

No Power Over Me - Demolishing Satan's Lies

4-Part Series

What is your story? Do you feel like your life is significant? Important? Necessary? Is life about more than making a living and raising a family? Are you bored? Have you found that “thing” you do that gives you life and makes you want to get out of bed every morning? Is life an adventure or drudgery?

My experience has shown most of us are confused, disoriented, and not aware of the big picture unveiled before us. We sense evil is on the rise but we do not know how to fight against it. We see the prolific spread of child pornography and trafficking; deranged people breaking into schools and gunning down our innocent children; authoritarian governments subjecting their populations to starvation and oppression; greed and lust for power in our government and corporations; and society is given over to brazen, sexual indulgence with no hint of shame.

I remember reading John Eldredge's book *Epic* about 20 years ago. It gave me perspective I have never forgotten. The next four paragraphs are a summary of what I learned from John.

On a Friday night, most of us want to read a good book or watch a movie. We want to hear others' stories in the hope they will help us understand our own. All the

stories we love have the same storyline. There is love, adventure, danger, heroes, villains, romance, sacrifice, a battle between good and evil, and insurmountable odds in favor of evil, but good prevails in the end. The storylines are all the same. Once upon a time, things were good, but something awful happened and now a great journey must be taken or a great battle fought to make things right again. At just the right moment, a hero arrives on the scene to save the day and make everything right. Life, as it was meant to be, is found again.

This is true of most stories and movies you can think of. Think of *Braveheart*, *Gladiator*, *Star Wars*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Wizard of Oz*, and *The Big Bad Wolf*. Have you wondered why we love these stories? Have you wondered why they captivate our imaginations and our hearts? Have you wondered why they inspire us to love more deeply and defend those we love? **BECAUSE IT IS BORROWED FROM THE STORY — OUR STORY!**

It is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

All the ingredients in the movies we love are borrowed from our story. Once upon a time, life was perfect in the Garden of Eden. Satan entered the picture, and we exchanged our glory for a lie. We believed Satan's lie that God could not be trusted,

that he was not good, and that we needed to take control of things. He was holding out on us, and we needed to rewrite the script.

You see, the story has been going on since the beginning of time. You have a role to play and an adventure to live, but you must understand your story in light of the bigger story already underway. Your story is much more exciting and adventurous than you believe. It is more dangerous than you imagined. It is more exhilarating than we understand.

Somehow along the road, we lost our hearts and our perspective.

We were meant to live in a relationship with God and others. Life doesn't work when it is all about you. We must recover our hearts and fight for the hearts of others. Our greatest joys and memories are around our family and friends. Our greatest wounds are also connected to people. **We all desperately want to belong and to be part of something bigger than ourselves.**

We live our lives as if we do not have an enemy. A life lived in that reality becomes very confusing. Evil is carried out through people, but people are not the enemy. Hitler, Stalin, and Khan were all influenced by Satan. He is the enemy of our souls. He hates God, but he knows he cannot defeat him. So, he turns his anger upon God's children. You are opposed, and you have an enemy that wants to deceive you, defeat you, and kill you and your family. He does not play by any rules and does not

respect any person or government.

Imagine a world where followers of Christ are free from fear, shame, and guilt. A person that is gripped by fear is not free to live. Fear keeps us from the peace of God and paralyzes us from advancing the kingdom.

God is inviting you into the adventure of a lifetime. It is a life of faith, bravery, courage, and a desire to rescue those that are wounded. For some, the necessary change is subtle. It takes a little "tweaking" to get back on the right path. For others, it requires a radical shift.

I invite you to spend some time in this **4-Part Series called "No Power Over Me: Demolishing Satan's Lies."** Each study builds upon the other and is intended to help you understand your story in light of the bigger picture. The studies come from my interactions with people over the last 3 decades and are a summary of my experiences. We all struggle to see our lives clearly. What do we think? Why do we do things we do not want to do? It all seems confusing and disorienting at times. My goal is to help you see the big picture and how the enemy has deceived you into believing you are not enough and you do not measure up. Each study will help you organize your thinking and give light to your journey.

Study I: The Sin Circle Study will help you understand how Satan has deceived you. You will understand how fear and the desire to control drive the

majority of your thinking and actions. Bullies use fear and threats to create fear in order to control you. Employers and governments use the same tactics. Your reaction to these threats and intimidations is dependent on what you believe to be true. Your thoughts gain power as you decide what is true and what is not. Your personality then determines how you live out those perceptions. You were born with a distinct personality given by God. The use of that personality in the flesh can be an unattractive thing. When you learn to submit your God-given personality to advancing His kingdom, it is a beautiful thing.

Study 2: The 15 Pitfalls Study will help you identify areas of your thinking that are not consistent with God's truth. The sin circle helps you identify the patterns in your life; this study helps you discover areas of your thinking that may be incorrect. These 15 areas cover 99% of the wrong thinking I have observed as I have met with people over the last 25 years. You must identify wrong thinking to correct bad behavior and out-of-control emotions.

Study 3: The Romans 1/Ephesians 4 and 2 Peter 1 Contrast Study will show you how following the flesh and its evil desires can lead you down a trail of futility, a hardened heart, a loss of sensitivity, and eventually to a point where God gives you over to your sin if you continue pursuing sin. That is the most horrifying thing I can imagine. I have personally witnessed people so bent on pursuing sin that God gave them over.

Study 4: The 2 Peter 1 Study will show you what a maturing Christian should look like. You will learn why faith is so important and why faith requires action to be authentic. You will understand why it is important to identify and live out what God has called you to be in this life. Faith and goodness lead to knowledge. We tend to strive to understand so we can have faith. But we must remember we have faith so that we can understand. God gets excited when we live with a child-like faith. He is eager and willing to reveal Himself to those who hunger and thirst for Him. A deep dive into self-control, perseverance, and godliness will lead you to the ultimate expression of maturity which is brotherly kindness and love. Love is the ultimate expression of knowing God.

We are experiencing evil rising around us like never before. It is time for us to recapture our first love and be sober and vigilant. The days are evil but God is pouring out His Spirit. It is time to rid our souls of the darkness and free ourselves from the sins that so easily entangle us. It is for freedom that He set us free. Let's run the race with endurance and train ourselves for godliness. Get ready for the adventure of a lifetime! Following God is never boring.