REFORMED DEMONOLOGY: THE THEOLOGY AND PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE IN ENGLISH PURITANISM

by

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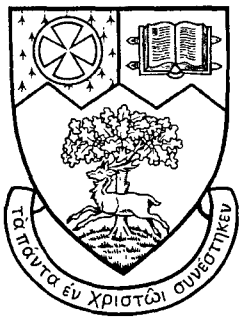

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ABSTRACT

"Reformed Demonology: The Theology and Practice of Spiritual Warfare in English Puritanism"

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The Puritan theology and practice of spiritual warfare differed in significant ways from that of their medieval precursors and their Roman Catholic contemporaries. These differences are primarily attributable to the Puritan doctrines of divine sovereignty and human depravity. Puritan theology and practice is categorized under four systematic headings of demonology: the origin and nature of Satan and his demons; demonic operations in history; how Satan assaults believers today; and how Christians can defend themselves from those assaults. Each chapter draws together the teaching found in Puritan spiritual warfare literature about that heading and demonstrates how the doctrines of divine sovereignty and human depravity undergird that teaching. The thesis concludes by proposing some historically responsible applications for modern-day spiritual warfare practitioners from the Puritans.

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INTRODUCTION

The Western church has experienced an explosion of popular interest in spiritual warfare over the last forty years.[1] Unfortunately, the literature of this movement has typically neglected the hard-won insights the church has gathered over two millennia of reflection and praxis. Most deliverance methods are built from a mix of personal experience, anecdotal accounts and Biblical study, woven together with theological reflection of varying levels of sophistication. This approach neglects one of the critical building blocks found in other fields of practical theology: historical research. Even when spiritual warfare writers delve into the past, they often commit historical errors. For instance, in Peter Wagner's book on strategic-level spiritual warfare, one chapter purports to show historical examples of this practice.[2] However, his approach is an anachronistic effort to read modern situations back into the past, reducing the historical enterprise to a mere propaganda effort.[3]

In an attempt to make the resources of the Christian past accessible to modern practitioners in a historically responsible way, this thesis will explore the theology and practice of spiritual warfare of the English Puritans. Renowned for being "without peer as diagnosticians of the human heart," the Puritans generated a rich body of literature on the machinations of the Devil and how Christians can successfully resist them.[4] Furthermore, Puritan demonology avoids the extremes in modern demonology. On the one end of the continuum is a denial of the existence of Satan, whether formally or simply informally by acknowledging his existence in the abstract but

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[1] Powlinson has identified four distinct movements of "demon deliverance ministry," all of which have arisen "only since the late 1960s." See Powlison, "Deliverance Ministry in Historical Perspective," 21.
[2] Chapter 4 "Probing History" in Wagner, *Confronting the Powers*, 91–120.
[3] For this and other common historical fallacies, see Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, 12.
[4] Shepherd, *Historical Theology*, Track F4.

never considering his activity in the believer's life and stoutly resisting any teaching that does. On the other end is an obsession with demonic activity that attributes all evil, or even inconvenient occurrences, to Satan. This view is often coupled with a conviction that the only suitable response to, or prevention of, these demonic assaults are "power encounters," or intense prayer sessions to cast out or repel the offending spirits. The Puritans strike a middle road between these approaches. On the one hand they take the Devil very seriously in their daily lives, but their primary response to this activity is active discipleship – although they were not afraid to conduct an exorcism when the situation called for it. Therefore, the Puritans make potentially helpful historical conversation partners for today's deliverance ministers.

This thesis will demonstrate that Puritan demonology and practice of spiritual warfare was guided by two core theological convictions of Post-Reformation Calvinism: divine sovereignty and human depravity. While these two orienting concerns influence all of Puritan spirituality, this thesis will explore their influence specifically on the area of spiritual warfare. This historical analysis of Puritan demonology fills a gap that currently exists in the field of Puritan spirituality. Furthermore, the thesis will conclude with some recommendations of how the Puritans' insights into spiritual warfare might be useful to today's spiritual warfare practitioner.

The History of the History of Puritanism

Prior to the 1930s, the Puritans languished as a topic for historical inquiry. They were dismissed as a "morbid, obsessive, uncouth and unintelligent" movement, with no distinctive culture of their own apart from "reactions against certain facets of medieval and Renaissance culture."[5] However, four key books published in North America in 1938 and 1939 formed a watershed in Puritan studies: William Haller's *The Rise of Puritanism*, A.S.P. Woodhouse's

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[5] Packer, *A Quest for Godliness*, 27.

Puritanism and Liberty, M.M. Knappen's *Tudor Puritanism*, and Perry Miller's *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century*.[6] These efforts "repristinated Puritan studies and did much to bring Puritanism back to the fore-front of American scholarly investigation," launching a "large-scale cottage industry, so that Puritan theology has become a very well-worked field in the last generation."[7]

This field has been worked by contributors from five different schools, as identified by John Coffey and Paul Lim. Historians of Tudor and Stuart England study Puritanism "because it helps to clarify the dynamics of church and state in the Elizabethan and early Stuart era, the upheavals of the English Revolution and the divisions of the Restoration."[8] Historians of colonial America have also contributed to the understanding of the Puritans "because they were widely regarded as 'founders' or 'shapers' of American culture."[9] Some social theorists, following the ground-breaking work of Max Weber in his *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, believe that Puritanism "could help to explain the emergence of modernity itself."[10] Scholars of English literature have long studied John Milton and John Bunyan, making "important contributions to the study of Puritanism" along the way.[11] Finally, confessional scholars have "published substantial studies of Puritan thought," including contributors from Calvinist traditions (e.g. J.I. Packer) and non-Calvinist traditions that see the Puritans as their ecclesiastical ancestors (e.g. Geoffrey Nuttall).[12] Coffey and Lim aver that "if studies published since 2001 are

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[6] Packer, *A Quest for Godliness*, 28.
[7] Shepherd, *Historical Theology*, Track F3 and Packer, *Puritan Theology*, Track B1, respectively.
[8] Coffey and Lim, *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 7.
[9] Coffey and Lim, *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 7.
[10] Coffey and Lim, *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 8.
[11] Coffey and Lim, *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 8.
[12] Coffey and Lim, *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 9.

any indication, Puritanism continues to inspire groundbreaking work," concluding that "the study of Puritanism is still flourishing."[13]

This flourishing has occurred despite difficulties in definition and periodization. As with many movements in church history (or intellectual and social history), much debate has arisen regarding the differential characteristics of Puritanism (i.e. the "who") as well as the date range within which it existed (i.e. the "when"). The challenges in establishing these boundary markers have prompted much debate in historical circles. Sinclair Ferguson notes, "The problem of defining the concept 'Puritan' in historical terms has been frequently and inconclusively discussed."[14] Coffey and Lim agree, but somewhat more tongue-in-cheek: "Defining Puritanism has become a favourite parlour game for early modern historians."[15] Even more colourfully, Patrick Collinson has compared the endeavour to "a debate conducted among a group of blindfolded scholars in a darkened room about the shape and other attributes of the elephant sharing the room with them."[16] Some historians despair of establishing an objective definition for the term 'Puritan.' For instance, Charles and Katherine George sceptically assert that "The word 'puritan' is the 'x' of a cultural and social equation: it has no meaning beyond that given it by the particular manipulator of an algebra of abuse."[17] Others have even called for "the abolition of Puritanism as a historical category."[18]

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[13] Coffey and Lim, *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 9.
[14] *John Owen on the Christian Life*, 20.
[15] *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 1.
[16] Collinson, "A Comment: Concerning the Name Puritan," 484. Quoted in Durston and Eales, "The Puritan Ethos, 1560-1700," 1.
[17] *The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation*, 6.
[18] Coffey and Lim, *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 1.

This confusion surrounding the definition of Puritanism exists for two reasons. First, the term 'Puritan' was originally an indiscriminate term of abuse that few applied to themselves.[19] Therefore, it was the movement's enemies who described 'Puritanism,' and they "were not primarily concerned with presenting accurate accounts, but instead drew crude caricatures which only reinforced their own and their readers' prejudices."[20] Second, Puritanism was not an independent entity, but rather was a protest movement "in conflict with the secular and ecclesiastical authorities or with those many sections of local society which did not share its ideals."[21] As society changed, so did the protest, so the definition of Puritanism was a moving target:

> In the course of the century and a half which separated the accession of Elizabeth I from that of Queen Anne, the political religious and social environment in England changed repeatedly and sometimes dramatically, and what was implied by the labels 'puritan' and 'puritanism' inevitably altered to reflect the evolving priorities and preoccupations of church, state and people.[22]

Such confusion presents a serious obstacle for the historical study of a movement.

Despite these difficulties of definition, historians have managed to produce serious studies of Puritanism. This has been made possible by Puritan scholars establishing a great deal of consensus among their working definitions. Coffey and Lim define Puritanism as "a distinctive and particularly intense variety of early modern Reformed Protestantism which originated within the unique context of the Church of England but spilled out beyond it."[23] This movement hungered for "'a further reformation', the logical completion of the process of reconstituting the

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[19] Durston and Eales, "The Puritan Ethos," 2. Those labelled 'Puritans' identified themselves "as 'the godly', 'professors', 'true gospellers' or 'the elect'." (*Ibid.*, 3)
[20] Durston and Eales, "The Puritan Ethos," 3.
[21] Durston and Eales, "The Puritan Ethos," 3.
[22] Durston and Eales, "The Puritan Ethos," 4.
[23] *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 1–2.

national Church which in their view had been arrested halfway."[24] Packer sums up the Puritan ethos as follows:

> Puritanism was essentially a movement for church reform, pastoral renewal and evangelism, and spiritual revival; and in addition...it was a world-view, a total Christian philosophy, in intellectual terms a Protestantised and updated medievalism, and in terms of spirituality a reformed monasticism outside the cloister and away from monkish vows. The Puritan goal was to complete what England's Reformation began: to finish reshaping Anglican worship, to introduce effective church discipline into Anglican parishes, to establish righteousness in the political, domestic, and socio-economic fields, and to convert all Englishmen to a vigorous evangelical faith.[25]

These working definitions have proven sufficient to enable academics to carry on exploring Puritanism as a coherent movement.

Despite the remarkable variety and diversity within the Puritan movement, its adherents shared an identity based on three things. First was "a set of shared convictions, Biblicist and Calvinistic in character, about on the one hand Christian faith and practice and on the other hand congregational life and the pastoral office."[26] Second was a shared sense of calling to restore the Church of England to the New Testament model "by eliminating popery from its worship, prelacy from its government and pagan irreligion from its membership."[27] Finally was a shared body of literature that exhibited a unique "homiletical style and experimental emphasis."[28] Such definitions make possible the meaningful historical study of the Puritans, even in the face of the aforementioned confusion.

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[24] Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 12.
[25] Packer, *A Quest for Godliness*, 28.
[26] Packer, *A Quest for Godliness*, 36.
[27] Packer, *A Quest for Godliness*, 36.
[28] Packer, *A Quest for Godliness*, 36.

Historical Works on Puritan Spiritual Warfare

"Spiritual warfare made the Puritans what they were," insists Packer, "They accepted conflict as their calling, seeing themselves as their Lord's soldier-pilgrims."[29] Elsewhere he encapsulates Puritan identity in the phrase "pilgrims in conflict."[30] Despite these protestations of the importance of the warfare theme in Puritan spirituality, remarkably little has been written on Puritan demonology. In the Puritan scheme of the three enemies of the soul – the world, the flesh and the Devil – the first two have received far more attention than the third.

Nevertheless, some works do seek to describe Puritan theology and practice of spiritual warfare, as well as to attempt to discern how these beliefs and practice came to be. The modern discussion of Puritan demonology was set by Jeffrey Burton Russell in his seminal four-volume work on the history of the idea of the Devil. In particular, volume three deals with the Devil in the modern world, starting with the Protestant Reformation and briefly touching on the Puritans. His first key assertion is that the demonology of the Reformers was "for the most part essentially traditional, even medieval" with the "sharpest turn in the history of diabology" occurring not in the Reformation but two centuries later in the Enlightenment.[31] Russell expresses some surprise that the Reformers "uncritically accepted virtually the entire tradition of medieval diabology," expecting that "the Protestant emphasis upon the absolute sovereignty of God and the refusal to believe that any being could interpose between man and God" would have led instead to a denigration of Satan's power.[32] But Protestant academic and popular works "made the Devil's powers greater and wider than at any time since the first few centuries of Christianity."[33] Russell

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[29] Ryken, *Worldy Saints*, xi.
[30] Packer, *Puritan Theology*, Track A2.
[31] Russell, *Mephistopheles*, 26.
[32] Russell, *Mephistopheles*, 30.
[33] Russell, *Mephistopheles*, 30.

attributes this elevation of Satan's power in the sixteenth century to several factors. First, "the removal by the Protestants of such structures as exorcism and private confession, through which beliefs in the Devil could be contained or controlled."[34] Second, the enlistment of the Devil in the propaganda war between the Protestants and Catholics elevated the general awareness of his activities and influence.[35] Third was an introspective and individualizing trend within Christianity:

> Earlier ages had seen the Devil's opponent as God, Christ, or the whole Christian community. If attacked by Satan, you could at least feel part of a great army upon whose hosts you could call for aid. But now it was you versus the Devil; you alone, the individual, who had the responsibility for fending him off. No one denied that the grace of Christ protected the faithful, but the new introspection placed upon the individual the burden of examining his soul for signs of a weak faith that would invite the Devil in...now there was only the solitary Christian, alone in his closet with his Bible, pondering his sins, unsure of his faith, fearful of the power of temptation...against centuries of Christian tradition, this individualistic emphasis on self-reliance and competition left the Christian naked on a black heart at night, exposed to the winter winds of evil...Isolation provoked terror, terror an exaggerated view of the devil's power.[36]

These three factors, proposes Russell, generated a greater awareness of Satan's activity amongst both laypeople and theologians in the sixteenth century.

While Russell goes into great detail on the demonology of the Protestants in general, he only treats the Puritans briefly. First, he observes that the growing scepticism regarding the activity and even existence of the Devil towards the end of the seventeenth century was stoutly resisted by the Puritans.[37] He also notes that the Puritans, like all Protestants, decided that exorcisms were "foul superstition and gross magic," leaving them in a difficult position: "their churches affirmed all the traditional doctrines of demonic obsession and possession but removed

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[34] Russell, *Mephistopheles*, 31.
[35] Russell, *Mephistopheles*, 31.
[36] Russell, *Mephistopheles*, 31–33.
[37] Russell, *Mephistopheles*, 80.

the traditional antidotes."[38] However, Russell is mistaken at this point; while the Puritans condemned the Catholic rite of exorcism, they replaced it with a form of dispossession that they felt was more biblical. Finally, Russell insists that Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* "emphasized the internal demon of temptation and sin more than a transcendent lord of evil."[39]

Stuart Clark concurs with Russell's main points and adds some details of his own. Clark uses the term 'demonology' to describe early Protestant views of witchcraft rather than demonic activity more generally. Nevertheless, his conclusions do shed some light on Puritan demonology as a whole. He agrees that there was "little to distinguish Protestant demonology from Catholic" with total agreement concerning "the mechanics of temptation, the limitations on the powers of devils to effect changes in the natural worlds, and their consequent resort to illusion."[40] Clark attributes this agreement to "a shared intellectual indebtedness to Augustine and Aquinas."[41] However, he does note that this "unity on essentials does not rule out differences of accent, tactics and priorities."[42] Clark also observes that the Biblicism of Protestant witchcraft literature resulted in "little enthusiasm" for "traditional demonological topics like transvection [witch levitation], metamorphosis, and sexuality," instead focusing their attention on "the spiritual and moral significance of witchcraft."[43]

Furthermore, Clark insists that "the origin, nature and significance of everyday misfortunes... underlie the whole of Protestant demonology."[44] That is, one of the main purposes of these works was to "correct popular misconceptions about the basic causation of unpleasant

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[38] Russell, *Mephistopheles*, 91.
[39] Russell, *Mephistopheles*, 92.
[40] Clark, "Protestant Demonology," 47.
[41] Clark, "Protestant Demonology," 47.
[42] Clark, "Protestant Demonology," 48.
[43] Clark, "Protestant Demonology," 58.
[44] Clark, "Protestant Demonology," 59.

events."[45] Surprisingly, they drew attention away from witchcraft, labelling the urge to blame these afflictions on witches alone as a form of practical atheism because it "undervalued the spiritual function of misfortune as a retribution for sin and a test of faith, and questioned God's providential control over affairs."[46] In particular, the practice of counter-witchcraft – the use of 'white' magic to counteract the witch's 'black' magic – was condemned as idolatry because it "ignored the need for repentance or the benefits of 'bearing the cross,' and attributed specious powers to the supposedly protective or curative properties of persons, places, times, and things."[47] Since the practice of white magic was more widespread than black magic, Protestant pastors condemned it as "the witchcraft more condemned in Scripture than the other."[48] Like any other form of affliction, assault by witchcraft presented "an opportunity for introspection and spiritual betterment."[49] Thus, Protestant demonology shifted attention from the devil to God and from the witch to the victim.[50] This is demonstrated in the popularity of the story of Job in Protestant demonological works of the era, which acknowledged "no source of his ills other than divine and no remedies other than patience and faith."[51] Clark sees this as the natural product of "Protestant theology's providentialism, its heightened sensitivity to any hint of dualism, and its intense fideism."[52] He specifically identifies the "English Calvinists" as proponents of this "providentialist" school of demonology.

Darren Oldridge challenges Russell and Clark's view that the demonology of the Protestant reformers was largely the same as that of the medieval church. One of the "central themes" of his

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[45] Clark, "Protestant Demonology," 59.
[46] Clark, "Protestant Demonology," 60. See also 59.
[47] Clark, "Protestant Demonology," 60.
[48] Clark, "Protestant Demonology," 62.
[49] Clark, "Protestant Demonology," 60.
[50] See Clark, "Protestant Demonology," 60.
[51] Clark, "Protestant Demonology," 71.
[52] Clark, "Protestant Demonology," 61.

book is the conflict between the "crudely physical conceptions of Satan which had survived from the Middle Ages" and the Protestant image of Satan "as the source of mental temptations" who is "engaged in a psychological campaign to destroy the faith of God's children."[53] Satan's most common manifestation became the "tempter who sought to exploit the innate depravity of human beings."[54] He insists that the Puritan minority then attempted to impose their "more powerful and pervasive view of Satan" on the rest of populace, who retained the "jokey, physically limited representations of the devil which had been common in the late Middle Ages."[55] Oldridge argues that "it made sense for a beleaguered minority to embrace the idea that they were engaged in a cosmic struggle with Satan, whose instruments included political leaders and the mass of ordinary people." Thus, his thesis is that "social and political factors were generally more important in shaping the behaviour of English Protestants [towards demonology] than purely theological concerns," which in turn explains the "the apparently confused attitude" of Puritan pastors towards witchcraft and demonic possession.[56] This 'confused attitude' is the apparent contradiction between the Protestant doctrine of providence, a theology which Oldridge believes ought to alleviate fear of the Devil (since he is merely God's instrument), and the Protestant emphasis on the Devil's power, "elevating the struggle against him to the centrepiece of religious life."[57] Another expression of this 'confusion' is the disagreement amongst English Protestants regarding witchcraft and demonic possession – with Reginald Scot and Samuel Harsnett denying them as popular superstition and the Puritan exorcist John Darrell arguing for their reality. However, Oldridge fails to note that neither Scot nor Harsnett were Puritan (in fact, Harsnett was

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[53] Oldridge, *The Devil in Early Modern England*, 2–3.
[54] Oldridge, *The Devil in Early Modern England*, 25.
[55] Oldridge, *The Devil in Early Modern England*, 3.
[56] Oldridge, *The Devil in Early Modern England*, 4.
[57] Oldridge, *The Devil in Early Modern England*, 7.

notoriously anti-Puritan), therefore this disagreement did not exist within Puritan movement. Therefore, while Oldridge believes that the "contradictions between the theory and practice of Protestantism suggest that non-theological factors played a major role" in Puritan demonology, the contradictions he identifies can be resolved. While Oldridge is correct that Protestant beliefs about the devil were influenced by political and social factors, the evidence simply does not support his thesis that non-intellectual factors "were probably more important that purely theological considerations" – the "traditional" position that he attributes to historians such as Russell.[58]

Frank Luttmer reinforces Oldridge's point that Satan's role as spiritual tempter was emphasized far more by the Puritans than his "capacity to inflict physical harm on victims."[59] However, Luttmer's greatest contribution to the field of Puritan demonology is the following observation made in his end notes:

> Historians of early modern Europe have tended to neglect this dimension of the perceived threat of Satan, especially in comparison to the enormous amount of work devoted to other phenomena related to the devil such as demonology, witchcraft and AntiChrist. Two genres in the Puritan literature were especially prominent in analysing the treatment of the devil as spiritual tempter, one taking its point of departure from Satan's temptation of Christ recorded in Matthew, Mark and Luke, the other, the 'Christian warfare' genre, based on the exhortation to put on 'the whole armour of God' in Eph. vi.11-17.[60]

Thus, Luttmer both firmly establishes Satan's role as tempter as the one most important to the Puritans, while at the same time identifying a blind spot in historical literature regarding this issue. He also helpfully highlights two main Biblical sources for Puritan demonology: the temptation of Jesus (in Matthew 4 and Luke 4; the Puritans make little use of the Markan parallel, no doubt due to its brevity) and Paul's "armour of God" passage (in Ephesians 6).

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[58] Oldridge, *The Devil in Early Modern England*, 32.
[59] Luttmer, "Persecutors, Tempters and Vassals of the Devil," 4.
[60] Luttmer, "Persecutors, Tempters and Vassals of the Devil," end note 18.

Luttmer expounds other key elements in Puritan spiritual warfare. First is the idea that warfare with the devil is "an inevitable consequence of regeneration, an integral part of the sanctification process, and a sign of election."[61] The dark picture painted by Russell and Oldridge of the individual Christian struggling alone against Satan is somewhat lightened; the struggle is portrayed as not only unavoidable, but as a sign of justification and a means of sanctification. Another theme in Puritan spiritual warfare is that the believer's fallen nature is a traitor in this struggle, "readily embracing all the temptations of the world and the Devil."[62] The Devil also uses his knowledge of each believer's "spiritual condition, psychological temperament and intimate habits" to deploy the most effective temptation at the most opportune moment.[63] The Christian fights back in this spiritual conflict by "using spiritual armour and weapons" to maintain the "golden mean of vigilance" between Satan's temptations to "carnal security and presumption or to despair and the loss of hope in salvation."[64] The believer's arsenal is varied:

> The principal 'armour' and 'weapons' available to regenerate Christians were, of course, 'spiritual' ones such as faith, prayer, the Word and God's grace and 'spirit'. But there were also practical steps that Christians could take in the 'flesh and blood' to minimize the occasion to temptation... Such was the principal objective behind godly efforts to suppress the culture of Satan in towns and villages.

Thus, Luttmer sees the Puritan social and political struggle against the 'ungodly' as the product of their view of spiritual warfare, rather than the other way around as Oldridge proposes.

In 2006, Nathan Johnstone produced what may be the best survey of Puritan spiritual warfare. First, he advocates for a distinction between "the academic *demonology* of witch texts and pamphlets and a broader *demonism*," since witchcraft "did not in fact define demonic belief

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[61] Luttmer, "Persecutors, Tempters and Vassals of the Devil," 4.
[62] Luttmer, "Persecutors, Tempters and Vassals of the Devil," 4.
[63] Luttmer, "Persecutors, Tempters and Vassals of the Devil," 14.
[64] Luttmer, "Persecutors, Tempters and Vassals of the Devil," 12 and 4.

more widely in the period."[65] Like Luttmer and Oldridge, he observes that while Protestants did not explicitly reform demonological theology, they formed a "characteristically Protestant demonism" by emphasizing temptation above all the Devil's other assaults.[66] However, Johnstone offers an alternative explanation for this shift from a Devil who was primarily a mental threat rather than a physical one. Since the process of splitting from the Roman church was so personally distressing, the Reformers sought an explanation for why so many had been taken in by Catholicism:

> In describing how Satan came to exact such a profound influence over generations of ostensibly pious men and women, Protestants articulated a demonic agency which placed the Devil's power firmly in the human consciousness and in the manipulation of man's instincts. As a consequence Protestantism emphasized the Devil's presence in the everyday religious instincts of the average Christian.[67]

Johnstone likewise disagrees with Russell's assertion that Protestantism stripped the Christian of helps against Satan. He agrees that Protestants condemned Catholic rituals because their focus on externals did not focus on "real site of diabolic conflict."[68] However, Protestant pastors "did not fail to substitute their own understanding of how the devil might be fought off."[69] The knowledge that God only allowed Satan to tempt in order to test one's faith meant that proper response "was not to attempt to be rid of affliction through magical ceremonies, but patiently to bear it, and so demonstrate a faith that the Devil would ultimately be constrained by God."[70] In this understanding of spiritual warfare, the Puritan clergy adopted a somewhat different role than their Catholic counterparts. No longer the 'magic men' who made ceremonies efficacious, they acted as "repositories of the scriptural learning and insight which might arm individuals and

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[65] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 19 and 18.
[66] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 1.
[67] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 27.
[68] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 83.
[69] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 85.
[70] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 85.

society against temptation."[71] Despite this welcome assistance, the individual remained "ultimately responsible for resisting Satan's influence."[72]

Johnstone also identifies some elements of Puritan spiritual warfare. He agrees with Luttmer that the Puritans saw the believer's fallen nature as an Achilles heel in this struggle: "The stock of inbred evil resulting from Adam's fall was supremely malleable under the Devil's influence, and the effect of temptation was akin in the words of the Cambridge theologian William Perkins, to putting a match to gunpowder."[73] Johnstone also identifies two key types of demonic temptations in the Puritan view: enticement to sin "by appealing to man's natural corruption, and, most threateningly, by introducing doubts as to election."[74] Puritan divines also taught that God allows this temptation as both a test of faith and an opportunity to practice faith. This leads Johnstone to conclude with Luttmer that Satan's assaults were seen as a kind of backhanded compliment.[75] He also highlights warnings against the creeping nature of apparently small sins, which show the Puritan conviction "that the difference between the temptation to mundane sins such as laziness and greed, and the temptation to criminality was a difference in scale only."[76] Furthermore, Johnstone points out the practical nature of Puritan demonology:

> [The Puritans'] powerful sense of the Devil's presence was combined with a pragmatic focus on scriptural authority in questions of doctrine. The result was a 'de facto' approach to Satan's reality in which his agency was to be experienced rather than speculated about...English reforming theologians were relatively unconcerned with what might be termed 'fundamental' theodicy – the cosmic origin of evil. But in stark contrast to this reticence was their concern over Satan's earthly activity. The Devil's agency was not a theological puzzle to be pondered, but a demonstrable certainty to be recognized and reckoned with.[77]

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[71] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 100.
[72] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 2.
[73] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 2.
[74] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 3.
[75] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 3.
[76] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 4.
[77] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 29.

This practical approach to demonology is simply an example of the Puritan's practical approach to most spiritual matters.

Finally, Johnstone explores the nature of Puritan dispossession. The Puritan approach differed significantly from the Catholic rite, involving prayer and fasting, often by a group of ministers and godly members of the local faith community.[78] Johnstone criticizes two aspects of recent historical inquiry into demonic possession. First, he observes that this "Protestantisation" of exorcism "has been characterized as a compromise born of the demands for spiritual healing by parishioners and out of the challenge presented by Catholic exorcisms."[79] However, he insists that the enthusiasm for this practice demands a more comprehensive explanation. He sees this mode of dispossession as simply an application of the countermeasures that Protestant demonism prescribed for resisting Satan's assaults in general.[80] This leads to Johnstone's second criticism. He finds that this connection between the Puritan responses to possession and to temptations is "obvious, but in light of historians' concentration the bizarre physical behaviour of demoniacs it bears emphasising."[81] He explains his critique in a footnote:

> Whilst they have been justifiably reticent as to suggestions about what 'really' happened in possession cases, historians have tended to be interested in how its physical symptoms, such as swellings and convulsions, might be explained, and in the cultural and sociological meaning of possession as a phenomenon that disrupted household and community. As a result relatively little attention has been given to the spiritual meaning of possession as an example of the Devil's agency.[82]

Johnstone's criticism alludes to a body of literature that has explored possession (and dispossession) cases in early modern England. However, this corpus contains little material helpful for the study of Puritan spiritual warfare. As Johnstone notes, this literature is focused on

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[78] See Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 103.
[79] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 102.
[80] See Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 103.
[81] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, 102.
[82] Johnstone, *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England*, footnote 185 on page 102.

the physical phenomenon of possession and how they might be explained 'scientifically,' the sociological and cultural aspects of possession, and the polemical political aspects of dispossession. For instance, Almond 'profiles' the possessed, noting that two-thirds of possession cases involved female children or adolescents, leading him to theorize that possession "was a culturally available means by which children and adolescents, and especially young women, escaped subordination."[83] Kathleen Sands theorizes that "For fifteen centuries, the primary political function of Christian exorcism was to prove the superiority of Christianity over non-Christian religions," but notes that the Protestant Reformation turned the political focus of exorcism inward, "and it became a weapon that Christians used against each other."[84] Marion Gibson focuses on the pamphlet war between the Church of England establishment and supporters of the Puritan exorcist John Darrell, whose activities "seemed likely to strip authority from the hierarchy of the national church and to promote the political aims of the godly wing of the church."[85]

While these sources contribute little to the study of Puritan spiritual warfare, they do provide a helpful explication of the Puritan practice of dispossession. Since Biblicism is a core conviction for the Puritans, their take on dispossession was based on Jesus' comment in Mark 9:29: "This kind [of spirit] can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."[86] Philip Almond proposes that the Puritans expanded this into a general prescription on how to deal with all cases of possession.[87] Of course, this was nothing new since "extended periods of prayer and fasting were also a central part of a developing Protestant spiritual regime throughout the period,

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[83] Almond, *Demonic Possession*, 26.
[84] Sands, *Demon Possession*, 5–6.
[85] Gibson, *Possession, Puritanism and Print*, 5.
[86] King James Version; see also Matthew 17:21.
[87] See Almond, *Demonic Possession*, 37. See also Gibson, *Possession, Puritanism and Print*, 4.

and believed to be efficacious for all manner of special needs."[88] Prayer was key because the Puritans thought it useless to issue commands directly to the devil (as Catholic exorcists did) "since in providential theory the devil could do nothing without God's having willed it."[89] Other Puritan practices were similarly adapted for use in dispossessions. First, preaching on and reading of the Bible was interspersed with sessions of prayer during a dispossession. Almond notes that, just as Catholic exorcisms featured their cultic objects and practices (e.g. the Eucharistic host, relics, holy water, the sign of the cross), so did Puritan dispossessions feature "the prime cultic object in Protestantism" – the Bible.[90] Since a dispossession could last for days, several ministers would often take turns preaching. This bore some resemblance to the practice of 'prophesying,' where a group of ministers would "preach complementary sermons and discuss doctrine in front of a lay congregation."[91] Finally, since local Puritan laypeople would join in the prayer and fasting, a dispossession resembled other communal fasts, which were days "devoted entirely to a round of sermons, prayers and psalm-singing, often concluding with a simple, shared meal."[92] This resemblance is not surprising, since communal fasts were usually called at a time of crisis to plead with God to intervene, and the possession of a member of the community must have qualified as a crisis. Nevertheless, since possession occupies a secondary place to temptation in the Puritan schema of demonic assaults, Puritan dispossession is only a minor theme in Puritan spiritual warfare.

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[88] Almond, *Demonic Possession*, 37.
[89] Gibson, *Possession, Puritanism and Print*, 4.
[90] Almond, *Demonic Possession*, 36–37.
[91] Gibson, *Possession, Puritanism and Print*, 8.
[92] Durston and Eales, "The Puritan Ethos," 21.

Practical Works on Puritan Spiritual Warfare

Apart from these historical works, another body of literature explores Puritan beliefs and practices of spiritual warfare. These confessional works are less concerned with the development and historical milieu of the Puritan practice of spiritual warfare – sometimes not at all. Instead, they explicate the primary material with a view to apply what they learn to today. This approach results in a narrower view of the topic in that it is bereft of the insights gained by a greater awareness of the historical context. However, these sources do read the primary sources carefully and are far more detailed than the more analytical historically-oriented literature.

The seminal work in the field is by Bryan Zacharias, whose 1992 MCS dissertation from Regent College was published by Banner of Truth in 1995. William Gurnall's *The Christian in Complete Armour* is the principal source, although other Puritan writings are frequently cited to reinforce, illustrate or expand on Gurnall's points.[93] While the book is very well written, Zacharias performs only limited analysis on Gurnall's work; he mostly describes Gurnall's thought instead of attempting to explain why Gurnall thought that way.[94] Furthermore, he mostly follows Gurnall's own outline, instead of attempting to construct a systematic view of Puritan spiritual warfare.[95] Zacharias also performs almost no interaction with secondary sources, which he excuses on the basis that the relevant body of primary sources "is vast and quite easily

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[93] The sources Zacharias primarily uses include William Perkins' *A Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft* and *The Combat Between Christ and the Divell Displayed*; Paul Bayne's *Exposition of Ephesians*; John Downame's *The Christian Warfare*; William Gouge's *The Whole Armour of God*; John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Richard Gilpin's *Daemonologia Sacra*, Matthew Poole's *Commentary on Ephesians*, and Matthew Henry's *Commentary*. He also less frequently cites Richard Sibbes, William Bridge, John Owen, Thomas Brooks, Thomas Manton, Thomas Watson and Richard Baxter.

[94] This is a conscious decision on Zacharias' part, for he declares that he is attempting "to condense from a mass of literature...the explicitly Puritan view" of the three key questions his book explores (6).

[95] The content of Zacharias's three main chapters follow Gurnall's own explication, as demonstrated by the gradually increasing page numbers in his citations. A systematization of Gurnall's thought would have been of greater interest, as would attempting to answer questions that were not of primary importance to Gurnall himself but have been in other periods.

accessible."[96] He explicitly states that his aim is to study the Puritans' view of spiritual warfare instead of examining the development of those views or comparing them with the views of their contemporaries.[97] This lack of historical context prevents the distinctives of the Puritan theology and practice of spiritual warfare from being highlighted. Finally, Zacharias is clearly a proponent of the Puritans. While such appreciation does not necessarily invalidate a historian's work, one does wish for a more critical evaluation of the Puritan view at times.[98]

In spite of these limitations, Zacharias presents what may be the most detailed description of Puritan demonology today. Following Gurnall's explication, he explicates the Puritan answers to three key questions relating to spiritual warfare: the nature of enemy, "why and how are saints vulnerable" to this enemy, and how the people of God can defend themselves against this enemy.[99] Satan's nature is expanded from Ephesians 6:12, where "principalities" is understood as referring to Satan's rule over human beings, "powers" to the devils' power that enforces that rule, and "rulers of the darkness of this world" to the boundaries of that rule, while "spiritual wickedness in high places" describes the spiritual nature and wicked disposition of the devils.[100] Zacharias continues by expounding the Christian's many vulnerabilities to demonic attack. These can be due to the believer's own makeup – the remnants of original sin at work and the weakness of one's graces – or to Satan's targeting priorities – he especially attacks at certain seasons in the believer's life and focuses on those who are important to the health of family, church and society.[101] He concludes by describing the divine resources available to the Christian in this

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[96] Zacharias, *The Embattled Christian*, 7.
[97] Zacharias, *The Embattled Christian*, 6–7.
[98] For instance, Leland Ryken insists that believers today can learn much from the Puritans, but he acknowledges that at times that means learning what *not* to do from their bad example. See the chapter "Some Puritan faults" in *Worldly Saints*.
[99] Zacharias, *The Embattled Christian*, 6.
[100] See Zacharias, *The Embattled Christian*, 16–52.
[101] See Zacharias, *The Embattled Christian*, 53–73.

spiritual warfare. After demonstrating how the only safe option for a Christian is to stand firm – neither cravenly retreating backward nor foolishly charging forward – he shows how Gurnall and other Puritans explain from Paul's "armour of God" passage in Ephesians 6 how to stand.[102]

Peter Jensen's published lecture is the most historically-oriented of these works.[103] He describes three views of dispossession among Protestants in early modern England. First was the sceptical position, advocated by John Deacon and John Walker, which emphasized "both the possibility of fraud, and also God's sovereignty and the power of Christ's death to deal with Satan."[104] In direct opposition to this was the "divine power through human hands" school of the Puritan exorcist John Darrell and his followers, who "were countering the Roman Catholic appeal to a religion which could be seen to 'work,' with their own experiential efforts."[105] Finally, there was the position of the theologians William Perkins and George Gifford, who "accepted the power of the devil, but by emphasizing God's sovereignty turned the attention away from human power to divine."[106] They held that "the day of miracles had passed" and therefore "no-one should attempt to exorcise by speaking to the devil" but rather the best response is to pray to God.[107] Unfortunately, Jensen appears to misunderstand Darrell's view since he only practiced dispossession by prayer and fasting, locating himself within the theological framework advocated by Perkins and Gifford by insisting that "removing the Devil by prayer and fasting is not miraculous" since he exercised no direct "power over unclean

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[102] See Zacharias, *The Embattled Christian*, 75–109.
[103] Not surprising since the lecture was published by The Latimer Trust, "a conservative Evangelical research organization within the Church of England, whose main aim is to promote the history and theology of Anglicanism as understood by those in the Reformed tradition." (Jensen, *Using the Shield of Faith*, ii)
[104] Jensen, *Using the Shield of Faith*, 3.
[105] Jensen, *Using the Shield of Faith*, 3.
[106] Jensen, *Using the Shield of Faith*, 4.
[107] Jensen, *Using the Shield of Faith*, 4.

spirits."[108] It appears that Jensen is using Darrell as a seventeenth-century proxy for the post-Second World War charismatic movement, whose approach to demonology he criticizes in his introduction.[109]

Despite this historical error, Jensen does have some insights into the Puritan view of spiritual warfare. From the margin notes of the 1560 Geneva Bible, Jensen observes that Satan's power is based on his angelic nature, his hordes of demonic minions, and "enough foreknowledge to give accurate predictions."[110] In his goal of making Christians doubt God's word, Satan uses guile and even physical violence – the latter proven by the book of Job and the contemporary persecution of Protestant Christians by the papacy.[111] However, God's providence and the Cross both limit Satan's power, thereby reducing him to an instrument of the divine will.[112] Thus, the Protestants "reduced spiritual reality to the One great power, God himself, and at the same time pressed home the sinfulness and alienation of human beings." Thus, the believer's duty "was to exercise himself in prayer to God for relief (since God ruled the devil), and to give himself to follow the precepts of scripture and thus resist the devil."[113] Jensen also notes how the Puritans made extensive use of the temptations of Eve, Job, and Jesus as the biblical sources for their demonology.[114]

David Darwin's 2001 Doctor of Ministry dissertation also looks to the Puritan model of spiritual warfare as a corrective for modern malpractice. He perceives "a dualistic worldview of the spirit world which more closely resembles the animistic worldview of many Eastern Religions instead of the biblical worldview presented in the Scriptures" in the demonology of the

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[108] Almond, 8.
[109] See Jensen, *Using the Shield of Faith*, 1–2.
[110] Jensen, *Using the Shield of Faith*, 5.
[111] See Jensen, *Using the Shield of Faith*, 5–6.
[112] See Jensen, *Using the Shield of Faith*, 7–8.
[113] Jensen, *Using the Shield of Faith*, 10.
[114] See Jensen, *Using the Shield of Faith*, 14.

Asian church.[115] He looks to the Puritans for help correcting this error because they "were thoroughgoing supernaturalists" and yet logical and biblical in their method.[116] Unfortunately, this work is much less helpful to the field than Zacharias' and Jensen's for three reasons. First, little space is devoted to the topic; only chapter three (consisting of 41 pages of the 308-page work) explicates the Puritan view of spiritual warfare. Second, unlike Jensen, he makes no effort to place the Puritans within their historical context and engages in little interaction with secondary sources.[117] Finally, Darwin's interest in the Puritans is to use them as a foil against modern deliverance ministry practitioners. While this approach does explore the Puritan perspective on questions of interest to modern readers, it also results in an uncritical presentation of the Puritans as a panacea for all the excesses of modern spiritual warfare.

However, unlike Zacharias and Jensen, Darwin is systematic in his description of Puritan spiritual warfare, resulting in a much broader vista of the topic. He proposes that the doctrine of God's providential care and the metaphor of a soldier-pilgrim are the orienting ideas for Puritan spiritual warfare.[118] Careful to dispel any dualism in spiritual warfare, he emphasizes how in Puritans believed that "Satan existed and acted because of God's permission and according to God's ultimate purposes."[119] Darwin also insists that Satan's goal in spiritual warfare is to "provoke the believer into moral sin" rather than to take direct control by possession.[120] To this end, Satan primarily employs the strategies of "deception, temptation, accusation and

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[115] Darwin, *The Pilgrim Warrior*, 3.
[116] Darwin, *The Pilgrim Warrior*, 56. Darwin attributes the Puritans' analytical approach to their being on the cusp of the Enlightenment, but it may be better attributed to the rigorous scholastic training coupled with a Ramist philosophical method at Cambridge University, where so many Puritan pastors and theologians were trained.
[117] The only secondary sources cited in his chapter is Lovelace's *The American Pietism of Cotton Mather* (1979) and Zacharias's work.
[118] Darwin, *The Pilgrim Warrior*, 57.
[119] Darwin, *The Pilgrim Warrior*, 59.
[120] Darwin, *The Pilgrim Warrior*, 67.

affliction."[121] Christians are to defend themselves, not by confronting Satan, but rather by petitioning God for deliverance and maintaining a close connection with Christ.[122] While Darwin acknowledges that the Puritans believe in the possibility of demon possession, even of believers, he is quick to observe that they say very little about this mode of demonic attack and how to treat it. He attributes this silence to a belief that the Gospel was "a leavening agent" in a culture, which by its very presence drove out demons.[123] Darwin's concluding comments on the "implications to the current spiritual warfare debate which are directly addressed by the Puritans" again emphasize how his survey was organized less by the Puritan emphases and categories, but rather by modern concerns.[124]

The most recent practical work on Puritan spiritual warfare is Jonathan Watson's paper delivered at the 2008 Westminster Conference, which explicates Brooks' popular work on spiritual warfare, *Precious Remedies against Satan's Devices*. After a brief biographical sketch of the author, Watson summarizes the work by listing the four categories of devices that Satan employs: "to draw souls to sin," "to keep souls from all holy and heavenly services," "to keep souls in a mourning, staggering, doubting and questioning condition," as well as devices to attack various kind of people – the great, the learned and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, and real and nominal believers.[125] However, he does not enter into much detail on these points, endeavouring merely to show "the wide-ranging scope and thrust of Brooks' treatise" in order to "whet" the audience's appetite.[126] Nevertheless, Watson concludes with some detailed practical

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[121] Darwin, *The Pilgrim Warrior*, 71.
[122] See Darwin, *The Pilgrim Warrior*, 69 and 75–79.
[123] Darwin, *The Pilgrim Warrior*, 85. However, Darwin offers no citations to prove that this idea was, in fact, a Puritan belief – a notable absence in a chapter otherwise careful to demonstrate its assertions from primary sources.
[124] Darwin, *The Pilgrim Warrior*, 93.
[125] Watson, *Spiritual Conflict*, 5.
[126] Watson, *Spiritual Conflict*, 5.

applications that highlight some important elements in Brooks' work. First is a careful distinction "between Satan's temptations and *our own fallen tendency to sin*" so that "we can't blame everything on the devil."[127] Second is to know the enemy, including his nature, his assisting role in all our sins, his envy and malice towards humanity, his experience in spiritual warfare, and his limitations.[128] This last item insists that Satan cannot harm a believer's happiness without "a double leave": "He must have commission from God" and "leave of us...When he tempts, we must assent."[129] Third is to know your weapons; only spiritual weapons must be used in this combat, as Paul states in Ephesians 6:13 and 2 Corinthians 10:4.[130] Finally, Watson lists several directions for the successful prosecution of spiritual combat, including: walk carefully and only by the rule of God's word; seek wisdom, humility and the filling of the Holy Spirit; resist Satan's temptations immediately and vigorously; do not engage the enemy in your own strength, but daily commune with God for fresh ammunition; and be watchful and pray.[131]

Methodology

Fundamentally, history as a discipline consists of two tasks: description and interpretation.[132] In the case of this thesis, the Puritan teaching on spiritual warfare is described. The interpretive task is to determine whether this teaching is oriented primarily by the doctrines of divine sovereignty and human depravity. Therefore, in John Tosh's scheme outlining the six types of history, this thesis will engage in intellectual history – that is, the history of theological thought.[133]

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[127] Watson, *Spiritual Conflict*, 6.
[128] See Watson, *Spiritual Conflict*, 6–8.
[129] Watson, *Spiritual Conflict*, 8.
[130] See Watson, *Spiritual Conflict*, 8–9.
[131] See Watson, *Spiritual Conflict*, 9–12.
[132] See Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, 112.
[133] See Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, 83.

As with most historical essays, this thesis adopts a hybrid of a source-oriented approach and a problem-oriented approach.[134] However, it weighs more heavily on the problem-oriented side of the spectrum in that the question of spiritual warfare in the Puritans dictates which sources were studied. Nevertheless, the approach is source-orientated in that content and structure of the sources themselves were used to assess the hypothesis.

The thesis utilizes the systematic framework developed by Richard Greenfield to explore the Puritans' spiritual warfare theory and practice. In his seminal work *Traditions of Belief in Late Byzantine Demonology*, Greenfield employs a four-fold structure to organize the beliefs regarding demonology found in eastern orthodox sources of the period. The first section is "The Origin and Nature of the Demons," where he addresses the origins of angels in general and describes how the devil and demons fell from their once-lofty state.[135] He also explores the ontology of demons, including both the aspects of the angelic nature they have retained as well as those aspects corrupted by their fall. Greenfield then moves on to "Activity and Operation in History," which covers the part demons played in the Fall of humanity as well as how they were involved with, and affected by, Christ's incarnation, death and resurrection.[136] The "Activity and Operation against Men" section outlines all the ways in which demons assault people today.[137] Given the wide breadth of these operations, Greenfield includes several sub-sections including: physical assault, counterfeit visions and dreams, possession, temptations, and other methods. Finally, Greenfield covers "Resistance to the Demons," wherein he describes how God constrains (and even directs) demonic activity and how Christians can stand against demonic

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[134] See Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, 54.
[135] See Greenfield, *Traditions of Belief in Late Byzantine Demonology*, 7–33.
[136] See Greenfield, *Traditions of Belief in Late Byzantine Demonology*, 34–76.
[137] See Greenfield, *Traditions of Belief in Late Byzantine Demonology*, 77–134.

assaults.[138] This thesis systematizes the teaching of the Puritans on spiritual warfare using these divisions in order to facilitate determining the influence the doctrines of divine sovereignty and human depravity across the entire field of demonology. Despite the fact that Greenfield's categories were developed for use in a Christian context different in time, place and doctrinal background, the schema is complete yet concise and is flexible enough to be adapted to other contexts. However, those points at which the schema does not fit the Puritan data will be noted and alterations recommended.

Primary Sources

Tosh elevates everyday correspondence as the primary source that carries the most weight because of its unguarded nature.[139] While an examination of private Puritan letters and journals for insights on the topic of spiritual warfare would doubtless be profitable, such sources are less accessible and less focused in their treatment of spiritual warfare. Instead, this thesis examines those sources where statements about spiritual warfare have been explicitly gathered and published. It is important to recognize that the professed theology and practice described in published works is different from that which functions at the "pew level." Nevertheless, such sources are more accessible and their very popularity at the time indicates that they reflected the thoughts of the movement in a significant way. Finally, the research will be restricted to English Puritans, eliminating American Puritans in an effort to restrict the scope of the work to a manageable size.

A number of Puritan sources fit this description. The first is by William Perkins, one of the first theological giants of the Puritan movement. A moderate Puritan, he ministered as a fellow of Christ's College at Cambridge University, served as a chaplain in the local prison, and became

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[138] See Greenfield, *Traditions of Belief in Late Byzantine Demonology*, 135–148.
[139] Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, 34.

pastor of Old St. Andrew's church across the street from the college.[140] His clarification and extension of Calvin's doctrine of predestination brought criticism from Jacob Arminius in Holland, but he helped to establish Christ's as a greenhouse for future Puritan leaders.[141] Amongst his many other theological and ethical works, Perkins published two treatises related to spiritual warfare. The first is *Combat between Christ and the Devil displayed* (1606), a series of sermons on the temptations of Christ in Matthew 4 first preached at Cambridge.[142] The second, *A discourse on the damned art of witchcraft* (1610), is primarily focused on witchcraft, but has some information germane to spiritual warfare in general.

Thomas Brooks served as a chaplain in the parliamentary navy during the English Civil War, which explains some of the technical military vocabulary (and especially the idiom of naval warfare during the Age of Sail) in *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*.[143] First published in 1652 while he was rector of St. Margaret's in London, this book is the most accessible of the Puritan treatises on spiritual warfare, both by virtue of its length (only 165 pages), straightforward structure and pragmatic approach. While almost all Puritan literature is highly practical, *Remedies* is almost exclusively so as it lists strategies that Satan uses to tempt people (the 'devices') followed by several preventative or corrective measures that challenge that strategic (the 'remedies'). As mentioned above, Brooks organizes these demonic strategies in several categories: devices to "draw souls to sin," to "keep souls from holy duties," to "keep

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[140] Brook, *Lives of the Puritans*, 2:129. During the Elizabethan era, a "moderate" Puritan was one who desired further liturgical reform, but was not pressing for the replacement of episcopacy by a Presbyterian form of church government.

[141] See Bremer, "Perkins, William," 197.

[142] Hereafter, when Perkins is cited in footnotes without a qualifying title, this first work is intended.

[143] See Appleby, "Brooks, Thomas," 34.

souls in a sad, doubting, and questioning condition," and to "destroy all sorts and ranks of men in the world."[144]

Given the Puritan era's great love of biography, it is unusual that William Gurnall is absent from almost all of that literature. This is even more surprising when one considers the popularity of his masterwork on demonology, *The Christian in Complete Armour*, both in his day and since.[145] However, some historians attribute this to the other notable event in the otherwise quiet life of the pastor of Lavenham in Suffolk: he was one of the very few Puritans who chose to conform to the Act of Uniformity,[146] and was thereafter vilified.[147] The book itself, published in three volumes in 1655, 1658 and 1662, is an extended (over a thousand pages in most editions) commentary on Ephesians 6:10-20, consisting of "a sweet and power encouragement to the war" and twelve "directions for managing this war successfully" which focus especially on the pieces of the armour of God.[148]

Like most Puritans, medical doctor and minister Richard Gilpin refused to conform to the Act of Uniformity – even when offered the bishopric of Carlisle by the church establishment, who were desperate to keep such a popular minister.[149] Prior to his ejection, the primary challenge Gilpin faced in his parish was Quakerism, which is reflected in the warnings against

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[144] Brooks, 12, 68, 91, and 117, respectively.

[145] Six editions were printed in Gurnall's lifetime, and fellow Puritans Richard Baxter and John Flavel thought highly of the book. In the eighteenth century, Methodist Augustus Toplady and Anglican John Newton both admired it (it was Newton's favourite book after the Bible). In the nineteenth century, Baptist preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon commented that it was "peerless and priceless" (see *William Gurnall,* ¶2–3). The book remains popular today, with the Banner of Truth Trust producing six reprints in the second half of the twentieth century.

[146] The 1662 Act of Uniformity, coming two years after the re-establishment of the monarchy, was a measure designed to punish Puritan pastors for their support of the Parliamentarian cause during the English Civil War. The Act required all clergy to sign a declaration specifically composed to be unacceptable to Puritan sensibilities. The intended result was achieved; over two thousand ministers refused to conform and resigned their ordinations.

[147] See Zacharias, *Embattled Christian*, 12.

[148] Gurnall, 3 and 27.

[149] See Gilpin, xxxiii.

illuminism in his writings.[150] In 1677 he published the most systematic of Puritan demonological works, *Dæmonologia Sacra* (copying the title of a book on witch hunting written in 1597 by King James IV of Scotland, later King James I of England). The first part of the book addresses Satan's nature and his methods of "tempting to sin" and "preventing and spoiling religious services and duties," while the second part explores his methods "for corrupting the minds of men with error" and attacking "the peace and comfort of the children of God."[151] These first two parts are the "monstrous" product of a single verse – 2 Corinthians 2:11 – although Gilpin assures the reader that he did use others when the material was first presented as a series of sermons.[152] He also admits that he has not included remedies to resist Satan in these first two parts, excusing their absence by the fact that others have done so "very fully" and that his aim is instead to reveal more fully "Satan's craft" because "others have done it more sparingly."[153] Departing from the systematic nature of the first two parts, the third part is a commentary on "the combat between Christ and Satan in Matthew 4."[154]

These four sources by Perkins, Brooks, Gurnall and Gilpin form the basis of Puritan teaching on the theory and practice of spiritual warfare. They are the most influential due to the stature of their author, their exhaustive treatment of the topic, their popularity, or some combination of the above. Other sources mostly explain and illustrate ideas already presented in these four works, although original contributions can be found among them. John Downame's *The Christian Warfare* (1609-18) is a treatise on sanctification in general, but with special attention given to Satan's efforts to derail it. William Gouge, like Gurnall, structured his treatise

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[150] See Gilpin, xxix–xxx.
[151] Gilpin, 7 and 126.
[152] Gilpin, 6.
[153] Gilpin, 6. While Gilpin does not specifically cite any one author here, he does appear to be referring to Brooks amongst others.
[154] Gilpin, 312.

on spiritual warfare, *The Whole Armour of God* (1615), as an extended commentary on Ephesians 6:10-20. Thomas Taylor's *Christ's Combat and Conquest* (1618) follows Perkins in seeing the temptations of Jesus as a model for how Christians are to conduct their own spiritual warfare. Edward Turges describes in *The Christian Soldier* (1639) how and why the Christian must take up arms against the three enemies of the soul: the world, the flesh and (of relevance to this thesis) the devil. Henry Lawrence's *Of Our Communion and War with Angels* (1646) focuses more narrowly than Gurnall's work, commenting on Ephesians 6:11-18. In *The Christian's Combat* (1654), Christopher Love also exposits Ephesians 6:10-20. William Spurstowe, like Brooks and Gilpin, seeks to expound *The Wiles of Satan* (1666). The last Puritan treatise on spiritual warfare, Thomas Manton's *Christ's Temptation and Transfiguration* (1685), contains a collection of seven sermons on Matthew 4:1-11.

The final category of primary sources consists of those works that focus on some other aspect of the theology but treat spiritual warfare in passing. Thomas Goodwin published the lessons of his long struggle with doubts regarding his salvation in a series of sermons called *A Child of Light Walking in Darkness* (1636), which includes several chapters on Satan's role in provoking these doubts. The greatest of all Puritan theologians, John Owen, addresses some aspects of spiritual warfare in his three treatises *Of the mortification of sin in believers* (1656), *Of temptation* (1658), and *The nature, power, deceit and prevalency of indwelling sin* (1667).[155] John Bunyan mentions spiritual warfare in his allegories: the famous *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678 and 1684), but even more in the lesser-known *The Holy War* (1682). In *The Certainty of the Worlds Of Spirits Fully Evinced* (1691), the famous pastor Richard Baxter presents

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[155] All three treatises have been published in a single volume called *Sin and Temptation.* It is this work that is intended when Owen is hereafter cited in footnotes without a qualifying title.

documented cases of possessions, spirit apparitions and witchcraft in order to prove to sceptics the reality of the spiritual realm.

These primary sources offer advantages and disadvantages. As mentioned before, these published works do reflect the thinking of the Puritan movement, but there is always a gap between a movement's professed theology and its operative theology. Nevertheless, Victor Shepherd avers that, because Puritan preaching was so theologically informed, nowhere else in Christian history is that gap as narrow as it is in English Puritanism.[156] One advantage of these sources is that they exhibit the highly applicatory nature of Puritan preaching, whether they are published sermons or not. This means that demonic tactics and practical responses are covered in great detail, making them a great store of practical demonology.

This thesis will demonstrate how the orienting theological concerns of divine sovereignty and human depravity shape the Puritan theory and practice of spiritual warfare. Each chapter explores a different aspect of Puritan demonology. Chapter 1 explores the Puritan view of the origin and nature of Satan and his demons, how they are paradoxically to be respected as powerful enemies and yet never feared since God reigns victorious over them. Chapter 2 shows that the Puritan focus on demonic operations in history focuses almost exclusively on the episodes of the temptations of Eve in Eden and Jesus in the wilderness. Chapter 3 catalogues the Puritans' many observations on how Satan assaults Christians, with an overwhelming emphasis on temptation. Chapter 4 similarly notes the many 'remedies' prescribed by Puritan divines for Satan's assaults. Each chapter will outline the Puritan teaching (or teachings) on that subject and note how that teaching was influenced by the doctrines of divine sovereignty and human depravity.

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[156] Shepherd, *Historical Theology*, Track F3.

CHAPTER ONE

ORIGIN AND NATURE

The Puritan's first concern with the origin and nature of Satan and his demons was to assert that they existed as real, personal beings. Although the Enlightenment came into its full flower during the eighteenth century, the seventeenth century saw the rise of scepticism regarding the miraculous in general and demonology in particular. Gilpin insisted that there are "such things as devils and wicked spirits," rejecting the view that they are "but theological engines contrived by persons that carry a goodwill to morality and the public peace, to keep men under an awful fear of such miscarriages as many render then otherwise a shame to themselves and a trouble to others."[1] Gilpin also refuted those who "deny, if not their being, yet their temptations...thinking that our own fancies or imaginations may be the only devils that vex us."[2] Gurnall similarly challenged the idea that devils are "qualities, or evil motions, arising from us," lamenting that what Scripture clearly teaches is ignored only because people are so fallen that they refuse to believe what they cannot see with their own eyes.[3]

Origin

The Puritans adopted the historic doctrine of the Church regarding the two-stage origin of devils: first their creation as angels and then their fall. Gurnall saw their creation attested to in Colossians 1:6 and their fall in Jude 1:6, while Perkins presented Revelation 12:7-12 as the

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[1] Gilpin, 47.
[2] Gilpin, 50.
[3] Gurnall, 127.

account of their fall.[4] Despite this general continuity with earlier Christian teaching, there was some minor disagreement between Puritans regarding two aspects of the devils' fall. The first area where they differed was what precipitated that fall. Gurnall followed the traditional line that a "noble creature that God set at the top of creation" made a "bold and blasphemous attempt to snatch at God's own crown."[5] Gilpin, on the other hand, did not refute this position, but insisted that the biblical evidence is insufficient to enter into specifics regarding the sin itself. However, drawing on 1 Timothy 3:6, he did agree with Gurnall and others that it was pride that drove Satan to that sin, whatever it was.[6]

The other point on which Puritans differed regarding Satan's fall was its impact on him and his devils. Gurnall insisted that Satan "lost his wisdom, indeed, as soon as he became a devil" as well as "much of his power," although he did retain his innate abilities as a spiritual being.[7] Spurstowe agreed, asserting that when Satan lost his "glorious robe of holiness...he became inferior in power, wisdom, and knowledge to the unfallen angels."[8] However, others insisted that his power remained undiminished by the fall.[9] Perkins even taught that the devil's power was actually *increased* by his fall and has continued to grow since then, "energized by the malice he bears toward humanity."[10] However, most Puritan writes make no mention of any such changes when describing Satan's power as an angel, perhaps unwilling to speculate on a matter not directly treated in the Bible. Despite this minor disagreement, all agreed that Satan's power is daunting, regardless of how it compared to his pre-fall abilities. This might be another reason

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[4] See Gurnall, 127 and Perkins, i.
[5] Gurnall, 128.
[6] See Gilpin, 397 and Gurnall, 138.
[7] Gurnall, 48 and 101.
[8] Spurstowe, 15.
[9] See Gilpin, 16.
[10] Zacharias, *The Embattled Christian*, 25. The quote he cites from Perkins is from *Witchcraft*, 20.

why most Puritans were silent on the topic – they were not concerned with what Satan's power *was*. Their practical bent focused them on the situation as it stands *now*.

Nature

As was demonstrated in the Puritan teaching on the origin of devils, they were reluctant to speculate on the nature of angels and demons. In this, they followed John Calvin's advice:

> let us here remember that on the whole subject of religion one rule of modesty and soberness is to be observed, and it is this, in obscure matters not to speak or think, or even long to know, more than the Word of God has delivered. A second rule is, that in reading the Scriptures we should constantly direct our inquiries and meditations to those things which tend to edification, not indulge in curiosity, or in studying things of no use...if we would be duly wise, we must renounce those vain babblings of idle men, concerning the nature, ranks, and number of angels, without any authority from the Word of God.[11]

Goodwin echoed this sentiment while defending his teaching on Satan's role in spiritual depression. He claimed not to have violated "that severe increpation of the Apostle against curious speculations about angels," following the scholastics "in their labyrinths...no further than I found a clue of Scripture and right reason clearly guiding and warranting my way."[12] Despite this reluctance to speak where Scripture is silent, the Puritans did have a lot to say about the nature of Satan and his demons. However, their demonic ontology was constrained by their Biblicism and practical interests – that is, they taught only what they felt what the Bible clearly stated and what was of use to the Christian's spiritual warfare.

1. Being and Character

The Puritans taught that, like angels, demons are spirits, or beings composed of a single, immaterial substance. This definition was contrasted with that of humans, who are corporeal and "compounded," with souls that are "made to subsist in a human body, and together with it make

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[11] Calvin, *Institutes*, I.14.4.
[12] Goodwin, 234.

one perfect man."[13] The argument for their being incorporeal was that "they enter into bodies and possess them...One body cannot thus enter into another."[14] Despite this essential difference from humanity, they were categorized as created beings, and therefore finite.[15]

However, unlike angels, demons are evil spirits. While incapable of sins which require a body (such as gluttony or concupiscence), Satan and his hosts do "commit the spiritual sins of lying, pride, hatred, and malice."[16] Gurnall insisted that they are more evil than any human could ever be for two reasons. First, they are "the inventors of sin – the first that sounded the trumpet of rebellion against their Maker."[17] Second, while humans also rebelled against God, the devils' rebellion was considered worse because "they sinned without a tempter."[18] The Puritans turned even this abstract consideration of the character of devils to practical ends. Gurnall saw the even the evil of the devils as a source of encouragement:

> If the saints must have enemies, the worse they are the better it is...Wickedness must needs be weak. The devils' guilt in their own bosoms tells them their cause is lost before the battle is fought. They fear thee, Christian, because thou art holy, and therefore thou needest not be dismayed at them who are wicked...Whose side is God on that thou art afraid?[19]

Ironically, the very evilness of the Christian's enemies is a reason to fear them less, not more.

The first source of Puritan teaching on the character of demons was the various names the Bible uses for evil spirits. Gilpin saw the three names used in Jesus' temptations in Matthew 4 as a summary of the nature of demons: *Satan* (meaning 'adversary') shows his "malice and fury," *tempter* illustrates how he expresses that malice, while *devil* (meaning 'slanderer') alludes to his

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[13] Gurnall, 127.
[14] Gurnall, 127.
[15] See Gurnall, 127.
[16] Gilpin, 11.
[17] Gurnall, 128.
[18] Gurnall, 128.
[19] Gurnall, 484.

ultimate goal.[20] Brooks assembled a list of demonic characteristics from the names used throughout the Scriptures:

> Sometimes he is called Behemoth, which is *Bruta*, whereby the greatness and brutishness of the devil is figured (Job 40:15). Those evil spirits are sometimes called *accusers*, for their calumnies and slanders; and *evil ones*, for their malice. Satan is *Adversarius*, an adversary, that troubleth and molest (1 Peter 5:8). *Abaddon* is a destroyer. They are *tempters*, for their suggestion; *lions*, for their devouring; *dragons*, for their cruelty; and *serpents*, for their subtlety.[21]

Since the name 'devil' means 'slanderer,' Perkins taught that Satan slanders in three ways: he slanders God to humans (using Genesis 3:4 as his example), he slanders humans to God (citing Job 2:3), and slanders humans to one another, "engendering ungodly and uncharitable surmises and suspicions in one man against another, and in causing one man to slander and injure another" (James 3:14).[22]

The demonic hosts hate God and humans, and the Puritans offered several explanations are offered for this enmity. First and foremost, Satan seeks revenge against God for being expelled from His presence.[23] Since he cannot "pull [God] out of heaven," he tries to compete with Him by setting himself up as the god of this world.[24] He does so by demanding worship that imitates the ways God has appointed for His own worship, by promoting contempt for the truth of God's ways, and, where he has succeeded in eliminating God's worship, by profaning those places where God was most celebrated.[25] Satan's hatred of humanity is attributed to two reasons. It is primarily derived from his hatred of God – he cannot harm God, but he can assault those who bear His image and especially those He calls His children. Thus, Satan's hatred of humanity is

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[20] Gilpin, 338.
[21] Brooks, 156.
[22] Perkins, 9. See also Love, 12–13.
[23] See Brooks, 153 and Gilpin, 11 and 12.
[24] Gilpin, 101.
[25] See Gilpin, 101–102 and 419–420.

primarily instrumental, not intrinsic.[26] But there is also an intrinsic element to his hatred, for he envies humanity for being able to enjoy the paradise that he was cast out of.[27] The Puritans believed that this explains why he does all he can to impede people on the road to heaven – he wants to drag them down to share in his own misery and condemnation.[28] This great malice, prompted by revenge upon God and envy of humanity, is how the Puritans explained why Satan and his demons fight a war that they know they must ultimately lose.[29]

2. Power

When the Puritans discussed the nature of Satan they spend most of their effort emphasizing his power and malice, instead of ontological concerns. Their aim was to present Satan as a daunting enemy – not to intimidate their audience, but rather to motivate them to be watchful: "not to weaken the saints' hands, but to waken their care."[30] Their descriptions of the great power and malice of demons were meant to stir the reader to diligently 'buckle on the armour' and "kindle in them an holy industry unto all good."[31] They should not paralyze the reader with fear; in fact, Gurnall insisted that "the greatest hurt [Satan] can do thee, is by nourishing this false fear of him."[32] The Puritans walked this line between overemphasizing Satan's danger and dismissing it due to their twin core convictions of divine sovereignty and human depravity. Human depravity prompted them to highlight the danger of demonic assault, in order to jar people out of their complacency or give pause those whose carnal security would lead them to rashly try to take the fight to Satan. Divine sovereignty, on the other hand, placed boundaries on this power, emphasizing that Satan can do nothing without God's prior permission.

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[26] See Owen, 17; Gilpin, 13 and 332; and Gurnall, 129.
[27] See Brooks, 153 and 160; Gilpin, 209; Goodwin, 257; Love, 11–12; Gurnall, 154
[28] See Brooks, 3; Brooks, 156–57; Gurnall, 156; Spurstowe, 11; and Gilpin, 209.
[29] See Gilpin, 14.
[30] Gurnall, 78.
[31] Spurstowe, 28. See also Love, 15.
[32] Gurnall, 103.

By carefully maintaining this tension, the Puritans could wax on about Satan's terrible power and malice, but then insist that the believer has nothing to fear from him.

In the Puritan view, Satan was such a formidable opponent because of his great power. Drawing on imagery from naval and land warfare from the recent English Civil War, Brooks stated that Satan has "a greater influence upon men, and higher advantages over them (having the wind and the hill, as it were), than they think he hath."[33] This power is the sum of abilities derived from several different characteristics. First is his innate power as an angelic being, which the Puritans believed grants Satan many advantages. As an incorporeal being, he can move from place to place "quickly, imperceptibly, and irresistibly."[34] His lack of a physical body also means that his harassment of humanity cannot be interrupted by fatigue, illness or death.[35] Finally, his incorporeality allows him to act secretly, making him "so little feared by the ignorant world."[36] A second advantage granted by the devil's angelic being is heightened intellectual capabilities. This starts with a vast store of knowledge "because as spirits they come nearest to the nature of God."[37] However, demons also have lightning-quick cognitive processing abilities, although Spurstowe insisted that they think from cause to effect like humans, instead of intuitively understanding objects (as the scholastics argued).[38]

The second source of Satan's power expounded by the Puritans was his ability to influence people by 'injecting' thoughts into the mind, igniting the imagination, and stirring the body's passions. First, Satan can inject thoughts and suggestions directly into the mind.[39] The Puritans considered this power especially dangerous because these injections are difficult to discern from

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[33] Brooks, 4. See also Gilpin, 20.
[34] Gilpin, 15.
[35] See Gurnall, 128.
[36] Gurnall, 127.
[37] Gurnall, 127. See also Gilpin, 21.
[38] See Spurstowe, 16–17.
[39] See Owen, 100.

one's own thoughts, and people tend to be "more apt to be swayed by such thoughts which they look upon as the natural births of their own hearts, than ever they would be by such which they discern to be foreign, and to be injected from an irreconcilable and a sworn Enemy."[40] Second, Satan has the power to influence the imagination (or the 'fancy', as the Puritans also label this faculty). While he cannot "force the spring of the will," he can attempt to influence it "by pulling at the weights and plummets – that is, by moving and acting our imaginations and affections."[41] In addition to this connection between the imagination and the will, manipulating the imagination also influences the mind:

> To the *Understanding* [the fancy] is a prompt assistant in the matter of invention to supply it with variety of objects whereon to work...To the *Will* its office is to elicit and excite its desires towards some convenient and pleasing object, in which for the most part it is so successful, as that oft times plausible Fancies do more take and sway the Will, than knotty and severe Arguments.[42]

Gilpin explained exactly how Satan uses the imagination to reinforce his suggestions:

> When [Satan] propounds an object to our lust, he doth not usually expose it naked under the hazard of dying out for want of prosecution, but presently calls in our fancy to his aid, and there raiseth a theatre, on which he acts before our minds the sin in all its ways and pastures...our imagination presenting these things to us as in lively pictures and resemblances, by which our desires may be inflamed and prepared for consent.[43]

However, Satan's control over the imagination is not total. Goodwin suggested that devils cannot create new images in the imagination, but are restricted to "calling forth the images there already."[44] Third, in addition to suggesting thoughts and manipulating the imagination, Satan can

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[40] Spurstowe, 34. See also Goodwin, 264.
[41] Gilpin, 62. See also Goodwin, 266.
[42] Spurstowe, 13.
[43] Gilpin, 66. See also Spurstowe, 12–13.
[44] Goodwin, 278.

agitate the passions "by stirring up such humours in the body, which such passions do act and stir in."[45] Like the imagination, manipulation of the passions can influence the mind and will:

> Passions, like to heavy weights hung upon a clock, do not only make the wheels, the thoughts, move faster, but also pervert them and wrest them the wrong way...so as to a heart thus distempered all things come to be presented amiss.[46]

Thus, when the Puritans said that Satan 'makes a suggestion', something much more is meant than when one person tries to persuade another by mere words.

Magnifying the strength of Satan's raw powers is the manner in which he employs them. First, he is diligent in his opposition. In addition to being immune to physical exhaustion by virtue of his incorporeality, he is single-minded in his pursuit of humanity, never missing even a small opportunity to "trouble, or puzzle, or affright."[47] Gilpin proposeed that the reason for his unwearied efforts "to tempt and destroy" is that the success of this labour "is all the delight we can suppose him to have."[48] The Puritans believed that this diligence, exercised over a period of five thousand years (i.e. since humanity's fall), has resulted in the second multiplier of his powers: vast experience. Brooks and others described this danger in sobering terms:

> as he hath time enough, so he hath made it his whole study, his only study, his constant study, to find out snares, depths, and stratagems, to entangle and overthrow the souls of men. When he was but a young serpent, he did easily deceive and outwit our first parents (Gen 3); but now he is grown that 'old serpent,' as John speaks (Rev 12:9), he is as old as the world, and is grown very cunning by experience.[49]

This experience has further enhanced Satan's third power multiplier: his cunning. Even before he accumulated his current experience, he was "too crafty for man in his perfection," and therefore

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[45] Goodwin, 284. A common medical theory of the Puritans' day was humorism, the belief that moods were driven by the balance between the four bodily fluids, or humours, of blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm.
[46] Goodwin, 284. See also 266.
[47] Gilpin, 13. See also Brooks, 164, Perkins, ii, and Spurstowe, 25–29.
[48] Gilpin, 45.
[49] Brooks, 157. See also Gilpin, 22–23, Goodwin, 262, and Spurstowe, 19–20.

even more so in humanity's current fallen state.[50] He is a "cunning sophister, and can put fallacies upon the understanding...by subtle objections and arguments."[51] The Puritans discerned in Scripture numerous references to his cunning: wiles (Ephesians 6:11-12), logical fallacies (2 Corinthians 2:11), political deceits (Revelation 12:7), warlike stratagems (Revelation 12:17) and ambushes (2 Timothy 2:26), hunter's snares (James 1), gaming cheats (Ephesians 4:14), shady deals (2 Corinthians 2:11), disguises (2 Corinthians 11:14), deceits (2 Thessalonians 2:10) and ingenious contrivances (2 Corinthians 11:3).[52]

In addition to Satan's raw power and the various ways he multiplies it, the Puritans noted that he does not attack humans alone. First, there is his vast host of demons. Resistant as they are to speculation, the Puritans did not attempt to number them like the scholastics did:

> The Schoolmen...speak as confidently of the number of good and evil angels, as if they looked into the muster-roll both of the heavenly host and the infernal legions, and yet their assertions have as little agreement with each other, as the testimonies of the false witnesses concerning Christ, no two of them speaking the same thing.[53]

Instead, they merely assert that, since Satan is not omnipresent and yet all are tempted constantly, "the devils that assist him must be numerous."[54] The Puritans also refuted the idea that "every man hath one good angel and one bad attending upon him, the one to protect him, the other to tempt him," instead asserting that sometimes one evil spirit assaults a person and sometimes many.[55] Just as they were hesitant to speculate on the number of demons, so they resisted speculating on their organization. Pseudo-Dionysius constructed an elaborate "ranks and

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[50] Gurnall, 48.
[51] Gilpin, 141.
[52] See Gilpin, 52–56.
[53] Spurstowe, 29–30.
[54] Gilpin, 17. See also Gurnall, 101.
[55] Perkins, 52. For the history of how the 'shoulder angel' theory was imported into early Christianity from Judaism, see Russell, *Satan*, 28 and 43–45.

employments" of angels and demons which became popular in medieval Catholicism.[56] While the Puritans dismissed such hierarchies as "presumption" and "too weak a notion to be the foundation of a pulpit discourse," they did acknowledge that it is reasonable to assume that there is some "order among devils."[57] Gilpin even went so far as to speculate from Daniel 10:13 that demons might be "allotted to several countries and places, as their own proper charge and jurisdiction," although he admits that this interpretation is denied by some – including Calvin himself.[58] Finally, the Puritans insisted that the demonic host is made even more formidable by their perfect unity of purpose to "rob God of his glory, and man of his happiness."[59] "We cannot say there is love among them," noted Gurnall, yet "they are all agreed in their design against God and man" and they know that "if they agree not in their design, their kingdom will not stand."[60] Thus, unlike the armies of the seventeenth century, Satan's army is perfectly disciplined, with "no mutinies for want of pay, no complaints of hard marches."[61]

The Puritans often cited a 'trinity of the soul's enemies' in their works: the world, the flesh and the devil, with the first two portrayed as allies of the third. The Puritans tread a careful line between the doctrine of divine sovereignty and the scriptural assertions that Satan is the prince and even god of this world. Gurnall explained that Satan claims the world by conquest (for he stole Adam's heart), by election (by the unanimous vote of humanity's depravity), and by the gift of God himself (as he claimed to Christ in Luke 4:5-6) – none of which are legal, but merely theft, rebellion, and mere permission, respectively.[62] But while this authority is not *de jure*, it is *de facto*. God has granted Satan a general commission "over the children of disobedience,"

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[56] Gilpin, 19. See also Russell, *Satan*, 213.
[57] Gilpin, 19 and Gurnall, 93.
[58] Gilpin, 20.
[59] Spurstowe, 32.
[60] Gurnall, 101.
[61] Spurstowe, 31–32.
[62] See Gurnall, 94.

enabling him to exercise his power over them "without control; his suggestions and temptations are as law to them" – although the Puritans were careful to state that this control is "not to force them, yet effectually to draw them."[63]

Apart from the world, Satan's other ally is the flesh, or the believer's own fallen nature. The Puritans used several illustrations to show the relationship between Satan and the flesh. One favourite is that of the devil fanning the flesh's sparks into flame.[64] Another is a traitor within a besieged city – the enemy might or might not be held at the walls, but he will certainly take the city if a sympathetic agent opens the gate from the inside.[65] The central truth in both cases is the same: "we must be careful that we do not lay all our temptations upon Satan...and father that upon him that is to be fathered upon our own base hearts."[66] Their purpose was to emphasize human responsibility: "The whole guilt lies with the sinner, and therefore the whole punishment will yet fall upon him."[67] Fallen humans would sin even without any help from Satan.[68] However, the Puritans did acknowledge that scripture and human experience both demonstrate that Satan has a hand in temptation. The paradox was resolved by asserting that Satan provokes the flesh and, once aroused, he urges in onward.[69] Or, as Gurnall summarized, "The fire of lust is ours, but...his temptations are the bellows that blow it up."[70]

3. Limitations

As mentioned before, the Puritan doctrine of divine sovereignty led to a consistent refutation of any hint of dualism in Puritan demonology. Cosmic spiritual warfare is not a

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[63] Gilpin, 17 and 18; Gurnall, 110.
[64] See Gilpin, 54; Perkins, ii; Gurnall, 488; Spurstowe, 93.
[65] See Gurnall, 605.
[66] Brooks, 152. See also Owen, 9.
[67] Owen, 38.
[68] See Gilpin, 326.
[69] See Brooks, 153; Gilpin, 53; Gurnall, 87; Owen, 104.
[70] Gurnall, 606.

struggle between peers, or even near-equals. To emphasize this point, the Puritans identified several key limitations upon Satan's power. The first relates to the question of whether Satan can read a person's thoughts. The Puritans insisted that "the immediate and imminent acts of the mind [Satan] cannot directly see into," for "[God] can alone both search and know the heart and conscience."[71] However, despite lacking unmediated access to the mind, they noted that Satan appears to be able to read a person's thoughts based on his prompt and relevant response to their refusals of his temptations.[72] Satan does this by several means. As mentioned before, Satan has access to the images within the imagination. Since the imagination is 'next-door' to the mind, he can see these images "when reason itself calls upon any of them, and maketh use of them, as it doth whenever it sets itself to think or muse."[73] In the same way, he can intuit the mind's thoughts based upon their effects upon the body.[74] He knows everything people say and do, even the smallest and most secret actions, for his demonic agents can follow them anywhere.[75] With this body of observations, Satan can then draw on his vast store of experience with humans in general and this person in specific to guess what they are actually thinking.[76] Therefore, while Satan cannot read a person's mind, his capacity to gather and analyze 'battlefield intelligence' is the next best thing.

Another limitation of Satan's power that the Puritans emphasized is that he cannot know the future. The Puritan doctrine of divine sovereignty again dictated that certain knowledge of future events belongs to God alone:

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[71] Gilpin, 24 and Goodwin, 271. See also Gurnall, 58 and Spurstowe, 12.
[72] See Gilpin, 23.
[73] Goodwin, 277. See also Spurstowe, 12 and Gilpin, 24.
[74] Goodwin, 278. See also Gilpin, 24.
[75] See Goodwin, 275–76 and Gilpin, 24–25.
[76] See Gilpin, 24, Goodwin, 274–75 and Gurnall, 51.

> [The ability to fortell things to come is] an incommunicable property and prerogative of the only true God, who stands upon the hill of eternity, and from thence that the full prospect of all things, and to whose infinite understanding they are all present; for his will being the cause of all events, he must needs know them.[77]

However, just as he can deduce people's thoughts, Satan can often accurately predict the future. These predictions are the product of several causes. First is if God Himself reveals the future to him, such as when God wishes Satan "to be his instrument to execute some of his purposes."[78] But even without such direct revelation, Satan can often guess the future due to his deep knowledge of how nature works.[79] He can also predict how humans will act because he understands the dynamics of each human heart, knowing every secret of state and commerce.[80] Of course, Satan also does all he can to 'load the deck' in favour of his predictions. He can communicate information quickly over long distances, which can give the impression of prediction in certain situations.[81] He also can tempt people to a certain course of action to make his prediction come true.[82] Finally, he can fall back on the old charlatan's trick of making his predications intentionally vague so they can match a number of possible outcomes.[83]

Satan is also limited in that he cannot perform miracles – something that the Puritans again insisted is the province of God alone. They granted that Satan can do "wonderful and amazing" things, but these do not qualify as a true miracle, which is defined as a "real act, done visibly, and above the power of nature."[84] His wonders can be mere illusions, either deceptions of the senses or direct manipulation of the imagination.[85] They can also be the product of his deep

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[77] Gurnall, 588. See also Gilpin, 25.
[78] Gurnall, 588–89. See also Gilpin 25.
[79] See Gurnall, 588 and Gilpin, 25.
[80] See Gurnall, 588 and Gilpin, 25.
[81] See Gilpin, 26.
[82] See Gilpin, 26.
[83] See Gurnall, 588 and Gilpin, 26.
[84] Gilpin, 31.
[85] See Gilpin, 31.

knowledge of "the secret ways of nature's operations, and the ways of accelerating or retarding those works."[86] Such phenomena can appear to be miraculous to those ignorant of the natural laws involved.[87] Finally, by reason of his great speed, he can perform what amounts to sleight-of-hand.[88]

In addition to these intrinsic limitations, the Puritans agreed that Satan suffers from one enormous external limitation: the will of God. Despite his inimical malice, terrible power and the weakness of his prey, he typically adopts the strategies of a weaker opponent – namely deception and persuasion.[89] The Puritans explained this strange state of affairs by the doctrine of divine sovereignty: because of God's will, Satan "cannot tempt as he will, nor when he will, nor in what he would, nor as long as he would."[90] He is only allowed to harass the saints with God's permission, "without which it would be impossible for him to reach his hand out against any."[91] Furthermore, God carefully monitors and strictly restrains his assaults, putting "a check on Satan when there is need."[92] There appear to be two primary practical uses for this limitation. The first is to encourage the timorous that, because the Holy Spirit is in control of the situation, Satan is on a tight leash, unable "to pluck the weakest saint out of Christ's hands."[93] The second is to caution the overconfident by reminding them of their depravity; the Christian is "but a weak creature, conflicting with enemies stronger than itself, and therefore cannot keep the field without an auxiliary strength from heaven."[94]

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[86] Gilpin, 32. See also Perkins, 38.
[87] In the famous words of Arthur C. Clark, "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic."
[88] See Gilpin, 33 and Perkins, 38.
[89] See Gurnall, 131, 296 and 484.
[90] Gilpin, 319. See also Perkins, 4.
[91] Gilpin, 317. See also Goodwin, 258.
[92] Gilpin, 319. See also Gilpin 17–20; Perkins, 4 and 29; and Gurnall, 104.
[93] Gurnall, 30. See also Gurnall, 192.
[94] Gurnall, 10. See also Gurnall, 484.

In addition to God's permission, Satan must have his victim's consent in order to tempt successfully.[95] Thus,

> Satan must have a double leave before he can do anything against us. He must have leave from God, and leave from ourselves, before he can act anything against our happiness...When he tempts, we must assent; when he makes offers, we must hearken; when he commands, we must obey, or else all his labour and temptations will be frustrated, and the evil that he tempts us to shall be put down only to his account.[96]

Gilpin agreed that Satan "must use his craft, because he cannot compel; he must have God's leave before he can overcome...neither can he prevail against us without our own consent."[97] Like the mind, the will is beyond Satan's reach. However, Satan's temptations are successful – always in the unregenerate and often in the case of believers – due to human depravity. Gurnall insisted that Satan "cannot command thee to sin against thy will; he can [only]...make the soul go faster, that is on its way, as the wind carries the tide with more swiftness."[98] Goodwin agreed: that "which gives [Satan] privilege, scope, and matter to work thus upon us is something within us; there being, even in the best, something which doth belong to his jurisdiction" – that is, darkness.[99] Therefore, while Satan cannot coerce, human depravity means that he often finds the will leaning in the direction he wants to suggest.

The Puritans stoutly insisted with James 1:13 that God tempts no one, but they do recognize that "it is not improper to assert that God and Satan do concur in the same temptation, though the ways of proceeding, with the aims and intentions of both, be directly different and contrary."[100] God and Satan vary in the purpose of their temptations: God tries people to test

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[95] This consent does not appear to apply in assaults other than temptation, however. See Chapter 3.
[96] Brooks, 153 and 154.
[97] Gilpin, 57. See also Goodwin, 266, Spurstowe, 93
[98] Gurnall, 104.
[99] Goodwin, 260.
[100] Gilpin, 317. The proof text for this is that David is incited to take a census by God in 2 Samuel 24:1 and by Satan in 1 Chronicles 21:1.

what is in their heart, while Satan allures people to disobedience.[101] They also vary in their technique: God "providentially presents occasions" to obey or disobey, while Satan "actively persuades to do evil," alluring his victims "unto sin by inward suggestion or outward objects."[102] Thus, the Puritans maintained the distinction first proposed by Tertullian that "the devil tempts, God only tries."[103] Even so, their doctrine of divine sovereignty leads them to conclude that, "When Satan tempts a saint, he is but God's messenger."[104]

While the Puritans did not often engage in theodicy from an abstract or philosophical perspective, they did offer several reasons why God grants Satan permission to assault His saints. Their primary and foundational reason is derived from the doctrine of divine sovereignty: God allows Satan to trouble His saints to bring glory to Himself. The first question in the Westminster Larger Catechism (composed by a Puritan assembly during the Interregnum) is "What is the chief and highest end of man?" to which the Puritans answered, "Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him forever."[105] This sentiment is echoed in Love's answer to the question "why God suffereth his servants to be tempted": "First, it is for his own glory."[106] Other Puritans agreed, explaining that God is glorified in this case by aiding His saints to be victorious over a powerful enemy despite their weakness.[107] Even when God's reasons for glorifying himself through allowing a specific demonic assault are unclear, He does have them and so the believer is to trust Him.[108]

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[101] See Perkis, v and 7; Owen, 97; and Gilpin, 16.
[102] Gilpin, 58 and Perkins, 7.
[103] Quoted in Gilpin, 58.
[104] Gurnall, 70.
[105] Westminster Assembly, *Westminster Larger Catechism*, Question 1 and answer.
[106] Love, 4.
[107] See Brooks, 157 and Gurnall, 95.
[108] See Owen, 105.

As mentioned above, another reason God allows demonic assaults is to test what is in a person's heart, using Satan as His instrument.[109] The Puritans believed that God does so, not because He is unsure about the person's obedience (that would be incompatible with divine omniscience), but because people themselves do not know until they are tried:

> God tempts man to show him what is in man, either of grace or of corruption. Because grace and corruption both lie deep within a man's heart, men often deceive themselves in search for one or the other...Thus the soul remains in uncertainty, and we fail in our tests. God alone can plumb the depths of our souls. His instruments are His trials.[110]

Therefore, this testing aims to reveal something to the testee, rather than the tester.

Testing a sample of precious metal – or assaying – not only reveals the purity of that sample, but changes it, leaving it more pure than when the trial began. In the same way, the Puritans saw God's testing as not only revelatory, but also transformative. God uses spiritual conflict to sanctify His saints.[111] He strengthens His people's graces by spiritual warfare, for "the gifts of God's Spirit – faith, hope, patience, and the rest – languish in us if they be not exercised with temptations."[112] Another commonly cited positive effect was "an increase in diligence, humility, and watchfulness."[113] That is, when a person is troubled by Satan's assaults, they come to recognize that they cannot rely upon their own strength or rest in past victories. Therefore, they redouble their efforts to keep careful watch over their souls and to engage in those spiritual disciplines that keep them close to Christ, their only true hope of spiritual safety.[114] God can even use temptations to evoke greater love from the saint.[115] This transformative aspect explains

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[109] See Gilpin, 315; Perkins, 29; and Love, 5.
[110] Owen, 97–98. See also Perkins, vi.
[111] See Brooks, 114.
[112] Love, 6. See also Perkins, vi.
[113] Gilpin, 315.
[114] See Brooks, 94; Gurnall, 488; Perkins, 53; Gilpin, 60; and Love, 6
[115] See Gurnall, 75.

why the Puritans referred to temptations as a purifying agent, "like fire to gold (1 Peter 1:7)" or, paradoxically, as "food or poison, man's exercise or man's destruction."[116]

God's purposes in allowing Satan to assault the church are also eschatological. First, this constant harassment makes Christians "long for Christ's return," sharpening their thirst for the Eschaton and causing them to cry out with ever-renewed conviction, "Come, Lord Jesus!"[117] This also has the effect of weaning Christians of the love of worldly things.[118] Second, this life of war will make the peace of heaven all the more sweet.[119]

God also uses temptations to prepare his saints to comfort and edify others. Those who have passed through intense temptations are better able to empathize with and comfort others who are in a similar situation.[120] They also discover what helps are most useful to those suffering temptations.[121] For this reason, temptations were considered by the Puritans as vital to the formation of pastors: "Reading, meditation, prayer and temptations, make a divine.[122]"

Finally, God allows demonic assaults in order to cure or prevent sin. God allows Satan to harass a person as a punishment for sin, whether sentenced by Himself or at the church's request (i.e. through excommunication).[123] God also permits Satan to attack a person where she is strong in order to prevent sins where she is weak, the way Paul's thorn in the flesh prevented pride.[124] Temptations can stir up some "prevailing corruption" within the believer "which the blind eyes of our judgement would not discern;" now revealed, it can be specifically targeted for

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[116] Gurnall, 75 and Owen, 97.
[117] Brooks, 94 and 164.
[118] See Brooks, 94 and Perkins, vi.
[119] See Brooks, 94.
[120] See Brooks 94, Perkins, 3 and Gurnall, 72.
[121] See Gilpin, 315 and Perkins, 3.
[122] A common saying quoted by Perkins on page 3.
[123] See Goodwin, 258 and Perkins, 29.
[124] See Gurnall, 71 and Perkins, vi.

mortification.[125] God will even use a saint's fall into sin to prevent future sins. Shocked by the failure, the saint will more diligently apply the means to fight that temptation in the future and mortify the "prevailing corruption" within them that was the true cause of the fall.[126] Under "Satan's scouring" the saints "recover their whiteness."[127] God also uses their fall to edify others: negatively "to warn others how sin is punished" and positively to assure others who sin that God can forgive them, too.[128]

Conclusion

The Puritans mostly followed Christian tradition when describing the origin of Satan and his demons. While their Biblicism led them to refuse to speculate on the particulars of the angelic fall, they agreed with the broad strokes of the origin story put forth by the medieval church. They was also a great deal of agreement with traditional teaching on Satan's nature – the Puritan assertion of Satan's reality, evil, malice, power and cunning was nothing new. However, the Puritans had a distinct emphasis on the presentation of these attributes – an emphasis build on the theological foundation of the doctrines of divine sovereignty and human depravity. The reason the Puritans expounded Satan's reality, evil, malice, power and cunning was to establish him as a clear and present danger. Human depravity led some people to not take Satan seriously, so he had to be presented as a viable threat to motivate them to maintain a careful watch over their souls. Human depravity led others to an inordinate fear of Satan, so the Puritans emphasized his limitations. Divine sovereignty meant that Satan could harm no one without God's permission. While this may have prompted questions regarding whether God was the origin of evil, the aim of this teaching was to encourage believers that their struggle against

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[125] Love, 5.
[126] Gurnall, 72. See also, Love, 5.
[127] Gurnall, 105.
[128] Perkins, vi. See also Gurnall, 72.

Satan was under divine supervision. Thus, Puritans could wage their spiritual warfare secure in the knowledge that God would never allow Satan to press them beyond that which would achieve His purposes.

CHAPTER TWO

OPERATIONS IN HISTORY

Greenfield organizes his chapter on demonic activity and operation in history under four headings:

> Here the part the demonic beings played in the fall of man and in his subsequent life on earth deprived of paradise will be examined: so too will the crucial events of the life of Christ, when their victory was reversed and their rule overthrown; the years of the development of Christianity when the demons were fighting a defensive action. And the part it was believed they would play at the end of history when their defeat would be made absolute.[1]

While the Puritans had opinions on all of these events, two received focused attention in their treatises on spiritual warfare: the fall of humanity and the temptation of Christ.

The Fall of Humanity

The temptation of Eve was seen by the Puritans as a case study of Satan's temptations. Apart from describing the historical reasons why humanity is depraved, this episode was also considered a description in narrative form of how Satan tempts humans, as well as the human mistakes in responding to temptation that lead to sin.

Of the Puritan spiritual warfare literature, Gilpin offers the most detailed analysis of the temptation itself.[2] Satan chose the serpent as the instrument of his temptation since it was the most subtle animal.[3] He then targeted the woman since she was "the weaker vessel...and yet such,

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[1] Greenfield, *Late Byzantine Demonology*, 34.
[2] The comments that follow are taken from Gilpin, 56–57, unless otherwise noted.
[3] Bunyan supposes that the serpent was actually a flying dragon – a beast familiar to humans and under their dominion, and so one that would not appear to be a threat. See *Holy War*, 11.

as once gained, he knew was likely enough to prevail with the man."[4] Satan also appears to have taken advantage of Adam's absence, since his victims are easier to tempt when they are alone and without the support of others. He "made the object plead for him," pointing to the actual tree, which was apparently in sight.[5] Satan does not come right out and tempt Eve at first, but rather asked her what appears to be an innocent question. Under the pretence of lauding God's generosity, he undermined God's command, "as if he had said, 'Is it possible that so bountiful a creator should deny the liberty of eating of any tree? To what purpose was it made, if it might not be tasted?'"[6] Once Satan detected in Eve's response "a wavering suspicion, that possibly God was not in good earnest in that prohibition," he more boldly contradicted the promised punishment for disobedience.[7] He then emphasised the benefits the fruit will grant and asserted that God prohibited its consumption out of jealousy and malice, all the while making no further mention of the punishment. Finally, Satan disguised his lethal suggestion with "a pretence of greater kindness and care than God had for them."[8] Throughout his explication, Gurnall insisted that Satan continues to use these tactics against people today.

The Puritans discerned a connection between Eve's temptation in Genesis and the threefold expression of worldly temptation found in 1 John 2:16.[9] First, when Eve saw that the tree "was good for food" parallels "the lust of the flesh." This was understood "in a more restrained sense, not for the lustings of corrupt nature, but for the lustings of the body in its natural appetite."[10] Then, the tree being "pleasant to the eyes" was mapped to "the lust of the eyes." In this case,

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[4] Gilpin, 56.
[5] Gilpin, 56.
[6] Gilpin, 57.
[7] Gilpin, 57.
[8] Gilpin, 57.
[9] Citations are from the King James Version. See also, Manton 263–64.
[10] Gilpin, 344.

Satan "took advantage of the external senses."[11] Finally, the tree's desirability "to make one wise" was seen as an expression of "the pride of life," where Satan inflames the affections.[12]

The result of this primeval sin, or more accurately of God's punishment for it, is as devastating as it is broad-reaching. It is at this point in Puritan demonology that the doctrine of human depravity shows itself most clearly. The fall not only defaces the image of God in humans but actually imprints the image of the devil:

> Seest thou the monstrous pitch and height of wickedness that is in the devil? All this there is in the heart of every man. There is no less wickedness potentially in the tamest sinner on earth, than in the devils themselves, and that one day thou, whoever thou art, wilt show to purpose, if God prevent thee not by his renewing grace. Thou art not yet fledged, thy wings are not grown to make thee a flying dragon; but thou art of the same brood, the seed of this serpent is in thee, and the devil begets a child like himself..[13]

Brooks insisted that "Satan hath cast such sinful seed into our souls, that now he can no sooner tempt, but we are ready to assent."[14] Gurnall agreed: "naked [Satan] finds us and slaves he makes us, til God by his effectual call delivers us from the power of Satan."[15] But even the deliverance of God's effectual call is a limited one. Owen avered that sin still "has dominion over the believer," although he grants that "its rule is somewhat weakened."[16] Sin is weakened in believers in that:

> Although the law of sin is *in* believers, it is not a law *to* believers...Grace has sovereignty in their lives. This gives them the will to do good. They do not make it their business to always sin (see 1 John 3:9). Thus a believer does not commit sin in a habitual and wilful way...While the best a non-Christian can do is sin, the worst a Christian does is to sin.[17]

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[11] Gilpin, 344.
[12] See Gilpin, 344.
[13] Gurnall, 130. See also Gilpin, 433–34.
[14] Brooks, 3.
[15] Gurnall, 28.
[16] Owen, 7.
[17] Owen, 5–6.

Despite this weakening of indwelling sin in believers, even the most complete and sincere mortification "abates its *force*, but it cannot deal with its *nature*."[18]

The fall does not only cripple humanity; Satan is cursed as well. The curse does not simple apply to the serpent, but to Satan who used it as his instrument of temptation.[19] Satan's malice towards humanity, his implacable enmity, is one consequence of the curse: "I will put enmity betwixt thee and the woman, betwixt her seed and thy seed" (Genesis 3:15).[20] The part of the curse stating that "Dust shall be thy meat" is interpreted by some Puritans to mean that "if Satan can be said to have any delight or ease in his condition, it is in the eating of this dust, the exercise of this enmity."[21] Finally, the concluding clause of the "woman's seed bruising the serpent's head" was seen as fulfilled in the coming of Christ to "destroy the words of the devil" (1 John 3:8).[22]

The Temptation of Christ

Although the Puritans believed that it is Christ's atoning death and resurrection that makes spiritual warfare possible, they spent far more effort exploring a different episode in the life of Christ: His temptation in the wilderness. This is due to the fact that this encounter was understood to be an archetype of Satan's devices and Christian resistance. The Puritans offered three reasons why Christ allowed Himself to be tempted. After all, "Christ could have prevented [the temptations], or by a divine authority commanded silence to the tempter, and by his power might have chased him away," but He submitted to it.[23] The first reason was so "he might foil the

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[18] Owen, 16.
[19] See Gilpin, 13.
[20] See Gilpin, 12.
[21] Gilpin, 13.
[22] See Gilpin, 13.
[23] Gilpin, 445.

Devil at his own weapon," or as Gilpin put it: "it became [Christ] to overcome the enemy at the same weapon by which he overcame out first parents."[24] Second was to more fully equip Him for his office as mediator, that "he might be 'a merciful high priest unto them that are tempted' (Hebrews 2:17-18)...himself knowing the trouble and anguish of temptation."[25] But the most expounded reason for Christ allowing Himself to be tempted was to provide Christians a case study for how to wage spiritual warfare: "that in his example he might give us direction whereby to know the special temptations wherewith the Devil assaults the Church, as also how to withstand and repel the same."[26] As with Eve's temptation in Genesis 3, the Puritans map the three temptations Satan employs in Matthew 4 and Luke 4 to 1 John 2:16:

> When [Satan] tempted Christ to turn stones in to bread, there he endeavoured to take advantage of the 'lust of the flesh'...When he further tempted Him 'to cast himself down,' he pushed him upon "the pride of life;" when he showed him 'the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them,' he attempted to gain upon him by the 'lust of the eyes.'[27]

Because the three temptations the devil used to entice Jesus "are the ground of all, and the most principal temptations that Satan hath," insists Perkins, "therefore it will be needful for us to take special notice of them, as also of Christ's repulses given into them, that so we may be the better armed against them and the like."[28] So Christ submitted to Satan's temptations, as second Adam, high priest, and model spiritual warrior – so, "it *was wholly for our sakes.*"[29]

Although Christ's reasons for allow Satan to tempt Him are clear, Satan's own reasons for assaulting the Son of God are less so. What could motivate him to "*undertake a thing so*

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[24] Perkins, 8 and Gilpin, 445–46.
[25] Perkins, 9. See also Gilpin, 446 and Manton, 262–63.
[26] Perkins, 8. See also Perkins, iv, Manton, 263–64, and Love, 25.
[27] Gilpin, 344–45. See also Manton, 263–64.
[28] Perkins, 51.
[29] Gilpin, 446.

unfeasible and hopeless as the tempting of Christ"?[30] Gilpin discussed several possible answers, starting with the theory that Satan did not realize that Jesus was the Son of God. However, Gilpin dismissed this as improbable, noting that, while some (such as Beza, Cyprian and even Perkins[31]) believed that Satan was uncertain whether Jesus was the Son of God or not, Satan must have known:

> being privy so many things related to him, as the promises which went before and directly pointed out the time, the angel's salutation to Mary at his conception, the star that conducted the wise men to him, he testimony from heaven concerning him, with a great many things more, he could not possibly be ignorant that he was the Messiah and the Son of God by nature.[32]

Why, then, would Satan knowingly try to tempt the Son of God? First, the power of sin over Satan himself is so great "that it might enforce him to the bold attempt of such a wickedness."[33] While it might seem ironic that Satan himself is driven by a sinful nature, Gilpin insisted that "Satan is as great a slave to his own internal corrupt principles as any."[34] Secondly, as mentioned in chapter one, "There is a superior hand upon the devil, that sways, limits, and orders him in his temptations."[35] Thus, whatever Satan's own intentions might have been in tempting Christ, "God carried on a gracious design for the instruction and comfort of his children" – that is, those reasons outlined in the previous paragraph. [36] Therefore, the Puritans used depravity (this time demonic rather than human) and divine sovereignty to explain why Satan would attempt such an impossible feat.

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[30] Gilpin, 323.
[31] See Perkins, 6.
[32] Gilpin, 373.
[33] Gilpin, 323.
[34] Gilpin, 323.
[35] Gilpin, 323.
[36] Gilpin, 323.

The Puritans identified two important elements in the prelude to the temptations. The first was that the Spirit led Christ into the desert to be tempted. Here the divine hand is revealed to be at work, orchestrating the encounter, in spite of own Satan's intentions. Second are the conditions under which the combat is fought – that is, Christ is alone and hungry in the wilderness. Since solitude robs one of the support and comfort of others, hunger of the body weakens one's resolve, and the wilderness is considered to be Satan's home ground, all three conditions work to favour the tempter. The Puritans believed that this was done in order to entice Satan to attack Christ. Dyke concluded, "Christ, by the baits of the place, and of the condition in the place, draws him on, and provokes him to fight, giving him all the odds and advantage that might be."[37] The ambush worked, for Satan himself appears visibly and physically, and not merely as "a phantasm" who only worked in Christ's imagination.[38] God also gave Satan every advantage in order to magnify Christ's glory for having won the victory on such an unbalanced field.[39] Since the Spirit Himself lead Christ into this spiritually perilous situation, Christ is innocent of the charge of tempting God by presumptuously putting Himself in harm's way – a warning often sounded by the Puritans.[40]

Turning to the confrontation itself, the first temptation to turn stones to bread was seen by the Puritans as a temptation to distrust God. The temptation insists that God's miraculous provision for Jesus over the course of His 40-day fast cannot be trusted further, and so Jesus

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[37] Dyke, 12. See also Perkins, 12.
[38] Manton, 258 and 268. See also Gilpin, 340 and Perkins, 15. This seemingly minor point is considered important since, "To men the grievousness of Christ's temptations would be much lessened, if we should think it only a piece of fantasy, and imaginary rather than real. And if his temptations be lessened, so will his victory, so will our comfort" (Manton, 269). Furthermore, Thomas Hobbes insisted in *Leviathan* (1651) that Christ's temptations occurred via visions (see Gilpin, 415).
[39] See Dyke, 13.
[40] See Manton, 259.

must take matters into His own hands.[41] It also casts doubt on the divine declaration at Jesus' baptism that He is God's Son.[42] In either case, the temptation attacks faith by fostering distrust – which the Puritans saw as the same tactic as was used with Eve.[43] Satan adopts this tactic for two reasons:

> First, [the Devil] knew well, that if Christ were the true and proper son of God, then...he it was that must accomplish that old and ancient promise made to our first parents 'for the bruising of the serpent's head.' That was the thing that of all other, the devil was most afraid of...and therefore by moving this question he intends to infringe, yea and (if he could) quite overthrow our Saviour Christ in the right of this title. Secondly, the devil since his fall, bears an unspeakable deadly hatred against God himself...whereas in Christ's baptism a little before, God had proclaimed him 'to be his beloved Son on whom he was well pleased', hereby the Devil goes about to prove the clear contrary, and so as much as in him lieth, seeks to make God a liar.[44]

Christ's response to the temptation is a re-affirmation of His trust in God's provision. The reply of "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceededth out of the mouth of God" – quoted from Deuteronomy 8:3 – was understood by the Puritans not "that a man may live by the written word without meat and drink," but rather "that whatsoever way [God] hath appointed whereby man shall live, whether by ordinary or extraordinary means, whether without means or against means, the same shall be effectual for man's preservation."[45] On the other hand, "No means can avail unless God giveth his blessing."[46]

The order of the temptations in Matthew's version of the story differs from Luke's.[47] Gilpin explained that "Luke puts this temptation last, but he only had respect to the substance of the temptation in his narration; not regarding the order of them, which Matthew hath punctually

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[41] See Manton, 270; Gilpin, 355–56; and Perkins, 16.
[42] See Manton, 270; Gilpin, 351; and Perkins, 15.
[43] See Gilpin, 355.
[44] Perkins, 17.
[45] Perkins, 21. See also Manton, 275–76.
[46] Manton, 276.
[47] In Matthew the second temptation is for Christ to throw Himself from the temple pinnacle, while Luke puts the temptation to worship Satan in exchange for the kingdoms of the world second.

observed."[48] Gilpin insisted that Matthew's order is logical since the temptation springs from Christ's affirmation of trust in God's care in response to the first temptation: "as if Satan had said 'Since thou wilt rely upon the help and providence of God in an extraordinary way of working, give an experiment of that by casting thyself down."[49] The Puritans discerned that Satan's purpose in this second temptation was to lead Christ into presumption, for "the neglect of ordinary means, when we have them, is a tempting of God."[50] While Manton agreed that presumption was one aspect of the temptation, he believed that the chief reason it was wrong was that it was incompatible with the nature of His ministry:

> Christ was not to begin his ministry by miracles, but doctrine...the gospel was to be first preached, then sealed and confirmed by miracles; and Christ's miracles were not to be ludicrous, but profitable...to instruct and help men, rather than strike them with wonder.[51]

Therefore, while presumption was the general consensus amongst Puritans regarding the aim of the second temptation, it was not the only theory.

One aspect of this temptation that received much attention from the Puritans was Satan's transportation of Christ to Jerusalem. They dismissed the interpretation that it was "a visionary or an imaginary thing;" Christ and Satan were physically present at the Temple's pinnacle.[52] Neither did the Puritans agree with the theory that Christ simply followed Satan there on foot.[53] Instead, they believed that the interpretation that "Satan was permitted to take up the body of Christ, and by his power to have conveyed him in the air" best fits the passage.[54] Their preoccupation with this issue appears to be related to two incorrect conclusions that some drew

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[48] Gilpin, 376.
[49] Gilpin, 376.
[50] Gilpin, 382. See also Perkins, 27 and Manton, 293.
[51] Manton, 278.
[52] Gilpin, 377.
[53] See Gilpin, 377.
[54] Gilpin, 377. See also Manton, 277 and Perkins, 23.

from this interpretation. First, the fact that Satan was able to exercise his power over Christ this way does not mean that Satan was stronger; Manton insisted that "this translation is not to be imputed to the weakness of Christ, but his patience, submitting thus far that he might experience all the machinations of Satan."[55] Second, some believed that the righteous cannot be physically affected by Satan; but the Puritans were eager to show that, with God's permission, Satan can touch anyone.[56]

The third temptation aimed to "draw Christ to commit idolatry by the hope of worldly kingdoms and the glory of them."[57] Gilpin explained the charge of idolatry by defining the term two ways:

> We worship God, when in ways and actions commanded or prescribed, we testify our belief and resentment of his incommunicable attributes. It is idolatry when either we use the same actions of prescribed worship to that which is not God, or when we testify our respects to the true God in an undue way of our devising.[58]

Gilpin then took advantage of the discussion to condemn the Roman Catholic distinction of *latria* and *dulia*:[59]

> Satan doth not here set himself up as the omnipotent God, for he acknolwedgeth one superior to himself, in that he confesseth that the power he had of the kingdoms of the world was given to him (Luke 4:6) and therefore not the *latria* but the *dulia* is required of [Christ]; and yet this Christ denies him as being idolatry, in that no religious worship...is due any but God alone.[60]

Therefore, Christ's refusal to offer Satan neither *latria* nor *dulia* was enlisted in the debate against the entire Roman Catholic veneration of Mary and the saints.

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[55] Manton, 277.
[56] Manton, 281.
[57] Perkins, 38.
[58] Gilpin, 430.
[59] In Roman Catholicism, *latria*, or worship, may only be offered to God. However, *dulia*, or veneration, may be offered to Mary and the saints. This distinction allows them to give homage to Mary and the saints while remaining innocent of violating the second Commandment – an explanation the Puritans found unconvincing.
[60] Gilpin, 430.

The means by which Satan attempted to entice Christ to commit this idolatry was the use of worldly pleasures – a technique he often uses to divert the mind from God.[61] This enticement raises two questions that the Puritans endeavoured to answer. First, there is no mountain from which all the kingdoms of the world may be seen, therefore they believe that "the words must not be taken rigorously."[62] Instead, the Puritans proposed that Satan again transported Jesus to a mountaintop where "many castles, towns, and fruitful fields might be seen as a sample of the rest" and then amplified this vista "by Satan's skill and art, as a great naturalist and a prince of the power of the air."[63] Since Satan could not direct affect Christ's imagination, he could not show Him a completely made-up vision of the kingdoms of the world, thus he had to bring him to a mountaintop to have a view upon which to work.[64] Satan also chose to show Christ the kingdoms of the world from a mountain in order to imitate God showing Moses the Promised Land from Mount Nebo.[65] The second question the enticement raises is whether Satan's offer to give Christ the kingdoms of the world was genuine. The Puritans uniformly denied that the ability to grant such rule was within Satan's power, believing that God alone has the sovereignty to distribute the world's kingdom as He wills.[66] Citing Psalm 24:1 and Proverbs 8:15, they insisted that God alone determines who governs the earth. However, Dyke did note that there is some truth in what Satan says:

> The Devil's chain is sometimes slackened, and God lets him alone in his violent usurpation, and disposing of these earthly things, and that for the most just causes...[However] the

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[61] See Gilpin, 424.
[62] Manton, 302. See also Gilpin 415–16.
[63] Manton, 302 and Gilpin, 416.
[64] Manton, 302. This line of reasoning also allows the Puritans to avoid contradicting their insistence that the temptations were real and not mere visions (See Gilpin, 416).
[65] See Perkins, 36, Gilpin, 415, and Manton, 302.
[66] See Perkins, 39–40; Gilpin, 415–16; Manton, 303; and Dyke, 220.

> Devil turns *toleration* into *donation*, connivance and *permission* into *approbation*, and that which is done at some times, and in some places he makes constant and general.[67]

Nevertheless, the Puritan consensus was that Satan could not legitimately offer Christ the kingdoms of the world.

Conclusion

It is at this point that Greenfield's four-fold breakdown of the field of demonology fits the Puritan body of knowledge the worst. The origin and nature of demons, their assaults today and how Christians can defend themselves are all well-represented in the Puritan spiritual warfare literature. However, demonic activity in history is only of interest as illustrations of Satan's nature, his assaults, or defences against them. This fits with the general Puritan disinterest in speculation and focus on exploring the practical implications of Biblical doctrine. To follow Puritan presentation of demonology more closely, one would have to divide this category amongst the other three.

Puritan descriptions of the temptations of Eve and Christ emphasized human depravity and divine sovereignty. The Puritans took up the curse resulting from Eve's act of rebellion as an opportunity to expound the depth of human depravity. In particular, they emphasized that, although Satan did tempt her, and God did allow that temptation to take place, Eve remained responsible for her disobedience and justly bore the punishment for it. The Puritans also used this episode to explore how human depravity remains operative in Christians, even after regeneration. They also used Christ's temptation to show that God orchestrated the encounter to achieve His glorious purposes – such as providing a template for resistance against Satan.

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[67] Dyke, 223--24.

CHAPTER THREE

TYPES OF DEMONIC ASSAULTS

Temptations

Several historians have observed that the demonic activity that the Puritans discussed the most was temptations.[1] The Puritans considered an intimate familiarity with the temptations employed by Satan and his demons to be essential for spiritual health and safety. Brooks listed "Satan's devices" as one of "the four prime things that should be first and most studied and searched," together with Christ, the Bible and the believer's own heart; "If any cast off the study of these, they cannot be safe here, nor happy hereafter."[2] Gurnall urged his readers to "study his [Satan's] wiles" and to consult God, for He "can tell thee what plots are hatching there [in hell] against thee."[3] The Puritans considered such familiarity with Satan's devices beneficial since it highlighted the dangers on the spiritual journey, therefore rousing the drowsy soul to greater watchfulness.[4]

However, Satan stoutly resists any disclosure of the details of his tempting technique. Brooks observed that his research on demonic strategies was fraught with obstacles and difficulties, since "Satan strives mightily to keep those things from seeing the light."[5] Gilpin likewise warned that Satan will try to keep people ignorant of his devices "by the power of prejudice," dismissing any instruction on the topic as "idle speculations" and undermining

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[1] See Introduction, "Historical Works on Puritan Spiritual Warfare"
[2] Brooks, 3.
[3] Gurnall, 57, 58. Gilpin goes even further, insisting that only God can reveal Satan's plans (9).
[4] See Brooks, 156, Gilpin, 9, and Spurstowe, 6.
[5] Brooks, 5.

pastoral exhortations to believers to study the topic by portraying it as something beyond their intellectual ability or simply too much hard work.[6] This demonic concealment results in a dangerous misconception of how Satan works:

> Indeed the natural man doth not perceive that working of Satan which doth procure his woe. It may be he hath seen the players' and the painters' Devils, some black-horned monster with broad eyes, crooked claws or cloven feet. And until some such thing appears unto him, he never fears hurt by Satan.[7]

Although written in another time and place, the Puritans would agree with the nineteenth-century French poet Charles Baudelaire that, "la plus belle des ruses du diable est de vous persuader qu'il n'existe pas!"[8]

The Puritans identified four main categories of temptations. First is to draw people to sin. Although the Puritans did not have a well-defined typology of these sins (like the Roman Catholic seven deadly sins or the Eastern Orthodox eight evil thoughts), Gilpin did attempt to map the three temptations from 1 John 2:16 to the temptations of both Eve and Jesus.[9] The second kind of demonic temptations try to divert Christians from their holy duties. The third kind aims to dilute the pure doctrine of the church. The final category of temptations – disguising the soul's spiritual state – constituted one of the primary pastoral challenges that Puritan pastors faced, both in comforting the elect and challenging the hypocrites. The Puritans catalogued numerous variations and implementations of these four temptations, which are outlined below.

1. Drawing Souls to Sin

In addition to the primary aim of defacing the sinner and dishonouring God, the Puritans offered several secondary reasons as to why Satan tempts Christians to sin. Gurnall noted that

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[6] Gilpin, 4, 5.
[7] Perkins, ii.
[8] "the devil's best trick is to persuade you that he doesn't exist!" *Le Joueur généreux*, 2.
[9] See Gilpin, 344–45. See also Gurnall, 489–493 and Owen, 116.

holiness – that is, realized sanctification rather than justification or regeneration – is of great benefit to the believer.[10] First, while holiness does not entitle the believer to be a child of God, it does serve as an evidence for such a status, and therefore is a source of assurance and peace of the soul. Holiness also facilitates communion and fellowship with God. Furthermore, holiness of life exerts a powerful influence upon others, whether in the church or out of it. Finally, Gurnall argued from the episode of Abraham's bargaining with God over the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19 that personal holiness keeps entire nations safe and prosperous. Since holiness has so many benefits, Satan does all he can to cripple it in believers by tempting them to sin.

The primary form of enticement to sin is to emphasize the pleasure of the suggested sin or the benefits it will reap. Like a skilled salesman, Satan highlights every possible benefit of engaging in the sin, even to the point of promising "more than ever sin can give."[11] Such deception is necessary, insisted Gilpin, because a rational person cannot desire evil as evil – he or she needs to be convinced that it is good in some way.[12] Therefore, "in every act of sin, men, by compliance with Satan, are said to deceive ... themselves."[13] However, in some cases, Satan will obstruct the way to sin, knowing that our "natural curiosity presseth us with great earnestness after things of difficult access, and we have also strange desires kindled in us from a prohibition."[14] This apparent obstruction is therefore merely a more subtle form of enticement. A related form of misdirection is when Satan "tempts us to something that is most cross to our temper or present inclination...to make us to run as far from it as we can into another snare, and

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[10] Gurnall's explication can be found on pages 306–09.
[11] Gilpin, 421. See also Brooks, 12, Perkins, 37, Gurnall, 131, Spurstowe, 63 and Owen, 37.
[12] See Gilpin, 55, Owen, 67–68, and Spurstowe, 47.
[13] Gilpin, 55.
[14] Gilpin, 423. Gilpin offers the example of the seeming difficultly of attaining some worldly rewards, such as material possessions or an influential position.

also to make us believe that we have done well and avoided a temptation, when indeed we have but exchanged it."[15]

Often accompanying this emphasis on the benefits of sin is a de-emphasis of the dangers of the suggested sin. The Puritans catalogued numerous arguments that Satan uses to portray sin as less perilous. The first group of arguments insist that the suggested action is not, in fact, a sin. Satan paints "sin with virtue's colours;" greed is disguised as good stewardship; pride as nobility; drunkenness as good fellowship.[16] A similar approach argues that it is harmless to enter a situation where temptation is likely.[17] Finally, Satan may encourage intemperate excess in the enjoyment of lawful things.[18]

The second set of arguments that portray sin as less hazardous acknowledge that the suggested sin is evil, but insist that it will have little or no negative impact. The assertion most commonly identified by the Puritans in this category is that the sin is small: "it is but a little pride, a little worldliness, a little uncleanness, a little drunkenness, etc...You may commit it without any danger to your soul."[19] This suggestion is often combined with a comparison with other Christians: "It is so small a sin, especially when compared with so-and-so's sin – and he's a bishop!"[20] By these arguments, Satan seeks to draw the believer into sin "by insensible degrees," from thought to habit, from small matters to gross sins.[21] Another argument in this vein is that the sin will remain secret: "I will not be seen abroad in thy company to shame thee among thy neighbours."[22] Other arguments spring from the twin lies that "you can stop whenever you want"

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[15] Gilpin, 73–4. See also Perkins, 28 and Gurnall, 53.
[16] Brooks, 16. See also Gilpin, 73 and Spurstowe, 64.
[17] See Brooks, 38 and Gilpin, 72.
[18] See Spurstowe, 67–68.
[19] Brooks, 19. See also Gilpin, 75, Gurnall, 4, Owen, 60–61, and Spurstowe, 50.
[20] See Brooks, 24, Gilpin, 75 and 112, Gurnall, 628.
[21] Gilpin 71. See also Perkins, 11–12, Gurnall, 52 and Spurstowe, 40.
[22] Gurnall, 4.

and "repentance is easy."[23] In short, Satan suggests the damage done by committing the sin – if any – may be quickly and effortlessly repaired.

Finally, there are those arguments that admit that the sin is evil, but insist that it is unavoidable. The first offers an excuse from infirmity: "The temptation is so strong and you are so weak; surely the fact that you even tried to resist means that you won't be blamed for it."[24] This would have been an especially effective strategy at the time since the Reformed tradition taught that sins of infirmity could never be entirely eliminated in this life. The second argument insists that, while the sinful act is regrettable, it is necessary, either due to the demands of the situation or in order to fulfill one's legitimate responsibilities.[25] Related to this argument is the idea that "one act of sin may put you into a capacity of honouring God more".[26] By way of example, Gilpin mentioned those who have "admitted advancements and dignities against conscience, upon no better ground but that they might keep out knaves, and that they might be in a condition to be helpful to good men."[27] This is an oblique reference to the Church of England's offers of ecclesiastical appointments to Gilpin and other prominent Puritans after the Great Ejection in 1662. These appointments could only be accepted by agreeing to conform to the Act of Uniformity, which was unthinkable to almost all Puritans.

The maximization of the pleasure of sin and the minimization of the dangers of sin conspire to alter the perceived cost-benefit ratio of committing the sin. One would be a fool to not purchase so much at so small a cost! But Perkins warned that this one-two combination is a common demonic approach, which then flips once the sin has actually been committed:

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[23] See Gilpin, 75 and 76; Brooks, 27 and 30; Owen, 41; and Spurstowe, 42 and 86.
[24] See Gilpin, 75–76.
[25] See Gilpin, 75 and 347–49.
[26] Gilpin, 76.
[27] Gilpin, 76.

> He hides from their eyes all the miseries, plagues and punishments which are due to sin and that will follow upon it, and he shows them only all the profits and delights that they may reap thereby. Thus he sugars over the poison of his temptations, that men never feel the bitterness of them until their souls be thereby deadly infected. But then he takes a clean contrary course, and shows to the wounded soul all the woes and terrors of God's wrath, that if it be possible he may bring a man to despair.[28]

Thus the tempter quickly becomes the accuser.

2. Diverting Souls from their Duties

The Puritans observed that Satan's temptations also targeted Christians' performance of their 'duties.' This term included the spiritual disciplines, participation in Christian community, service in ministry, obedience to God's commands, or any other kind of religious obligation. Gilpin, who has the most comprehensive teaching on this category of temptations in the sources surveyed, identified several reasons why these duties were a prime target for demonic attack. If Satan succeeds in this endeavour, he "deprives us of our weapons" and "cuts off our provisions," which "saves him a labour in his temptations."[29] He also "robs God of that honour" which the duties might have rendered.[30] Thus, the attack strikes at both the Christian and God Himself.

According to the Puritans, Satan's first approach to diverting souls from their duties is to prevent those duties in the first place. He may engineer various circumstances in order to provide excuses for neglecting the duty, including "bodily indispositions" and "a throng of worldly affairs."[31] This is particularly insidious because, if successful, Satan's hand is not discerned in the distraction, but rather it is merely ascribed to coincidence.[32] Alternatively, he may emphasize how toilsome and tedious the duty is, endeavouring "to picture a holy righteous life with such an

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[28] Perkins, 37–38. See also Brooks, 37; Gurnall, 65; Gilpin, 100; Owen, 134; and Spurstowe, 42.
[29] Gilpin, 100.
[30] Gilpin, 101. See also Gurnall, 561–62.
[31] Gilpin, 104, 105. See also Gilpin, 117; Spurstowe, 88–89; and Owen, 49.
[32] Gilpin, 104

austere sour face, that the creature may be out of love with it."[33] However, noted Gilpin, this tactic is successful only against those "that have not yet tasted the sweetness and easiness of the ways of the Lord."[34] Other demonic techniques for rendering duties unattractive include raising up "nicknames and scoffs against the ways of God's service,"[35] emphasizing the "outward meanness" of duties and the suffering they can provoke,[36] and pointing out how few bother with them.[37] The final way Satan stirs up distaste for duties is by pointing out how fruitless they have been in the past.[38]

Satan also drives believers from their duties by focusing his temptations on the individual, rather than on the duties themselves. He may try to convince believers that they are somehow unworthy of performing the duty, that their hearts are unprepared, and that to proceed without true sincerity would be irreverent and presumptuous.[39] Or he might take the opposite tack, arguing from salvation by grace alone that Christ has done it all and therefore believers need not do anything.[40] Gilpin, who struggled with the Quakers in his parish, referred to a specific form of this temptation: they "have the communications of his Spirit, and therefore they need not now drink of the cistern, seeing they enjoy the fountain; and that these services ... are as useless as scaffolds are when once the house is built."[41] Finally, Satan may encourage believers to rest on their past duties, reasoning that since they were so diligent in the past, they can now relax.[42]

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[33] Gurnall, 385. See also Brooks, 73 and Gilpin, 106, 113.
[34] Gilpin, 107.
[35] Gilpin, 109. See also Spurstowe, 65–66.
[36] Gilpin, 111. See also Brooks, 70, 81.
[37] See Gilpin, 117 and Brooks, 84.
[38] See Gilpin, 107.
[39] See Gipin, 108 and Gurnall, 277.
[40] See Gilpin, 116, Spurstowe, 58, and Brooks, 77.
[41] Gilpin, 114.
[42] See Gilpin, 117 and Brooks, 89.

If unable to convince believers to neglect their duties entirely, Satan attempts to corrupt them. The Puritans defined a corrupt duty as one that is "displeasing unto God and unprofitable to us."[43] The Devil accomplishes such corruption in one of four ways: by unbalancing the duty, by suggesting a wrong foundation for the duty, by distracting the believer during the execution of the duty, or by spoiling the duty after the fact. The Puritans identified several demonic techniques by which duties may become unbalanced, all of which ironically involve encouraging the Christian to engage in a godly duty – but always in a way that will compromise that duty or others. Satan may pit one duty against another, encouraging a lesser duty to the neglect of the greater – Martha and the Pharisees are cited as victims of this technique.[44] Or he may put believers off their present duty to grasp at a duty that is beyond their reach, whether due to office or to ability.[45] The Devil might also convince believers to perform the duty at the wrong time; for instance, preparing for future duties at the expense of today's obedience.[46] In each case, because Satan is encouraging a duty, the temptation is often not recognized for what it is.

Satan may also urge believers to perform their duties in such a way as to spoil them. Gilpin listed several ways duties may be built on a wrong foundation. They may be undertaken carelessly, or the opposite extreme of attempting to perform them "in our own strength, and not in the strength of God."[47] The Devil may tempt Christians to undertake their duties out of wrong motivations, such as a desire for the praise of others, out of mere habit, or in order to manipulate God into doing what they want.[48] Believers also may be tempted to perform their duties "without resolutions of leaving their sins" – for Satan "is willing that they engage in the services of God,

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[43] Gilpin, 118.
[44] See Gilpin, 116, Gurnall, 368, and Owen, 50.
[45] Saul's sacrifice in 1Sam is cited as an example of the first, while works of supererogation are examples of the second. See Gilpin, 118.
[46] See Gilpin, 118 and 119, Spurstowe, 59 and 81 and Owen, 50.
[47] Gilpin, 118. See also Spurstowe, 61.
[48] See Gilpin, 119 and 120, Spurstowe, 80–81 and Owen, 52–53.

if they will keep up their allegiance to him."[49] With regard to the duty itself, Satan urges people to be more concerned with the duty's outward expression than its inward work.[50] Alternatively, he encourages human additions to divine duties or excess in their performance.[51]

If Satan cannot get Christians to spoil their duties, he attempts to ruin them through distractions.[52] These can be either demonically engineered external events or inward injections.[53] In the second category, he may inject "sinful, proud, filthy, yea blasphemous thoughts;" for even if the believer stoutly resists them, they can constitute a formidable distraction.[54] Other times he prompts "thoughts holy in themselves but impertinent...good fruit being brought forth in a bad season."[55] Sometimes Satan is not the origin of the distraction, but merely encourages the person's own flights of fancy.[56]

Finally, if Satan was unable to unbalance, spoil or interrupt the duty, he tries to corrupt it afterwards. In this endeavour, the Devil takes one of two approaches: condemnation or praise. If the believer discovers any weakness in the duty – and "who doth not," Gilpin wryly asked[57] – Satan can criticize how the duty was performed, taking "our duties in pieces, and so disfigure them that they shall appear formal, though never so zealous; hypocritical, though enriched with much sincerity."[58] Alternatively, the Devil can applaud Christians for a job well done and encourage them to take pride in their performance, with the goal of tempting "to think highly of

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[49] Gilpin, 119.
[50] See Gilpin, 123.
[51] See Gilpin, 124. Although Gilpin does not explicitly mention the Roman Catholics in his examples of these temptations, they are clearly in view at this point. See also Spurstowe, 89–90.
[52] See Brooks, 85.
[53] See Gilpin, 120–23.
[54] Gurnall, 665.
[55] Gurnall, 665.
[56] See Gurnall, 664.
[57] Gilpin, 113
[58] Gurnall, 60.

ourselves...as if we were better than others, whom we are apt to censure as low and weak."[59] Another variation on this theme is to encourage security, urging believers to think that the duty was performed so well that they can be less diligent in the future. The tempter echoes the words of the rich fool: "Soul, take thine ease: thou hast much laid up for many years."[60]

3. Diluting Pure Doctrine

The Puritans attributed the creation and maintenance of heresy to demonic activity. Perkins described this work as "a principal part of the Devil's endeavours against God's church,"[61] while Goodwin observed that Scripture itself connects Satan with false teachers and their teachings.[62] Several reasons are offered as to why Satan would busy himself in such work. First and foremost is that all doctrinal errors are sins, "greater or lesser evils, according to the importance of those truths which they deny, or the consequences that attend them."[63] However, Gurnall noted that Satan lowers "the price of errors in the thoughts of men" so that people "think they shall not pay so dear for an error in judgement as for a sin in practice."[64] He pithily concludes, "if thou beest a slave to the devil, it matters not to what part thy chain be fastened, whether to the head or foot."[65]

Apart from error being sin, the Puritans identified several secondary effects of error that make it a demonic priority. Error is a contagious sin, spreading not only from person to person, but also within a person's mind, eventually corrupting all truths.[66] Error also provokes division, hatred and wars.[67] Error is Satan's preferred tool for derailing reformations, since it both divides

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[59] Gilpin, 125.
[60] Luke 12:19, quoted in Gilpin, 125.
[61] Perkins, 41.
[62] Romans 16:18, Revelation 2:24, 1Timothy 4:1 and 2 Thessalonians 2:9 are quoted in Goodwin, 265. See also Gilpin, 127.
[63] Gilpin, 131.
[64] Gurnall, 617.
[65] Gurnall, 299.
[66] See Gilpin, 131–2 and Spurstowe, 108.
[67] See Gilpin, 132. See also Gurnall, 136.

the reformers and gives their enemies ammunition against them – a particular concern for the Puritans in their reforming endeavours.[68] Finally, corrupt doctrines result in corrupt practices, or at the very least impede spiritual progress.[69]

As with the other stratagems, the Puritans listed several means by which Satan tries to promulgate his errors. He always attempts to give the error some kind of basis in Scripture, basing the lie as close to the truth as possible.[70] He does this most commonly by taking "part of a truth which should stand in conjunction with another, and sets it up alone against its own companion."[71] He is also careful to make liberal use of the language of Scripture in order to legitimate the error.[72] However, Perkins noted that one mark of false teachers is that – contrary to Scripture – they try to prove that Jesus was not the Son of God, but rather merely a worthy prophet.[73] In addition to the cloak of Scripture, Satan disguises error with the cloak of mystery. He suggests that Scripture contains secret truths hidden in allegories, or whispers prophetic words of knowledge that constitute a 'more complete' revelation of God's will than that contained in the written Word. In either case, the heretics believe that they alone are God's favourites because they have discovered doctrines concealed from the mainstream Church.[74] Alternatively, the Devil may set up tradition as the completion and perfection of the Word.[75] Furthermore, Satan tries to convince people of the divine approval of his doctrine by imitating the Holy Spirit's revelatory *modi operandi*.[76] These include: auditions, ecstatic visions, dreams,

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[68] See Gilpin, 133–34.
[69] See Gilpin, 74, 137, and 139; Brooks, 56; and Gurnall, 135–36.
[70] See Gilpin, 158; Perkins, 29–31; Spurstowe, 74; and Gurnall, 51.
[71] Gilpin, 161.
[72] See Gilpin, 161.
[73] See Perkins, 17. See also Gurnall, 213.
[74] See Gilpin, 162–65 and Spurstowe, 76–78. Here again Gilpin's struggle with the Quakers expresses itself.
[75] See Gilpin, 197.
[76] This is how the Puritans interpreted the warning in 2 Corinthians 11:14 that Satan could appear as an angel of light.

miraculous signs, prophetic utterances, inward impulses, or the spontaneous injection of Scripture verses into the mind.[77] The Devil also attempts to "adorn an error with truth's clothing," by encouraging those behaviours that often accompany true doctrine, such as zeal, order, or strictness of life.[78]

Satan also encourages error by the way it is promoted. He uses "unintelligible gibberish" and "affected expressions" to increase the dramatic impact of errors that are otherwise "too flat and dull to gain upon any man of competent understanding."[79] Sometimes, instead of using sophisticated arguments to sustain the error, one merely encounters "bold assertions that it is truth, and a confident condemning the contrary as an error...backed with threatening of hell and damnation."[80] The Devil also renders the truth unattractive by misrepresenting it or slandering those that adhere to it.[81] Finally, Satan argues for the error from the learning, eloquence or holiness (real or imagined) of those that support it, or from "the ease, peace or other advantages which men pretend they have received since they engaged in such a way."[82]

4. Disguising a Soul's Spiritual State

The final key demonic temptation elucidated by the Puritans was deception regarding the soul's true condition. Perkins asserted that Satan always contradicts God, pronouncing damnation where God pronounces grace, and favour where God condemns.[83] These twin deceptions are summarized in the title of Thomas Goodwin's treatise on Isaiah 50:10-11: *A Child of Light Walking in Darkness and a Child of Darkness Walking in Light.*

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[77] See Gilpin, 172–3, 177, 179, and 403–7; Spurstowe, 78–79; and Perkins, 36–37.
[78] Gilpin, 207.
[79] Gilpin, 166.
[80] Gilpin, 167.
[81] See Gilpin, 185–6.
[82] See Gilpin, 168, 183.
[83] See Perkins, 17.

According to the Puritans, Satan carefully buttresses the carnal security of the reprobate and the hypocrite. Gurnall listed four arguments by which hypocrites are convinced that they are saved: "I am fearless in danger, like the righteous," "I perform secret duties in my closet," "I pray and fight against my sins, and have even conquered some of them," and "I despise hypocrisy in others."[84] Once Satan has thus convinced the hypocrite, he vigorously resists losing his prey to God's gospel messengers. He does all he can to isolate them from "serious thoughts" about their spiritual state, employing such instruments as carnal friends and flattering preachers.[85] Satan also tempts people to related forms of presumption, such as expecting God's promised blessings while neglecting the means by which they are ordinarily mediated. Examples of this presumption include expecting abundant material provision while failing to work diligently, or foolishly entering tempting situations while expecting God to deliver them from sin.[86]

The Puritans recognized that presumption was a more common temptation than despair. Perkins insisted that for every person who falls to despair "a thousand perish through presumption... for despair is a painful thing to flesh and blood...but to presume is sweet and pleasant to the flesh."[87] Nevertheless, Puritan pastors wrote much more about despair than presumption. This may be due to the fact that, while presumption was more common in the general population, despair was more common among the Puritans themselves. This has led

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[84] See Gurnall, 252–53.
[85] See Gurnall, 113.
[86] See Perkins, 33–35 and Gilpin, 383–85.
[87] Perkins, 28.

some historians to label the search for assurance as the preeminent Puritan pastoral care problem.[88]

Various Puritan authors made it clear that, while Satan cannot rob believers of their salvation, he can deprive them of their peace and comfort – that is, the subjective assurance that they objectively belong to God.[89] Gurnall noted that the Devil turns to this strategy when his enticements to pleasurable sins are unsuccessful; thus, temptations to despair are actually a sign that Satan is "hard put to it."[90] However, Gilpin offered an alternate explanation: that certain temperaments or life situations make believers susceptible to temptations to despair.[91] Despite of these differences of opinion regarding the reason for such temptations, all agree that many were plagued by them. Gurnall even argued that despair is the sin that Satan chiefly aims at, and that "other sins are but as previous dispositions to introduce that, and make the creature more receptive for such a temptation."[92]

Three main reasons are offered as to why Satan attacks the believer's peace. The first is personal; the Devil and his demons are indignant that any human should enjoy the happiness that they lost when they fell.[93] The second reason is psychological: while he cannot really separate believers from God, the Devil attempts to get them to believe that they do not belong to God.[94] Finally, Christian peace is attacked because it is a valuable target in itself; it "adorns and beautifies the ways of religious service, to render them amiable and pleasant," "all holy services

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[88] See Stanglin, *Arminius*, 98. However, there is some disagreement on this point; see Ferguson, *John Owen on the Christian Life*, 99.
[89] See Brooks, 91 and Gurnall, 500.
[90] Gurnall, 499.
[91] See Gilpin, 220–223.
[92] Gurnall, 508.
[93] See Gilpin, 207; Goodwin, 257; and Gurnall, 508,
[94] See Goodwin, 257.

doth depend upon it," and it is "a badge of our heavenly Father's kindness."[95] This is why Satan works so hard to undermine peace.

Satan undertakes these temptations by arguing against the Christian's regeneration. His arsenal of false syllogisms seeks to convince the believer that she is not, in fact, one of God's children, but merely a self-deluded hypocrite. Goodwin explained that these syllogisms are false either in their major or minor premise:

> His false *majors*, they are such as, misapprehensions of the ways and of the work of grace, or misunderstanding of sayings of Scripture, etc...But he hath another wing of forces to join these; and they are false accusations of a man to himself, from the guilt of his own heart and ways, misconceits of a man's self, and misapplications to a man's self: another sort of arguments, wherein the *minors* are false."[96]

These false syllogisms are based on misrepresentations of four truths: the major premises of the nature of conversion and God's providence and holiness, and the minor premises of the person's sins and graces.

The Puritans noted several ways that Satan attempts to misrepresent conversion in order to convince Christians that they never were regenerated. One lie is that conversion must always involve feelings of terror.[97] After all, without such an experience of fear, how can they be sure they were truly humbled for their sin?[98] On the opposite extreme is the myth that true converts should never feel fear of God once they have been converted; if they do, it is proof that they still live under "a spirit of bondage."[99] Another myth is that true converts must be able to specifically identify the time and manner of their conversion; without a sure knowledge of such details, how can they be sure they were converted?[100] Satan also argues that true conversion immediately

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[95] Gilpin, 210–211.
[96] Goodwin, 268. See also Spurstowe, 82–83.
[97] See Gilpin, 270.
[98] See Gurnall, 61
[99] Gilpin, 271.
[100] See Gilpin, 270.

generates remarkable gifts of prayer and exhortation, as well as growth in grace that is both visible and rapid.[101] Another myth about conversion that found wide acceptance in the Reformed tradition – including the Puritan movement – was the idea that saving faith always included assurance.[102] Therefore, lacking assurance meant *ipso facto* that one is not converted. While many Reformed theologians and pastors challenged this myth, knowing that a varying assurance would result in a varying sense of election, the idea remained popular. Finally, the Devil argues that since true converts love God for Himself instead of His gifts, they should be unconcerned whether they are saved or not; anything less would be selfishness.[103] This radicalization of the Puritan emphasis on God's sovereignty insists that believers ought to desire that God would be honoured even if that means that they would be damned.[104]

The Devil also misrepresents God's nature in order to convince believers that they are not His children. The most common argument is from afflictions. Any "dark providences" are interpreted to mean that God does not love the believer; after all, He would never treat His beloved children this way.[105] Satan might even emphasize God's holiness and justice; however his goal is not to honour God, but rather to make the believer feel small and dirty, unworthy of being one of God's children.[106]

Turning to the believer's own characteristics, Satan argues against their regeneration from their sins. Gurnall believed that the Devil's chief temptation to get souls to despair "is taken from all the greatness and multitude of the creature's sins."[107] Satan suggests that Christians' ongoing

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[101] See Gilpin, 270–1.
[102] See Gilpin, 270.
[103] See Gilpin, 271.
[104] See Gilpin, 271. This line of reasoning resulted in a common ordination question in Scottish Presbyteries in the nineteenth century: "Are you willing to be damned to the glory of God?"
[105] Gurnall, 67. See also Gilpin, 273–4; Perkins, 16; and Brooks, 97.
[106] See Gilpin, 272.
[107] Gurnall, 508.

struggle against sin proves that they are hypocrites, especially when they relapse into the same sin despite having sincerely repented of it and prayed against it.[108] This temptation is so effective because Christians mistake these suggestions for the conviction of the Holy Spirit rather than the condemnation of the Accuser.[109] Furthermore, the Devil attempts to get believers to forget about God's mercies in Christ, and to focus only on their sins alone.[110] Even those without a habitual sin can be the victims of this temptation. Satan will vex the believer with temptations, and then turn around and insist that they are not elect because they are so tempted.[111]

Finally, Satan argues that Christians do not have justifying faith because they lack the graces found in God's children, such as faith, humility, or patience. He presents false major premises by giving the grace a false definition, elevating it to such heights that few could honestly claim to possess it.[112] The aforementioned temptation of including assurance in the definition of saving faith is an example of this heightening of a grace.[113] Alternatively, the Devil may employ a false minor premise, presenting the believer's grace as less than it really is or suggesting that it is counterfeit altogether.[114] He dismisses the ordinary evidences of regeneration – such as repentance, mortification of sin, and love for the Church – as inadequate, insisting that only extraordinary evidences – such as direct revelation – are valid.

5. The Tactics of Temptation

These four great temptations are Satan's strategies. However, the Puritans also described in great detail Satan's tactics in temptation – the techniques that he uses regardless of which specific temptation he is aiming for at the moment. The first tactic, and most often described, is a

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[108] See Brooks, 110 and Spurstowe, 83.
[109] See Gurnall, 59.
[110] See Brooks, 91 and Goodwin, 270.
[111] Brooks, 113 and Gurnall, 59.
[112] See Gilpin, 280–82.
[113] See Brooks, 95.
[114] See Brooks, 99 and Gilpin 282–85.

personalized approach: "Whatever sin the heart of man is most prone to, that the devil will help forward...Satan loves to sail with the wind, and to suit men's temptations to their conditions and inclinations."[115] "He does this," explained Gilpin, "because he must win our consent; he cannot force it, but must entice and deceive us to comply with him."[116] If the temptation matches the person's temperament, situation, or calling, much less effort is required to convince the Christian to yield to it. This also explains why the temptations that trouble a certain person can vary; as their condition or situation changes, so does the Devil's approach.[117] Since seventeenth-century psychology was based on the Hippocratic four humours, the Puritans also proposed that demonic temptations were customized to the person's prevailing humour.[118] Furthermore, the Puritans catalogued those specific occasions when Satan is especially likely to tempt. [119] Those occasions most cited as being dangerous seasons include: at conversion, during times of affliction, before or during some great work for God's glory, after some great expression of God's love, and at the hour of death.[120] Regardless of the specifics, all agree that Satan carefully and constantly observes his quarry and selects the temptations most likely to succeed against them.

Another satanic tactic that is near universally observed by the Puritans is that temptations are unceasing.[121] Gilpin went further, noting that there is a gradual escalation in this unceasing stream of temptations. He proposed that this happens for two reasons: Satan does not want to reveal himself too much too soon, and thus frighten off his prey, and lesser temptations "prepare

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[115] Brooks, 3 and 4. See also Gilpin, 26, 59; Goodwin, 263–64; Perkins, 14; Spurstowe, 69–70; and Gurnall, 51.
[116] Gilpin, 346.
[117] See Gilpin, 377.
[118] Perkins, 14.
[119] See Gilpin, 80, Gurnall, 48, and Spurstowe, 21–22.
[120] See Gurnall 49–50. See also Gilpin, 46–47, 313–15, 343–44; Perkins, 2–3, 13; Love, 15; Owen 127–29; Spurstowe, 87–88.
[121] See Brooks, 117; Gilpin, 376; Perkins, 23–24; Spurstowe, 110; and Gurnall, 52.

and incline the heart to greater." [122] Gilpin also insisted that, in addition to this unending series of temptations in general, there can be long sieges of a specific temptation in particular.[123] This sort of incessant temptation gives the victim no rest and is highly resistant to prayer. Gilpin believed that such intense assaults require more than Satan's general commission to tempt believers; a special divine commission is necessary. God grants such commissions when He wants to demonstrate His ability to preserve the believer, or to prevent the sins of pride or sloth.

Spurstowe observed a third tactic: isolation. Satan compounds temptations with the urge to withdraw from any source of help from the community of faith:

> [Another Satanic wile] is to persuade Christians when he doth thus afflict to keep his counsel, so as either through shame or fear they dare say nothing...Thus Satan wounds, and would not have Christians complain; he tempts and solicits and would not have Christians seek counsel, and so many times the burden falls the heavier, and the wound smarts the more. Whereas if experienced Christians were acquainted with them it might be a help to them.[124]

Tragically, this isolation cuts off believers from the very things that would support and encourage them in their time of trial.

The Puritans envisioned the actual mechanics of temptation as a two-step process. First, the temptation is proposed, which can be delivered by one of several vectors. An external object may be presented, such as a valuable to pilfer or a doctrinal error to embrace.[125] If the temptation has been well-matched to the victim's inclinations and current situation, no further convincing is typically required.[126] If not, the Devil may enlist the aid of carefully-chosen proxies, such as

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[122] Gilpin, 342.
[123] See Gilpin, 331–32.
[124] Spurstowe, 85.
[125] See Gilpin, 61, 330; and Perkins, 7,
[126] See Gilpin, 61.

friends, family, or other influential persons, to highlight and reinforce the temptation.[127] This is why Satan carefully encourages believers to keep wicked company.[128]

If the object itself and one's companions are insufficient to present the temptation, the Devil steps in actively by injecting tempting thoughts into the believer's mind.[129] In this direct approach, he may adopt approaches of varying subtlety. One option is to disguise that he is tempting the believer, either by dropping the suggestion casually, without great force or importunity, or by "raising a crowd of other thoughts in the mind...then doth he thrust in among them the intended suggestion."[130] In either case, he seeks to pass off the thought as the product of his victim's own mind, making compliance more likely.[131] Alternatively, Satan may attempt to overcome the believer's resistance through a surprise attack: "he sets upon us without giving us warning of the onset; but then he backs it with all the violent importunity he can, and by this he hinders the recollecting of ourselves and the aid of reason."[132] He attacks so vigorously, insists Gilpin, because he has learned that "good men upon such a sudden motion do yield...to that which at other times they could not be drawn to by many reasons."[133]

Once the temptation has been presented, the second step is to overcome any resistance. Satan does so by urging the mind to embrace the temptation and the will to act upon it. While these faculties are outside of the Devil's direct reach, he can affect them indirectly in several ways. He may stimulate the imagination and affections, thereby "pulling at the weights and plummets" of the mind and will.[134] He may leverage the spirit-body unity of the human self by

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[127] See Gurnall, 53–56, Perkins, 51, and Gilpin, 61.
[128] See Brooks, 61 and Gilpin, 67.
[129] See Gilpin, 61, Owen, 100 and Spurstowe, 47.
[130] Gilpin, 71.
[131] See Spurstowe, 70–71.
[132] Gilpin, 71.
[133] Gilpin, 71.
[134] Gilpin, 62.

"stirring the humours to provoke to passion or excessive mirth."[135] Satan might importunately repeat the temptation, attempt to demoralize his opponent by insisting that they will never win, or boast that he has already won since "our thoughts could not have dwelt so long upon such a subject but that we had a liking to it."[136] This Puritan emphasis on the key role of the mind in temptation was explained by Owen:

> When sin attempts to enter into the soul by some other way (such as the affections), the mind checks and controls it. But when deceit influences the mind, the chance of sinning multiplies. The mind is the leading faculty of the soul. When the mind fixes upon an object or course of action, the will and affections follow suit.[137]

Thus, the Puritans saw the mind as strategic ground; if conquered, all other faculties will fall before it.

Once a sin has been established in the life of a believer, the Puritans listed several techniques by which the Devil maintains that sin. First, he attempts to intensify the sin so that the sinner will never think of repenting and returning to God.[138] This could be done by building a sinful habit through repetition, compounding that sin with another (for instance, lying or dissembling in order to hide it), or making the law offensive to the sinner (by raising the law's objections at a moment when the heart is most engaged with the sin). Second, the Devil does all he can to keep sinners from spiritual light.[139] He suppresses any stirrings of conscience, quieting them with assurance that their sin will remain hidden from others. He hinders those who might challenge sinners and incites lying preachers to tell them that they are good enough Christians. He snuffs out the light by persecution, smothers it with the cares of the world, deflects it with titillating thoughts of vain delights, and defers it with excuses and delays. If the light should

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[135] Gilpin, 330.
[136] Gilpin, 79–80. See also Spurstowe, 48–50.
[137] Owen, 36. However, he elsewhere notes that the will is influenced by both the mind and the emotions (Owen, 68–69).
[138] See Gilpin, 83–85.
[139] The list of interventions following comes from Gilpin, 85–91.

break in despite these countermeasures, Satan does all he can to stir up resentment against the light within the sinner's heart. Third, if sinners should discover their precarious situation and try to pull back from their sin, Satan does all he can to cut off their retreat. He intensifies the frequency and severity of the temptations to their habitual sin.[140] He boasts of his strength and the sinner's weakness and insists that any resistance is doomed to fail.[141] Where once he minimized the severity of the sin, he now magnifies it, declaring that it is too late for repentance, for the sin has opened an uncrossable chasm between the sinner and God.[142] Finally, if the sinner persists in repentance, Satan pleads that the execution be postponed for just a while – knowing that most reprieved sins are eventually welcomed back into the sinner's heart.[143] The Devil may even pretend to depart, but only so that the victim will become lax and less watchful at some future date.[144]

Other Demonic Assaults

While temptation is the form of demonic assault that receives the most attention from the Puritans by far, other assaults were mentioned from time to time. The first is persecution: "It is [Satan] that hath filled the world with blood and fury."[145] Gurnall saw this assault as a follow-up to Satan's enticements to error, and worried that the rampant error the Puritans perceived in England would soon break out in open persecution.[146] However, Gurnall also explained why Satan favours temptation over persecution as a means of assault:

> Christian blood is sweet to his tooth, but the blood of the Christian's godliness is far sweeter. He had rather, if he could, kill that, than them—rather draw the Christian from his

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[140] See Gilpin, 99.
[141] See Gilpin, 98.
[142] See Gilpin, 99 and 100.
[143] See Gurnall, 4.
[144] See Gilpin, 91–98; Spurstowe, 52–53; and Gurnall, 53.
[145] Gilpin, 37. See also Gurnall, 221.
[146] See Gurnall, 224.

> godliness, than butcher him for it...Persecution, he hath learned, doth but mow the church, which afterward comes up thicker for it; it is unholiness that ruins it.[147]

Since Satan seeks to truly tear down the church, he primarily uses temptation rather than persecution.

Demonic possession was also discussed by the Puritans, but only very briefly. Their commitment to Scripture was what led them to affirm the existence of corporeal possession: since Jesus repeatedly encountered demoniacs, possession must be a real phenomenon.[148] Gilpin proposed the following characteristics of demonic possession, all lifted directly from Scripture: multiple spirits can possess one person, the possessed often act violently, they can be sadly afflicted, and they can manifest strange abilities.[149] He also observed that all possessions are not all the same, nor are they equally subject to exorcism. For instance, there is demonic obsession, "where the devil afflicts the bodies of men, disquiets them, haunts them, or strikes in with their melancholy temper."[150] Unlike today, the Puritans did not debate whether a real Christian could be possessed.[151] Gurnall simply made an off-handed remark that Satan could have possessed Job, "that being short of taking away his life – the only thing reserved by God out of his commission."[152] But even here, Gurnall's purpose was not to speculate on whether one of God's people can be possessed, but rather to show why Satan prefers temptation to possession:

> he had rather possess the souls of men than their bodies... He had rather hear Job himself blaspheme God, while was *compos mentis* – his own man, than himself in Job to belch out blasphemies against God, which would have been the devil's own sin, and not Job's.[153]

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[147] Gurnall, 305. See also Spurstowe, 8–9.
[148] See Gilpin, 34–35.
[149] See Gilpin, 35.
[150] Gilpin, 35.
[151] For instance, one of Arnold's *3 Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare* is "Can a Christian Be Demon-Possessed?"
[152] Gurnall, 358.
[153] Gurnall, 358.

Gurnall further insisted that temptation is a more intractable problem than possession: "A whole legion of devils are as soon cast out of the body, as one lust out of the soul; yea, sooner."[154] Therefore, while the Puritans affirmed corporeal possession as a demonic tactic, they paid it relatively little attention.

Witchcraft also received little attention in the Puritan spiritual warfare literature.[155] Where they did address witchcraft, it was treated under the heading of Satan's power. They cautioned that, while there are charlatans who claim magical powers, one must not dismiss all witches as frauds.[156] Perkins further insisted that, by God's permission, "a true believer may be bewitched," therefore "it is but the fancy of presumptuous persons, when they say, their faith is so strong that all the witches in the world cannot hurt them."[157] Therefore, while witchcraft is affirmed as a real possibility, it is viewed simply as another kind of satanic assault which, like all the others, God may or may not allow to afflict the believer.

The possibility of demonic affliction of the believer's body was also stoutly defended by the Puritans. Job was held up as the preeminent example of this assault, together with the prerequisite of God's permission.[158] They also pointed to Satan transporting Jesus in Matthew 4:5 and 8 as proof that "the Devil may have power over the bodies of God's own children."[159] However, while Satan enjoys inflicting physical torment for its own sake, the Puritans noted that he usually uses bodily afflictions in order to set the stage for an assault upon the believer's soul.[160]

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[154] Gurnall, 598.
[155] For a survey of secondary literature on why this might be, see the Introduction.
[156] See Gilpin, 28–30 and Perkins, 37 and 42.
[157] Perkins, 25.
[158] See Perkins, 24–25.
[159] Perkins, 25. See also Gilpin, 378.
[160] See Gilpin, 66 and Gurnall, 101.

Various Puritans identify other demonic assaults. Gilpin defended the existence of ghosts, identifying them as a visual manifestation of evil spirits and citing the apparition to Saul at Endor as an example.[161] Gurnall also listed disunity among Christians and natural disasters among Satan's endeavours.[162] Gilpin and Gurnall both attributed the cruel worship practices of heathens throughout history to demonic inspiration.[163] Perkins observed that one of Satan's specialities is "to overturn states and kingdoms, by putting ambition into men's hearts after earthly kingdoms, and glories."[164] Despite these many other modes of demonic assault, Puritan demonology was almost entirely given over to the treatment of temptation.

Conclusion

The overwhelming emphasis on temptation was the result of the Puritan theological orienting concerns of divine sovereignty and human depravity. Divine sovereignty explains why so little is said about the other types of demonic assault. Satan and his demons can only inflict persecution, possession, witchcraft, illness and other afflictions on Christians when God allows. The Devil is merely the instrumental cause to the divine ultimate cause. Therefore, these demonic assaults received little attention in the Puritan corpus.

While the Puritan theology of divine sovereignty explains their lack of emphasis on other types of assaults, the Puritan perspective on human depravity explains their primary emphasis on temptation. Temptations require God's permission just like the other assaults. However, unlike these other assaults, they also require the believer's assent.[165] Since believers retain "indwelling sin" despite their regeneration, and cannot expect to be rid of it in this life, it is likely that this

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[161] See Gilpin, 33–34.
[162] See Gurnall, 400 and 101, respectively.
[163] See Gilpin, 40–42 and Gurnall, 352.
[164] Perkins, 39–40.
[165] See Chapter 1 for further details.

assent can be won.[166] Therefore, it is necessary for Christians to be well-versed in many 'devices' Satan uses to secure that assent.

[166] See Owen, 154.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHRISTIAN RESISTENCE

The Puritans described Satan's many strategies and tactics not from any sort of occultic curiosity, but rather to equip their readers to resist them. In many cases, simply recognizing that a certain suggestion is actually a kind of demonic assault is defence enough. Forewarned, in their opinion, was forearmed. Beyond revealing the enemy's playbook, as it were, the Puritans also had a great deal to say about how to resist Satan's assaults. Once again, they drew upon their core theological convictions of divine sovereignty and human depravity to orient their thinking. Since God sovereignly controls Satan's assaults, and because human depravity means that even Christians can be self-deluded, the Puritans insisted that one must resist Satan God's way, rather than by one's own strength and methods. Human depravity also explains the Puritan conviction that the primary activity of spiritual warfare is to watch and pray. This meant viewing one's own thoughts, attitudes and actions with a good deal of self-suspicion and praying to the Holy Spirit for clarity in identifying those cracks in one's personality by which Satan could establish a beachhead and for the strength to seal those cracks through mortification.

How Not to Resist

The Puritan emphasis on fighting Satan God's way generated a number of warnings about ways not to fight. First they observed that "Satan is willing to gratify us with nominal and imaginary privileges and defences against himself."[1] Satan encourages the use of these false

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[1] Gilpin, 379.

remedies by sometimes voluntarily withdrawing when they are used.[2] Three imaginary defences in particular were highlighted. The first are "self-devised inventions, such as were never appointed or blessed of God to any such use; but only found out by the bold superstitions of men."[3] The Puritans categorized the various Roman Catholic anti-demonic practices of their day under this heading: "their masses, matins, vigils, pilgrimages, Lent-fasts, whippings, vows of chastity, poverty...where is a word of God for these? Who hath required these things at their hands?"[4] Also included under this heading is any confidence in the holiness of a place or activity to protect one from Satan: "He is not so fearful, as many imagine, as that he dares not approach a churchyard or a church; neither place nor duty can keep him off...the devil is as busy at a sermon or prayer as at any other employment."[5]

The second imaginary defence is that employed by "carnal Protestants," who "war after the flesh" (2 Corinthians 10:3) – that is, they fight "with weapons or means which man's carnal wisdom prompts to, and not God's commands."[6] Resistance of Satan is 'carnal' when one relies upon one's own strength, rather than God's, and when one's motive for resisting is "the fear of man more than of God."[7] "We should not [wrestle Satan] in the strength of our own resolutions, or our own vows," warned Spurstowe, "but we should go against Satan as David did against the Philistine 'in the name of the Lord' (1 Samuel 17)."[8] Other forms of resisting sin that is "not according to the word of command that Christ gives" include: resisting one sin but embracing

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[2] See Spurstowe, 82–83.
[3] Gilpin, 379. See also Gurnall, 199.
[4] Gurnall, 32. Others add exorcisms, relics, holy water, and the sign of the cross to this list. See Perkins, 26 and Gurnall, 100.
[5] Gilpin, 379. See also Perkins, 26.
[6] Gilpin, 32.
[7] Gilpin, 33, See also Love, 14–15.
[8] Spurstowe, 101. See also Spurstowe, 94.

another; temporarily setting aside a favourite sin due to slavish fears (for this is but a conflict between conscience and will, rather than between the person and their sin); and resisting sin without hating it.[9] In regards to inadequate carnal motivations used to resist Satan, some examples include: fear of shame and loss of reputation, a desire not to disturb one's peace of mind by wounding the conscience, and fear of hell.[10]

Another kind of carnal resistance is presumptuously entering spiritual combat "without that armour which God hath appointed to be worn by all his soldiers, and yet with a bravado, to trust to the power of God to save them...[they] have nothing but a carnal confidence on the name of God."[11] Gurnall criticized these "profane and ignorant" persons who "trust in God, hope in his mercy, defy the devil and all his works...who are yet poor naked creatures without the least piece of God's armour upon their souls." Instead, Gurnall insisted that "He that duly places his confidence on the power of God must conscientiously use the means appointed for his defence" and to neglect these means is "a carnal confidence in the power of God."[12]

The final imaginary defence is the abuse of the "real defences and helps which God hath commanded, so that they use them in a formal manner."[13] God's armour can be misused in three ways. First, it is misused when "by fleshly confidence we make it a spell," as though the ordinance or spiritual discipline itself is what drives Satan off.[14] Gurnall elsewhere warned, "We must not confide in the armour of God but in the God of the armour."[15] Another misuse of God's armour is when it is used as a cover for sin, such as when hypocrites adopt all the Christian

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[9] Gurnall, 83–84.
[10] See Owen 112–113.
[11] Gurnall, 27.
[12] Gurnall, 27.
[13] Gilpin, 379–80.
[14] Gurnall, 100.
[15] Gurnall, 33.

language, behaviour and duties appropriate to a Christian, but continues in their sin.[16] Thirdly, the armour of God is not used as God appointed when Christians "eye not God through [their divine duties]."[17] This consists of (1) performing a duty without recognising that any spiritual benefit derived from it is purely a gift from God and not the result of human achievement; (2) holding the duty in contempt, such as thinking, "What is this preaching that I should attend on it, where I hear nothing but I knew before?"; and (3) giving up a duty because one does not appear to be spiritually gaining anything by it.[18]

Instead of these ineffective defences, the Puritans urged their readers to defend themselves only with armour that is "divine in the institution and only as God appoints."[19] After all, continued Gurnall,

> The soldier comes into the field with no arms but what his general commands. It is not left to every one's fancy to bring what weapons he pleases; this will breed confusion...[those who] do more, or use other, than God commands, though with some seeming success against sin, shall surely be called to account for this boldness.[20]

The only effective defence against demonic attack is relational, to put on Christ:

> We read of putting on the 'Lord Jesus' (Rom 13:14), where Christ is set forth under the notion of armour. The apostle doth not exhort them for rioting and drunkenness to put on sobriety and temperance, for chambering and wantonness to put on chastity, as the philosopher would have done, but bids, 'put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ;' implying thus much that til Christ be put on, the creature is unarmed. It is not a man's morality and philosophical virtues that will repel a temptation, sent with a full charge from Satan's cannon.[21]

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[16] See Gurnall, 33.
[17] Gurnall, 34. Elsewhere Gurnall equates the armour of God with "those duties and means which God hath appointed the Christian to use for his defence" (28).
[18] Gurnall, 34.
[19] Gurnall, 32. See also Spurstowe, 109–110.
[20] Gurnall, 32.
[21] Gurnall, 28. Zacharias comments: "The Puritan life is not a life where spiritual success is attained through ritual, spiritual mechanics, or magic. It is relational, not technological...The Christian's armour is not to be seen as a sort of superior spiritual technology, but rather the arming of the soul in relation to Christ, as Christ imparts his grace to the soul." (118)

Another way not to resist Satan is the prohibition against counter-attack. Several Puritans noted that the armour of God described in Ephesians 6:10-20 is entirely defensive, with the exception of the Sword of the Spirit, which is both offensive and defensive. Gurnall explicitly states that offensive operations are works of supererogation:

> this spiritual war of the Christian lies chiefly on the defence, and therefore requires arms most of this kind to wage it. God hath deposited a rich treasure of grace in every saint's heart. At this is the devil's spite; to plunder him of it, and with it of his happiness, he commenceth a bloody war against him. So that the Christian overcomes his enemy when himself is not overcome by him. He wins the day when he doth not lose his grace, his work being rather to keep what is his own than to get what is his enemy's...But be not persuaded out of the line of thy place, and calling that God hath drawn about thee; no, not under the specious pretence of zeal and hope to get the greater victory by falling into the enemies' quarters.[22]

Gurnall illustrated this prohibition with two examples of offensive acts: do not dare Satan to tempt you, and do not return the reproach of his instruments with reproach.[23] Elsewhere he warned against "going out of our proper place and calling," or abandoning one's proper role in the church, society and family, in order to perform some duty not suitable to that role.[24] God used to issue extraordinary calls, but Gurnall warned that "it is dangerous to pretend to the like, and unlawful to expect such immediate commissions from heaven now, when [God] issueth them out in a more ordinary way."[25] Thus, the Christian's standing orders in spiritual warfare are to stand their ground.

A third way the Puritans identified as a dead-end when resisting Satan is the use of "unlawful means" to relieve suffering or persecution.[26] Perkins saw this as a matter of faith: "We must practice faith in our lives, especially by using only lawful means for our relief in times of

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[22] Gurnall, 522.
[23] Gurnall, 522.
[24] See Gurnall, 202–03.
[25] Gurnall, 205.
[26] Perkins, 4.

distress." [27] That is, we must trust God, either for deliverance from our suffering or for the patience to bear it. But the temptation is to seek relief at all costs, which amounts to a practical form of atheism: "there are many among us who plainly show what a throne Satan hath in their hearts...who, as if there were not a God in Israel, go to help and cure to his doctors – wizards I mean."[28] In fact, one mark of Protestant demonology in general was its greater preoccupation with the 'white' magic of the local 'cunning man' or folk healer, than with the 'black' magic of witches.[29] Similarly, one must not try to escape the trials brought on by the practice of discipleship by setting it aside.[30]

Finally, the Puritans warned against disputing with Satan when he tempts, but instead urge their readers to oppose him with peremptory denials. Gilpin presented the most systematic treatment of this topic, noting that disputing is dangerous for five reasons: it honours Satan by granting him an audience when he should simply be rejected; it softens our abhorrence of the temptation; it is an implicit invitation for Satan to press on with the temptation; it usually only benefits Satan rather than us, due to the inequality of the conflict; and it is defeatist, for it indicates a willingness to yield.[31] There are four situations when it is especially dangerous to dispute with a temptation.[32] First, Christians must not dispute when the temptation is especially suited to their temperament or condition, for even when hating it and debating against it, they may be drawn in by it. Second, when the temptation is to neglect a duty or to do something that is clearly sinful, one must not dispute it but simply deny it. Third, when the temptation persists

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[27] Perkins, 17.
[28] Gurnall, 102.
[29] See Clark, "Protestant Demonology," 62–65.
[30] See Perkins, 4.
[31] See Gilpin, 457–58. See also, Goodwin, 267 and Perkins, 42.
[32] See Gilpin, 454–57.

after all the usually means of resisting it have been used, and it has become a mere annoyance, it should be denied. Finally, temptations to despair or to doubt one's adoption into God's family should never be disputed, because Satan's arguments in this matter are especially persuasive.[33] However, there are some cases in which one may or even should dispute with a temptation.[34] First, when the suggestion is to something that is not clearly sin, or not sinful for all people at all times; the believer must then think the matter through in order to "endeavour his own satisfaction in the lawfulness or unlawfulness of a thing, so that he may be 'fully persuaded in his own mind' (Romans 16:5)."[35] Second, when the temptation has enlisted the believer's own corrupt nature to take up the suggestion; in this case, the believer must "by a force of holy arguing, to pull out the arrow."[36] Third, when the temptation is to a habitual sin; because "these kinds of sinful motions are not cast out easily," they must "reason together with God about the wickedness and ingratitude of their actions and about the contrary loveliness, blessedness, and happiness of the ways of God, that so they may be brought to repentance."[37] Finally, one should dispute a temptation when Satan delivers it through another person; for by arguing, the believer not only discourages future sinful suggestions from that person, but may attempt to rescue them from their own wickedness.

Resisting Temptations

1. Resisting Being Drawn to Sin

The primary Puritan counsel regarding resisting enticements to sin was to re-establish a proper cost-benefit ratio of committing the sin. They did so by de-emphasizing the pleasures of

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[33] See also Goodwin, 262–63.
[34] See Gilpin, 453–54.
[35] Gilpin, 453.
[36] Gilpin, 453.
[37] Gilpin, 453–54.

sin and by highlighting the costs of sin. Brooks urged his readers to consider how the "seeming sweet that is in sin will quickly vanish, and lasting shame, sorrow, horror and terror will come in the room thereof."[38] Sin will cost the believer divine favour, peace, comfort and outward blessings today – all to gain something that will be revealed as "more vile, filthy and terrible than hell itself" when it is unmasked at the Judgement Seat.[39]

In particular, the Puritans strongly objected to the suggestion that small sins are somehow less dangerous. They offered several reasons why small sins are deleterious to spiritual health. Most often mentioned, was the 'slippery slope' – the commission of small sins leads to the commission of greater sins in the future.[40] Gurnall warned with a homey aphorism: "when the hem is worn, the whole garment will ravel out, if it be not mended by timely repentance."[41] Spurstowe explained more systematically:

> [Small sins suppress] that which may hinder the commission of greater sins, the powerful preservatives against presumptuous evils, are an awe-full fear of God, and a heart touched with the due sense of sin...Now both these will a customary living in small sins waste and destroy, by making the heart brawny and stiff: a path that is trodden only by the foot of a child will, by its often going upon, contract a hardness as well as the beaten road, and so will the heart in which little sins have a common passage to and fro.[42]

The Puritans also warned that small sins are dangerous not only instrumentally (because they lead to greater sins), but they are also intrinsically deadly. Brooks noted that small sins are less likely to shock the soul to repent than larger sins do: "There is oftentimes greatest danger to our bodies in the least diseases that hang upon us, because we are apt to make light of them, and to neglect the timely use of means for removing of them, till they are grown so strong that they

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[38] Brooks, 14.
[39] Brooks, 17.
[40] See Brooks, 19 and Gilpin, 343.
[41] Gurnall, 52.
[42] Spurstowe, 44.

prove mortal to us."[43] Brooks also warned that the Bible shows us that sometimes the smallest sins have provoked God's greatest anger, such "as the eating of an apple, gathering few sticks on the Sabbath day, and touching of the ark."[44] Finally, Brooks plead with his readers not to offend God for the sake of such a small thing: "Little sins carry with them but little temptations to sin, and then a man shows most viciousness and unkindness, when he sins on a little temptation."[45]

The Puritans also challenged the suggestion that it is safe to sin because God is merciful. Brooks urged his readers consider several truths that contradict this lie. First, while it is true that God will never disinherit His children, He does punish them – and sometimes severely – for sinning, especially when they sin against mercy.[46] The remembrance of God's past mercies is meant to preserve believers from sin, not encourage them to sin.[47] Furthermore, when observing God's mercy to the wicked – that is, in not punishing them in this life, but rather allowing them to prosper – one must remember that the worst judgment is "to be left to sin," when "God lets the way to hell be a smooth and pleasant way."[48] Finally, against the argument that it is easy to repent after having sinned, Brooks insisted that "to repent of sin is as great a work of grace as not to sin," for by sin "the powers of the soul are weakened, the strength of grace is decayed, our evidences for heaven are blotted, fears and doubts in the soul are raised...and corrupts in the heart are more advantaged and confirmed; and the conscience of a man after falls is the more enraged or the more benumbed."[49] Therefore "it is better to be kept from sin than cured of sin by

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[43] Brooks, 21.
[44] Brooks, 19.
[45] Brooks, 20–21.
[46] See Brooks, 25 and 28.
[47] See Brooks, 30.
[48] Brooks, 27. See also Brooks, 43 and 46.
[49] Brooks, 36.

repentance, as it is better for a man to be preserved from a disease than to be cured of the disease."[50]

Due to sin's danger, the Puritans warned their readers to carefully avoid all occasions of sin – that is, people, places, things or events where one is likely to be tempted. Do not play with that which the tempter baits his hooks; it is a gamble that always loses, because the house cheats.[51] Brooks explained the need to avoid occasions of sin in terms of both divine sovereignty and human depravity:

> It is impossible for [a person] to get the conquest of sin, that plays and sports with the occasions of sin. God will not remove the temptation, except you turn from the occasion...As long as there is fuel in our hearts for a temptation, we cannot be secure. He that hath gunpowder about him had need keep far enough off from sparkles.[52]

Gilpin acknowledged that sometimes one is required to enter into occasions of sin "by the obligation of the law of nature, or lawful calling, or command of God, or unavoidable providence, or relation;" in these cases, it is vital to proceed with great care.[53] However, wherever possible, one must avoid not only sinful occasions, but even the appearance of evil, to avoid "coming near the borders of temptation."[54]

Since temptation is rejected or assented to in the mind, the Puritans had a great deal to say about keeping watch over the mind. They encouraged the use of a "threefold inquiry" throughout the day to monitor the quality of one's thoughts: are they evil; if not evil, then are they empty, frothy or vain; if good, then is it the right time or in the right way?[55] They also urged the careful selection of the raw material for one's thoughts: "Set a strong guard about thy outward senses;

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[50] Brooks, 36, note 1.
[51] See Brooks, 13; Gurnall, 57; Brooks, 61; and Owen, 121.
[52] Brooks, 39. See also Spurstowe, 105.
[53] Gilpin, 359.
[54] Spurstowe, 104. See also Gurnall, 311 and Owen, 147.
[55] Gurnall, 134.

these are Satan's landing places, especially the eye and ear."[56] That is, hearing "vain discourse" and viewing "wanton objects" pollutes the mind[57]

2. Resisting Diversions from Duty

The Puritans offered several counter arguments to Satan's reasons for not performing Christian duties. They challenged the suggestion that to perform a duty when one lacks the disposition is somehow hypocritical. Gilpin insisted that "indispositions are no bar to duty, but that duty is the way to get our indispositions cured."[58] He goes on to propose that a "service is more spiritual that is bottomed and carried on by a conscientious regard to a command, when there are no moral motives from sense and comfort concurring."[59] Gurnall also noted that indispositions are more common among those who have never learned to delight in their duties.[60] Brooks also pointed out that the troubles that duties can cause are only temporal and therefore unable to truly harm the Christian, while the neglect of duties makes one vulnerable to both temporal and eternal harm.[61] More positively, he noted that God makes troublesome duties sweeter with revelations of Himself in this life and heavenly rewards in the next.[62] Gurnall added that if holy living costs Christians the love of the world, it often gains them the world's respect – as well as God's blessing.[63] Third, the argument that justification by grace means that believers need not do anything is countered with a list of Scripture passages that show all the duties Christ

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[56] Gurnall, 133. Note also the importance of Ear Gate and Eye Gate to the assault and defence of the town of Mansoul in Bunyan's *Holy War*.
[57] Gurnall, 133 and 134.
[58] Gilpin, 108.
[59] Gilpin, 108.
[60] See Gurnall, 326.
[61] See Brooks, 70 and 72.
[62] See Brooks, 74 and 76.
[63] See Gurnall, 338–39 and Spurstowe, 82.

requires of believers.[64] Furthermore, Brooks asserted that those who do not perform the duties God commands while waiting for the divine gift of assurance will never receive it, "holy works being a more sensible and constant pledge of the precious Spirit [than sudden flashes of joy and comfort], begetting and maintaining in the soul more solid, pure, clear, strong, and lasting joy."[65] Finally, Brooks warned those who are tempted to rest upon their past duties that "good things rested upon will as certainly undo us, and everlastingly destroy us, as the greatest enormities that can be committed by us."[66]

Resisting Satan's efforts to corrupt duties during their performance consists of two things: performing duties by faith and combating distractions. Owen taught that, just as believers are saved by faith, they must live the Christian life by faith:

> We must perform our duties in faith, deriving our strength from Christ, without whom we "can do nothing" (John 15:5). It is not enough to believe, though that is necessary in every good work (Ephesians 2:10). Faith must characterize our obedience. Paul describes this as "the obedience of faith (Romans 1:5)...Thus Paul says, "Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God" (Galatians 2:20). Christ is our life, and He is also the source of our obedience in the discharge of all our duties of holiness.[67]

Gurnall provided a description of what the performance of duties in God's strength instead of one's own looks like:

> Christian, rely upon thy God, and make thy daily applications to the throne of grace for continual supplies of strength; you little think how kindly he takes it, that you will make use of him, the oftener the better, and the more you come for, the more welcome... let not the weakness of thy faith discourage thee. No greater motive to the bowels of mercy to stir almighty power to relieve thee than thy weakness, when pleaded in the sense of it.[68]

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[64] See Brooks, 77.
[65] Brooks, 80.
[66] Brooks, 90.
[67] Owen, 55.
[68] Gurnall, 22.

When combating distractions that arise during duties, the starting point is to recognize that these thoughts are not sins as long as they are resisted and lamented.[69] Some proactive suggestions were also offered, depending on the cause of the distracting thoughts. The most common cause of distractions is the "instability" of our minds, which leads to "levity in prayer."[70] The solution is to meditate on holy things all the time, for "a vain heart out of prayer will be little better in prayer," and especially to maintain "a reverential awe of God's majesty and holiness" during prayer.[71] Distractions may also be the result of "a dead and unactive heart;" to keep "your affections in prayer warm and lively" Gurnall suggested meditation on one's sins, needs and God's past mercies.[72] Worldly cares can also be a source of distractions, so Christians are urged "keep thy distance to the world, and that sovereignty which God hath given thee over in its profits and pleasures"; if He hasn't given such gifts, Christians must instead strengthen their faith "in the providence of God for the things of this life."[73] Despite these recommendations, Gurnall recognized that while distractions may be hindered, it is impossible "wholly to prevent them" since they are "the necessary infirmities of thy imperfect state."[74]

The Puritans did not spend a great deal of time describing how to resist Satan's attempts to spoil duties after their performance by false praise. Simply observing that Satan fosters spiritual pride by suggesting self-satisfaction for the performance of a duty was warning enough. Instead, the Puritans focused their effort on the more common concern in their circles: how to resist the

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[69] Brooks, 87. See also Gurnall, 682–83.
[70] Gurnall, 677.
[71] Gurnall, 677. See also Brooks, 86.
[72] Gurnall, 679. See also Brooks, 89.
[73] Gurnall, 679–80. See also Brooks, 89.
[74] Gurnall, 676 and 682.

suggestion that their duties were performed inadequately and therefore are unacceptable to God. Gurnall urged his readers to consider the two different kinds of acceptance:

> There is an acceptance of a thing by way of payment of a debt, and there is an acceptance of a thing offered as a token of love and testimony of gratitude...It is true, Christian, the debt thou owest to God must be paid in good and lawful money, but for thy comfort, here Christ is thy paymaster. Send Satan to him, bid him bring his charge against Christ, who is ready at God's right hand to clear his accounts, and show his discharge for the whole debt. But now thy performances and obedience come under another notion, as tokens of thy love and thankfulness to God, and such is the gracious disposition of thy heavenly Father, that he accepts thy mite.[75]

There is a difference, insisted Gurnall, between "hypocrisy in a person, and a hypocrite;" so he comforts his readers with this test: "if thou findest a party within thy bosom pleading for God, and entering its protest against thee, thou and thy services are evangelically perfect."[76] However, Gurnall did not simply assert that human depravity means that the Christian's duties will always be flawed. He made two suggestions for how to use Satan's accusation to grow spiritually. First, these accusations should urge the victim to be ever more diligent and circumspect in the performance of their duties.[77] Second, believers should allow these accusations – "which are in a great part too true" – to make them more humble before God.[78] In fact, Gurnall insisted that these benefits are why God allows Satan to make such accusations in the first place.[79]

3. Resisting the Dilution of Pure Doctrine

Within the Puritan mindset, the greatest defence against Satan's temptations to theological error was to recognize its sinfulness. Only if error is seen as spiritually deleterious will people watch for it. Brooks insisted that "an erroneous, vain mind is as odious to God as a vicious life,"

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[75] Gurnall, 61.
[76] Gurnall, 61.
[77] See Gurnall, 61.
[78] Gurnall, 61.
[79] See Gurnall, 61.

and goes on to quote the aphorism that "a blind eye is worse than a lame foot."[80] He laments the many evils that errors produce:

> Oh the graces that error hath weakened, and the sweet joys and comforts that error hath clouded, if not buried! Oh the hands that error hath weakened, the eyes that error hath blinded, the judgments of men that error hath hardened, the affections that error hath cooled, the consciences that error hath seared, and the lives of men that error hath polluted! Ah, souls! Can you solemnly consider of this, and not tremble more at error than at hell itself?[81]

As with other temptations, Brooks discerned God's sovereign hand at work, speculating that "in these days God punisheth many men's former wickednesses by giving them up to soul-ruining errors."[82]

Apart from becoming aware of the many dangers of error, the Puritans also recommended testing the spirits (1 John 4:1), which is primarily understood as discerning the veracity of human teachings.[83] This is especially necessary because Satan manipulates Scripture to reinforce his false teachings. Gilpin offered two exegetical rules for detecting error "clothed in Scripture phrase": more difficult passages should be interpreted by those that are clearer, and the conclusion should be compared to the "general current" of all of Scripture.[84] Perkins went so far as to warn preachers to avoid making too many references to Scripture in sermons, for "in affected multiplicity of quotations can the abuse of Scripture be hardly escaped."[85]

Another way to test a doctrine is to examine its motives and fruit. Gurnall recommended that his readers crucify their flesh daily to avoid error, for

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[80] Brooks, 56.
[81] Brooks, 61.
[82] Brooks, 57. Brooks cites Romans 1:28 to defend this theory.
[83] See Perkins, 29. The Puritans also cite 1Thessalonians 5:21 and Revelation 2:2 in this context.
[84] Gilpin, 414–15. See also Gurnall, 627.
[85] Perkins, 31.

> though a spiritual sin, [heresy is] yet by the apostle reckoned among the deeds of the flesh (Gal. 5:20), because it is occasioned by fleshly motives, and nourished by carnal food and fleshly fuel. Never [have] any turned heretic, but flesh was at the bottom; either they served their belly or a lust of pride...Carnal affections first send up their fumes to the understanding, clouding that, yea, bribing it to receive such and such principles for truths.[86]

In particular, the Puritans warned their readers to beware of curiosity, and instead to be humbly content with what Scripture has said, avoiding the hasty adoption of any new doctrine.[87] The carnal nature of heresy supplied Brooks with several characteristics that mark false teachers. They are "men-pleasers" because they seek to become rich through their teaching.[88] They presume to slander "Christ's most faithful ambassadors."[89] They neglect the great doctrines of Scripture and instead "stand most upon those things that are of the least moment and concernment to the souls of men."[90] Finally, the primary goal of their teaching is to convince their audience to adopt their point of view, rather than to bless them.[91] The fruit of a doctrine must also be inspected to discern whether it is error. Gilpin suggested the careful examination of the tendency of the doctrine (i.e. if it promotes pride and presumption or distrust and despair, then it is of Satan).[92] Brooks also identified certain outcomes that are the sure marks of error: any hindrance of holiness or encouragement of ungodliness; any strictness or rigour beyond what Scripture demands; or assigning good works any part in the work of justification.[93]

The final means of detecting error is to "seek the face of the Lord for help and counsel."[94] In practical terms, this means three things: "to pray such new notions over and over again," "to

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[86] Gurnall, 137.
[87] See Brooks, 60 and Gurnall, 137 and 219.
[88] Brooks, 149. See also Brooks, 151–52.
[89] Brooks, 150.
[90] Brooks, 150.
[91] See Brooks, 151.
[92] See Gilpin, 414–15.
[93] See Brooks, 58–59.
[94] Gilpin, 415.

search the Word," and "not to trust our own hearts, but to call in counsel from others."[95] These three measures are mutually reinforcing, therefore one should not be emphasized to the neglect of another: "Wait conscionably on the ministry of the word... Say not that thou prayest to be led into truth; God will not hear thy prayer if thou turnest thine ear from hearing the law."[96] Of course, this places a great onus upon preachers not only to teach the truth, but also to discern and refute errors.[97]

The Puritan defence against error was not only negative. In addition to careful discernment, they also recommend getting a "heart inflamed with a sincere love to the truth."[98] Gurnall suggested three ways a believer can acquire such a heart. First, mortify the flesh so that one's affections do not run counter to one's convictions.[99] Second, stoke the flames of love for God Himself, for "this will work in thee a dear love to his truth."[100] Thirdly, meditate frequently on beauty of God's truth, especially on how it is pure (making "the soul pure that embraceth it"), reliable ("We may lay the whole weight of our souls upon it and yet it will not crack"), free (making "the soul free that cleaves to it"), and victorious (it "shall prevail at last").[101] Brooks likewise urged his readers to "receive the truth affectionately, and let it dwell in your souls plenteously," for:

> It is not he that receives most of the truth into his head, but he that receives most of the truth affectionately into his heart, that shall enjoy the happiness of having his judgment sound and clear, when others shall be deluded and deceived...It is not the hearing of the truth, nor the knowing of the truth, nor the commending of the truth, nor the talking of

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[95] Gurnall, 137. See also Gurnall, 218–219, 604, 625 and 627.
[96] Gurnall, 137.
[97] See Perkins, 30 and 41.
[98] Gurnall, 224.
[99] See Gurnall, 226–27.
[100] Gurnall, 227.
[101] Gurnall, 228–29.

> truth, but the indwelling of truth in your souls, that will keep your judgments chaste and sound, in the midst of all those glittering errors[102]

Thus, resisting the dilution of doctrine is not merely an exercise of the head, but also of the heart.

4. Resisting the Disguise of the Soul's Spiritual State

The Puritan teaching on resistance of the temptation to error began with recognizing a truth (namely, that error is sin). Similarly, resisting the temptation to doubt one's election also began with the recognition of a truth: "there may be true faith, yea, great measures of faith, where there is no assurance."[103] Brooks went on to state that because "assurance is an effect of faith" it cannot be faith, and therefore "there may be true faith where there is much doubtings."[104] Gurnall offered several reasons why a Christian with true faith might not enjoy assurance: a lack of clear understanding of the doctrine of the gospel; a failure to live in obedience to Scripture commands; or a misunderstanding of the nature of assurance (i.e. they might actually have it, but fail to recognize it because it is not "a light, giggling joy as the world's").[105] However, Gurnall admitted that even where none of these conditions exists, some may "continue for a while under some dissatisfactions and troubles in their own spirits."[106]

Moving from diagnosis to treatment, Perkins urged his readers to "labour for assurance of our adoption (2 Peter 1:10, 5-7)", insisting that "a man in this life may ordinarily be resolved and assured of his salvation."[107] Three measures are suggested for gathering evidence for true faith. First, take careful note how God's graces manifest themselves and grow in degree: "Do thy love,

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[102] Brooks, 57. Brooks cites 2Thessalonians 2:10–12 and Colossians 3:6 to support these suggestions.
[103] Brooks, 95.
[104] Brooks, 96. See also Brooks, 108.
[105] See Gurnall, 384–85.
[106] Gurnall, 385.
[107] Perkins, 16. This challenged the Roman Catholic teach of the day that a Christian could only enjoy assurance through an extraordinary revelation from God. See also Gurnall, 384.

hope, humility, godly sorrow, grow more and more, poor soul, and you yet question what it is – whether true grace or not?"[108] Then eagerly embrace any opportunity God offers to prove the sincerity of faith – namely, "those seasons wherein God more eminently calls us forth to deny ourselves for his sake."[109] Finally, wait for God to give the gift of assurance; but this does not mean to wait passively. Since it is the Spirit of God who reveals what God has given (1 Corinthians 2:12), and "the Spirit sits in the ordinances," one must "wait upon God in all the ways of his ordinances" to "have the truth of our graces – that are our evidences for heaven – sealed to our consciences."[110] But how does one resist Satan's temptation to despair while thus gathering evidence for true faith? Gurnall offered four suggestions to Christians in this conflict. Start with renewing your repentance as if you had never repented before; that way, no matter how Satan calls into doubt the legitimacy and sincerity of your earlier repentance, he can say nothing against your current repentance.[111] Then, pray to God for "a new copy of thy old evidence, which thou hast lost."[112] Third, hide for a time in "the name of God, and the absolute promises of the gospel."[113] Finally, share this inner struggle with a trusted friend, for "the very strength of some temptations lies in the concealing of them."[114]

Another way that Puritan writers tried to assist their readers in getting assurance was to clarify the differences between the temporary faith of hypocrites and the true faith of the elect. First, temporary faith may alter external behaviour, but true faith changes the heart, so that even

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[108] Gurnall, 278.
[109] Gurnall, 279.
[110] Gurnall, 280.
[111] See Gurnall, 68.
[112] Gurnall, 68.
[113] Gurnall, 69. See also Gurnall, 65–66.
[114] Gurnall, 69.

if sinful behaviour has not yet been reformed, the saint hates it.[115] Second, temporary faith sees religious duties and moral virtues as means to win some worldly reward, but true faith enables a soul to be satisfied with Christ alone.[116] Third, temporary faith struggles against sin differently than true faith does. True faith's warfare is universal (against all sins), constant (not ambivalent), holistic (fought across all faculties, as opposed to the hypocrite, whose conscience fights the will), and more successful (whereas sin in the hypocrite grows stronger despite his struggle).[117]

This last difference between temporary and true faith reveals of another argument that Satan uses to convince Christians that they are not God's children. Satan points to the ongoing presence of sin in the life of a believer as proof that their conversion was counterfeit and that they remain his servants.[118] However, the Puritans dismissed this as a misinterpretation of Scripture. Brooks insisted that Christ has freed Christians from the dominion of sin and its damning power, but not its presence and vexing power.[119] He went on to explain that this remnant of sin is left in the believer after conversion "as a monument of divine grace, and to keep us humble, wakeful, and watchful, and that our armour may be still kept on, and our weapons always in our hands."[120] To resist this temptation, one must first learn to distinguish between the convicting voice of the Holy Spirit and the condemning voice of the Enemy. For the Puritans, the key difference was that, while the Holy Spirit "will chide, frown, convict and punish the soul," He never calls into question that the believer is a child of God the way Satan

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[115] See Brooks, 99–100.
[116] See Brooks, 101–102 and 106.
[117] See Brooks, 104–107.
[118] Gurnall notes that Satan "tempts *to* sin, and then *for* it." (65).
[119] See Brooks, 91–92.
[120] Brooks, 107.

does.[121] Furthermore, any suggestion that God is unwilling or unable to forgive the believer if he sincerely repents is also from the Devil.[122] Not even relapses into the same sin are legitimate grounds for doubting one's adoption by God, no matter how vociferously Satan argues the opposite. The Puritans differentiated between "voluntary" relapses, where both the heart and will are set against the sin but infirmity betrays the believer at the hour of temptation, and "voluntary" ones, where the soul longs to return to the sin.[123] God will often allow His people "to relapse into infirmities to keep them humble," therefore the proper response to such relapses is humble repentance, and not discouragement or doubt regarding one's adoption.[124] In summary, the Puritan advice on how to resist this temptation was to repent of your sins, then "repent for being discouraged by your sins"[125] and finally comfort yourself with this thought:

> thou, who art at peace with God now on earth, shalt feast with God ere long in heaven...Every day brings thee nearer to it, and nothing can hinder thee of it at last. Not thy sins themselves, and I know thou fearest them most. He that paid thy great score at thy conversion will find mercy enough in his heart, surely, to pass by thy dribbling debts, which thy own infirmity, and Satan's subtlety, have run thee into.[126]

The Devil also argues for a person not being a child of God from what the Puritans called "cross providences" – that is, suffering. Since the doctrine of divine sovereignty ultimately attributes all events in a person's life to God's will one way or another, suffering appears to prove that God does not love a person. However, the Puritans dismissed this as a false syllogism. They draw their primary argument from Hebrews 12:5-6, which encourages the readers not to

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[121] See Gurnall, 59–60 and Goodwin, 269.
[122] See Gurnall, 60, 62–63.
[123] Brooks, 112.
[124] Brooks, 112. See also, Gilpin, 375–76.
[125] Brooks, 93.
[126] Gurnall, 377.

lose heart when God rebukes, "for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."[127] That is, they resolved the potential pastoral problem presented by the doctrine of divine sovereignty with the doctrine of human depravity: one's suffering is God's discipline for one's sins. While this might appear to be bad news, the Puritans insisted that it is the best news possible: God loves you too much to allow you to continue on your sinful way. [128] On the other hand, "he damns the wicked to be rich, honourable and victorious in this world to bind them faster up in a deep sleep of security."[129] However, Puritan theodicy was not strictly based on reciprocity; they freely acknowledge that people suffer for reasons other than their own sins.[130] For instance, they insist that "all the cross providences that befall the saints are but in order to some noble good that God doth intend to prefer upon them."[131] Nevertheless, despite what other things God intends to achieve in allowing His child to suffer, the Puritans insisted that everyone also deserves suffering as punishment for their sins.[132] How, then, did the Puritans counsel those in the midst of cross providences? Gilpin summed up resistance to Satan in these cases as follows:

> Seeing Satan takes advantage of the sharp humours of impatience and distrust, we must be particularly careful not to touch too much upon the harshness of our troubles, because this is that that sets fretting and distracting thoughts on work. Afflictions, like the pillar of the cloud and fire in the wilderness, have a light and darkness; and accordingly, those that converse with the dark side of troubles envenom their imaginations, and poison their thoughts with dark and hideous conclusions... whereas those that study and view the light side of them are full of praise and admiration for the gracious mixtures, comfortable mitigations, encouraging supports, etc, which they observe. It is wisdom then to keep upon the right side of them.[133]

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[127] See also the source for the quote in Hebrews 12:5–6, Proverbs 3:11–12. Other passages cited by the Puritans in this context include Deuteronomy 8:5, Job 5:17, Psalm 119:75, and Revelation 3:19.
[128] See Brooks, 97.
[129] Gurnall, 68. The Puritans draw the idea that the worst punishment for sin is further sin from Romans 1:28.
[130] See Goodwin, 288–290.
[131] Brooks, 98.
[132] See Goodwin, 289.
[133] Gilpin, 336.

The key, then, is to focus on the positive aspects of the suffering, and steer one's thoughts away from the negative.

5. Resisting Temptations in General

In addition to these suggestions on how to resist specific temptations, the Puritans also offered numerous ways to resist Satan's temptations in general. The first is to recognize that everyone is tempted, but that these temptations are harmless unless they are assented to.[134] This means that, rather than only being the lot of immature or carnal believers, even the holiest of saints will be afflicted with temptations – as was Jesus Himself.[135] In fact, the experience of temptation is considered to be so essential to the Christian condition that Perkins warned against "carnal peace" and insists that "those who have never been tempted have never fellowshipped with Christ in his afflictions."[136] The Christian life is "a continual course of trouble and peace," so the practical implication for resistance is that "every child of God must watch against security, and at the end of one assault to prepare for another."[137]

A second general council regarding resisting all sorts of temptations is to use the word of God. Jesus Himself, who could have driven Satan off in the desert with His own power, instead used Scripture "that we might know that the written word of God, rightly wielded by the hand of faith, is the most sufficient weapon for the repelling Satan and the vanquishing of him in all his temptations."[138] Gilpin offered three reasons why Scripture is such a potent countermeasure: it is sufficient, for there is no temptation "but the Scripture will afford a suitable promise or

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[134] See Brooks, 115; Gilpin, 238–39; Gurnall, 132 and 529; and Owen, 60, 65–66.
[135] See Gilpin, 318, 323 and 325 and Perkins, v--vii, 1–2, 8–9, and 50.
[136] Perkins, 53. See also Owen, 103.
[137] Perkins, 51. See also Love, 2–4; Gurnall, 80; Edwards, 3–4; and Perkins, iii.
[138] Perkins, 19. See also Spurstowe, 95.

command to repel it;[139] it is well-matched to the task, for nothing better undermines temptation's arguments "than doth the contrary commands of Scripture;"[140] and it is efficacious, for when one enlists Scripture's arguments in the struggle against temptations, God Himself is enlisted "to go down to the battle with us."[141] However, Gilpin was careful to stipulate that the Bible is not some sort of magic book:

> the force and power of Scripture is not in the words or characters, but in the mind and reason of it; not that Scripture can be used as a charm or spell, as if the devil were afraid of the sound and words of it...but it is the authority of its command which works upon the mind the highest impressions of fear and care, and as a strong argument prevails with us to forbear.[142]

Having established the power of the Word in spiritual warfare, the Puritans then turned to how exactly it is to be used. First, ruminate upon those passages that highlight the danger, evil, and overall ugliness of sin, "so thou mayest make it the more odious and hateful to thy thoughts."[143] Next, seek out Scripture's answers to the arguments Satan uses to drive home his temptations.[144] Similarly, rebuff temptation's suggestions with the opposite command – for example, when tempted to lust, the refusal should be: "I must not, for God has commanded that 'You shall not commit adultery.'"[145] However, the Puritans recognized that the Law has no power to deliver people from sin, only to convict them of it. Therefore, their final suggestion on how to use the Word to fight temptations was to "plead the promise against sin at the throne of grace," praying God's promises to deliver His people from the power of sin back to Him.[146] Since Scripture is such a vital weapon in the battle against temptation, Love concluded by urging his readers "to

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[139] Gilpin, 466.
[140] Gilpin, 468.
[141] Gilpin, 468.
[142] Gilpin, 463.
[143] Gurnall, 629.
[144] See Gurnall, 625; Spurstowe, 98–99; Edwards, 44; and Love, 25–28.
[145] Gilpin, 468.
[146] Gurnall, 638.

come into God's school continually, that there we may learn how to handle the sword of the Spirit...Otherwise, [Satan] will use it to our own overthrow."[147]

All Puritan advice on resisting temptations can be summed up in two words: watch and pray. Watchfulness is important for all soldiers, observed Gurnall, but especially so for the Christian in the war against sin. The world's soldiers fight other mortals who need sleep like they do, but Satan is "ever awake and seeking whom he may surprise" and few Christians are bested by him except where "there is either treachery or negligence in the business."[148] This is why Puritan preachers laboured to warn their listeners against 'carnal security': because of human depravity, their own hearts are eager to betray them to the soul's enemy. Gurnall continued by explaining exactly how the Christian is to watch. First, one must watch constantly, for an attack may come at any time but especially when it is least expected.[149] One must also watch universally, including all parts of the self and not merely certain ones.[150] Finally, one must watch wisely, "placing your chief care about these main duties to God and man" and "in those things where thou findest thyself weakest."[151] In particular, wise watchfulness against temptations means to put on the whole armour of God as described in Ephesians 6.[152] Spurstowe grimly concluded that while Christians may not always be in battle, they are always at war and so must be watchful; a Christian will know no peace except "in his conscience and the grave."[153]

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[147] Love, 28.
[148] Gurnall, 206. See also Owen, 79–80. Times of prosperity and peace are indicated as times of especial danger (see Perkins, 38).
[149] See Gurnall, 208.
[150] See Gurnall, 209.
[151] Gurnall, 209.
[152] See Perkins, 13.
[153] Spurstowe, 91. See also Perkins, 24.

The second part of the classic Puritan formula on resisting temptation was prayer. Gurnall warned against entering the field of combat without one's second, that is, "engage God by prayer to stand at thy back."[154] Petitions should be made for deliverance from temptations as well as strength to bear up under them if God should allow them to come.[155] Prayer is essential to spiritual combat, for without it "we cannot endure the least assault of Satan by our own strength" and "we cannot obtain the spiritual armour."[156] Spurstowe urged his readers to pray often:

> When we are assaulted by Satan, it is one of the best weapons we can use to defend ourselves with...His temptations are grievous to us, but our prayers are far more grievous to him. You do not know how you wound his head with prayer, when he bruises your heel with temptations. In temptation it gives a supply of strength (Ex 17:11). And then it buckles on all our armour about us, for prayer is *armatura armature*, the armour of the armour; and though it have no distinct part to which it is applied, yet it must be used with every piece of armour, without which all the armour will be as no armour.[157]

Thus prayer was both a defensive and offensive measure in Puritan spiritual warfare.[158]

Finally, the Puritans encouraged meditation upon certain truths for encouragement during the fight against temptations. First, every resisted temptation "causes a shout in heaven" among God and the angels who watch the combat, and God will not fail to reward his soldiers for their "faithful service" in "his wars on earth."[159] Second, Satan cannot cause any lasting harm to the saint, for the soul is out of his reach.[160] Third, since Satan and his hosts of demons were already defeated by Christ, therefore there is "a certain hope of victory."[161] These meditations and others aimed to keep the spiritual soldier's morale high, for the Puritans saw despair as the surest means of defeat.

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[154] Gurnall, 84 and 643–44. See also Gilpin, 470
[155] See Perkins, 13 and Owen, 124.
[156] Love, 30.
[157] Spurstowe, 101–03.
[158] See Brooks, 162.
[159] Gurnall, 7. See also Gurnall, 195, 198; Edwards, 12; Spurstowe, 110; Brooks, 156; and Love, 8–9.
[160] See Spurstowe, 37 and 110; and Love, 23–24.
[161] Love, 10. See also Brooks, 156; Gurnall, 131; Spurstowe, 94; and Perkins, iii.

Resisting Other Assaults

The Puritans considered persecution to be a complex satanic assault to deal with, because it always entails the use of instruments (i.e. other human beings). Therefore, while firmly resisting Satan's assault, the Christian must not abuse their abusers, for "they are men possessed of, and acted by, the devil."[162] Instead, the Christian is to:

> Save your displeasure for Satan, who is thy chief enemy. These may be won to Christ's side, and so become thy friends at last. Now and then we see some running away from the devil's colours, and washing thy wounds with their tears, which they have made with their cruelty... we are not to bend our wrath against them, but [against] Satan that rides them, and spurs them on, labouring by prayer for them as Christ did on the cross, to dismount the devil, that so these miserable souls hackneyed by him may be delivered from him. It is more honour to take one soul alive out of the devil's clutches, than to leave many slain upon the field.[163]

Gurnall also outlined several measures that can be taken in order to hold up under persecution. The first is to ensure that one is suffering for Christ's sake, and not merely reaping the consequences of stubbornness: "get clear Scripture grounds for those principles and practices of thine which stir up the persecutor's rage against thee."[164] Second, meditate on those passages which teach Christians "to dread God more and fear men less," especially those that describe God's wrath against apostates.[165] Third, carefully mortify any love for the world, for "persecutors tempt as well as torture."[166] Finally, persecuted believers can strengthen their faith on two biblical promises: that "God will not let the persecutor's wheel come upon thee that art

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[162] Gurnall, 90.
[163] Gurnall, 91.
[164] Gurnall, 620.
[165] Gurnall, 620. See also Gurnall, 229.
[166] Gurnall, 621.

not able to bear it" and that "the ship of the church may be tossed, but it cannot sink, for Christ is in it, and will awake time enough to prevent its wreck."[167]

None of the primary sources surveyed described the process for conducting a dispossession. This is telling, showing that the emphasis of Puritan spiritual warfare lay elsewhere. Nevertheless, they did believe that possession was possible, and some secondary sources provide details drawn from narratives describing Puritan dispossessions. As mentioned in the introduction,[168] Puritan dispossessions were merely another application of the faith community's stock response to all calamities – gathering for fasting and prayer. The doctrine of divine sovereignty ascribes all events, good or bad, ultimately to God; therefore, the Puritan response to danger or disaster was to set aside a day for prayer for God's protection or deliverance. This explains why Puritan dispossession narratives describe a number of local Puritans gathering in the home of the demoniac for prayer, fasting and a near-constant round of preaching (therefore requiring a number of ministers). There are several significant differences from the Roman Catholic practice of exorcism, including: the absence of holy artefacts and holy men; no commands to leave were issued directly to the possessing demon, but rather God was petitioned to remove it; and the demoniac was not a passive victim but an active agent in their own dispossession (i.e. by joining in the fasting and prayer).

In the case of physical afflictions, the Puritans simply urged believers to take the ordinary measures prudent for their case (such as taking medicine) and then to bless God with patience in the midst of their suffering. They were to encourage themselves with the thought that such

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[167] Gurnall, 622, 623.
[168] See Almond, 37–38; Gibson, 4 and 8; Durston and Eales, 21; and Johnstone, 102–03.

sufferings do not reflect God's displeasure, for Christ's body suffered Satan's abuse as well.[169] As mentioned before, they were to avoid undertaking any means of relieving their pain that was not God-honouring, especially engaging the services of a practitioner of 'white magic.' Instead, they were to consider how God often cures diseases of the soul by allowing Satan to inflict diseases of the body.[170]

The final two categories of satanic assaults – haunted places and disunity in the church – received little attention in the Puritan spiritual warfare corpus. Perkins noted that Christians should avoid places "which are known to be haunted with evil spirits... unless it be within the compass of his calling or else have a true extraordinary motion of God's Spirit so to do."[171] His reasoning is ground in divine sovereignty: "if God has given liberty unto Satan to possess such places as have been consecrated to idolatry, or defiled by oppression and blood, or such like abominations, why should we without warrant from God, put ourselves into his hands?"[172] Regarding disunity, Brooks challenged his readers to consider how unity keeps them safe, and urges them to dwell "more upon these choice and sweet things wherein you agree, than upon those things wherein you differ", and "more upon one another's graces rather than upon one another's weaknesses and infirmities."[173]

Conclusion

The Puritan defences against Satan's many assaults were all founded on the twin doctrinal foundations of divine sovereignty and human depravity. Chapter one showed how the Puritans believed that God carefully supervised every Christian's combat against Satan. Chapter two

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[169] See Gilpin, 378.
[170] See Brooks, 72.
[171] Perkins, 4.
[172] Perkins, 5.
[173] Brooks, 130 and 128.

demonstrated that the Puritans saw the Fall as having left an indelible mark on human nature, a corruption that persisted even among Christians. These two ideas combine in the Puritan suggestions for how to defend oneself against Satan's assaults. Since God is in supreme control of the struggle, Christians should fight God's way and in God's strength. Above all, they must avoid creating their own ways or fighting in their own strength, since both are corrupted by their fallen nature. Furthermore, many of the defence techniques advocated by the Puritans were often exhortations to meditate on Scripture warnings and promises – necessary correctives to the twisted reasoning of the depraved human mind. Finally, the preeminent Puritan advice on resisting Satan was to watch and pray. Watch, because constant vigilance is necessary when the satanic enemy outside the gate has an 'inside man' in the form of human depravity. And pray, because the sovereign God is the only source of true victory in the struggle.

CONCLUSION

The Puritans were firmly located within the Reformed tradition, largely due to influences from Geneva on their leaders in exile during Mary's reign. Therefore, the signature doctrines of divine sovereignty and human depravity underpin most of Puritan spirituality. The Puritan theology and practice of spiritual warfare is no exception.

Some recent theories either downplay the difference between Puritan demonology and that of their medieval precursors and Roman Catholic contemporaries, or attribute those differences to non-theological factors. Russell asserts that Reformers uncritically adopted medieval demonology, with only minor alterations. Clark agrees, although he places greater emphasis those alterations, especially those resulting from Calvinist "providentialism." Oldridge sees a greater discontinuity between the demonology of the Puritans and that the medieval church, but attributes this shift to social and political causes.[1] Johnstone agrees that such a discontinuity exists, although he blames the Protestant struggle against Roman Catholicism. However, a survey of Puritan literature shows that there is a distinctively Puritan approach to the theory and practice of spiritual warfare, and that doctrinal factors were the primary influence on that approach – specifically, the doctrines of divine sovereignty and human depravity.

The understanding of the origin and nature of Satan and his demons was the element of Puritan demonology most in agreement with medieval demonology. However, even here one can perceive the influence of the divine sovereignty and human depravity. The single greatest impact of the doctrine of human depravity was the unwillingness among Puritans not to speculate on

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[1] Luttmer also notes these developments, but reverses cause and effect – that is, he sees the Puritan social and political struggle as the result of their demonology, rather than its cause.

those aspects of Satan's origin and being that were not clearly taught in Scripture. Because human reasoning is so corrupt, its operations are suspect, especially when it is unanchored by Biblical teaching. Puritan teaching on Satan's nature was also influence by human depravity. Throughout Puritan spiritual warfare literature, Satan is portrayed as evil, hateful, powerful, and shrewd in the use of that power. The purpose of such explication was to show how Satan is a very real threat to Christians – an effort made necessary by the unwillingness of corrupt human nature to be disciplined and watchful against demonic temptations. Paradoxically, the Puritans also portray Satan as limited in his ability to do harm, both by God and to a limited degree by the need to win the consent (or at least the acquiescence) of his human victims' wills. This reassured those whose corrupt nature caused them to fear Satan inordinately, sapping their resistance. Thus, the Puritan teaching on Satan's nature corrected presumption and despair, both of which arose from human depravity and both of which compromised spiritual warfare.

The doctrine of divine sovereignty comes strongly to the fore in Puritan teaching on Satan's nature when they explain how God limits Satan's power. First, they clearly repudiate any idea of dualism, affirming that God's omnipotence, omnipresence, and true knowledge of the future means that the cosmic struggle between good and evil is not one between equals. Working from the book of Job, the Puritans believed that Satan needs God's permission before assaulting a person, and that the form, intensity and duration of that assault is strictly regulated by the divine hand. The Puritans offered many reasons why God allows any assaults at all, mostly based on the idea of God using the enemy's own weapons against him, to achieve His glorious purposes. While this line of reasoning may strike the modern reader as making God the author of evil, the goal was to reassure believers that their spiritual combat was under God's loving control.

The Puritan exposition of Satan's activity throughout history is also grounded on the doctrines of divine sovereignty and human depravity. They especially focus on two specific episodes in Biblical history as crucial in impact and typical of Satan's activity: the temptation of Eve in Genesis 2 and the temptation of Jesus in Matthew 4, Luke 4 and Mark 1. Both episodes are used by the Puritans as case studies of how Satan goes about tempting people, and how to respond (in the case of Jesus) or not (in the case of Eve). Furthermore, the curse resulting from Eve's disobedience was often used by Puritans to explore the doctrine of human depravity, including how it continues to affect even those who have been saved and regenerated by the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of divine sovereignty comes to the fore in the temptation of Jesus when the Puritans speculate on why God allowed Jesus to be tempted. The very question presumes that God was in complete control of the situation, and their answers spring from the conviction that God ironically permitted the assault on His Son in order to further His own plans against sin and Satan.

Oldridge, Luttmer and Johnstone all observe that, while medieval demonology included temptation in their categories of demonic assaults, the Puritans elevated temptation far above all the others. In particular, the Puritans identify four primary kinds of temptations employed by Satan: drawing souls to sin, diverting souls from their spiritual duties, diluting doctrine, and disguise the soul's spiritual state. Within Puritan spiritual warfare literature, these four modes of spiritual assault receive much more attention than all other forms of demonic assault – such as persecution, possession, witchcraft, physical attacks, and others – combined. This emphasis is explained by the twin orienting doctrines of divine sovereignty and human depravity. Satan can only afflict Christians with the other assaults when God sovereignly allows. In these cases, there is little for the Christian to do other than to pray for relief and bless God with patience in the

meantime. However, temptations are a different case. In addition to God's own sovereign permission, the Christian must also assent to the temptation for the assault to be successful. In the Puritan understanding, without this assent there is no sin. Unfortunately, human depravity means that Satan is all too likely to successfully secure this assent. Therefore, Puritan pastors devoted a great deal of effort warning their audiences about Satan's many techniques for overcoming human resistance to temptation.

One characteristic of Puritan writing is a strong emphasis on practical divinity. Therefore, they did not simply describe Satan's assaults, but also recommended several ways to defend against each one. Of course, revealing the ways in which Satan tries to destroy God's children is itself highly useful to mounting a successful resistance. However, the Puritans go further. First, they carefully warn against commonly used defences that are actually harmful. Since divine sovereignty means that God is in ultimate control of the spiritual struggle, it is essential that the Christian wages spiritual war God's way and in God's strength. Then, they describe ways to resist each of Satan's four key temptations as well as general techniques that are useful against any temptation. These suggestions boil down to three essential pieces of advice, all of which are necessitated by human depravity. The corrupt human mind is self-deluded, and so one must meditate regularly on the Scriptural warnings and promises that counter-act Satan's lies. The lazy fallen will is likely to grow complacent, so one must vigilantly watch for any spiritual threat. Finally, the crippled human strength is unable to resist Satan's attacks, and so one must pray constantly for help from above.

The Puritan understanding of Satan's origin and nature, his activities in history, his assaults on Christians today and how they can be resisted were all founded on the twin doctrines of divine sovereignty and human depravity, and not simply adopted uncritically from the medieval

church. Since these are the twin pillars of Calvinist theology, this makes Puritan demonology a genuinely Reformed demonology.

Application

Most Puritan sermons consist of two parts of roughly equal size.[2] The doctrinal part is exegetical and expositional: identifying a principle, or 'doctrine', within a certain bible verse, explaining the doctrine, and reinforcing or nuancing it by drawing in related verses. The application part is practical and hortatory, identifying what the doctrine means for the audience's life, with several 'uses' of different kinds targeted at different kinds of listeners. Without this second section, a sermon would have been judged severely lacking by a Puritan audience. Similarly, a scholarly exposition of the Puritans without considering what the modern church could learn from them would be incomplete.[3] Martin Lloyd-Jones insists that there "could be nothing quite so ridiculous as to turn the teaching of the Puritans, of all people, into a kind of new scholasticism and to spend our time in merely quoting texts, repeating phrases and displaying our theoretical knowledge."[4]

Two kinds of uses can be derived from the Puritan theory and practice of spiritual warfare. First, there are two general uses that apply to any historical exploration of the demonology of a person or group in the history of the Church. Then there are several specific uses drawn from Puritan demonology.

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[2] See Packer, *A Quest for Godliness*, 284–88 and Ryken, *Worldly Saints*, 99–102.
[3] This applies to expositions written by church historians. While secular historians bear no such responsibility to the church, Tosh insists that *all* historians have "a wider responsibility" to society (*Pursuit of History*, 26).
[4] Lloyd-Jones, *The Puritans*, 24.

1. General Uses

The first general use relates to the methodology of today's spiritual warfare practitioner. The other branches of practical theology – such as homiletics, liturgy, education, counselling, and spiritual formation – use history as well as Scripture, reason and experience when developing their theories and practices.[5] It is time that spiritual warfare practitioners expand their methodology to include a consideration of how generations of their Christian predecessors addressed the challenges facing them as they conducted this ministry. Fortunately, post-modernity's growing appreciation for the 'ancient paths' of Christian heritage has prepared the way for such a methodological change.

However, mere appreciation of history is not enough; there must be a responsible use of history. Thus, the second general use is for academic historians. Because most spiritual warfare practitioners lack formal historical training, academic historians must help them to learn as much as possible from the Christian tradition. One way this could be done would be to identify which persons and movements in the history of Christianity were most active in the area of spiritual warfare. This would help practitioners focus their efforts on exploring the richest veins.[6] Alternatively, historians could find and collect those nuggets from individuals and groups that did not especially focus on spiritual warfare, but who did treat the topic in passing at one time or another. This effort would again save the practitioner time and effort by assembling these widely-scatter insights into one place.[7] Finally, historians could delve into the specifics of spiritual warfare of a person or tradition, performing the usual historical tasks of description and

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[5] Albert Outler's "Wesleyan Quadrilateral."

[6] Tosh asserts that, while today's concerns should not determine the historian's conclusions (which would reduce history to mere propaganda), they should determine the historian's line of research – that is which periods are studied and what questions are posed (see Tosh, *Pursuit of History*, 26).

[7] Jeffrey Burton Russell's five-part series on the history of the concept of Devil is a good example of this.

interpretation, and presenting the practical fruit of faithful historical reconstruction: an awareness of "the variety of human mentality and achievement;" the appeal to history "as a source of precedent...provided we do not look for a perfect fit between past and present;" predictions based on "the identification of past trends and their projection into the future;" an appreciation for "what is durable and what is transient;" the realization of "how far one's action and thought are conditioned by the heritage of the past"; and the negative task of "undermining myths which simplify or distort popular interpretations of the past."[8] The result of such historical labours will be a practice of spiritual warfare that is not limited by the experiences of this generation of practitioners, but rather a practice that is guided by the millennia of the experiences of others.

2. Specific Uses

Turning from the general applications of historical work in the field of spiritual warfare, there are a number of practical uses specific to this explication of Puritan demonology. The first specific use is for today's inheritors of the Reformed tradition, including Presbyterians, the Dutch Reformed, and certain kinds of Baptists. The Reformed movement has remained largely aloof of the deliverance ministries of today's spiritual warfare practitioners. While stoutly defending the reality of the Devil and his demons, in practice the Reformed struggle against evil is largely restricted to mortification of the inward sin nature, neglecting a wider warfare against an external enemy. In the Puritans, however, the Reformed movement finds a group that is both highly Calvinist and yet fully prepared to deal with the Devil's activity in daily life. The Puritans even model a means of dealing with cases of demonic possession, if need be, despite the

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[8] Tosh, *Pursuit of History*, 15–21.

assertion of some modern Reformed theologians that demonic possession ended with the New Testament era:

> After Christ's resurrection and ascension into heaven, demon-possession greatly diminished. The book of Acts reports a few instances which general emerged when the gospel was first brought to an area...But the New Testament epistles – though speaking often of satanic opposition against the church (Rom 8:38-39; 1 Cor 2:8, 15:24-26; Eph 1:20-22, 3:10, 6:12; Col 1:16, 2:15) – make little mention of demon-possession and give no instructions for exorcism. Demon possession does not seem to have been a significant problem in the established New Testament church.[9]

Therefore, those in the Reformed movement who want to enter into a full-spectrum struggle against evil, but who are uncomfortable with the charismatic theological foundations of much spiritual warfare practice today, can look to the Puritans for help with establishing rules of engagement based on Calvinist doctrine.

The second specific use encourages spiritual warfare practitioners to emphasize discipleship in their ministries. If temptation is Satan's preferred form of assault, as the Puritans argue, then a corresponding majority of spiritual warfare activity should be oriented towards defending against temptation. Such a mode of spiritual warfare would be characterized by efforts aimed at sealing those cracks in the human psyche that Satan uses to drive the wedge of his temptations. This explains the strong emphasis on mortification, watchfulness and prayer in Puritan teaching of how to defend oneself from Satan's assaults. This perspective on spiritual warfare should encourage practitioners to focus not only on dramatic and instantaneous activities – casting out a 'spirit of drunkenness' – but also on the gradual and seemingly mundane activities of discipleship, such as inner healing, confession, cultivating a Biblical worldview, and accountability – the slow process of helping a drunk become contentedly sober. Using Richard

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[9] Beeke, 25–26.

Foster's categories, this will call for the addition of the holiness tradition to the charismatic tradition that many spiritual warfare ministries already embrace.[10]

The third specific use applies to the church as a whole. It can appear that there are only two positions on demonic possession available to the church today. First, one can acknowledge possession as a reality and adopt exorcism (whether a formal rite like that of the Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox churches or the informal power encounters of the charismatic tradition) as a response. Alternatively, one can deny the possibility of demonic possession (either in theory or in practice). However, the Puritans present a third option: an affirmation of the reality of possession, but with a response that is as Biblically-based as exorcism but entirely different in focus. As mentioned in chapter 4, Puritan dispossession differs from exorcism in that it is communal, addresses God instead of the demon(s), and involves the demoniac in their own deliverance. As merely another form of intercession and fasting, it utilizes skills that the community has developed in other parts of the Christian life. Therefore, the Puritan form of dispossession is far less daunting than would be a specialized activity such as performing an exorcism.

The fourth and final specific use is for those who suffer from depression. The Puritans were among the first in history to acknowledge that depression could have physiological causes, and were very merciful towards those who laboured under 'a melancholy spirit.' At the same time, their advice was to resist this spirit, and not simply patiently suffer it the way they advised suffers of other physical illnesses. Their purpose was not to lay the charge of sin on people already suffering from depression, but rather to help them see their despair as the work of an

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[10] See Foster, *Streams of Living Water*, chapters 3 and 4, respectively.

enemy. Such an externalizing view empowers depressives to fight against the leaden cloak of their affliction, far more than if it was merely a struggle against an inner impulse.[11]

Conclusion

The English Puritans occupied a nexus point in history. They bridged the gap between the humorous, physical view of Satan in medieval Europe on one side and the deism of the Enlightenment that pushed Satan to the margins of life just as it pushed God. Within this transition, they presented the fullest description of that uniquely Protestant perspective on Satan as a very real enemy who nonetheless could be successfully resisted with God's help. The Puritans were able to generate this body of work because of their freedom to develop a body of practical spirituality that Continental Protestants were unable to match since they were fighting for their doctrinal and physical lives. Therefore, the Puritans represent a distinct school of demonological theology and practice that is worthy of historical study.

However, much work remains in this field. Future research could mine Puritan sources outside of the literature specifically addressing spiritual warfare to see if the principles identified in this thesis are repeated or nuanced in some way. Another potentially fruitful line of inquiry would be to track spiritual warfare theory and practice over the one hundred and fifty year span of Puritanism to discover any shifts in response to developments within and outside the movement. Furthermore, Puritanism in the United States and elsewhere could be added to the conversation: did Puritans practice spiritual warfare similarly in the North American colonies and in enclaves on the Continent as in England? Finally, how did Puritan demonology differ from that of their Roman Catholic and non-Puritan Anglican contemporaries?

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[11] For more details on the Puritan understanding, diagnosis and treatment of depression, see Part III of Lewis, *The Genius of Puritanism* and Wang, "The English Puritans and Spiritual Desertion".

Such study of the demonology of Puritans, as well as that of other movements in church history, would have a salutary effect upon spiritual warfare practice today. The application of this research should not be the uncritical adoption of the theology and practices developed in another historical context. While some concepts and practices might be carefully adapted for use in a twenty-first century context, the primary practical fruit of such research lies somewhere else. The diversity found in the theology and practice of spiritual warfare throughout history should open the eyes of the modern practitioner to the fact that godly people of good intent and sharp intellect, working from the same Bible and a shared history, have come to remarkably distinct approaches to resisting Satan's works. This diversity warns modern practitioners against absolutizing any one approach, but rather encourages them to develop an array of techniques as well as a means of discern when to apply which technique. This broadening tendency is the first and finest fruit of all historical research.

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