to some drugs (cocaine, for example), often they begin to demonstrate aberrant behavior, and their lives begin to deteriorate. Seeing that demonic phenomena can accompany some hallucinogenic drug use, and that drug use can lead to poverty, instability, crime, mental problems, and physiological problems, it is natural, then, that Charismatics would establish links between substance abuse and demonization.

C. Non-Christian Communities and Spiritual Warfare

Thus far this chapter has examined how the Anchor Fellowship approaches

⁶⁶ R.R. Griffiths, W.A. Richards, M.W. Johnson, U.D. McCann and R. Jesse, "Mystical-type experiences occasioned by psilocybin mediate the attribution of personal meaning and spiritual significance 14 months later," *Journal of Psychopharmacology* 22, no. 6 (2008): 621.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 629.

spiritual warfare with non-Christian individuals. There is also a category of spiritual warfare in the context of non-Christian communities. While the actual focus of the MAM outreach efforts are on individuals, there is a community component to their spiritual warfare on behalf of women involved in Nashville's nightlife. A clearer example of spiritual warfare practices in the context of a large non-Christian community setting can be provided.

1. Sturgis, South Dakota

The Anchor Fellowship was in debt during the entirety of this study. The Cornerstone Music Festival alone cost thousands of dollars. To remedy the debt, Stump began looking for fundraising opportunities. Through a connection with an organization called Kingdom Promotions, he secured an opportunity for "paid volunteer" work at the Buffalo Chip Campground in Sturgis, South Dakota.

Every year in August, thousands of motorcycle enthusiasts ranging from "weekend bikers" to the Hell's Angels descend on the small town of Sturgis. The Buffalo Chip Campground is famous for being the center of activity, and the cost to get in is exorbitant.⁶⁸ Every night, a different major band holds a concert at the campground. The Buffalo Chip Campground is also private property, so police are not permitted in, creating an "anything goes" environment. With the amount of disposable wealth the patrons carry, and with the laissez-faire oversight, the place quickly becomes a motorized bacchanal. Though technically forbidden, public sex and prostitution often occur, drugs are common, assault is frequent, drunk driving is blatant. Misogyny is encouraged. Chris

⁶⁸ Tent camping is \$700 for the week. To bring an RV into the campground begins at \$1500.

Hayzlett called Sturgis "evil"⁶⁹ and said, "I feel like I now understand what it must have been like in Sodom and Gomorrah."⁷⁰

Including myself, thirteen of us went to Sturgis for this fundraiser. We travelled in a fifteen-passenger van, pulling a camping trailer. When we arrived, we learned that our shifts would be from 6 PM to 6 AM every night, working as security until roughly 4 AM, and trash detail from 4 AM until 6 AM. Two of the women who went with us were given shirts identifying them as security, but the rest of us were not. Working security meant that we asked bikers to surrender their guns, knives, and drugs to us, and that we checked their wristbands at the gates to the campground and at the gates to the amphitheatre. We were living in the campground for the week; most of us had tents and a few people were sleeping in the camping trailer (although after about 9 AM sleep was extremely difficult because of the noise and the 90°F+ heat). We cooked meals mainly from canned goods that had been taken from the Anchor Fellowship's food donation pantry back in Nashville, although a group of Christian bikers had also set up near our campsite and were giving away free pancakes every morning.

Sara Burgers had approached this event as an opportunity for ministry, saying she had a heart for the women in places like that.⁷¹ Most people on this trip, however, were mainly there to help the church raise money. For Burgers, the spiritual warfare was meant to be offensive, as she had hoped to show God's love to people there. For everyone else, the warfare was mainly defensive. During an interview, Burgers told me that "even after that last statement about how I have experienced a lot [of spiritual warfare], Sturgis was

⁶⁹ Chris Hayzlett, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 11 Jan. 2010.

⁷⁰ Chris Hayzlett, casual conversation, Sturgis, SD, 9 Aug. 2009.

⁷¹ Sara Burgers, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 4 Nov. 2009.

off the Richter scale. I feel like months later I am still processing through it.”⁷²

While Hayzlett and Burgers both felt that demons were heavily present at the Buffalo Chip Campground, Mikey Brackett made a different observation:

Just looking at the people and seeing how miserable they were, seeing what they were doing, [...] and just seeing the pain and the fear and the hurt and the insecurity in all of those people and how they were acting it out, you couldn't deny that there was something heavy about it. Now I didn't see demons running around and I didn't feel like there were little demons walking around on people's shoulders, but just as a whole, I think it was such a widespread thing that I don't think you're able to pick out one or two things. I think it was such a broad covering of loss and regret and shame and evil, that it just kind of sat like a cloud.⁷³

This statement was not a denial of the presence of demons, but rather a denial that he sensed them. Brackett's assessment was that the violence and selfishness endemic to that place was rooted in a collective misery of the people there.

The members of the Anchor Fellowship who went felt like there was some small amount of ministry that they performed, but, largely, people were praying for protection, both spiritual and physical. Our team was often threatened with physical violence, including one person who threatened to kill a young woman. One night a drunk woman offered to show Stump her breasts, and when he declined, she bit him. One morning at dawn, a man holding a large pipe began shouting at me because some people had parked RV's amidst his display of American flags. The environment was considered to be one of danger, both because of the physical threats, and because of the psychological stress. Back in Nashville, many members of the Anchor Fellowship were also praying for the spiritual and physical protection of the Sturgis team.

After five days of this environment, a breaking point came. Everyone was under

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Mikey Brackett, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 15 Dec. 2009.

great strain from the trip, and the members of the Anchor Fellowship felt they were spiritually oppressed. We had been caught in a frigid hailing thunderstorm that night, and Hayzlett and Stump were discussing whether or not we should continue to stay. It was also the night the death threat had been made. During this discussion, they received a call from Brian Ban in Nashville, who said he had woken from a dream about us coming home drenched in water. His interpretation of the dream was that God was calling the Anchor Fellowship to leave the Buffalo Chip Campground. When we returned from our shifts at 6 am, we packed up our campsite and left four days before we were scheduled to do so.

For this study, I have largely tried to keep my own views out of research. I wish to deviate from this omission on the matter of Sturgis. I was the only non-Christian on the Anchor Fellowship's team at Sturgis, and I am typically very skeptical of supernaturalism. That point established, I agreed with the Anchor Fellowship that there was something sinister about the place. The rationalist side of me thinks perhaps my perception was because of the poor diet, the filth of the August sweat, the unending dust kicked up by the motorcycles, and the open sewers that ran beneath unlit outhouses, because of my personal discomfort with the misogyny, homophobia, and racism in many of the patrons, and because of the severe sleep deprivation that had me hallucinating before the end of the trip. Most of us suffered from nightmares for several months after this trip. Setting apart that rationalism, there is a part in me that feels like there was something tangibly evil about that place, which I have never been able to explain satisfactorily. Neither before nor after Sturgis have I ever been in a place that felt like

that, and I had no context for it.

2. Wicca, Paganism, and Freemasonry

There is a belief within contemporary Evangelicalism that witchcraft and occult activities are demonic.⁷⁴ From this position, it is often believed that people who adhere to Wicca, Paganism, New Age religions, and similar systems of thought are aligned with Satan, either knowledgeably or unwittingly. This belief can, at times, develop into a situation of conflict. In Colorado Springs, for example, Christians from the New Life Church began praying outside the homes of suspected witches, upsetting the residents enough that two-thirds of them put their houses up for sale in one month.⁷⁵ This was done as part of a territorial warfare campaign that New Life had launched in Colorado Springs.

Historically, secret societies have also been thought to be demonic,⁷⁶ and presently, many Evangelicals still hold this position. The contemporary focus, however, identifies the Freemasons as being demonic more than any other secret society.⁷⁷ They are often linked to the New World Order in conspiracy theories, which will be addressed in the next section.

How does the Anchor Fellowship approach these matters? They do share the viewpoint that Paganism and Freemasonry are demonic, and, in interviews, one person linked their demonic oppression to past Pagan practices, and another linked her demonic oppression to her family's history with Freemasonry. During a deliverance session, one of

⁷⁴ Charles H. Kraft, *The Rules of Engagement: Understanding the Principles That Govern the Spiritual Battles in Our Lives* (Colorado Springs, CO: Wagner Publications, 2000), 107.

⁷⁵ Jeff Sharlet and Chris Hedges, "Soldiers of Christ," *Harper's Magazine* (May 2005): 44.

⁷⁶ George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press: New York, 2006), 29.

⁷⁷ Personal observation.

the questions Stump posed was: "have you had any involvement in Freemasonry?"⁷⁸

There is a clearly established position that these practices are demonic.

However, unlike many other Charismatics, the Anchor Fellowship does not typically engage these particular groups in any sort of spiritual warfare practice. Nobody appears to be praying in front of the Freemason lodge two blocks from the church office, nor are there spiritual warfare campaigns against Pagans in Nashville, although Christy Brooks said that she does pray for God to bring light to the Freemasons lodge every time she drives past. Hayzlett asserts that there would never be a campaign to pray outside of people's houses, unless they were specifically invited to or specifically instructed by God to do so, though he considered both of those to be unlikely scenarios.

3. Secular Politics

Academia has focused great attention on connections between politics and religion. Certainly there are connections, and generally it is a topic worth exploring. Spiritual warfare can be linked to political action in some contexts. For example, Lou Engle framed his opposition to California's Proposition 8 relating to same-sex marriage legislation in terms of territorial warfare.⁷⁹

The Anchor Fellowship is moderately estranged from politics, which they consider to be a matter of individual conscience. They also view politics as having limited usefulness and a thing destined to perish. The one major exception to this estrangement is their opposition to the New World Order. Conspiracy theorists believe the New World Order is a secret one-world government, a military, an economic system,

⁷⁸ Josh Stump, question posed to a counselee during a deliverance session, Nashville, TN, 4 Nov. 2009.

⁷⁹ Lou Engle is a prominent Evangelical and political activist. Lou Engle, "Blog Archive >> Urgent Call to Prayer" <<http://www.louengle.com/2009/03/04/urgent-call-to-prayer/>> (accessed 16 Mar. 2009).

and a eugenics program.⁸⁰ Some theorists believe the New World Order was behind the Kennedy assassination, the September 11th attacks, and other major assassinations throughout the last hundred years.⁸¹ Theorists often connect the New World Order to Freemasonry and the Illuminati.⁸² Christian theorists often connect the New World Order to the one-world government that is expected to arise just prior to Armageddon in premillennial eschatology.⁸³

Nichole Lim explained that "the New World Order is the formation of a one-world government that is going to bring a message of peace, but it's not peace, it's just a takeover, ushering in the Antichrist and the end of the world as we know it."⁸⁴ This view is the most common one at the Anchor Fellowship on the subject⁸⁵ and has led to political activities, such as protests against the Iraq war, the federal reserve, and human trafficking.⁸⁶ There is also the expectation among premillennialists that when the One-World Government comes, Christians will be persecuted, including the expectation that they will not be able to purchase goods.⁸⁷ Stephen D. O'Leary has argued that belief in and opposition to the existence of an evil cabal is important for premillennial theodicy.⁸⁸

⁸⁰ Christian J. Pinto, *Megiddo: The March to Armageddon* (Mount Juliet, TN: Adullam Films, 2003).

⁸¹ Andrew Neel and Luke Meyer, *New World Order* (Brooklyn: SeeThink Films, 2009).

⁸² Christian J. Pinto, *Megiddo: The March to Armageddon*.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Nichole Lim, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 4 Oct. 2009.

⁸⁵ It is not, however, the only view. Chris Hayzlett specifically made a point to say he did not believe there was an orchestrated one-world government pursuing the destruction of mankind, but that he did believe there were many unscrupulous groups who each wanted money or power and were sometimes willing to work together to get it. Christy Brooks has been critical of the "fear-based" response sometimes found in opposition to the New World Order. Chris Hayzlett and Christy Brooks, casual conversations with author, (CH) 6 Nov. 2009, (CB), 10 Oct. 2009.

⁸⁶ "Past Events" on the "Christian Action Against Apathy" group on Facebook. CAAA was a short-lived ministry of the Anchor Fellowship.
<<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=37382846768#/group.php?gid=37382846768>> (accessed 2 Feb. 2010).

⁸⁷ This idea is drawn from Revelation 13:17, which reads "so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name." (NIV)

⁸⁸ Stephen D. O'Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 6.

Because of this view, many members of the Anchor Fellowship believe that there will be a time when it will be wise to begin stockpiling necessities.

In these actions no attempt is made to completely stop the New World Order as such. Political action in this context is usually viewed as merely slowing the advance. The New World Order is believed to be prophetically guaranteed and unpreventable.⁸⁹ Spiritual warfare in this context consists mainly of preparing to withstand the Tribulation, and the opposition of the Antichrist.

It is an oddity when juxtaposed against the rest of the demonology at the Anchor Fellowship. People at the Anchor Fellowship typically avoid viewing other people as demonic enemies, drawing a clear line between spiritual enemies and oppressed humans. When discussing the New World Order, however, this line is somewhat blurrier. Individuals believed to be in league with the New World Order seem to be more distrusted than other individuals who are thought to be demonically cozened. It represents an unusual deviation from the Anchor Fellowship's typical view on spiritual warfare as being mostly spiritual and immaterial.

D. Chapter Summary

Spiritual warfare is practiced differently in a non-Christian context than it is in a Christian context. Exorcisms and deliverance are not advised for non-Christians, unless they first convert. The expression of God's love is still considered a valid approach with non-Christians, as is praying for them.

There is a belief that the Holy Spirit can identify and overpower the will of demons in possessed non-Christians, and that there is authority given to Christians to act

⁸⁹ The issue of the New World Order is considered to be one of prophecy, rather than predestination.

in this capacity. Members of the Anchor Fellowship do not propose using this flippantly or often.

With non-Christian communities, and especially with hostile non-Christian communities (such as at Sturgis), spiritual warfare is largely defensive. The Anchor Fellowship does not typically engage in territorial deliverance, and, often, territorial deliverance is not considered possible because of a spiritual legal right held by demons. There is a vaguely liminal approach that is sometimes used, where members of the Anchor Fellowship will engage a non-Christian community in the hopes of reaching individuals within it, such as with the MAM prayer walk.

The confluence of spiritual warfare and politics is mainly eschatological at the Anchor Fellowship. The only significant mixture of the two is the opposition to the New World Order.

Chapter VI - Spiritual Warfare and the Arts

The previous chapters have predominantly been focused on spiritual warfare practices and beliefs in Evangelicalism and at the Anchor Fellowship. Within contemporary Evangelicalism, there exists a symbiotic relationship between spiritual warfare and the arts, especially in the areas of music and literature. Musicians, writers, and performers who believe in spiritual warfare use their art forms to illustrate or express their conceptions of it, and, in turn, those who receive these art forms adopt the ideals promoted therein. Music is also used as a tool in spiritual warfare practices. Chapter VI focuses on this relationship.

A. Music

Music is the predominant art form that also serves as a vehicle for spiritual warfare. Spiritual warfare content can be found both in Christian rock and metal bands (including some that have significant secular followings)¹ as well as within worship music. Worship music is a difficult category to define. The difficulty may come from the fact that the term has two meanings: first, "worship music" refers to a particular stylistic

¹ Examples would include Switchfoot, UnderOath, Demon Hunter, etc. Spiritual warfare content does exist in other genres as well, but it seems more prevalent in rock and metal.

genre, and second, it also can refer to music intended to promote the action of worship.²

Stylistically, worship music is usually driven by piano or guitar, and puts a heavy emphasis on "devotional" lyrics. There is significant overlap between the worship genre and Christian contemporary music (CCM).³

Regarding intention, worship music is meant to draw people towards "intimacy" with and respect for God. Worship music is sometimes played independent of congregational settings,⁴ but it is also often featured in Evangelical church services or "worship services." One author explained the intention of worship services thus: "Like pep rallies, these worship services fulfill a particular, focused purpose: they are a means to a victorious end and preludes to the 'real action' of life."⁵ In other words, worship services (and by extension, worship music) are often intended to lead listeners into a particular mindset that is conducive to action and personal reform. In an ethnographic study of worship music, Jennings found that the intention of worship music was also to

² These definitions are my own, drawn from observation and conversation. I was unable to find a clear definition already existing in print. Academic literature regarding Christian worship music does exist, but each of the many texts I consulted omitted firm definitions. The first definition is derived from my personal observation that "worship" is often treated as a genre. The second definition is an amalgam of the definitions provided to me by individual practitioners, and can also be paraphrased from Joel Hartse's presentation of atypical worship styles in a *Christianity Today* article. Implicitly, if the post-rock bands he discusses would not normally be defined as "worship" (and that is part of his argument), then this gives further credence to the suggestion that "worship" music often is interpreted as a genre as well as an intent. Joel Hartse, "Groans Too Deep for Words: A New Breed of Bands Sees Instruments as More than Accompaniment for Praise Lyrics" *Christianity Today* (Jan. 2009): 54-55. Other researchers have encountered the same problem of defining worship music, especially because practitioners themselves do not totally agree. See the discussion of this issue in Monique Marie Ingalls, "Awesome in This Place: Sound, Space, and Identity in Contemporary North American Evangelical Worship" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2008), 14-16.

³ Ingalls links the formation of the "worship" genre to the commercial adoption of worship music by the Contemporary Christian Music industry in Nashville. *Ibid.*, 153.

⁴ Examples of such settings would include homes, car stereos, festivals, etc.

⁵ Trevor and Bonnie McMaken, "Your Worship Isn't Enough," *RELEVANT Magazine*, (Online content, undated) <<http://www.relevantmagazine.com/god/worship/features/18614-your-worship-isnt-enough>> (accessed 4 Feb. 2010). David Lim disagreed with this position, arguing that worship was important in its own right and should not be reduced to merely the promotion of other action.

partly "set a mood" conducive to "a spiritual encounter."⁶

The distinction between worship music and regular Christian music is subjective. Regular Christian music, or even secular music, can be defined as worship music if the intended use is for devotional purposes.⁷ As an example, during the early months of this study, the Anchor Fellowship opted for the traditional method of collecting tithes and offerings by passing collection baskets back and forth through the aisles.⁸ During this time, the chosen offertory music was "Sæglópur" by the secular Icelandic band Sigur Rós. Although it seems very unlikely that Sigur Rós intended the song to be used this way, its presence during a time of worship and its use as an aural stimulus for devotional purposes makes it "worship music" in this setting.⁹ Stylistically, however, Sigur Rós would not be categorized within the worship genre.

1. Worship Music at the Anchor Fellowship

Worship music comprises an important part of church services at the Anchor Fellowship. The opening of every church service consists of prayer, liturgical readings, tithing, and, on select occasions, communion. Worship music is played during all of these portions. After Josh Stump delivers a sermon, church services typically close with

⁶ Mark Jennings, "'Won't you break free?' An ethnography of music and the divine-human encounter at an Australian Pentecostal Church," *Culture and Religion* 9, no 2 (Jul. 2008): 163.

⁷ On 3 Jul. 2009, Jesse Kevon proposed from stage at the Cornerstone Music Festival that his hardcore band, Mankind, was about to play a worship song. Hardcore music involves heavy drums, electric guitar, and screaming. This same point has been made by Joel Hartse, "Groans Too Deep for Words: A New Breed of Bands Sees Instruments as More Than Accompaniment for Praise Lyrics," *Christianity Today* (Jan. 2009): 54-55.

⁸ During the later part of this study, this practice changed. The Anchor Fellowship moved the collection baskets to the front of the sanctuary to encourage members to be "more intentional" about their giving and to make it "an act of worship." Instead of passing the baskets, members were asked to get up during a particular time during the opening worship and walk to the front of the church to tithe.

⁹ Some of the Christian post-rock bands Hartse interviewed also cited Sigur Rós as a spiritual influence. Joel Hartse, "Groans Too Deep for Words: A New Breed of Bands Sees Instruments as More Than Accompaniment for Praise Lyrics," 54-55.

"ministry time," in which people can receive prayer or prophecy from people on the ministry team (chapter III). Worship music is also played during this portion of the service. Typically, those who are not involved in giving or receiving prayer spend this portion of the service in personal prayer, devotional actions, or ecstatic worship.¹⁰ It is typically the worship portions of the service that are thought to be the most conducive to spiritual warfare.

2. Worship Music as Spiritual Warfare at the Anchor Fellowship

The worship pastor at the Anchor Fellowship, David Lim, espouses the view that spiritual warfare is best defined as the struggle to stay focused on God. "God is always trying to turn our eyes to him, and the enemy and every part of the enemy is trying to turn our eyes back to ourselves and back to the world."¹¹ Expanding on this point, Lim explained how exactly he believes worship can be used as a tool in spiritual warfare.

I feel like worship is spiritual warfare because by its very definition it is opening your eyes to God and becoming more and more aware of God. I feel like it's a reflection and an expression of your awareness of God. And so whether I'm leading songs, or whether I'm praying with somebody, or whether I'm talking to somebody, those things are all going to be a reflection and an expression of how aware I am of God at that point in my life. [...] Because I think [Satan's goal in] spiritual warfare innately is just turning your eyes away from God, then worship turns your eyes toward God, so in that way it's spiritual warfare.

Josh Stump made similar observations. "I've seen people come in with a hard heart and [who are] very angry towards God, who get caught up in the worship. And that

¹⁰ By ecstatic worship I refer to the practice of embracing intense emotions and of abandoning social norms regarding body movement and facial expressions. For example, someone involved in ecstatic worship may drop to their knees while waving their arms above their head with their eyes closed and speaking in tongues. This practice is acceptable in a worship service, but would be a violation of social norms if it occurred elsewhere (a post office, for example).

¹¹ David Lim, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 9 Dec. 2009.

can be a transforming situation."¹²

Spiritual warfare practices are difficult to observe during the worship portions of services at the Anchor Fellowship. It is possible to gain clear visual observations during worship, but aural observations are difficult. The volume of the music masks all else; conversations that occur are only audible to the participants. There were a number of times when I was personally approached by members of the Anchor Fellowship who wished to pray for me or inform me of a prophetic vision they had received for me, and in each of these situations, those who approached me were forced to shout what they wished to say.¹³

Regardless of the aural limitations, visual cues can indicate spiritual warfare practices occurring during worship services. For example, some members of the Anchor Fellowship will engage in a form of what is known as "intercessory prayer," by praying on behalf of the entire congregation. Intercession can be visually observed by posture: while some engaging in corporate intercession may remain in their seats, occasionally someone will go to the front of the sanctuary and face the entire congregation to intercede. Accompanying ritual may include the raising of the hands with palms facing the congregation, as well as speaking in tongues.¹⁴ Similarly, it is not uncommon to espy two or three people praying for someone – typically at the Anchor Fellowship, this involves the laying on of hands.¹⁵

Spiritual warfare shifts focus slightly during worship. It is common in a

¹² Josh Stump, telephone interview with author, 13 Feb. 2009.

¹³ Those who pray for people or sing during all three services on Sunday are often hoarse by the end of the third service. Personal observation.

¹⁴ Speaking in tongues can be distinguished from normal speech by lip reading.

¹⁵ Laying on of hands is gender-specific, however. Women do not often lay hands on men, nor men on women. It is not for theological reasons, but, as Lim phrased it, "for emotional safety." It is practicality rather than a moral concern.

deliverance session for demons to be directly rebuked or commanded away, though Lim avoids this practice during worship. Instead, if Lim senses that there is something demonic interfering with the service, he prefers to defer to God instead of speaking directly to them.

I'll stop and pray, and ask God to remove those things [demons], or block those things, but I try to reserve my songs and everything – not to sing to a demon to tell it to leave, but instead to pray that it would be gone, that God would remove it, and then follow that up [...] with renewing my focus on God.¹⁶

This approach is shared by others who lead worship as well. During one particular service, the worship leader (not Lim) was having significant problems with the sound equipment. He addressed it by saying "In my old church, we would have just prayed the demons out of the sound equipment."¹⁷ The tone with which he said it suggested a joke, and it elicited some laughter from the congregation. But he followed this statement immediately with "So let's do that now." Rather than rebuke demons, he asked for people to pray for God to repair the situation. It is worth noting that in some Charismatic environments, it is commonplace to ask for God to protect audio-visual equipment from demonic interference.¹⁸

Some members of the Anchor Fellowship are also involved in touring worship bands, which represents another vestige of spiritual warfare. One touring band, The Ember Days, considers the Anchor Fellowship their "home base" for a larger mission. Speaking on spiritual warfare in worship, Matt Burrowes said "people are set free from bondage every time we play" and that "whenever we play, we're opposing something,

¹⁶ David Lim, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 9 Dec. 2009.

¹⁷ 10:30am church service at the Anchor Fellowship, Nashville, TN, 13 Sept. 2009.

¹⁸ Personal observation. For an ethnographic example, see *Jesus Camp*. Loki Films Inc, *Jesus Camp*, DVD, directed by Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady (Los Angeles: Magnolia Home Entertainment, 2006).

obviously, the enemy."¹⁹ Expanding on this concept, Jason Belcher said,

In the worship is God's presence and even in that there is sometimes healing, or revelation, or something. We get emails quite a lot about people being at a worship event, and [who have] had a vision of God's love, or had something happen, or God spoke to them about something, or they sensed freedom in an area.²⁰

In a way, then, the Anchor Fellowship exports spiritual warfare through the vehicle of worship tours. It should be mentioned that the perceived overturning of Satan's plans is because of "God's presence" – in other words, the Holy Spirit.

The music itself is thought to be a vehicle for the Holy Spirit to operate. As Chad Johnson phrased it, "I think music typically is so emotional and so stirring in the heart; when it's good music there is something genuine there, that it is also very easy for us to latch on to it both positively or negatively. [...] I do think that there is something really unique about music that seems to connect with someone's soul unlike anything else."²¹ Others at the Anchor Fellowship think similarly; Brooks suggested that music provides an unusually easy route to reaching God.²²

3. Spiritual Warfare Content in Worship Lyrics

It is common for Evangelical worship music to contain spiritual warfare lyrics.²³ With worship music at the Anchor Fellowship, lyrical references to spiritual warfare tend

¹⁹ Matt Burrowes, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 24 Oct. 2009.

²⁰ Jason Belcher, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 21 Oct. 2009.

²¹ Chad Johnson, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 3 Feb. 2010.

²² Brooks referred to it as "cheating," not to suggest that music wasn't a valid route to God, but that it provided an unusually easy route. Christy Brooks, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 10 Dec. 2009.

²³ For example, popular worship/CCM band Casting Crowns uses spiritual warfare lyrics frequently. For an example, consider the opening stanza of "What if His People Prayed" which reads "What if the armies of the Lord / picked up and dusted off their swords / vowed to set the captives free / and not let Satan have one more." Casting Crowns, "What if His People Prayed," track one of *Casting Crowns*, Nashville: Beach Street Records, 2003.

to be vague and few. The majority of songs focus on praise and devotion to God.²⁴

An example of a vague reference would be this stanza from "All Who Are Thirsty:" "Let the pain and the sorrow / be washed away / in the streams of His mercy / as deep cries out to deep."²⁵ When focused upon by one singing along, these lyrics become an appeal for God to heal "pain" and "sorrow." Since the prevailing definition of spiritual warfare at the Anchor Fellowship includes physical and emotional healing, this song can be used as a tool in spiritual warfare practices.

There are only two direct references to spiritual warfare in lyrics at the Anchor Fellowship. One stanza in a song called "Come and Awake" reads "Spirit of God / breathe into life / a church that is holy / an army of light."²⁶ While this song is frequently used, during the course of this study, it was only played during the opening worship sequence, which seems for most people to be a time of preparation for the sermon, and closing worship, through the refocusing of attention upon God. The second reference paraphrases John 1:5 and Matthew 16:18 in the stanza "I see a light and it's shining in the darkness / and against it, the darkness won't prevail."²⁷ While during the later part of this study there was an overt effort to use the opening worship sequence for ministry time as well, this practice was never adopted by the congregation.²⁸

There is greater significance to the music than what appears on the surface. Both

²⁴ A typical example of praise lyrics would be this: "Your will above all else, my purpose remains / the art of losing myself, in bringing You praise / everlasting, your light will shine when all else fades / neverending, your glory goes beyond all fame." Hillsong United, "From the Inside Out," track four of 7 *Essential Songs of Hillsong United*, Mobile, AL: Integrity Media, Inc, 2008.

²⁵ Vineyard Music UK, "All Who Are Thirsty," track eleven, disc one, of *Top 25 Vineyard UK Praise & Worship Songs*, San Clemente, CA: Maranatha! Records, 2007.

²⁶ David Lim, *Come and Awake*, unpublished, 2009.

²⁷ This song was used in both opening and closing worship. David Lim, *Immanuel (The Light)*, unpublished, 2009.

²⁸ Lim encouraged people not just to wait until the closing worship to pray for each other or give words of encouragement, but to use the opening worship sequence for ministry as well. The congregation never adopted this practice, reserving these activities for the closing worship alone.

Stump and Lim are convinced that worship is a useful tool during spiritual warfare, yet the content of the music lacks the more overt references to spiritual warfare often found in worship music. Nobody sings about swords or victory over demons. Instead, the music mainly reflects praise and submission to God. Inherent in it, then, is the belief that praise and devotion are themselves a warfare action. Furthermore, it is during these moments when the congregation shifts their focus on praise and devotion that the Anchor Fellowship practices ministry time, and it is during ministry time that spiritual warfare is most often practiced. There is a direct correlation, then, between praise and warfare.

4. The Cornerstone Music Festival

For the past several years, the Anchor Fellowship has operated a stage at the Cornerstone Music Festival (henceforth simply "Cornerstone") in Bushnell, Illinois. This stage has a missional intent, and it is the view that many of those who attend Cornerstone are not Christians.²⁹ Every day of the week began with a church service led by Stump, followed by twelve hours of live music. During this week, there were several moments of spiritual warfare worth noting.

a. Demonic Attacks on Transportation

The first occurrence of spiritual warfare at Cornerstone happened on the journey to the festival. At this time, the Anchor Fellowship was in possession of an old school bus and a 15-passenger van; these were the transportation for many of the people going to Cornerstone, as well as much of the stage equipment. The school bus had also been modified with bunks, and was to be sleeping quarters for eight people.

²⁹ Brian Ban, conversation with author, Bushnell, IL, 1 Jul. 2009.

At about the halfway point, the bus engine stopped working, stranding a number of people and some equipment in Okawville, Illinois. The bus was temporarily abandoned there, and the van took a two-hour detour into St. Louis to rent a second van. A few hours from Bushnell, the trailer behind the passenger van popped a tire. These problems sapped the Anchor Fellowship of time, money, and sleeping quarters for many of the project leaders.

These auto troubles were viewed as demonic attack. The perception was that God was intending to "do something big" at Cornerstone,³⁰ and these problems were the assault of the enemy, an attempt to thwart them. There were several moments where people discussed this view. Each time, the response was to sing songs, pray, and encourage each other about the potential of the trip. Some prayers included requests for angelic protection.

b. Sleeping Giant

On 3 July 2009, the Christian metalcore band Sleeping Giant played at the Anchor Stage. During their set, they played a song called "Oh Praise Him," and, during this song, Tommy Green incited several hundred people to participate in spiritual warfare as a single unit. This is the only time during this research where 1) a song was deliberately used as spiritual warfare, and 2) a large group of people were asked to participate in spiritual warfare as a single unit.

The song opened with drums—a military cadence. Green, a charismatic speaker,

³⁰ Comments made by members while at a gas station in rural Illinois.

began preaching. He taught the audience a Hebrew phrase "hallel yah"³¹ and led them in chanting it. He then "broke off a spirit of fear" from the audience, and instructed them to sing, to jump, to shout, to stomp their feet. The point was to release and abandon anxieties about sound and movement, and to reject "the spirit of fear."

In between moments of preaching, Green sang the lyrics to the song, a repetition of "Oh praise Him / the resurrected Lord Jesus the lamb who was slain / the mighty lion of Judah with blood on his mane / we love you Lord Jesus we lift up our lives and sing / all praise and glory to you Christ the King" With the audience emotionally charged, Green continued to preach on issues of social justice,³² focusing on the need for Jesus, and on not judging others.³³

This performance demonstrated several facets of spiritual warfare that have not yet been discussed. The first notable quality of this event was the use of the physical body as an agent of spiritual warfare. In explaining MAM (Chapter V), Christy Brooks identified the body as "something to give to Jesus." Thus, the significance of the human body is already established. "Thomas's" bruises (chapter IV) also establish the belief that the body can be affected in spiritual warfare. However, what occurred during the Sleeping Giant performance was something more. This was the use of the body as an actual instrument in spiritual warfare.

In explaining his views on spiritual warfare, Green was careful to say that he prefers to focus on God rather than on demons. He also identified fear as a "demonic stronghold." The use of the body in dancing and singing is a way to overcome fear, and,

³¹ Green's Hebrew pronunciation distinguished the phrase from the Anglicized "hallelujah" and the Latin "alleluia."

³² In particular, his opposition to human trafficking, particularly child sex slavery in Thailand. Sleeping Giant, live performance at the Cornerstone Music Festival, Bushnell, IL, 3 Jul. 2009.

³³ In particular, he emphasized not judging other Christians and not judging homosexuals.

therefore, to overcome demonic strongholds. He also linked dancing and singing to the worship of God. Since Green believes that the worship of God is also good for overcoming the demonic, this view gives the dancing and chanting a second spiritual warfare characteristic. In Green's own words:

I think He wants us to take so much more pleasure in who we are than I think we're allowed to. I just want human hearts to love Him with everything they've got; so if there's some nagging doubt here, or even a sort of hellish attack against them that would say "no no, you can't dance because people will make fun of you. No, He doesn't want you to do that..." No, we dance in the bible, we dance throughout history, we dance and it's beautiful, and He loves it, so dance now. Be free.³⁴

The dancing also presents an opportunity to mention a second point; though Green did not himself suggest it, other interviewees have suggested that the material world can affect the spiritual world. Specifically, "Thomas" claimed that he has used martial arts with "dramatic results" during prayer as a weapon in spiritual warfare.³⁵ As this claim demonstrates that at least one person believes physical motion can be an agent of spiritual warfare, it may be that others think so as well.³⁶

Third, this point exemplifies the proposition at the beginning of this chapter that, "like pep rallies, these worship services fulfill a particular, focused purpose: they are a means to a victorious end and preludes to the 'real action' of life."³⁷ Sleeping Giant definitely views their performance as worship (in intent, not genre), and given the content of the preaching, the "means to a victorious end" and "preludes to the real action of life" seem to be their agenda as well. The mixing of worship with imperatives for social justice

³⁴ Tommy Green, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 18 Jul. 2009.

³⁵ "Thomas," interview with author, Nashville, TN, 23 Jun. 2009.

³⁶ In the wider Charismatic world, this view is held more commonly than what would be suggested by most members of the Anchor Fellowship. See Frederick C. Kubiacek, "Spiritual Warfare and the High Praise of God" <<http://www.unlimitedglory.org/txt/highpraises.html>> (accessed 8 Feb. 2010).

³⁷ Trevor and Bonnie McMaken, "Your Worship Isn't Enough," *RELEVANT Magazine*, (Online content, undated) <<http://www.relevantmagazine.com/god/worship/features/18614-your-worship-isnt-enough>> (accessed 4 Feb. 2010).

and against judgmentalism suggest the promotion of "real action." The "breaking off of a spirit of fear" is meant not to be a temporary fix, it is meant to be spiritual warfare.

Above all, the focus on God is intended to empower all of these changes.³⁸

c. Binding

The Cornerstone Music Festival also afforded an intriguing situation in which the ritual language of spiritual warfare was applied not to demons, but to people. While not typically used at the Anchor Fellowship, the language of "binding" spirits is common within the greater Charismatic movement.³⁹ During a worship service on the last day of Cornerstone, a man got up to speak at the microphone. It is common for people to interrupt worship for prayer, prophecy, or encouragement at the Anchor Fellowship, although it is rarely done by somebody who is not in a position of leadership.⁴⁰ Tearfully, the man took the microphone and encouraged people to follow their dreams, and, in his address, he said "I bind you to your dreams" and "I loose you from your memories of failure."⁴¹

The importance of this event is that the ritual language of spiritual warfare, which normally targets demons, can be transmuted into ritual language targeted at people. This was, however, the sole example encountered during this research. If the ritual words used in controlling demons are being used to control people, what exactly does that mean? It

³⁸ "I want people to be free to be loved or to love, but when I focus too much on 'we're going to go after all these problems,' I lose focus on who is the one who can really do it. It's His love that transforms the human heart and love transforms its object no matter what it is." Tommy Green, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 18 Jul. 2009.

³⁹ Mark Driscoll, "Spiritual Warfare Lecture Notes" <http://assets.marshallchurch.org/media/misc/spiritual-warfare_document.pdf> (accessed 13 Jan. 2009).

⁴⁰ Personal observation.

⁴¹ As explained in chapter II, the language is drawn from Mark 3:27. Cornerstone worshiper, proclamation on stage, Bushnell, IL, 4 Jul. 2009.

could indicate the viewpoint that the perceived authority Christians have over demons, they also have over each other. It could also indicate the belief that the power is in the words themselves, rather than in a God-given authority. It is also possible that the speaker viewed his authority in the Kingdom of God as extending to the making of decrees for other "citizens." It seems, however, that the most likely solution is that in his heightened emotional state, the speaker did not consider that he was applying ritual language for demons to people.

5. Music and Secular Conflict

Although members of the Anchor Fellowship believe that they engage in spiritual warfare through worship music, the worship music environment generally appeals only to Christians. Some exceptions exist: Sleeping Giant appeals to secular audiences too.⁴² But on the whole, when someone speaks of "worship music," they are speaking of music that falls within both the worship genre and worship intent. Spiritual warfare, however, is thought to occur in music that is not specifically Christian. One example recounted for this research came from Joel McAnulty, who spoke of his band "Harmonium," saying:

We had one guy who came up who was like a sorcerer, a self-proclaimed sorcerer or whatever, I don't know—I didn't really know him very well—come up to me after one of our shows and say that after the second song he had to leave because the most intense spiritual aura—like brightness—was coming from the stage and that he felt blinded by it. He felt overcome with it and had to leave. He basically came up to us after the show and was like, "I don't know what it is you guys are all about, but it's far greater than any mystical powers or things that I have been in touch with." And that led to us talking about what we believed. He was actually surprised when he found out we were Christians. He

⁴² In his Cornerstone preaching, Green mentioned that non-Christians attend Sleeping Giant shows, and gave some examples. Many Christian hardcore, metal, and metalcore bands have large secular followings, regardless of whether they have an obvious worship intent. UnderOath, As I Lay Dying, Haste the Day, and Zao are additional examples of Christian hardcore, metal, or metalcore bands with significant secular followings.

thought we were tapped into some unknown untalked about thing, he was so blown away by what he had experienced.⁴³

In this case, McAnulty believed that the Holy Spirit had been present with the band as they had played, and that even though the music had no obvious Christian connections, the self-proclaimed sorcerer had been overcome by the power of God.

On the other side of spiritual warfare, it is believed that some songs can be demonic. It is not uncommon for music to be labelled as demonic. More conservative Christians sometimes accuse "rock music" in this way.⁴⁴ This stigma of specific musical genres seems to be fading among younger and less conservative Christians, most likely because Christians have been co-opting metal for the past twenty years. Metal has often been associated with the demonic – largely because "black metal" and "death metal" often incorporate Satanism into their lyrics and performances.⁴⁵ The current prominence of Christian metal suggests that this bias has been overcome in the most stigmatized genre of music. If that is so, then the ban on genres because they are "demonic" is fading.

This shift does not mean that music is no longer viewed as a potential vehicle for either Satan or the Holy Spirit to use. In other words, though genres have lost the stigma of being "Satanic," specific bands and songs have not. The "counterfeiting" quality attributed to Satan (Chapter II) applies: if God uses music to reach people, so can Satan. Though there is less of a focus on that at the Anchor Fellowship, the idea does exist, and

⁴³ Joel McAnulty, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 11 Nov. 2009.

⁴⁴ Kurt E. Koch, *Occult ABC* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1986), 182.

⁴⁵ Darcey Steinke, "Satan's Cheerleaders," *SPIN Magazine* (Feb. 1996): 62-71.

some songs are to be avoided.⁴⁶

B. Literature

There was very little emphasis on literature at the Anchor Fellowship during this study. Some common spiritual warfare novels are read by members, but not necessarily as doctrine. Nichole and David Lim enjoy the Frank Peretti novels, though these do not frame their spiritual warfare practices as some scholars argue.⁴⁷ Others enjoy C.S. Lewis's *The Screwtape Letters* and J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, but, again, these were not emphasized during this research. In fact, there was only one spiritual warfare novel that anyone specifically suggested: *The Final Quest* by Rick Joyner.

It is unclear whether Joyner's book should be viewed as a novel or a religious text. It has a consistent plot and characters, but it is structured as an allegory, and in the introduction, Joyner identifies his work as being based on a series of "prophetic dreams."⁴⁸

Written in the first-person, *The Final Quest* focuses on one man's journey through the "last battle." In part, it is an allegory of the maturation process believed to exist for Christians as they progress in faith, understanding grace, suffering, etc. It is also a focus on spiritual warfare, depicting frequent battles against demons. These demons are monsters with varying weapons. For example, some are serpents who bind people in

⁴⁶ "There's some records man that I listen to and I can sense a demonic presence on it. Like, have you ever listened to 'Knife Prty' by the Deftones? That is a freaking dark song. Like I feel like my spirit goes [imploding noises]. I feel oppression all over that song." Jason Belcher, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 21 Oct. 2009.

⁴⁷ Robert Guilich has argued that Peretti's influence has shaped contemporary spiritual warfare practices and beliefs. Peretti has indeed made an impact in the wider world of Evangelical thought and practice, but neither David or Nichole Lim use the book as a basis for their views." Robert A. Guelich, "Spiritual Warfare: Jesus, Paul and Peretti," *PNEUMA: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 13, 1 (Spring 1991): 33-64.

⁴⁸ Rick Joyner, *The Final Quest* (Charlotte, NC: Morning Star Publications, 1996), 7.

shame,⁴⁹ some are vultures who relieve themselves on people.⁵⁰ The solution Joyner suggests is scripture, humility, and devotion to God as a means of protection,⁵¹ and truth and God himself as weapons against demonic attack.⁵²

For the purposes of this thesis, the most significant part of this text is its eschatological emphasis. Apart from the frequent references to "soldiers of the last battle," the text itself draws a connection between a perceived increase in pneumatological activity and the end times. Depicting a conversation with Jesus, Joyner wrote the following:

*"The last day church will not be greater than their generation, even if you do greater works," the Lord interjected. "All that is done is done by My grace. However, I will make more of My grace, and more of My power available to the last day church, because she must accomplish more than the church in any age has yet accomplished. The last day believers will walk in all of the power that I demonstrated and more, because they will be the final representatives of all who have gone before them. The last day church will demonstrate My nature and My ways as they have never been demonstrated before men. It is because I am giving you more grace, and to whom much is given much will be required."*⁵³

The perception here is that because the end of time approaches, God is providing more power to Christians. Much of this power applies to spiritual warfare (hence, the battle theme.) In other words, the apocalypse drives an increased urgency for spiritual warfare.

C. Chapter Summary

Music is used by Charismatics for spiritual warfare, and this is especially emphasized at the Anchor Fellowship. Music has a unique ability to connect humanity to

⁴⁹ Ibid., 60.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 26.

⁵¹ Ibid., 28, 56, 105, 107.

⁵² Ibid., 29, 137.

⁵³ Ibid., 137.

the spiritual realm (both God and devils), and, therefore, it is valuable to employ in spiritual warfare. The belief is that by connecting people to God, the demonic loses its grip, and "strongholds" can be overcome. Music can also be used to unite Christians into a single unit, and to promote theological ideals into a position that assists in their adoption by individuals. The environment created when playing worship music is considered conducive to successful healing, including forms of healing that requires spiritual warfare to be considered consummate. Demons are believed to attempt to hinder music and worship from being performed.

Literature is important in the wider Evangelical sphere, but less so at the Anchor Fellowship. The literature illustrates the pneumatological and eschatological foundations of spiritual warfare practice and belief. The demarcation between entertaining fiction and instructional allegory is often vague.

Chapter VII - Apocalyptic Eschatology

This thesis argues that spiritual warfare practices and beliefs are predicated on both pneumatological and eschatological concerns. The pneumatology of this argument has been well-established through the previous six chapters, yet the eschatological portion has not yet been sufficiently addressed. The Anchor Fellowship believes in kingdom theology. While the eschatological importance remains, it becomes obscured since kingdom theology focuses considerably more attention on the present time than it does on the end times. Additionally, between pneumatology and eschatology, pneumatology is proportionally the greater contributor to spiritual warfare beliefs.

As Stephen O'Leary phrased it in his exploration of eschatological rhetoric, "discourses of conspiracy and apocalypse are linked by a common function: each develops symbolic resources that enable societies to define and address the problem of evil."¹ Indeed, that is the heart of apocalyptic concern: to see evil erased, ended, remedied, and avenged. How exactly this happens depends on the perceived origins of evil. Is evil a product of human nature, or perhaps of free will? An aberration of an entropic universe? The meddling of demons? The best remedy is dependent on the nature of the cause.

Since spiritual warfare is an eschatological concern, to battle demons in the present is to re-enact, or perhaps more accurately, *pre-enact*, the *telos*. How Christians engage spiritual warfare correlates to how they perceive the apocalypse.

¹ Stephen D. O'Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 6.

This chapter will discuss how eschatology alters spiritual warfare.

Postmillennialism, premillennialism, and kingdom eschatology (a variation of premillennialism) will be addressed. This chapter is intended to demonstrate how the core beliefs of each set shift spiritual warfare beliefs and practices. It is not intended to be a discussion of the manifold nuances entrenched in eschatological theory or to be an exhaustive explanation of all possible eschatologies.

A. Postmillennialism

A good definition of postmillennialism comes from Mark G. Toulouse. He explains:

Unlike premillennialism, postmillennialism usually exhibits a profound optimism about the spread of the gospel and the success of the evangelistic mission of Christianity. Defenders of the view have asserted that the success of the church would usher in the millennium without need of any supernatural event. In their understanding, the millennium is a historical period characterized by religious peace and spiritual fulfillment. Most nineteenth-century scholarly postmillennialists emphasized that the millennium resulted from the grace of God rather than the action of human beings. But the view has always had a high regard for the potential success of human efforts and, in some circles, for the effects the gospel could have on the social sphere. In the American setting, popular postmillennialism often placed great emphasis on the ability of human efforts to bring in the millennium.²

Historically, postmillennialism has been the prominent eschatology among Evangelicals. Until the American Civil War, nearly all Evangelicals held this position, viewing history as the battle between God and Satan (whose defeat was thought immanent), and commonly interpreted the pope as the Antichrist predicted in Revelation.³ This position began to lose favor among Evangelicals for two reasons: first, it gradually

² Mark G. Toulouse, "Campbell and Postmillennialism: The Kingdoms of God," *Discipliana* 60, no 3 (Fall 2000): 78.

³ George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 49.

became associated with liberal theology,⁴ and, by 1925, many Evangelicals held liberal theology in contempt as heresy.⁵ Second, following the Niagara Bible Conferences of the 1870's, Bible Institutes began proliferating in America under prominent leaders such as D.L. Moody.⁶ These institutes emphasized evangelization over exegesis, but, additionally, they almost uniformly held a premillennialist stance. The result was that within American Evangelicalism premillennialism gradually began to supersede postmillennialism. While these are the leading theories regarding postmillennialism's decline, there is no sure answer, as postmillennialism more "faded away" than suffered any outright discrediting.⁷

Postmillennialism does exist in contemporary Christianity, including (to a small extent) among some Evangelicals. While finding material on postmillennialist spiritual warfare is challenging (contemporary postmillennialists seem to be taciturn when it comes to the devil), it does exist. And, indeed, it is quite different from most premillennialist viewpoints.

John A. Battle believes Revelation has two themes: "first, Christ will overcome all evil powers; and second, we should therefore endure and overcome."⁸ Writing about the role of Christians in the war with Satan, he says

With the exception of angels, such as Michael and the angels in chapter 12, and the specially gifted witnesses in chapter 11, God does not use the intermediate

⁴ Ibid., 48-51.

⁵ Ibid., 176-184.

⁶ Timothy P. Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism, 1875-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 28-34.

⁷ "There—especially among the moderate to liberal Protestants with whom this article is chiefly concerned—the once dominant eschatology [postmillennialism] appears not to have suffered outright rejection but to have ebbed away. Although its remains endured as faith in progress, it gradually ceased to be a distinct biblically grounded eschatology." James H. Moorhead, "The Erosion of Postmillennialism in American Religious Thought, 1865-1925," *Church History* 53, no. 1, (1984): 61.

⁸ John A. Battle, "Spiritual Warfare in Revelation," *Western Reformed Seminary Journal* 5, no. 1 (Feb 1998): 16.

power of his creatures, but rather his own miraculous and catastrophic intervention. Christ brings in his own kingdom by his own power. The saints ride with him and share the benefits of his victory, but the Lord personally smites his enemies.⁹

His final conclusion about spiritual warfare is that

We best fight Satan, not by pronouncing exorcisms or claiming special powers today, but by being loyal to our God. Living a life of simple Christian obedience, witnessing for Christ to those we see day by day, and praying for strength and spiritual growth, are the paths to spiritual victory in our warfare against Satan.¹⁰

The end result of Battle's position is identical to the avoidance/resistance and cessationist approaches, which are typically minority positions within Evangelicalism (chapter II). The argument for it is different from the premillennialist version, however. Contemporary evangelist T.D. Jakes encouraged Christians to avoid conflict with the devil because they may be "unskilled" or may not "have the proper level of anointing."¹¹ The cessationist argument relies predominantly on the position that along with spiritual gifts like prophecy and speaking in tongues, exorcism is no longer a valid ministry. These are pneumatological arguments against engaging in conflict with demons. There is a hint of cessationist pneumatology in Battle's position,¹² but his main argument is eschatological. God will deal with Satan in his own way entirely independent of human agency. In Battle's eschatology, God's actions do not translate into a necessity for Christians to act against Satan, except that they are to remain loyal to God.

Battle observes that

many in this movement [the spiritual warfare movement] believe that by consciously fighting the devil, the Christians will bring in the perfect kingdom

⁹ Ibid, 17.

¹⁰ Ibid, 18.

¹¹ T. D. Jakes, "How to Fight with Devil?" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAN_F_Y4j74> (accessed 16 Mar. 2009).

¹² "We best fight Satan, not by pronouncing exorcisms or claiming special powers today" implies cessationism.

of God. This sounds like the classic view of postmillennialism. According to that teaching, God brings in the promised golden age of the kingdom through the church's missionary work; this kingdom will last a thousand years; and afterward the Lord will return to judge the world and bring in the eternal state.¹³

He goes on to rebuke contemporary practitioners of spiritual warfare for their efforts to "bind Satan" and to "brazenly order Satan or the demons to submit to them, or to feel that their efforts were more potent than the evil angels."¹⁴

This statement brings up a significant issue: Battle is suggesting that the spiritual warfare practices, which are more common within Charismatic premillennialism, are being adopted by postmillennialists. This adoption supports the claim that pneumatology is the greater of the two impetuses for spiritual warfare.

While he suggests that the modern spiritual warfare movement sounds like "the classic view of postmillennialism," this claim seems suspect. If the assertion is merely that history has been viewed as the conflict between God and Satan, then certainly it is accurate.¹⁵ However, if one reads through the sermons and theology of modernity, excluding exorcisms, the implements of the contemporary spiritual warfare movement do not begin to appear until premillennialism was resurrected in the 19th century, and the full corpus of spiritual warfare beliefs and practices does not begin to emerge until the

¹³ John A. Battle, "Spiritual Warfare in Revelation," 14.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Marsden gives a good brief overview of this position. Additionally, he asserts that "In the early nineteenth century many American postmillennialists believed the defeat of the Satanic forces to be imminent." These Satanic forces are identified as Roman Catholicism, Islam, slavery, war, etc., and are categorically different from contemporary demonology. George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 2nd ed., 49, 62-63.

second wave Charismatic movement of the 1960s.¹⁶ The correspondence is more than coincidence, as will be demonstrated in the next section.

B. Premillennialism

Prior to the American Civil War, premillennialism had been an important minority position, which held tenets quite similar to those of postmillennialism in that “Both saw history as controlled by a cosmic struggle, both allowed for interpreting some Biblical prophecies literally, and both thought that some prophecies about the time immediately preceding the millennium were already being fulfilled in current events.”¹⁷ Gradually premillennialism began to gain popularity, particularly the dispensationalist variety.¹⁸ Today, dispensationalist premillennialism is a major (and possibly the majority) eschatological scheme within western Evangelicalism.¹⁹

It is also important to note that in this discussion, the focus is on futurist premillennialism as opposed to historicist premillennialism. “Historicist premillennialists believed that biblical prophecies of the “last days” were intended to provide an overview

¹⁶ This is my own observation. However, proving this point would require an entirely new study since no such research appears to yet exist. Puritan writings appear to advise a resistance approach only, as do Wesley, Finney, and lesser-known writers of the 17th-19th centuries. The first hints of contemporary spiritual warfare theology seem to emerge in the era of Darby, Spurgeon, and Moody. For an example of what is meant, consider this portion of John Darby’s commentary: “The Spirit of God does not tolerate the presence of an evil spirit when it makes itself actively manifest before Him. He does not lend Himself to its devices by giving it importance through a voluntary interposition; for He has His own work, and He does not turn away from it to occupy Himself about the enemy. He is occupied, in love, about souls. But if Satan comes in His way, so as to perplex these souls, the Spirit reveals Himself in His energy, and the enemy flees before Him.” Here, Darby is suggesting that the [indwelling] Spirit of God will actively engage and drive away demons. This is a step away from resistance and a step toward conflict with the demonic. John Nelson Darby, “Acts 16,” *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible*, <<http://www.ccel.org/d/darby/synopsis/Acts.html>> (accessed 20 Nov. 2008).

¹⁷ George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 2nd ed., 51.

¹⁸ Marsden connects the popularity of dispensationalism to John Darby. Dispensationalism refers to the belief that God operates in different ways in different times, for example, the dispensation of the law, or the dispensation of grace (the current age). *Ibid*, 46

¹⁹ Timothy P. Weber, “Happily at the Edge of the Abyss: Popular Premillennialism in America,” *Ex auditu* 6 (1990): 87.

of the entire church age.”²⁰ In contrast, futurist premillennialists believe the “prophecies of the last days to be fulfilled shortly before the Second Coming.”²¹ After William Miller’s failure to accurately predict the date of Christ’s return, historicist premillennialism fell out of favor, while futurist premillennialism retained its credibility.²² Some scholars consider futurist premillennialism’s opposition to date-setting to be the primary reason for its ascendancy over historicist premillennialism.²³ The absence of date-setting makes futurist premillennialist predictions difficult to falsify.

The main theme of contemporary premillennialism is the end of evil. As O’Leary has phrased it, “The problem of evil is not only a question of why God allows the innocent to suffer, but why the wicked are allowed to rule.”²⁴ This is the theodicean question premillennialism seeks to answer. Contemporary premillennialism is also concerned with the redemption of a fallen creation – when Christ returns to establish his kingdom, he will repair that which is broken.²⁵ Additionally, most premillennialist theologies predict that things will get worse before they get better.

So how exactly is this question commonly answered by premillennialists? Why do people suffer and why does evil prevail? The answer usually goes something like this: at the beginning of time, Satan led Adam and Eve into temptation.²⁶ At this time, the entire creation became corrupted—death, war, disease, parasitism, pride, selfishness—these things developed only after the original sin. Evil came into being not

²⁰ Ibid., 88

²¹ Ibid.

²² Stephen D. O’Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric*, 134-135.

²³ Ibid., 136.

²⁴ Ibid., 56.

²⁵ Todd Strandberg and Terry James, *Are You Rapture Ready?* (New York: Penguin Group, 2003) 258-259.

²⁶ This is a summary of common themes within contemporary premillennialism. For a more detailed, specific example, see Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, *Charting the End Times: A Visual Guide to Understanding Bible Prophecy* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2001), 7-10, 34, 50, 53, 58-59.

through God's actions but by human actions that were inspired by Satan. Thus, all the evil of history can be relegated to human agency. God has merely permitted evil to exist for a time. Because human nature has been corrupted, we have a proclivity toward evil, and, in fact, as the end of days approaches, evil will actually become worse and worse. The Antichrist and the Beast will establish a one-world government that will persecute Christians and lead people astray into a false religion. There will be a temporary peace before Armageddon unfolds, at which point Christ will return to earth to destroy evil, personally defeating Satan and throwing the Antichrist and the Beast into everlasting torment. After that will be the millennial kingdom, and, after this, the judgment. Satan, demons, and unrepentant sinners will be judged by God at this point. Some varieties hold that Christians will judge the angels and demons.²⁷

This eschatology does not necessarily lead to the esoteric, aggressive spiritual warfare common today (aggressive as opposed to passive resistance). Such forms of spiritual warfare typically come with a premillennialist framing, but premillennialism alone does not necessitate aggressive spiritual warfare. For example, Tim LaHaye's *Left Behind* series involves a form of spiritual warfare, in that the main characters are squaring off against the Antichrist and the New World Order. However, it lacks the sort of demon hunting more typical of Charismatic spiritual warfare. It lacks it because its pneumatology does not allow for it—the *Left Behind* characters do not prophesy, speak in tongues, engage in miraculous healing, etc. As this thesis has already established, aggressive spiritual warfare against demons requires a pneumatology that allows for God to work miraculously through Christians.

²⁷ Mark Driscoll, "Spiritual Warfare: Part 3: Christus Victor," http://assets.marshallchurch.org/media/2008/02/05/20080205_christus-victor_audio.mp3 (accessed 17 Dec. 2008).

Aggressive spiritual warfare, however, is also beholden to premillennialism. Postmillennialism aims at the gradual ebbing away of evil—Christianity is God's tool for bringing people to an awareness of how to live, and as they learn, evil will fade away.²⁸ Premillennialism aims for the continuation of evil until it reaches critical mass, at which point Jesus comes back to destroy it in an instant. This distinction is key.

Aggressive spiritual warfare is modeled after this teleological defeat of Satan. Mircea Eliade once proposed that many religious rituals are re-enactments of mythic events occurring *ab origine, in illo tempore*.²⁹ Aggressive spiritual warfare is very similar, except that it is not just a re-enactment of Jesus' ministry, but also a *pre*-enactment of Satan's defeat. In other words, spiritual warfare is a form of sacred time. While it is not explicitly stated, the tacit assumption seems to be that if Christians are to model Jesus' ministry, they are to model the entire ministry, both first and second comings. Authority for spiritual warfare is drawn from Jesus' commands to drive out demons and from interpretive models built around stories of Jesus' exorcisms.³⁰ But it is simultaneously modeled after the eschatological defeat of Satan in premillennialism, for each "battle" is a microcosm of the apocalypse, and spiritual warfare advocates frequently

²⁸ "The fully comic interpretation of the Apocalypse, however, would not merely postpone the end. Rather, it would make the End contingent upon human choice, would assign to humanity the task of ushering in the millennium. To be consistently comic, this interpretation would address the topos of evil by defining it in terms of ignorance and foolishness (which can be overcome by exposure, education, and progress) rather than exclusively in terms of sin and guilt that require blood expiation. Such an understanding of apocalyptic fulfillment as a product of human action rather than divine predestination would seem to be difficult to sustain in the face of the apparent historical pessimism of the Apocalypse itself; but it nevertheless appears in American history as the doctrine of "postmillennialism." Stephen D. O'Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric*, 84.

²⁹ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (Orlando: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers, 1959), 70, 80-82.

³⁰ John Wimber, "Power Evangelism Definitions and Directions," in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, ed. C. Peter Wagner and F. Douglas Pennoyer (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), 17.

remind people that Satan's fate is sealed.³¹

Furthermore, much of the spiritual warfare language is linked to this eschatology. For example, Driscoll proposed that since "we are going to judge the angels in the end; it's perfectly fine to judge a few in the middle as well."³² He also proposes binding demons to truth by asking the question "will that stand as truth before the White Throne of the Lord God Almighty," which is essentially an authoritative control predicated on an eschatological event. Often in deliverance, the ritual language used instructs demons to return to "the abyss"³³ or "the pit"³⁴—demons' future prison in apocalyptic myth. Lastly, current spiritual warfare is often cast as being the beginning of the end, and that spiritual warriors are currently fighting the last battle.³⁵

Other spiritual warfare practices are rooted in eschatology as well. House deliverances and territorial warfare seek to create demon-free spaces; the only other places in premillennialism which are believed to be demon-free are the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and New Earth. Many premillennialists believe that even heaven presently has fallen angels, for Satan is thought to have access to speak with God.³⁶ In cleansing territory, these premillennialists seek to proleptically enact the eschatological end.

³¹ "We war with foes who are not only already totally defeated by our reigning Lord; they are already forced into subjection to our shared authority with the Lord." Ed Murphy, "We are at War," in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, 59.

³² Mark Driscoll, "Spiritual Warfare: Part 3: Christus Victor" <http://assets.marshallchurch.org/media/2008/02/05/20080205_christus-victor_audio.mp3> (accessed 17 Dec. 2008).

³³ Ed Murphy, "We are at War," in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, 59.

³⁴ Mark Driscoll, "Spiritual Warfare Lecture Notes," <http://assets.marshallchurch.org/media/misc/spiritual-warfare_document.pdf> (accessed 13 Jan. 2009).

³⁵ Rick Joyner, *The Final Quest* (Charlotte, NC: Morning Star Publications, 1996), 86-87.

³⁶ Tim LaHaye and Thomas Ice, *Charting the End Times: A Visual Guide to Understanding Bible Prophecy*, 32.

O'Leary states that there are

two variations on the topos of apocalyptic argument: one focuses on the identity and career of the great beast in Revelation, the second is the "apocalyptic jeremiad" which lists and laments the present-day evils that serve as evidence of history's degeneration into iniquity.³⁷

That certainly seems to be accurate. Yet the importance here is more than rhetorical, for the focus of contemporary Evangelicalism is not only on belief and diatribes against evil, but also on action. Some choose retreat and isolation as the appropriate action, creating for themselves a fortress from the world.³⁸ Some see evangelization as an appropriate action, trying to rescue as many people as possible before the end comes.³⁹ As O'Leary has phrased it: "although some react to the tragedy of apocalypse by becoming passive spectators, others may find that the prediction of the world's End offers not only a cathartic conclusion, but also a role for the believer to play in the cosmic drama."⁴⁰

This is where the significance of pneumatology can be most clearly seen. Does the Holy Spirit empower Christians to *resist* evil, or to *defeat* evil? When the latter is the view, Evangelicals may assume a position of aggressive spiritual warfare. Because premillennialism lends itself more easily to a pessimistic worldview,⁴¹ it can become a petri dish for theories of demonic oppression, and, by extension, theories on how to defeat them.

C. Kingdom Theology

A subset of premillennialist theology is kingdom theology. Kingdom theology is

³⁷ Stephen D. O'Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric*, 81.

³⁸ Randall Balmer, *Blessed Assurance: A History of Evangelicalism in America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999), 54.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Stephen D. O'Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric*, 178.

⁴¹ Ibid., 84

important to this thesis because it represents the eschatological position of the Anchor Fellowship. Kingdom theology holds that Jesus inaugurated the Kingdom of Heaven during his ministry, and that the church is an “instrument” of God’s kingdom.⁴² This kingdom stands in conflict with Satan’s kingdom, and Satan holds dominion over the earth.⁴³ When Jesus returns, he will consummate the kingdom, and forever overturn the kingdom of Satan.⁴⁴

Because this eschatology posits, as Stump says, a kingdom that is both “now but not yet,”⁴⁵ definitions can become confusing. In practical terms, this positioning renders an understanding of eschatology that holds both premillennialist and postmillennialist qualities. Since the kingdom is already here, it is postmillennialist in that, as one lyricist put it, “the kingdom of the heavens is now advancing.”⁴⁶ The kingdom is here and unfolding, and Christian action can further usher it in. It is premillennialist in that Jesus is still going to come back to defeat Satan, and that evil will continue to grow stronger until Armageddon.

Under kingdom theology, there is, in essence, nothing which can be done to stop this increase in Satan’s activity. Paradoxically, action in the present can draw people out of the Kingdom of Satan into the Kingdom of God. Hayzlett described it as a polarizing phenomenon, saying that “the light will get lighter and the dark will get darker.”⁴⁷

The pneumatology which usually coincides with kingdom eschatology is Third

⁴² The Vineyard USA, “Theological and Philosophical Statements,”
<<http://www.vineyardusa.org/site/files/about/theological-statements.pdf>> (accessed 12 Feb. 2010).

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Josh Stump, casual conversation with author, Nashville, TN, 27 May 2009.

⁴⁶ Jon Foreman, “Your Love is Strong,” track one on *Limbs and Branches*, Nashville: Lowercase people records, 2008.

⁴⁷ Chris Hayzlett, casual conversation with author, Nashville, TN, 12 Feb. 2010.

Wave Charismatic,⁴⁸ sometimes referred to as “the signs and wonders” movement.⁴⁹ A prominent feature of it is healing, which is often cast as spiritual warfare. In kingdom theology, however, healing is not merely pneumatological but also eschatological. As James Wright has expressed, “healing is a pronouncement of victory over the kingdom of Satan. Further, it is a foreshadowing of the fullness of the kingdom of God. In this sense, the focus of healing is eschatological.”⁵⁰

Kingdom theology addresses both the present and the future. The future is considered unchangeable; the apocalypse is certain to happen and it cannot be prevented. In the present time, however, action is possible—change can happen. For this reason, premillennialists who adhere to kingdom theology focus on the present. During this study of the Anchor Fellowship, the apocalypticism so common in American premillennialism appeared to be largely absent.⁵¹ This absence is because, while they consider that the Kingdom of God has not yet been consummated, a form of it is presently here and, therefore, the everyday spiritual life is itself a lesser form of the coming kingdom. Thus, to engage in spiritual warfare is indeed to mirror the eschatological defeat of Satan. What God intends for the future is available in part now.

D. Chapter Summary

Spiritual warfare is predicated upon both pneumatology *and* eschatology. Under a

⁴⁸ “Third wave” refers to the evolution of Charismatic practices and doctrine in the 1980s and 1990s. It stands in distinction to “first wave,” which refers to the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement typical of the early 20th century, and “second wave,” which refers to a shift in doctrine and practice during the 1950s and 1960s.

⁴⁹ This is not stated anywhere, but the premise of kingdom theology is so connected to “signs and wonders” that it is hard to imagine any other pneumatology accompanying it. Personal observation.

⁵⁰ James Wright, “Profiles of Divine Healing – Third Wave Compared with Classical Pentecostal Theology,” in *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 5, no. 2 (2002), 273.

⁵¹ One exception to this absence was a seminar on “Forerunner Ministry,” in which a member of the Anchor Fellowship advocated for putting greater focus on Christ’s second coming.

postmillennial eschatology, which optimistically emphasizes the gradual transition from a fallen world into the kingdom of God, aggressive spiritual warfare does not typically take root. Instead, this eschatology lends itself to a resistance/avoidance approach or cessationist position. Provided that the pneumatology permits it, aggressive spiritual warfare extends from a pessimistic view of an already broken world declining into satanic chaos.

Aggressive spiritual warfare is modeled partly after Jesus' ministry as depicted in the Bible but also after the eschatological defeat of Satan at the end of time. The action of defeating a demon in the present is styled after Satan's future defeat. It is also a theodicean solution, in that it resolves the problem of evil by placing the ability to defeat evil in the hands of a spiritual warfare practitioner.

Like standard premillennialism, kingdom theology predicts Satan's end and the rise of the Antichrist, yet because the Kingdom of God is believed to have been initiated by Jesus at Calvary, there is no need to wait for the kingdom, for it is already here and active. Because the growth of the Kingdom of God means inflicting damage against the Kingdom of Satan, any action that meets this need is spiritual warfare. Because the growth of this kingdom is here and now, the eschatological focus of attention shifts from the end to the present.

Chapter VIII – Motivations and Alternative Explanations

The previous seven chapters have argued that pneumatology and eschatology determine spiritual warfare practices and theology. This is true, yet it would be remiss not to discuss what motivates action, for belief and structure are not in themselves impetuses for action. What drives those who believe in spiritual warfare to actually follow through on it?

Pneumatology and eschatology form the religious framework from which spiritual warfare beliefs and practices are drawn. That does not necessarily translate into motivation for action. Certainly there are situations where someone practices spiritual warfare for no other reason than because they believe they are supposed to, but the prominence of spiritual warfare in contemporary Evangelicalism suggests additional motivating factors. By comparison, most Christians believe in baptism and the Eucharist, and different traditions disagree as to how it is to be performed. Whatever controversies may have historically existed around these ritual sacraments has largely faded, and, while Evangelicals still disagree, today, baptism and communion do not dominate the discourse or typically spark conflict. These no longer fascinate the way spiritual warfare does.

This chapter focuses on spiritual warfare within Evangelicalism as a whole. There are some motivations that exist elsewhere in contemporary Evangelicalism, which do not exist at the Anchor Fellowship. If a particular motivation does exist at the Anchor Fellowship, it will be identified.

A. Contribution to Community Cohesiveness

Spiritual warfare has a unifying quality. The belief that hordes of demons seek to destroy individuals and communities provides a common enemy for Evangelicals to fight. To be unified by spiritual warfare is not the same as being in agreement on every particular, but it does provide some cohesiveness. To someone who does not believe in demons as real beings, spiritual warfare will likely seem dubious, and this unifying feature may seem unclear. Yet for those who share a belief in demons as real beings, spiritual warfare can be just as real as regular warfare. Just as soldiers feel camaraderie in battle, so, too, do Evangelicals who believe that they are fighting Satan. Unity is not only a motivation at the Anchor Fellowship, but in practically every Evangelical congregation that believes in spiritual warfare. Demons are considered to be malicious entities attempting to "kill, steal, and destroy." The perception of an external hostile force unites members of a congregation. Additionally, infighting is itself considered to be demonic,¹ and that serves as a negative reinforcement for unity, since being disunified is to be submitting to the devil.

In a different way, spiritual warfare can also be used to unite a congregation by defining the congregation in contradistinction to others. For example, Miles McPherson of the Rock Church in San Diego suggested to his congregation that the devil tries "to trap you in relationships that hold you down."² Specifically, he was referring to non-Christians whom Satan uses to lead Christians into sin. He continued his sermon by saying "you do not want to have a life void of non-Christian people, you always want to be a minister to non-Christian people. You just don't want to have a situation where non-

¹ Josh Stump, casual conversation with author, Nashville, TN, 18 Jun. 2009.

² Miles McPherson, "Extreme Home Takeover - part 6, Enemy Behind the Gates,"
<<http://media.therocksandiego.org/servicemp3/2007-04-22-message.mp3>> (accessed 18 Oct. 2008).

Christian people are holding you down or stifling your Christian walk." Further, "you need to have the upper spiritual hand in Evangelical relations." McPherson suggested that his listeners "seek the counsel of the Lord" with whom they should or should not spend their time.

In this specific case, the spiritual warfare falls closest to being under the resistance/avoidance and cessationist category. Such resistance-themed rhetoric serves to unite the members by rejecting those outside the congregation who are believed to be demonically influenced and dangerous. Not all non-Christians are rejected, because in this model, if members have "the upper spiritual hand" in a relationship with a non-Christian, they may be able to convert them.

This particular model of spiritual warfare unification does not exist at the Anchor Fellowship. The focus of the Anchor Fellowship is less on converting non-Christians to their view of Christianity. Rather, it is more on converting Christians to that view. When a member once suggested that the Anchor Fellowship is "an assembly line for new Christians," Hayzlett refuted that, saying it was more of "a service center" for "broken" Christians.³ Because the leadership of the church does not hold the opinion that Christians in the Anchor Fellowship are less sinful than non-Christians outside the church, the identity of the Anchor Fellowship is not often contrasted with the world.

B. Spiritual Warfare as a Didactic Tool

Another natural extension of spiritual warfare is its usefulness as a didactic tool. When attempting to explain why one believes God prefers people to behave or think in a certain way, it is helpful to contrast that with what Satan wants. In this way, spiritual

³ Chris Hayzlett, casual conversation with author, Nashville, TN, 27 May 2009.

warfare can become instructive. This posture is very prominent at the Anchor Fellowship.

David Lim's explanation of spiritual warfare is that "God is always trying to turn our eyes to him, and the enemy is trying to turn our eyes back to ourselves and back to the world."⁴ This contrast between God and Satan is not just a simple definition, it is a framework for teaching. To focus on oneself or "the world" is to follow Satan's guidance. To focus on God is to defy Satan. This dualism easily translates into teaching people how to "follow Christ" or "walk in the Spirit." In other words, spiritual warfare can become a metaphor for the entire Christian worldview.

Additionally, because the contrast between God and Satan is useful as a didactic tool, spiritual warfare also gains more "airtime" in sermons, music, and general conversation. Because it gets more airtime, it becomes more nested in the minds of listeners.

C. Theodicean Justification

Spiritual warfare provides a way to reconcile the concept of evil with the concept of a purely good God. This reconciliation has already been observed within existing academic treatments of the topic. Bramadat asserts:

The dichotomy between the heavenly realm's will for individuals and the demonic sphere's less powerful but undeniable ability to interfere with this plan appears to diminish causative mystery and to leave God's sovereign and purely benevolent will for individuals intact. In short, the references to barely metaphysical enemies may help to explain and contextualize a wide range of theodical issues.⁵

Similarly, O'Leary observed that:

⁴ David Lim, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 9 Dec. 2009.

⁵ Paul Bramadat, *The Church on the World's Turf: an Evangelical Christian Group at a Secular University* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 112.

the mythic narrative of the Apocalypse can be used to justify the existence of evil on a cosmic scale by pointing to the promised restoration of an earthly Kingdom of God, while individual experience of evil is itself proof, by an argument from design, that the cosmic drama of evil is nearing to its resolution."⁶

Both are correct observations of how spiritual warfare clarifies the existence of evil. Apocalypticism suggests that while evil exists, God has a plan to fix it, and in fact, he has already begun the repair process. Thus, the existence of evil is not in conflict with the benevolence of God because he is personally working to destroy evil.

Bramadat is hinting at something which requires further clarification. Spiritual warfare does not only bring theodicean answers, but it provides the believers with a partial solution for evil that does not rely solely on the apocalypse. Since practitioners believe that God has given them the means to combat demons, they also believe that God has given them the means to remedy certain kinds of evil in the present age. Since spiritual warfare is supposed to only be applied to demons, so it does not appear to completely fulfill a theodicean solution, since humans are thought capable of causing evil without demonic assistance.⁷ Because of this belief in humanly caused evil, the final judgment of the apocalypse is still required for the full resolution, but spiritual warfare meliorates at least some evil in the present.

By its nature, this explanation for the existence of evil is a primary function of spiritual warfare for all practitioners. Sin and suffering seem less strange to Christians when they believe that God has given them the tools to remedy these things.

⁶ Stephen D. O'Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric*, 42.

⁷ Ed Murphy explains it thus: "*Sin is personal*, it comes from *within*. This is the problem of the flesh." He also regards sin as a problem of society, saying that humans oppose God. Demons can cause people to sin as well, but some evil is caused by human sin. Ed Murphy, "We are at War," in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, 55-57.

D. Appeal to the Hero Archetype

There is an almost quixotic strain of thought that permeates much of the general discussion of spiritual warfare. The language used suggests conquest, bravery, and heroism. As Kraft wrote, "the battle is also offensive; we are to be looking for "captives" to set free."⁸ Similarly, Ed Murphy wrote

*Finally, to evangelize the demonized, we must learn how to bind demonic activity from the minds of demonized unbelievers. Demons cause confusion and resistance, hindering unbelievers from understanding the responding to the gospel. We can take control over these demons, allowing the unbeliever to exercise his or her will to accept or reject Christ without direct demonic interference.*⁹

The language of Christian music also sometimes emphasizes this role of the conquering hero. The Christian metal band Demon Hunter encourages their audience with the lyrics "wake the lifeless, die to fight this / stand beside me, storm the gates of Hell."¹⁰ The Classic Crime sings "would you go to war for me baby / would you die for the weekend, die for the peace of men," with the refrain "I'll take my heart back and set the people free / I'll leave the dead to die, and take who's coming with me."¹¹

Thus, the imagery of the conquering hero can serve to motivate spiritual warfare. Practitioners do not believe that they are simply praying, they are "taking control" and "freeing captives." To engage in spiritual warfare is to conquer potent enemies and to rescue people.

It is unclear whether heroism is a motivation at the Anchor Fellowship. Stump has advised the church "not to get caught up in yourself when you have authority over

⁸ Charles H. Kraft and David M. DeBord, *The Rules of Engagement: Understanding The Principles That Govern The Spiritual Battles In Our Lives* (Colorado Springs, CO: Wagner Publications, 2000), 18.

⁹ Ed Murphy, "We are at War," in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, 58.

¹⁰ Demon Hunter, "Storm the Gates of Hell," *Storm the Gates of Hell*, CD, Seattle: Solid State Records, 2007.

¹¹ The Classic Crime, "The Fight," *Albatross*, CD, Seattle: Tooth and Nail Records, 2006.

darkness” because that “authority comes from the Lord.”¹² Officially, then, it is considered to be bad to take pride in spiritual warfare. Given that pride is theoretically a *faux pas* across the Evangelical spectrum, and in some views the root cause of sin, and given that spiritual warfare is believed to be powered by the Holy Spirit, it is probable that most practitioners would agree with this statement. However, the language suggests that there may be tension between practices and official positions. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, statements like “we can control demons” and “I’ll take my heart back and set the captives free” suggest the view that one is personally the combatant, and therefore the hero, even with the official position that God is the combatant. While this sort of language is common within the greater Evangelical sphere, it is largely absent from the Anchor Fellowship.¹³ That does not definitively mean that the hero archetype does not appeal to and motivate members of the Anchor Fellowship, but it does suggest that it is not the common conception.

E. Framework for Understanding Failure

Spiritual warfare provides a useful framework for understanding failure. While the onus of sin remains on the individual, the notion that demons mislead Christians into error moderates responsibility.¹⁴ Timothy Warner phrased it thus:

¹² Josh Stump, “The Terrorism of Christ, part 1”

<http://web.me.com/monkstump/Anchor_New/Podcast/Entries/2008/8/24_Part_1_The_Terror_Of_Christ%E2%80%99Birth_of_Spiritual_War%E2%80%99D.html> (accessed 13 Feb. 2009).

¹³ Personal observation.

¹⁴ Timothy Warner provides an example in a story about two parents who took their child to a legitimate doctor who practiced holistic medicine. According to Warner, the child became hyperactive because the doctor had used healing methods drawn from demonic powers. When the parents discovered that, not only did they withdraw their support for the healing, but they “sought the Lord’s forgiveness.” Though they had been deceived, they were still considered culpable. Timothy M. Warner, “Deception: Satan’s Chief Tactic,” in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, 112.

Satan has, indeed, developed a considerable “bag of tricks” to impress people and lead them astray. These tricks include clever lies, to which he has found us humans quite susceptible, and displays of power, which bring equally ready responses from us, especially when we have lost touch with the power of God.¹⁵

Those who believe in spiritual warfare typically propose that it is possible for Christians to have victory in every battle. Most will also admit that they believe Christians do not always win every battle. Demons are considered to influence or instigate moral, vocational, or strategic failures.¹⁶ While people are not typically cleared of responsibility for such things, a belief that demons are partly responsible softens the shame that often accompanies significant failures.¹⁷ Conversely, engaging in spiritual warfare is thought to lessen the chance of failure.

F. Entertainment

As Randall Balmer suggested regarding the enjoyment of apocalypticism among Evangelicals, while it may seem absurd to outsiders, for Evangelicals, speculation about evil is entertaining.¹⁸ It is as true for spiritual warfare as it is for apocalyptic calculations about Armageddon. First, the speculation about *whom* they are fighting exactly is often

¹⁵ Ibid., 104.

¹⁶ This view is common, but for a specific example, Miles McPherson explains in one of his sermons that Satan will lead people to do things that will destroy their ministry or lead them into immorality. Miles McPherson, “Extreme Home Takeover - part 6, Enemy Behind the Gates,” <<http://media.therocksandiego.org/servicemp3/2007-04-22-message.mp3>> (accessed 18 Oct. 2008).

¹⁷ This is drawn from personal observations. I have never heard someone actually express it verbatim; instead, this thought is usually revealed in vaguer terms, and usually when someone is being consoled after some personal upset.

¹⁸ “Aside from their convictions about the literal truth of the Bible, evangelicals have many reasons for their fixation with the end of time. First, although this may seem improbable to those outside the evangelical subculture, it’s a lot of fun. Evangelicals *enjoy* speculating about prophetic events. Just who *is* the Antichrist? Could those UPC codes in the supermarket someday be imbedded on the back of your hand for use as a kind of debit card, and would they thereby be the dreaded and pernicious mark of the beast? How do Desert Storm and the Persian Gulf War—battles in the vicinity of the Holy Land—fit into the prophetic scheme? Should true believers oppose the United Nations and the European Community as harbingers of the one-world government that some have predicted would facilitate the rise of the Antichrist?” Randall Balmer, *Blessed Assurance: A History of Evangelicalism in America*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999), 53.

spoken of in terms of excitement. Is Satan behind some major world event? Are the nephilim still active today? Are stories of alien abductions actually demonic encounters?¹⁹ One young woman said early in this study "I think spiritual warfare is one of the most interesting parts of our faith."²⁰ The intrigue of the unknown and esoteric drives much of spiritual warfare discourse, and it is as true of the Anchor Fellowship as it is of Evangelicalism in general.

There is an entertainment aspect to spiritual warfare practice as well. Christians engaging in spiritual warfare may get the same adrenaline rush one experiences on a roller coaster; from their perspective, they are warring with powerful demons, yet like a roller coaster, they believe themselves safe from the danger because of divine protection. John Wimber recognized this aspect of spiritual warfare when he wrote "Power encounters are exciting experiences. But occasionally they lead to spiritual pride in those who receive them. This happens when they forget that the Holy Spirit provides wisdom and insight."²¹ In this statement, Wimber is recognizing that people do feel entertained by these situations, and is warning people to avoid idolizing the power they believe they wield.

G. Validation of Supernaturalism

Many, if not most, Evangelicals view Western culture as hostile to

¹⁹ Christopher Partridge has done some significant analysis of the view often found among Evangelicals that aliens and UFOs are demonic manifestations. See Christopher Partridge, "Alien Demonology: the Christian Roots of the Malevolent Extraterrestrial in UFO Religions and Abduction Spiritualities," in *Religion* 34, no. 3 (2004): 173.

²⁰ Rachel Smith, casual conversation with author, Nashville, TN, 21 May 2009.

²¹ John Wimber, "Power Evangelism Definitions and Directions," in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, 33.

supernaturalism.²² That seems to be a legitimate conclusion. The scientific study of religion frequently discounts *a priori* the existence of supernatural beings as a realistic possibility and seeks other answers to why people engage in religious thought or behavior. Over the past 150 years, various suggestions have been made about the nature of religion: it is economically motivated, it is a psychological delusion, or a cultural vestige. Some explanations suggest that religion is a product of evolution, a confluence of overactive Agency Detection Devices (the cognitive function that recognizes the presence of entities) and the Theory of Mind Mechanisms, the cognitive function that ascribes motive to other entities.²³ What Evangelicals would often view as spirit possession, psychiatrists often view as mental illness.²⁴ Religion has often been dismissed as legitimate, or treated reductively as being caused solely by natural factors.

In the wake of all these alternative explanations for religion and spiritual phenomena, in addition to living within an increasingly secular culture, many Evangelicals feel the need to validate their belief in the supernatural.²⁵ Evangelical thought,²⁶ music,²⁷ and literature,²⁸ recognizes the difficulty of maintaining faith in a

²² Personal observation. For a specific example, take these words of Timothy Warner: "When it comes to sorcery, most Westerners have a very difficult time accepting the idea that there is real power involved." Timothy M. Warner, "Deception: Satan's Chief Tactic," in *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare*, 112.

²³ Todd Tremlin, *Minds and Gods: The Cognitive Foundations of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 74-84.

²⁴ For example, a recognized mental disorder occurring only in Koreans—"shin-byung"—has symptoms that include hallucinations, physical pain, and spirit possession phenomena. Shin-byung is often linked to shamanic ancestry. Jaesung Ha, "Liberation from the Demon and the Demonic: Critical Analysis of Women's Experience in Spirit Possession" (PhD Diss., Vanderbilt University, 2006), 152-153.

²⁵ Bramadat has suggested in his research that part of the spiritual warfare discourse is a response to secularization. Paul Bramadat, *The Church on the World's Turf: an Evangelical Christian Group at a Secular University*, 113-115.

²⁶ Personal observation.

²⁷ For example, the lyrics to a Thrice song include "see the parts but not the whole / study saints and scholars but no perfect plan unfurls / do I trust my heart or just my mind, why is truth so hard to find / in this world? Yeah, in this world? / Because I'm due for a miracle, I'm waiting for a sign / I'll stare straight into the sun, and I won't close my eyes / 'til I understand or go blind" Thrice, "Stare at the sun" Track 5 of *The Artist in the Ambulance*, CD, New York: Island Def Jam Music Group, 2003.

secular world. The concept of spiritual warfare, however, helps Evangelicals maintain their belief in the supernatural. They perceive themselves as engaging demons in spiritual battles on a regular basis, and believe that they are accessing the miraculous power of God in daily life. Some Evangelicals even maintain that their own conversion was initiated by a supernatural encounter in a spiritual warfare setting.²⁹ As one rock band illustrated it, "the shadow proves the sunshine."³⁰

This validation of the supernatural is a motivation for Evangelicalism in general, but it is unclear whether it is a major motivation at the Anchor Fellowship. While evangelization is encouraged, it has been suggested that it is not the Christian's responsibility to "prove God."³¹ Additionally, apologetic arguments are not prominent at the Anchor Fellowship; rather, there is an assumption that God will reveal himself. Furthermore, belief in the miraculous is widespread. Prophecy, spiritual warfare, and prayers for healing are commonplace, but since these acts are rarely accompanied by apologetic explanations, it is less suggestive of a need to combat secularization and anti-supernaturalism and more of a widespread acceptance that the supernatural is real.

H. Observable Personal Transformation

Tangible change is a motivation within Evangelicalism, and probably the main motivation at the Anchor Fellowship. Often emotional or psychological "brokenness" is

²⁸ For example, see Josh McDowell's section defending miracles in Josh McDowell and Don Stewart, *Answers to Tough Questions Skeptics ask about the Christian Faith* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1980), 91-100.

²⁹ For an example, see Smith's encounter with a Pentecostal woman who became a Christian after demons were driven from her. Christian Smith, *American Evangelism: Embattled and Thriving* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 175-176.

³⁰ Switchfoot, "The Shadow Proves the Sunshine," Track 4 of *Nothing is Sound*, CD, New York: Sony, 2005.

³¹ Brian Ban, casual conversation with author, 10 Feb. 2010.

linked to demonic oppression. Spiritual warfare can be a catalyst for repairing this "brokenness."

For example, in early November a young man approached Stump for deliverance counselling. Among other symptoms, this man was feeling a strong sense of fear about some specific issues.³² After undergoing deliverance from "spirits of fear," the young man believed that there was a change and no longer felt afraid. In another case, Rachel Smith believes she was delivered from a "spirit of fear" relating to authority; she seemed more confident in her occupational abilities as the church's office manager after this session than she did before it.³³ Another example: after undergoing an intense deliverance session while visiting Newfoundland, "Isabel" claimed she no longer experienced apparitions or physical sensations like choking and scratching.³⁴ Such stories are common.

This research is not intended to defend or disprove the veracity of demons or supernaturalism. To say that spiritual warfare can repair "brokenness" is not to validate the existence of demons, but to validate that belief in the efficacy of spiritual warfare often accompanies observable change. Whatever the reason may be, spiritual warfare practices do correlate to observable changes in people. Because these changes do occur and can sometimes be observed, the desire for further change often serves as a motivation for spiritual warfare.

I. Politics

³² For ethical reasons, these "specific issues" cannot be identified, as they could reveal the identity of the individuals.

³³ Personal observations and information provided in an interview. Rachel Smith, interview with author, Nashville, TN, 19 Jan. 2010.

³⁴ "Isabel," interview with author, Nashville, TN, 14 Sept. 2009.

While not a prominent feature at the Anchor Fellowship, politics can be a motivating factor for spiritual warfare. For example, Lou Engle has written the following in his blog:

Pray that God would restrain principalities and powers that have mustered their forces of demons to seize this nation through this door in California. Pray for an unprecedented outpouring of the Spirit in California and America. Pray that God would raise up righteous leaders and bring down the unrighteous ones. Pray for the cleansing of sexual compromise and divorce in the church so that she can reclaim spiritual authority. Finally, pray that the love of God would be poured out on those struggling with homosexuality across this nation. Oh that the power of God, the power of the gospel, would be released again to free the captives!³⁵

In this situation, Engle was pleading with readers to engage in spiritual warfare for a particular political outcome, in this case, the overturning of same-sex marriage in California.

Similarly, the documentary film *Jesus Camp* showed footage of children at a Charismatic bible camp engaging in spiritual warfare by smashing teacups with a hammer. The cups symbolized various powers, including one that represented "unrighteous government." The film also depicted a woman producing a cardboard cut-out of George W. Bush and encouraging the children to "do some warfare over him," and leading them by speaking in tongues.³⁶

While a desire for political change may not be a motivating factor at the Anchor Fellowship, it is indeed a motivating factor for many other Evangelicals to engage in spiritual warfare.

³⁵ Lou Engle, "Blog Archive >> Urgent Call to Prayer" <<http://www.louengle.com/2009/03/04/urgent-call-to-prayer/>> (accessed 16 Mar. 2009).

³⁶ Loki Films Inc, *Jesus Camp*, DVD, directed by Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady (Los Angeles: Magnolia Home Entertainment, 2006).

J. Chapter Summary

While belief in spiritual warfare is predicated on the bases of pneumatology and eschatology, motivations for actually practicing spiritual warfare are manifold. Sometimes spiritual warfare is practiced because it encourages unity and belonging. Discussions of spiritual warfare can also be a useful didactic tool for those who seek to instruct others by contrasting God and Satan. It also provides a temporary theodicean solution. While Evangelicals believe evil will continue until God completely destroys Satan and his demons, spiritual warfare allows for the explanation of specific forms of evil in the present, and provides a vehicle for addressing these evils. It also appeals to the hero archetype in that by engaging in spiritual warfare, people believe they are doing something brave and noble. Spiritual warfare doctrine also softens failure by explaining that while they are still culpable, sometimes people fall victim to demonic influences. Similarly, fear of failure also motivates spiritual warfare. Spiritual warfare is also entertaining. Many people simply enjoy the speculation about evil, and some Evangelicals find spiritual warfare exciting. Spiritual warfare also staves off naturalism and secular dangers by normalizing the supernatural for practitioners. Belief in the efficacy of spiritual warfare practices also corresponds to actual changes in individual lives. Observation of change motivates further spiritual warfare. Finally, some Evangelicals believe that spiritual warfare can motivate and create political change.

Chapter IX - Conclusion

This chapter will readdress the previous eight chapters and elucidate the main argument of this thesis. Citations have been omitted as all of the material in this chapter has already been referenced in the previous text.

A. Who is Satan and What Does He Want?

Within the Christian tradition, the figure of Satan has always loomed as the enemy of God. Within contemporary Evangelicalism, Satan has largely been understood as a created being—an angel who rebelled—and who, with his army of demons, is very active in trying to destroy humanity.

Most Evangelicals who believe in Satan believe that his efforts to destroy humanity are both expressed covertly and overtly. Within Western society, it is proposed, Satan prefers to work mostly with covert methods. That is because his main strategy is thought to be illusion and deceit, and, since Western culture already has a secular and natural (as opposed to supernatural) worldview, Satan is thought content to trick people into believing that both he and God are imaginary figures. If lies are enough to lead people away from God, Satan is thought to do no more.

Among Evangelicals who ascribe to supernaturalism, and especially among Charismatics, Satan is believed to act overtly as well as covertly. The belief is that since they have accepted that God and Satan are real, the devil no longer feels compelled to hide himself. This is the same assumption made when targeting Freemasonry, New Age religions, and Paganism as activities that lead to demonization. It is believed that because these groups are thought to also accept supernaturalism yet reject Christianity, they are

embracing actual satanic powers. Engaging in non-Christian supernaturalistic religion or activities believed to be demonic (such as playing Ouija board games or reading Harry Potter books) are often thought to "open up doors" for demons to enter.

Satan is believed to be a counterfeiter. Many Evangelicals propose that what God does, Satan duplicates in twisted forms. For example, among Evangelicals who believe that God gives Christians prophetic words, there is a corresponding satanic version of false prophecy. If God teaches people how to love, Satan teaches people how to hate. Much of what is labelled Satanic influence rests on the dichotomy of good and evil, or, more exactly, local interpretations of good and evil. There is a semantic agreement that God is good and Satan is evil, but there is little concord regarding what "good" and "evil" specifically mean.

It is often proposed that Satan wants to destroy people because of his hatred for God, and his resentment of humanity's relationship to God. That is believed to be his motivation in trying to stop people from becoming Christians and for harassing those who are Christians.

B. Approaches to Spiritual Warfare

Evangelicals who believe in Satan also believe that Christians must have some response to his activities. Propositions about how Christians should respond vary from group to group and person to person. There are four categories for understanding these approaches thematically.

The avoidance/resistance and cessationist approach suggests that Christians should not engage the devil in combat. Among those proposing the avoidance/resistance

part of this approach, the majority believe that Christians are not authorized or empowered to do so. An additional viewpoint is that some Christians are empowered to engage demons in warfare but that most lack the "anointing" or authorization to do so, and, therefore, most Christians should avoid it. Instead, Christians are called upon to resist the devil and defy lies by embracing truth, and to pray that God will remove demonic afflictions.

The cessationist part of this category has a similar outcome but different conceptual foundations. While Jesus and the Apostles exorcised demoniacs and drove out evil spirits, it was, according to this view, a temporally limited ministry. When spiritual gifts ceased to have relevance, so did spiritual warfare. Cessationists often hold the position that Satan is still active, but only in the arena of truth and lies.

The systematic approach is characterized by rigorous theological models and affirms that demons are still active today. Spiritual warfare is considered a valid function of the church, but it is first predicated on systematic understandings of scripture, and only secondarily on observations. If spiritual warfare practices or beliefs contradict the held interpretations of the Bible, then they are rejected. The systematic approach is often characterized by classifying demonic activities (possession, gossip, arson, etc.) and by providing specific procedures for each situation.

The Charismatic/deliverance approach is substantially different from the systematic approach. While the systematic approach focuses first on scriptural interpretation and systematization of Biblical principles, the Charismatic/deliverance approach relies primarily on pneumatic guidance. Theological positions still guide those who adhere to the Charismatic/deliverance approach, but it is not the ruling principle for

spiritual warfare. Instead, those holding the Charismatic/deliverance approach believe that the Holy Spirit will tell them how and when to expel demons and also empower them to personally engage evil spirits. There is a belief that the Holy Spirit will not countermand scripture in these processes. Pneumatic inspiration for spiritual warfare can draw on scripture or from contemporary cultural references (e.g. *Lord of the Rings*).

The obsessive/fringe approach is different from the other approaches both in frequency of activity and in practice. The obsessive quality of this approach refers to the belief that exorcism is required quite often, sometimes daily or even hourly. The fringe quality of this approach is to distinguish practices that are beyond the pale of the other three categories. For example, establishing a "trial" to expel a demon from an afflicted Christian can be *a propos* for either the systematic or Charismatic/deliverance models, and therefore cannot be considered fringe. Chanting Jesus' name in a candlelit circle while physically beating a demonized person would be rejected under any of the first three approaches and would therefore be considered fringe.

C. The Anchor Fellowship

The Anchor Fellowship is an ideal environment for studying spiritual warfare practices. Because the local culture of the Anchor Fellowship is so diverse, many different interpretations of spiritual warfare and demonology are expressed. A strong majority of these views fall within the Charismatic/deliverance approach. Additionally, music is so prominent at the Anchor Fellowship that its importance in Charismatic spiritual warfare can be seen quite easily.

The advantage to an ethnographic study is that a particular topic may be seen in

detail. The disadvantage is that it is not conducive to understanding the whole of a topic. This thesis has attempted to provide an overview of Evangelical spiritual warfare belief and practices as a whole, though the focus has necessarily been on the Charismatic/deliverance approach to spiritual warfare. In this, the Anchor Fellowship has been very useful for illustrating the main body of Charismatic/deliverance beliefs and practices.

1. Pneumatology and Eschatology at the Anchor Fellowship

The argument of this thesis is that pneumatology and eschatology define the model for spiritual warfare for an individual or congregation. The pneumatology at the Anchor Fellowship is of a Charismatic variety. The Holy Spirit is believed to imbue believers with spiritual gifts and talents, to communicate the will of God to believers, and to provide a modicum of protection from evil spirits. Christians at the Anchor Fellowship believe that by the power of the Holy Spirit they can engage in spiritual warfare.

The eschatology of the Anchor Fellowship is a kingdom eschatology, a variety of premillennialism. While the kingdom of God has yet to be consummated (it is proposed that consummation will occur when Jesus returns), the Kingdom of God is already present to believers now. Simultaneously, the kingdom of Satan is still in existence and will not be broken until Jesus destroys it after Armageddon. In the present age, these two kingdoms are in conflict, and spiritual warfare is born from this clash.

2. Demonology at the Anchor Fellowship

Like most of Evangelicalism, the Anchor Fellowship believes that Satan is a fallen angel, the author of original sin, and that he leads an army of demons. Most members of the Anchor Fellowship believe not only in demons who are malevolent in a general way, but they also believe in territorial and assigned spirits. Demons are ubiquitous, but can be opposed by Christians armed with the Holy Spirit. The leadership of the Anchor Fellowship advises against "demon hunting" and instead proposes that demons only be dealt with when they inhibit the advancement of the Kingdom of God in some way. Territorial spirits are not engaged in aggressive spiritual warfare unless one believes that God has specifically communicated this action through the agency of the Holy Spirit. Demonic affliction is viewed similarly as physical or mental illness: it is an "area of brokenness" that requires "healing."

3. Spiritual Warfare at the Anchor Fellowship

There are many forms of spiritual warfare practiced at the Anchor Fellowship. Like most Evangelicals who believe in Satan, the Anchor Fellowship does emphasize rejecting lies and accepting truth from scriptural interpretation. Beyond that, spiritual warfare can vary and is practiced communally more often than it is practiced individually. Generally, it involves a spoken rejection or revocation of a demon's right to occupy a place or person. In deliverance sessions, two or more people help an individual who is believed to be afflicted by spirits to reject those spirits and to "embrace healing." In "deliverance counselling" or "theophostic prayer counselling," an individual is taught by one or more people how to reject ways of thinking that are believed to authorize

demons to afflict them. For example, to avoid giving demons power to make one afraid, that person might be led to understand what personally makes them afraid, and then to "speak truth" in that area to discredit fear. By discrediting fear, the individual is believed to be removing a "demonic stronghold."

When approaching demonization in non-Christians, members of the Anchor Fellowship typically try to demonstrate love without exorcising a spirit. It is believed that love "shines light into darkness" and "brings the kingdom of God" to that person, but that the demon has the "legal right" to occupy them until the individuals turn to God. A demon can only be, or by some accounts, *should* only be, removed from Christians. In particularly volatile situations where a demoniac is interfering with ministry efforts, a Christian is authorized to command the demoniac to leave.

The arts have a particular usefulness to the Anchor Fellowship in spiritual warfare. While performing, the worship leaders often take an avoidance approach by asking God to remove demonic interference rather than directly engaging a demon in that setting. Music is typically viewed as an instrument for the Holy Spirit to use. When people concentrate on worshiping God, it is believed that the kingdom of God becomes more manifest and more tangible. When that happens, evil spirits are "broken off" from people. Spiritual warfare in worship can also be more direct, as described by the Ember Days and Sleeping Giant, who cited examples of "hands-on" deliverances that have occurred at their shows.

While literature is not as prominent at the Anchor Fellowship as it is in many other congregations, it can also be useful to spiritual warfare practitioners. The novella *The Final Quest*, for example, illustrates the interconnectedness of spiritual warfare and

eschatology and allegorically depicts how adherence to various points of doctrine or orthopraxy are synonymous to spiritual warfare. Other novels, such as the Frank Peretti novels, can offer illustration of spiritual warfare principles.

D. Motivations for Spiritual Warfare

While spiritual warfare stems from pneumatology and eschatology, the motivations for spiritual warfare often do not. Spiritual warfare is popular, both topically and in practice, for numerous reasons. Spiritual warfare contributes to communal unity by rallying members against a common enemy, and sometimes by defining the group in contradistinction to others, and thus, becomes identity-forming and sustaining. Its didactic usefulness is another motivation for spiritual warfare, as are its theodicean applications. It also provides a way to soften failure by giving demons some culpability in someone's violation of individual or communal conceptions of morality. Spiritual warfare is also motivated by an appeal to heroic imagery, emphasizing one's power over demons and valorizing "rescuing captives" from demons. Evangelicals also find it enjoyable to discuss spiritual warfare, and the actual acts of spiritual warfare are often accompanied by intense experiences, making entertainment another motivation for spiritual warfare. Spiritual warfare also validates belief in supernaturalism. By normalizing the experience of supernatural conflicts, adherents defend the naturalism of secular culture. Some who practice spiritual warfare also witness a beneficial personal transformation from doing so, and the observation of such transformations encourages further spiritual warfare. Lastly, some advocates of spiritual warfare use it as an agency for political change, casting the electoral process as a battle between good and evil.

E. Eschatology and Pneumatology Affect Models of Spiritual Warfare

Pneumatology affects spiritual warfare in that believers only engage in aggressive spiritual warfare if they believe that the Holy Spirit has empowered them to do so. It is sometimes understood that cues to engage demons are delivered by the Holy Spirit as well, and the Spirit instructs the believer regarding the particular approach necessary for a specific situation. Conversely, when there is not a belief that the Holy Spirit offers power to combat demons, the spiritual warfare takes a resistance/avoidance or cessationist approach.

Eschatology affects spiritual warfare as well. Aggressive models of spiritual warfare thrive in premillennialist environments, whereas postmillennialism tends to downplay conflict with literal demons. Premillennialism is also often accompanied (though not always) by a belief that the end is imminent, and that demonic activity has intensified as the last battle is beginning. Premillennialism also offers a precise and cataclysmic moment for Satan's defeat, rather than a gradual ebbing away of evil as the kingdom of God overtakes the kingdom of Satan. This precise, eschatological moment offers a model for spiritual warfare as well, so that spiritual warfare is often modeled after it, and the judgment of demons affects how some Evangelicals view their level of authority.

F. Concluding Remarks

Spiritual warfare is an important part of contemporary Evangelicalism. The complexity and nuances of this controversial topic ensure its prominence in the

Evangelical discourse, possibly for as long as Evangelical Christianity will exist. Individuals and congregations do not agree on much beyond the most basic points, and this disagreement creates a diverse range of positions, practices, and motivations. This thesis has argued that pneumatology and eschatology shape the spiritual warfare model an individual or group may take, and has offered an in-depth example from the Anchor Fellowship in Nashville, Tennessee. Hopefully, this important issue will garner further attention in academic research, not only for its own sake but also for the far reaching influence it has on the whole of Evangelical theology and culture.

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