

The Armor of God

Is for the defense of one of the believer

Whereas demonic activities are under the offensive control of Christ and the apostles

1. Demonic activity is under the control of Christ and the Apostles

a. Signs and wonders:

1 Peter 1:12-13 (NASB)

12 Christ and you will be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of His grace to you.
13 It is His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and grace.

In the N.T., **signs and wonders** is our standard for **recognizing that Jesus is the with life and life-giving in the church age**.

signs and wonders was one of the many miracles that came under the classification of **signs and wonders**.

Acts 2:12 (NASB)

12 And **through the hands of the apostles** many **signs and wonders**

were done among the people. And they were all with agreement in Solomon's Porch.

This passage goes on to describe some of the **signs and wonders** such as healing the sick, as well as **those afflicted with unclean spirits**.

Signs and wonders were specifically designed to authenticate and validate the ministry of **the 12 apostles**.

They were unique to the apostles, and a very limited few who were under the personal authority of the apostles, and clearly associated with them, **in the beginning of the Church**.

Gifts in addition to the apostles could perform these signs and wonders, from the Apostle Paul would not have said:

1 Corinthians 12:10 (NASB)

10 The **signs of a true apostle** were performed among you with all perseverance, by **signs and wonders and miracles**.

These passages clearly show that the only legitimate practice of **casting out demons** as a sign or wonder was **apostolic**.

Some church leaders who don't understand context fancy themselves to be apostles. But clearly the Bible does not support this view.

Apostles were men who had witnessed the Lord's life and resurrection and had been directly commissioned by Him:

Acts 1:21-22 (NASB)

21 **Therefore it is necessary** that of the men who have accompanied us **from the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us**

22 **beginning with the baptism of Jesus until the day that He was taken up from us—****that one of these men become a witness with us of His resurrection?**

A parenthesis, adding an additional critical element

The apostolic office was foundational only, and thus unique to the beginning of the church

Ephesians 2:20 (NASB)

20 **being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets**, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,

Those who maintain the continuation of the apostolic office do so arrogantly inserting man's opinion without the content of scripture backing it up.

Because this foundational gift/office has ceased, **signs and wonders** have also ceased and, with them, the casting out of demons.

Remember, it doesn't matter how sincerely a person believes false doctrine, that doesn't make it any more acceptable to God.

God does not fellowship with false doctrine!

This fact does not mean that God no longer performs miracles or delivers the afflicted from demons.

During the time of our Lord's ministry on the earth and the beginning years of the church, God delegated the ability to perform miracles to a chosen few.

These men, the apostles specifically, performed these miracles through the power of God at their own discretion.

They determined where they would perform these miracles and whom they would heal.

God mediated the miracles through these individuals specifically.

Today, God still performs miracles, and probably does people from demons, although the absence of biblical teaching on the subject for church age believers, suggests, at the very least, that it's neither more than it was at the beginning of the church age.

but when they do happen God performs these actions directly rather than indirectly through His people/ as He did through the apostles

There is no biblical evidence whatsoever for so-called miracle healers, or exorcists, or a gifting for church age believers.

No church age believer since the death of the last apostle, has a spiritual gift for healing, or casting out demons.

God may heal someone or relieve someone of demonic oppression (as opposed to the signs of His power for apostles) as an answer to the prayer of an unsaved person who turns to Christ and seeks salvation:

However it should be noted that often healing does occur, the most applies to the request of God **not the individual who prayed**. God answered because of His mercy on the individual who needed mercy.

That doesn't mean that when the prayer is not answered in the affirmative, that your prayer was necessarily unbiblical.

Most of the time God doesn't heal.

That's due to the fact that we are in a fallen world, it is possible that we go through suffering, because they're designed to test our trust in God. These afflictions show the biblical believer to place our trust in God.

James 1:1-2 (NASB)

1 If this trial entails not testing, however you deal with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.

2 If this affliction, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore **whenever you desire to befriend the world, you make yourself an enemy of God!**

3 **These are things that we see that exist in the things of the flesh.**

4 Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose? He probably shows the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us?

5 But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

6 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

1 Corinthians 1:10-11 (NASB)

10 Because of the competing promises of the revelation, for this reason, to keep me from making myself, then you given me a share in the faith, a messenger of Jesus to present me... to keep me from making myself?

11 Concerning this I implied the fact that these things that it might have me.

12 And He has written me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfect in weakness." I thoroughly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weakness, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

13 Therefore I can boast in my weakness, with results, with weakness, with powerlessness, with affliction, for Christ's sake for whom I have made, there are strong.

The writer of Hebrews, which was written late in the apostolic period, recognized that even by the late apostolic period, **signs and wonders** were a thing of the past:

Hebrews 2:1-4 (NASB)

1 **Where shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which**

at the first began to be spoken **by the Lord** and

was confirmed to us by those who heard Him

2 **And God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders**, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

Clearly, the biblical solution to demonic oppression or possession in this age is never expressed in terms of casting out demons but rather in terms of resisting the Devil.

2. How to resist the Devil:

The only command given to church age believers for dealing with Satan is to **resist the Devil**.

It's very significant that this command is given 3 times in the N.T. :

1 Peter 5:1-10 (NASB)

10 **Resist him** steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brethren in the **world**.

11 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, **after you have suffered a while**, perfect stability, strength, and settle you.

James 4:1-10 (NASB)

7 Therefore submit to God, **resist the Devil** and he will flee from you.

8 Draw near to God and **the will draw near to you**. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

9 Lower yourselves and bow to your Father for sometime mourning and your joy to gleam.

10 **Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord** and **the will lift you up**.

Ephesians 6:11-17 (NASB)

11 **Put on the whole armor of God** that you may be able to **stand against the wiles of the devil**.

12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of evil powers in the heavenly places.

13 Therefore take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to **withstand in the evil day** and having done all, to stand.

The whole idea of these verses is that we are to humble ourselves, to receive God's word for the spiritual knowledge to resist the devil

The word translated **resist** means "to stand against" or "to oppose." It is a compound of the Greek preposition **anti**, meaning "against," and **histemi**, which means "to stand." The word came to mean "to set oneself against, to oppose, to resist, to withstand."

We resist the Devil by putting on the armor of God.

And what is the armor? It's a good rounded understanding of God's word

It is extremely important that we pay attention to the defensive aspect of this command because it is the exact opposite of what many teach today about spiritual warfare.

The ideas of **binding rebuking performing exorcisms** or **taking dominion over Satan and demonic strongholds** are **offensive** ideas, not **defensive**.

When believers go on the **offensive** against Satan, they are stepping out of their legitimate boundary becoming involved in situations that the Lord has never intended for them.

This offensive type of response was described by Peter as characteristic of false teachers.

1 Peter 2:11-12 (NASB)

11 **Where the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations** and to rescue the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment; 12 and especially those who are waiting for the Lord in the face of our brothers and despise **persecution**.

They are presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of **authorities**.

13 **Behold, angels, who are greater in stature and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them** before the Lord.

14 But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, **speak evil of the things they do not understand**

and will surely perish in their own corruption; 15 and will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to exult in the daytime. They are eyes and bladders, **carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you**, not having eyes full of misery, and their voice is like the roaring of waves.

16 They have a heart trained in covetous practices, and are accused of evil deeds.

17 **They have forsaken the right way and gone astray**, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.

18 But he was rebuked for his iniquity: a donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet.

19 These are like wild without eyes, driven around by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

Scripture is very clear that the battle is the Lord's, not ours.

The concept of spiritual warfare with all the offensive ideas of binding and rebuking, or performing exorcisms, trying to take dominion over Satan and demonic strongholds.