



Spiritual Warfare – Part 3

Our Authority in Christ. Knowing who we really are!!!

Ephesians 1:19-22, 2:4-6 – Our Authority in Christ

- ¹⁹ I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God the Father's power for us who believe HIM. This is the same mighty power ²⁰ that raised Christ from the dead and seated HIM in the place of honor at God the Father's right hand in the heavenly realms. ²¹ Now HE is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. ²² God the Father has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made HIM head over all things for the benefit of the church.
- ⁴ But God (The Father) is so rich in mercy, and HE loved us so much, ⁵ that even though we were dead because of our sins, HE gave us life when HE raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God the Fathers' grace that you have been saved!) ⁶ For HE raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with HIM in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus. ⁷ So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of HIS grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all HE has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus.

Definitions of Authority

- ▶ **Authority can be defined as:** "The power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience"
- ▶ **But it can also be defined as:** "The power to influence others because of one's commanding manner or recognized knowledge about something"

Human vs. Biblical Authority

- ▶ In a law-abiding society we are all charged with obeying human authorities i.e. government (Rom 13.1).
- ▶ But given recent secular humanistic 'equality' legislation the Christian finds it increasingly difficult to obey the authorities whilst obeying God! For example, how does a church respond when asked to perform a same-sex marriage?
- ▶ This is an example of [situational ethics](#). The Bible makes it clear that where there is conflict over 'truth' - or in this case a conflict of authorities - the correct but often painful choice is to choose the higher truth or authority.
- ▶ This leads to [persecution](#) even in so-called Christian nations. As Peter said to the authorities of his day: "*We must obey God rather than men*" (Acts 5.29)

Spiritual Authority and Power

- ▶ Jesus declared HIS authority on earth (Mat 28.18), and so He has authority above all human governments. He shared this authority with His disciples and this is true today.
- ▶ But authority without power is meaningless and so Jesus gives His church both His power and His authority:
- ▶ "He called the twelve together and gave them power (dunamis) and authority (exousia) over all the demons" (Lk 9.1)
- ▶ Note that the Greek differentiates between the authority to use God's power ('exousia') and the power itself ('dunamis'). Spiritual authority is the right to use God's power.

Our Authority in Christ

- ▶ Those whom Christ has redeemed have a legal basis to use His authority; it is their gift and legal right.
- ▶ Jesus said: "I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you" (Lk 10.19)
- ▶ Through Christ's death and resurrection, Satan's kingdom has been invaded and the church has been given the authority and power to 'plunder Satan's house' (Mat 12.29).
- ▶ In Jesus' name, Satan and demonic forces are rendered powerless. Believers in Christ have His supernatural power through the Holy Spirit:
 - ▶ "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1.8)
- ▶ This supernatural power can be manifested in many ways for the common good (1 Cor 12.7), as in wisdom, knowledge, discernment, healing and prophecy.

The Proper Use of Christ's Authority

- ▶ Christ's authority must be used with care. Believers do not own His authority, rather, it is given on trust or delegated to them and they are accountable to God.
- ▶ Authority should be used with love and spiritual discernment and be backed by prayer.
- ▶ It is to be solely used for the advancement of Christ's kingdom.
- ▶ The exercise of Christ's authority is not dependent on any physical object (such as crosses) or the use of 'sacred phrases' like 'the blood of Christ'.

Authority over Demons

- ▶ Christ's authority can be used to invest spiritual power in places; from whole countries down to small localities. Places like churches, homes and land can be spiritually cleansed by dedicating them to God.
- ▶ *"satan is always on the prowl seeking who he can destroy" (1 Peter 5.8)*, but the believer has the upper hand through Christ:
- ▶ *"Greater is He that is in you (the Holy Spirit) than he who is in the world" (1 Jn 4.4)*
- ▶ Speak the word of God. Jesus repeatedly used the word when tempted in the wilderness by saying 'it is written'. The enemy does not like to hear the words of scripture backed by The LORD's Authority (In Jesus' Name).
- ▶ Claim protection when entering enemy territory (a place or a region): *"He will give His angels charge concerning you" (Ps 91:11)*



Psalm 91:9-13

- ▶
9 If you make the LORD your refuge,
if you make the Most High your shelter, (seek His Kingdom)
- ▶
10 no evil will conquer you;
no plague will come near your home.
11 For He will order His angels
to protect you wherever you go.
- ▶
12 They will hold you up with their hands
so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone.
13 You will trample upon lions and cobras;
you will crush fierce lions and serpents under your feet!



Oppression vs. Possession

- ▶ It is very important for us as Christians to understand that neither satan or his demons are able to “possess” any of us.
- ▶ We are Christ's possession (1 Peter 2:9, 1 Corinthians 3:23)
- ▶ Christians can be oppressed however by the enemy especially if:
 1. Through ignorance or disobedience we participate in demonic activity (divinations, seances, palm readings, tarot cards, etc.)
 2. We allow ourselves to be trapped in addictive behaviours
 3. We allow ourselves to be influenced by people who are themselves controlled by spirits other than the Holy Spirit.

Authority in Healing

- ▶ **Inner healing:** The correct order when receiving healing ministry: understand oneself, acknowledge Jesus as Lord of everything in my life, confess my faults, forgive others, then finally, take authority over the enemy.
- ▶ Confessing can involve recognizing our own sin, generational sins and ungodly relationships. Christ's authority can be used to break the enemy's power over all ungodly vows and any imposed curses.
- ▶ Jesus then promises complete release: "He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives" (Lk 4.18)"If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (Jn 8.36)
- ▶ **Physical healing:** Physical sickness and disease is natural in a fallen world and the body naturally goes from a healthy to an unhealthy state. Sickness and disease may also come from unclean spirits (Acts 10.38). But whatever the cause of sickness and disease, the Bible makes it clear that God's normal will is for men and women to be healed as much as He wants them to be saved.
- ▶ "(God) Who pardons all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases" (Ps 103.3) Jesus saw healing as fundamental to people's needs. So He went around healing leprosy, lameness, paralysis, blindness, deafness, dumbness and so on.
- ▶ And Jesus is the same today. So the church has His authority to claim physical healing in a person. The authority is either over a fallen world resulting in what we might call 'natural' sickness or over sickness caused by satanic oppression: "Jesus ... gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness" (Mat 10.1)

Authority to Bless

- ▶ Believers have Christ's authority to bless people, homes, and land. They can enter a house and with Christ's authority proclaim peace upon that house:
- ▶ *"Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house' " (Lk 10.5)*
- ▶ Blessing is also a form of spiritual warfare. Jesus tells us to *"bless those who curse you" (Lk 6.28)* and Paul says *"Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse" (Rom 12.14)*.