

Seer in the Spirit: What Is a Principality?

The Bible tells us that when coming against evil, we “do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Eph. 6:12, NKJV). But what *are* these spiritual entities? What, for example, is a “principality”?

A principality, by my definition, is a demonic force with dominion over a specific geographic region. Sometimes they try to oppress an area with a specific negative trait, such as financial ruin, perversion or disunity, but this is not always the case. Demons, in most of my experience, are opportunists. They look for the cracks in our self-perception, attitude and beliefs, and then nuzzle into those cracks to try to make them worse. This is true on a personal level, but it is also true on a cultural level. I don't think that principalities inherently carry one particular bad trait; I think they look for what is wrong and try to make it worse.

Let me explain: A particular area or country that is full of poverty did not become that way because a principality of poverty took dominion over it. Instead, I would assume that a culture of poverty began to develop, perhaps starting with just a few people or just a few unfortunate circumstances: a bad harvest, a fire or a few failed business ventures. A principality, noticing an opportunity, could begin whispering lies into the ears of those who experienced loss because of those events. He would point to this situation and that situation, using evidence to slowly melt away people's hope. Soon people could begin to accept that “This is just how it is.” Thus, that principality has helped perpetuate a culture where poverty is normal.

You may be thinking, "What's the difference? If a principality is there, then it's there. Why does it matter how it got there?" Because if a principality of poverty came barging into my city and caused economic disaster, then I would be powerless to stop it apart from throwing prayers at it and hoping for the best. If, however, a principality snuck into my city and perpetuated an unhealthy mindset that was already there, suddenly I am very powerful. Why? Because if he had to sneak in and slowly gain influence and authority, that means he didn't start with any; he had to steal it. And who do you think he stole it from?

Principalities are, in my experience, violently territorial and aggressive toward those who challenge them. I've been around a fair number of people who feel the need to pray and intercede against these demonic entities, but this is something I've never had a strong inclination to do. Principalities, being demonic rulers over specific geographic regions, leave an open throne when they are brought down, and it seems to me that you shouldn't go tearing things off thrones that you aren't prepared to fill. Please don't think that I'm telling you to let these things just walk all over you or that I'm suggesting you shouldn't pray. I'm simply asking you to think about *what* you pray.

It is human nature to focus on dealing with the symptom rather than the problem because the symptom takes less responsibility to correct. When we have a headache, we'd rather take a pill than drink six to eight glasses of water a day and reduce our sugar intake. We'd rather buy Diet Coke and fat-free sour cream than eat fruits and vegetables. And it's much easier to throw money at the needy than to develop a culture that prevents poverty.

Principalities can stay only where they have a place to land. While casting down a principality will remove it from its place, it is much more profitable and powerful to change the spiritual ecosystem that attracted it in the first place. If

there is a spirit of poverty over your city, be generous. If there is a spirit of anger, release peace. If there is a spirit of homosexuality, release identity in Christ. If there is a spirit of fear, release love. That may seem like far too little when you're staring at the problems we all face, but that is just the point. Principalities strive to make us feel insignificant. Every single step we take, individually and corporately, toward a culture modeled after the kingdom of God is a victory. It is possible to cast down a principality through prayer, but it is impossible for a principality to remain in a culture that has made no room for it. {eoa}

The preceding is an excerpt from *The Veil* by Blake Healy (Charisma House, 2017). For more information or to order the book, please visit .

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