



Overcoming the Tacit Influence of the Kingdom of Darkness | KIB 545

Kingdom Intelligence Briefing

Introduction

The Principality Wars continue to rage around us, and we are completely unaware that this conflict even exists. Yet the Word of God is clear about its existence and how to walk in victory. I wrote about this war in the Kingdom Priesthood.

The keys to overcoming are revealed in the writings of the apostle Paul.

I. Background on the Apostle Paul

Acts 23:6–7 (ESV)

6 Now when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, “Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. It is with respect to the hope and the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial.” **7** And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided.

Paul was at least a second-generation Pharisee. His family was so influential that he served on the Sanhedrin.

Paul's Rabbinic Training

Generational Context

The Apostle Paul was trained as a rabbi and studied under the esteemed teacher Gamaliel. This connection places him within a significant tradition of Jewish scholarship.

Generations of Rabbinic Teaching

- **Gamaliel:** A prominent rabbi and a member of the Sanhedrin, Gamaliel is often regarded as a key figure in the development of rabbinic thought.
- **Paul's Lineage:** Paul's education under Gamaliel indicates that he was part of a rabbinic lineage that spans at least **two generations**:
 - **First Generation:** Gamaliel himself, who was a student of earlier rabbinic traditions.
 - **Second Generation:** Paul, who learned directly from Gamaliel.

This educational background highlights the depth of Paul's rabbinic training and his connection to the broader tradition of Jewish scholarship during his time. ¹

Under Gamaliel, Paul first studied the Torah. He was then trained in Greek philosophy, with an emphasis on how the Torah of God was superior to Greek philosophy, point by point. Paul was the perfect candidate to become an apostle to the Gentiles. Paul taught them Christ, how to walk in the commandments of God, and how to

¹ <https://www.kurtwillems.com/blog/apostle-paul-brief-biography> Summary provided by Google Gemini.

untangle themselves from the influence of the false gods that permeated all of Gentile society.

II. The Background of Western Society – Not Christianity, but Greek/Roman Philosophy

Ephesians 2:1–3 (ESV)

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins **2** in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— **3** among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

a. Introduction to Ephesians 2:1-3

Ephesians 2:1–3 provides one of the clearest biblical descriptions of humanity’s condition apart from Christ. Paul does not portray fallen humanity as spiritually disadvantaged, wounded, uninformed, or merely morally weak. His diagnosis is considerably more severe: humanity apart from Christ is spiritually dead, enslaved to a hostile spiritual order, governed by disordered desires, and standing under divine judgment.

The passage is especially important because Paul identifies three interconnected dimensions of bondage:

1. The world — an external system opposed to God.
2. The devil — a personal spiritual ruler working through rebellion.

3. The flesh — the fallen internal disposition of humanity.

Thus, Ephesians 2:1–3 provides an important theological foundation for understanding salvation, spiritual warfare, human depravity, and the believer’s deliverance into the Kingdom of God.

b. THE CONTEXT OF EPHESIANS 2:1–3

The opening words of Ephesians 2 cannot be separated from Ephesians 1.

Paul has just prayed that believers would understand the extraordinary power of God manifested in Christ:

Ephesians 1:19–20 (ESV)

19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might **20** that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,

Christ was:

1. Raised from the dead.
2. Seated at God’s right hand.
3. Exalted above every spiritual ruler and authority.
4. Given dominion over all things.

Paul then turns to believers in Ephesians 2. The theological parallel is deliberate. Christ was dead and was raised. Humanity was spiritually dead and must be made alive. This becomes explicit in Ephesians 2:4–6:

“But God...even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ...and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

Therefore, Ephesians 2:1–3 describes the condition from which God’s resurrection power rescues the believer.

c. The Old Walk is Not the New Walk

Ephesians 2:2 (ESV)

2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—

The Gentile world was formed and under the control of the kingdom of darkness. Paul refers to them later in the book of Ephesians:

Ephesians 6:10–13 (ESV)

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. **11** Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. **12** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. **13** Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

Paul is referring to the covert and overt influences of fallen angels, Nephilim (demonic powers), and the priesthood of darkness that labored together to construct all aspects of society.

You might find it interesting that a true classical education included reading, writing, and speaking Greek and Latin. This allowed the students to read Greek and Roman mythologies and philosophies in their original tongue!

While the Western world claimed to be “Christianized,” the educated among them were schooled in pagan philosophies. The Christian aspect was a veneer to hide the truth! The exact opposite of what the apostle Paul would have done. Because the Catholic Church rejected anything Jewish, that included the Torah of God. Instead of taking the First Covenant writings literally, they turned everything into allegory.

We are still laboring to untangle ourselves from the constant influence of the “old pagan gods.” Paul called it a wrestling match that never ends!

The New Walk in Christ is God’s Word (i.e., God’s ways, statutes, judgments, and commandments) empowered and made alive by the Holy Spirit dwelling within. We no longer walk in the old man, but in the new individual that we have become through Christ!

III. God’s Strategy for Overcoming

Ephesians 6:14–18 (ESV)

14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, **15** and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. **16** In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; **17** and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, **18** praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

Unless the belt of truth is fastened securely upon the believer, there is no hope of understanding or overcoming the conflict!

How deep is the truth of God that you are walking in? Is it deep enough to withstand the constant wrestling of the enemy through society around you?