

06 – EXERCISING AUTHORITY –

Prayer 4 – Resisting the Devil – (Binding and Loosing)

Luke 10:18 – “Behold, **I give you authority** to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.”

1.) When Did We Get This Authority? (When We Got Saved.)

Matt. 16:13-16 – “When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

- ✓ When Peter made that confession of faith, Jesus immediately gave him authority (v. 19 – Keys represent authority.) When we put our faith in Jesus, He gives us that same authority.

Some Important Thoughts

a.) **You can't exercise authority over the devil, if you're still in the devil's kingdom.** (The seven sons of Sceva proved that.)

Acts 19:13 – “Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took it upon themselves to use the name of Jesus on those who had evil spirits, saying, ‘I command you by that Jesus whom Paul preaches!’” (KJV, ISV)

- ✓ It's *obvious* that these men weren't saved. (i) First, it calls them “exorcists”. (This is the only time you'll find the word “exorcist” in the Bible. Jesus wasn't an exorcist and Paul wasn't an exorcist.) An exorcist is “one who ‘casts out devils’ by magic spells and incantations”. (They were trying to set people free from demons by *using* demonic power. Good luck with that!)

- ✓ The second way we know they weren't saved is by how they refer to Jesus. They called Him, “... **that Jesus whom Paul preaches**”. (That's not *at all* intimate. They didn't know Him personally! They'd seen Paul using Jesus' Name and they thought they'd give it a go. (It didn't go well.)

Acts 19:15 – “The evil spirit answered and said, ‘Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?’ Then the man in whom the evil spirit was jumped on them and overpowered them with such force that they all ran out of the house naked and wounded.”

- ✓ (So first, you need to be saved.) Then, second ...

b.) **Not only do you need to be a Christian, you've also got to be submitted to God.**

- ✓ Contrary to popular belief, the Bible doesn't say, “Resist the devil, and he shall flee from you”. It says, “**Submit yourselves** therefore to God. **[THEN]** Resist the devil and he shall flee from you.” – James 4:7

“Yield yourselves in total abandonment under God's authority, so the devil knows who backs you when you resist him.” (De Toit)

2.) You Need to Exercise Your Authority

- ✓ *Having* authority doesn't help you, if you don't *use* it. (That's true of most things in life.) Having a gym membership doesn't help you, if you don't use it. Having money doesn't help you if you don't spend any of it. Authority is no different.

3.) How Do You Exercise Your Authority? (The Bible uses several words.)

a.) **Resist** – James 4:7 – When James says, “Resist”, the understood subject of the sentence is “you”. You have to resist him.

- ✓ Too many Christians are asking *God* to do something about the devil in their lives. But the Bible tells you to resist him.

- ✓ “Resist” is a military term meaning, “to establish one’s position, to take a firm stand, to push back (remember our illustration from last week?), to refuse to be moved, to ardently withstand”. When you “resist” the devil, essentially, **you’re drawing a line in the sand, and saying, “Forget it!” to whatever he’s trying to do in your life.**

1 Peter 5:8-9 – “Be sober, be vigilant, (be clear-headed, stay alert), for your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour. **Whom resist**, steadfast in your faith ...”

A Few Observations From 1 Pet. 5

(i) God and the Devil Are Not Equal Opposites

- ✓ God is Omnipotent (all-powerful), Omnipresent (everywhere at once) and Omniscient (all-knowing). The devil is none of those things.
- ✓ Satan’s not everywhere at once. (This verse says he “walks about”). He’s not all-powerful. (If he *was*, he’d just devour *all* of us. But he can’t.) He’s not even all-knowing. (He doesn’t know in advance who can be devoured. He’s out looking for signs of weakness.)

(ii) You Have to Resist Him **in Faith**

- ✓ You need faith, because after you resist him, it might not *feel* like he fled. (But he did!) [Illustration.]
- b. **Rebuke** – To reprimand sharply. Jesus rebuked *demons* (Mark 1:25, 9:25), He rebuked the *wind and waves* (Mark 4:37-39), and He rebuked *sickness* (Luke 4:39). So, **Jesus not only rebuked the devil, He also rebuked situations that the devil had caused.** (Rebuking the devil’s work **is** rebuking the devil.)

c.) Cast Out – Mark 16:17 – “In my name shall they cast out devils ...”

Acts 16:16-18 – “But Paul, being grieved, turned and **said to the spirit, ‘I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.’** And it came out at that moment.” (KJV, MEV)

- ✓ There are two important words there. The word “say” (epo) means “to say with authority”. And “command” carries the same thought. (Demons don’t listen to weakness.)
- ✓ One day, as Smith Wigglesworth was waiting for a bus, a woman walked up with her little dog following her. She knew that the bus would soon be there, so she told the dog to go home. “Go on home, honey! Go on!” Just then the bus pulled up. She stomped her foot, and yelled, “GIT!” The dog ran off. Smith Wigglesworth yelled, “That’s the way you’ve got to do the devil!”

Prayer 5 – Commanding in Jesus’ Name

- ✓ Very seldom, in the Book of Acts, do you see the apostles praying for people like we do. (In the very last chapter, you see Paul praying for Publius’ father. Really, that’s the only time you see them acting like us.) Usually, they commanded something to happen in the Name.

Acts 3:6 – “Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give I thee. **In the name of Jesus Christ** of Nazareth, rise up and walk.”

- ✓ Aeneas – “Jesus Christ makes you whole.” “Tabitha arise.” To the Demon in the Fortune Teller – “In the name of Jesus, come out of her.”
- ✓ The book of Acts is *full* of that sort of thing. But where did they get the idea to do that? Evidently from Jesus. Jesus *continually* spoke to things. And He told the disciples that *they* could speak to things (mountains) as well.

Mark 11:23 – “For assuredly, I say to you, whoever **says** to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he **says** will be done, he will have whatever he says.”

- ✓ Out of all of the kinds of prayer we’ll look at, this is the strangest. (If you’re going to do this, here are Jesus’ instructions – or “Our Part”.)

- 1.) Speak to the Mountain – (“Whosoever shall **say unto this mountain**
- ✓ Most people don’t talk to mountains. They talk to God *about* their mountain. (“God, this mountain is so big.”) Jesus said to speak to it.
- 2.) Speak with Authority – (“Whosoever shall **say ...**”)
- ✓ Once again, the Greek word for “say” (epo) means “to say with authority”. (Mountains don’t listen to weakness.)
- 3.) Tell The Mountain What You Want It to Do
- ✓ Jesus said, “*Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea.*” In our case, it could be, “Blood pressure go down! Sickness *go* from me.”
- 4.) Believe – (Again, this is very specific. Believe what?)
- ✓ Believe that Jesus is the Son of God? No. Believe that God answers prayer? No. Believe that God’s able? No. *I know!* Believe you receive! No. (Not this time. That won’t work here.) He said, “**Believe what you commanded will come to pass**”. If you said, “Blood pressure go down”, you have to believe it will.

Prayer Attacks the Problem at the Root

- ✓ When Jesus cursed the fig tree. The tree withered **immediately** (Matt. 21:17-23). But the disciples didn’t see it until the next day. (In Mark’s account, it says they saw it, “when they passed by in the morning”.) Why didn’t they see it until then? Because it dried up “**from the roots**” (Mark 11:20).
- ✓ Think about that: Jesus cursed it, and the roots died *immediately*. The roots were dead, but above the ground, the tree looked fine. It took a few hours for “death” to show up in the rest of the tree.
- ✓ **Prayer attacks the root of the problem, not the outward symptoms.** With all these kinds of prayer, it may take a while for the circumstances to change. But God is working in the unseen realm.