

WON OR LOST IN WHAT WE BELIEVE

Inner Healing & Deliverance

Refresher Course · Week 2 · Participant Handout (Complete)

Spiritual warfare is won or lost in what we believe. The enemy holds no right against the cross. What he works through is agreement — sometimes ours, sometimes one made over us before we could consent — and an agreement can be withdrawn.

Last week in one line: authority is what is **true** of me, faith is **believing** what is true of me, and extra grace is what He adds for a particular assignment. Tonight we live entirely in the **middle** column — because the enemy works that same faculty from the other side.

1. Faith and a Lie Are the Same Faculty

Faith is agreement with what God said. A believed lie is agreement with what the enemy said. One faculty, pointed two directions.

Genesis 3:1, 4-5 — “Indeed, has God **said**...” ... “You surely will **not** die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it... you will be like God.”

- He asks a **question** about God's word, then offers a competing interpretation of God's **motive**. He never touches the fruit and never touches Eve. He needs her to **agree** — and the moment she does, the ground moves.
- John 8:44 — “he is a liar and the **father** of lies.” Lying isn't a tactic he uses; it is his **native** language. 2 Cor 11:3 — his aim is that our **minds** be led astray.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 — “the weapons of our warfare are... divinely powerful for the destruction of **fortresses**. We are destroying **speculations** and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and... taking every **thought** captive.”

- What are the fortresses made of? **Arguments**. Ideas. Things I **believe**. Paul locates the fortress in the **mind** — and that is where he says to fight.
- Agreement is never neutral. Rom 6:16 — “you are **slaves** of the one whom you obey.” What I yield to, I **serve**.
- 2 Thess 2:10 — they perish “because they did not receive the **love** of the truth.” Not because truth was unavailable — because it wasn't **loved**.

2. The Event Is Not the Wound — the Belief Is

Facts don't determine our emotional response. Beliefs do.

- Two children, the same divorce. One believes “this is my **fault**”; the other believes “adults make decisions that have nothing to do with children.” Same event, two different **futures** — and the difference isn't the divorce. It's what each child concluded it **meant** about them.

How a lie gets installed — four steps

- **1. The triggering event.** Any experience that challenges my sense of safety, worth or understanding. It doesn't have to be objectively traumatic — the **subjective** impact is what matters.
- **2. The interpretation moment.** The split-second conclusion about what it **meant** — made while stress is degrading my thinking, and often while I'm a **child**.

- **3. Belief crystallization.** Emotional **intensity** burns it in. Lies formed in crisis feel absolutely **true**, and they usually served a **protective** purpose — which is why they're so hard to give up.
- **4. The reinforcement cycle.** I look for **evidence** I was right, and act in ways that make it come true. The lie starts **filtering** every new experience to feed itself.
- A memory of one event hardens into a belief about how life **always** works. “That happened once” quietly becomes “that is how it **always** is.”

Four places the lies land

- **About God** — “He is angry with me.” “His love has to be earned.”
- **About myself** — “I am too much.” “I am not enough.” “Something is fundamentally wrong with me.” (Num 13:33 — “we became like **grasshoppers** in our own sight” — and then they assumed the giants saw them that way too.)
- **About others** — “Nobody is safe.” “If they really knew me they would leave.”
- **About my future** — “It will always be like this.” “I will never change.”
- Every one of those is a **sentence**. A person can organize thirty years around one.
- Arguing with someone's lie rarely works. It wasn't installed by an **argument** — it was installed by an **experience**. It takes an encounter with **Jesus**, not better logic.

3. Follow the Feeling — How Lies Get Exposed

What you feel is what you believe. What you believe is what you perceive.

- And it doesn't stop there — what I perceive then generates what I **feel**. It closes into a **loop**: feeling reveals belief · belief shapes perception · perception produces feeling · and around again. That loop is why a lie survives decades unexamined. It manufactures its own **evidence**.
- Hold the sentence precisely or it does damage: what I feel **points to** what I believe; what I believe **shapes** what I perceive. A diagnostic **tool**, not a law — because some feelings have **no** belief underneath them at all.
- So I break in where I can. I can't **see** my beliefs — they don't feel like opinions, they feel like **reality**. But I can feel my **feelings**, and that's the one **reading** on the whole circle I can actually take.

The question that opens almost every session: what am I feeling — and what would I have to believe for that feeling to make sense?

a. The psalmist does exactly this (Ps 42 — sons of Korah, not David)

Psalm 42:5 — “**Why** are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? **Hope** in God, for I shall again praise Him for the help of His presence.”

- He doesn't **suppress** the despair — and he doesn't **obey** it either. He **interrogates** it, then **preaches** to it and gives it a **reason**. The whole practice in one verse.
- Ps 77:7-9 — same move, beliefs said out loud as questions: “Has His lovingkindness **ceased** forever? Has God **forgotten** to be gracious?” Then v.11: “I shall **remember** the deeds of the LORD.”

b. Belief really does decide what I see

Titus 1:15 — “To the **pure**, all things are pure; but to those who are **defiled** and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.”

- The principle stated flat out: the **condition** of the person looking decides what the thing **looks like**. Which is why two people can sit in the same marriage or the same conversation and come away with genuinely different **accounts** of what happened.
- Ps 73:16 — “when I pondered to understand this, it was **troublesome** in my sight.” He couldn't **think** his way out. v.17 — “until I came into the **sanctuary** of God; then I perceived their **end**.” What changed wasn't his argument but his **vantage point**.

c. Guardrails

- Not every feeling is a **lie**. Jesus wept (Jn 11:35) and looked around at them with **anger** (Mk 3:5). Grief at real loss isn't deception. Emotion isn't the enemy — it's the **instrument panel**.
- The tell is **disproportion**: a reaction bigger than its trigger, or one that outlives the situation.
- Some feelings have a **physical** cause, not a belief — depression, anxiety and panic, trauma responses, grief, exhaustion, hormones, medication. (A reaction wildly out of proportion to its trigger is also the textbook description of a **panic attack**.) If I search for a lie and there isn't one, that's **information**, not failure — and it belongs in front of a **doctor** as well as in front of Jesus. A medical condition is **not** a spiritual failure.

Psalm 139:23-24 — “**Search** me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my **anxious** thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me.”

- Notice **who** does the searching. Not me excavating myself — **Him**. My part is to stop **defending** the room and let Him open the door.

4. Legal Ground — and Who Actually Holds It

Ephesians 4:26-27 — “do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not **give** the devil an **opportunity**.”

- topos = a **place**. Ground. He doesn't seem to operate at **will**, but through what has been **opened** to him.

But read the verb before you build on it

- Paul doesn't say the devil **has** a place. He says do not **give** him one. The ground is **conceded**, not seized.
 - Col 2:15 — He **disarmed** the rulers and authorities. He has no standing before God he can enforce against the **cross**.
 - John 14:30 — “the ruler of the world is coming, and he has **nothing** in Me.” Nothing to **grab**.

He holds no rights against the cross. What he works through is agreement — and an agreement is something that can be withdrawn.

Isaiah gives us the picture — by analogy

Isaiah 28:15 — “We have made a **covenant** with death... For we have made **falsehood** our refuge and we have concealed ourselves with deception.”

- v.14 names the audience: “you **scoffers** who rule this people in Jerusalem.” This is national leadership boasting about a foreign **alliance**. Their lies are political self-deception — so we're reasoning by **analogy**. Two words are worth taking:
 - They made falsehood their **refuge**. A lie isn't only something I think — it's somewhere I **hide**. That's why people **defend** their lies: letting go of a refuge feels like standing in the open.
 - He calls it a **covenant** — an agreement. Tonight's whole thesis in one Old Testament noun.
- (Don't push into vv.17-18 — there the sweeping away is God's **judgment** on people who refused the stone, not a gentle relocation. The mercy sits in v.16b.)

Where the ground gets handed over

- **Sin patterns.** Temptation → habit → **bondage**. There's a difference between **struggling** with sin and making **peace** with it.
- **Occult involvement.** Seeking knowledge or power from a source other than **God** — divination and fortune-telling, contacting the dead or spirits, witchcraft.
- **Inner vows.** Vows made in **pain** work like contracts: "I will never **trust** anyone again." "I don't need anyone." "I will never let anyone hurt me like this." Notice they're all **self-protection** — which is what makes them feel righteous.
- **Unforgiveness and bitterness.** Hurt → anger → **bitterness** → hatred → stronghold. 2 Cor 2:10–11 — forgive, "so that no **advantage** would be taken of us by Satan." Matt 18:34–35 — the unforgiving servant handed to the **torturers**, and Jesus applies it directly to His hearers.
- Ground never handed over willingly: childhood **trauma** and abuse · what came down a family **line** · **words** spoken over us by people with authority. An entry point I did not **choose** is not a sin I **committed** — it calls for healing, not shame.
- Two more places to look beyond the feeling: a pattern I've repented of **repeatedly** and never moved past (the door was probably never **closed**), and anything I've **promised** myself I would never do again — that's where the **vows** hide.

5. "But I'm a Christian" — Does This Apply to Me?

- The New Testament's warnings about the enemy's access are addressed to **believers**: Eph 4:27 · 2 Cor 2:11 · 1 Pet 5:8–9 · Jas 4:7. Paul doesn't tell the Ephesians the devil **can't** get a foothold — he tells them not to **hand** him one.
- The clearest case is Peter. Luke 22:31 — "Satan has **demanding permission** to sift you like wheat." Note where the demand goes: to **God**, not to Peter. Also 2 Cor 12:7 — a messenger of Satan given to Paul in connection with **revelation**, not with sin.

Ownership is settled. Occupancy is contested.

- I was **bought** with a price and I am His — that's not in question (1 Cor 6:19–20). But a house being His isn't the same as every **room** in it being surrendered. The temple was the LORD's house the day Hezekiah opened the doors — and there were still cartloads of filth to carry **out**.
- So the useful question is never "**possessed** or not?" It's: where is there **ground**, how was it **given**, and how do we take it **back**?
- Finding ground in myself is not evidence I'm not **saved**. It's evidence I have lived a **life**. Everyone in this room has believed something God never **said**.

6. The Stronghold Is the House

A stronghold is not the demon. It is the house the demon lives in.

- Demons are **squatters** in a damaged building. You can drive squatters out — but if you never **repair** the building or secure the door, they come back, and they bring **help**.

Matthew 12:43–45 — "I will return to **my** house from which I came"; and it finds it **unoccupied**, swept, and put in order. Then it takes along seven other spirits more wicked... and the last state of that man becomes **worse** than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation."

- Note the last line: Jesus aims this at a **generation** that rejected Him. Extending it to individual ministry is fair — but it is an **extension**.
- The spirit presumes on the house as “**my house**.” The parable doesn't call that a **right** — and what actually lets it back in is not a claim but an **empty** house.
- The house was swept and in order — and that wasn't enough. It was **empty**. **Removal** without **replacement** is how people end up worse off after ministry than before.
- The usual shapes: abandonment · shame · fear · control · performance. Different floor plans, built the **same** way.

How the house gets built — five stages

- A painful experience does real damage. → **The wound**
- An **interpretation** of that pain assigns it a meaning.
- The **lie** believed in that moment becomes the building **material**.
- **Reinforcement** over years strengthens the structure.
- Something gains **access** through the finished structure.
- Which is why inner healing and deliverance can't be **separated**. Deal only with the wound and the **house** still stands. Deal only with the demon and the house is still standing when it **comes back**.

7. How the Ground Is Reclaimed

Isaiah 28:16 — “Behold, I am laying a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a costly **cornerstone** for the foundation, firmly placed. The one who **believes** in it will not be disturbed.”

- That's the mercy in the chapter — and the New Testament names the stone: 1 Pet 2:6 and Rom 9:33 both quote this verse and apply it to **Christ**. The alternative to a refuge of lies isn't willpower or a better argument. It's a **Person** I can stand on.
- And Matthew 12 gives the order: the house failed not because it wasn't **cleaned** but because it was left **empty**. So: **truth** first, then **eviction**, then **occupancy**. Give someone somewhere to stand before taking away what they've been hiding in.

Four things that actually move the ground

- 1. **Renounce the agreement**. Name the sin, the vow, or the agreement **specifically** and take it back. General prayers don't close **specific** doors.
- 2. **Forgive**. Not a feeling — a **release**. This closes the most doors, and it's usually the one people most want to **skip**.
- 3. **Replace the lie with truth**. John 8:31–32 — “if you **continue** in My word... you will know the truth, and the truth will make you **free**.” Rom 12:2 — transformed by the **renewing** of the mind.
- 4. **Let Him fill the house**. 2 Tim 2:25–26 — “repentance leading to the **knowledge of the truth**, and they may come to their senses and escape from the **snare** of the devil.” Repentance → truth → coming to my senses → out of the snare.
- Eph 6:14 — “having **belted** your waist with truth.” It's the **first** piece Paul lists, and on a Roman soldier the belt is what everything else **hangs** from. If the war is fought over what we believe, truth isn't one weapon among several — it's what holds the kit together.

What it actually sounds like

- **Name it** — “Lord, when my father left, I believed I was not worth staying for.”
- **Renounce it** — “I **renounce** that agreement in the name of Jesus. It is not Yours, and I will not carry it.”
- **Forgive** — “I forgive my father for leaving, and I **release** him.”

- **Ask for the truth** — “Father, what do You say instead?” — and then **wait**. Don't recite someone else's verse. Let Him **say** it.
- Then ask Him to **fill** what was just emptied. Swept and put in order is not the same as **occupied**.

For Reflection

- What have I believed about God, about myself, or about my future that He never said?
- What is the feeling I keep having that is bigger than the thing that triggered it — and what would I have to believe for that feeling to make sense?
- Where did that sentence get installed — what was the event, and what did I conclude it meant about me?
- What have I made my refuge that is actually a lie? What would it cost me to come out of it?
- Is there a vow I made in pain that I have been calling wisdom?
- Who do I still need to forgive — and what advantage might that be giving away?

This Week

- Read Genesis 3:1–6 slowly. Watch how little the enemy actually does, and how much he gets.
- Read Isaiah 28:14–18. Notice the order: the cornerstone is laid before the refuge of lies is swept away.
- Ask the Holy Spirit for one sentence you have agreed with that He never said. Write it down. Renounce it, and ask Him what He says instead.

Tonight drew on Freedom Pathways: A Guide to Inner Healing and Deliverance Ministry — chapters 5, 7 and 8.
The full curriculum is available free at BattleTogether.com.

