

The Authority of the Believer: Exercising Our Dominion in Christ, Part 3

Please refer to the teaching notes for this message.

INTRODUCTION

This morning I'm teaching part three in a series on the authority of the believer. This will be my final message in this series. The reason that I focused on this is that, as believers, what we believe about the nature of the kingdom of God and how it operates is really an issue of life and death. Even as born-again believers who are on our way to heaven and sincere with Jesus, if we're not grounded in what the Word of God says about our place of authority, we can end up going through significant amounts of troubles. These could be prevented if we knew who we are in Christ and if we understood our place of authority. Now, one of the basic principles of the kingdom—John the Baptist said it, Jesus said it, and others said it as well—is, “Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand,” or, “The kingdom of God is within your reach of experience, if you repent.” So, repentance is the entrance to experiencing the kingdom of God.

REPENTANCE IS MORE THAN CHARACTER

Now when people think of repentance, they only think of repentance as a character issue. Repentance is more than a character issue; it's a thought pattern. It's a way of thinking. Now when Jesus said, “Repent, and you can experience the kingdom,” that's the entry point for experiencing the kingdom—not only changing your behavior, but the way you think. Even for us as believers in the kingdom, repentance, or changing the way we think, is the critical entry point to experiencing more of what the kingdom of God makes available to us. Today we call it the renewing of our mind, changing our thought patterns. It's a form of repenting to enter and to experience the kingdom of God.

CONFIDENCE IN OUR AUTHORITY

Now, I feel an urgency about this subject because, as a spiritual community, I believe we need to be strengthened in confidence to operate in our authority. That's why I've spent three messages on it. I want to urge you: don't hear it, agree with it, and then let it drift into the background. This needs to have a central place in our spiritual life and our family life. I'm talking about our natural families as well as in our friendship circles. We need to keep the conviction central, the reality that we can operate in authority. If we do, more good things will happen. If we don't, there will be negative things happening to us that could have been stopped.

One of the reasons I have this urgency is because I believe we're in a time of history when the negative is going to increase in intensity in the decades to come. The good news is that the positive is increasing as well. The positive and the negative are both going to increase. Now, this may sound like bad news, but I'm thinking globally, between now and when the Lord returns, and who knows when that will be? No one knows the day or the hour, but this is as easy as it's going to be between now and the coming of the Lord. It's not going to get easier. The battle will become fiercer in the next decade, and the one after, and the one after, etc. It will never be as easy as it is now.

So you're thinking, “Oh no!” No. There is an urgency. There is a battle that is coming to another level of intensity, and the good news is that the good is increasing as well.

GOD GAVE MANKIND DOMINION

Let's review for a moment, and then we'll look at some new verses. We're not going to cover all the verses here on this handout, but just a few of them in Genesis 1, by way of review. This is a remarkable, I mean *remarkable* declaration that God made over Adam and Eve, and therefore over all their offspring, the human race. He said, "Let them have dominion over all the earth" (Gen. 1:26, paraphrased). He gives the leadership of the earth to human beings. He *gave* the leadership of the earth to human beings. Now, they receive His blessing as they operate in unity with His leadership, but still, what takes place on the earth is dynamically impacted by what humans do on the earth. That's what this decree implies. That's what it says. God said, "Give humans the dominion, the government of the earth. If they choose to live in agreement with My leadership, then great good will be released through them. If they choose to live in agreement with Satan's leadership, then great darkness will be released through them. Either way, good or evil, it will be released as they agree either with Me, the Lord, or with darkness."

That's a remarkable decision that God made to govern the earth in this age—and even in the age to come—His being in participation with human beings. It's a remarkable decree. We covered that in the last two sessions. We can release the works of God or we can stop the works of the Devil as we use our place of authority in Christ Jesus. When the Lord gave this realm of authority, this stewardship, to Adam and Eve and their children, Adam and Eve gave it willingly to Satan. Again, we covered that already. The idea is that Satan became the god of this world because Adam and Eve abdicated their awesome place of authority. They gave it willingly to Satan. Then, approximately 4,000 years later, Jesus—fully God—becomes a man. As a man, standing in the same position that Adam stood in, and as a man standing before Satan as Adam stood before Satan; as a man, He conquered Satan. Jesus endured the temptations that Satan gave Adam, and He did not yield at all. He overcame in His own personhood, in His own humanity, all of the temptations. Then, He went to the cross, and He defeated Satan by paying the price for the sin of all humanity. He won the leadership of the planet back over to the human race to do righteousness, and so that righteousness could prevail on the planet.

JESUS DISARMED PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS

We looked at Colossians 2:15 in the previous sessions. Jesus disarmed the principalities and powers, meaning, the demonic hierarchy. He disarmed them. He triumphed over them, and by that triumph He has delegated that authority to us. We share in that victory, in that triumph. Satan is now a defeated foe. He is a defeated enemy. He was defeated by a man. Yes, Jesus is fully God, but it is in His humanity that Jesus defeated him, so that the authority to do righteousness could be given back to human beings to then release across the earth. Satan can now be legally stopped, because he was legally defeated at the cross. When Satan was defeated 2,000 years ago on the cross and at the resurrection, He didn't concede and say, "You know what, I'm going to be a good sport about this. I lost fair and square. You know, just as a statement of integrity, I'm going to back out of this war, because really, I lost. I'll just concede."

That's not what happened. The Bible says that Satan is a murderer, a thief, and a liar (Jn. 8:42–44, 10:10). He said, "I lost, but you know what, I'm not going to live inside the boundaries of my defeat if the people of God don't enforce that victory and stop me from attacking them." Though Jesus won the victory, the victory must be enforced, issue by issue, day by day, by the people of God on the earth who use the authority of Jesus' name to stop these works of the enemy.

JESUS WANTS TO GOVERN WITH AND THROUGH HIS PEOPLE

The Church must be taught this place of authority. Many in the Church are sincere, and they love Jesus, but they don't know their place of authority. When the enemy attacks them, they cry and moan over it. Oh, they complain about it, but they don't actually stop the attack. Jesus is the Head of the Body. He's in heaven; His Body is on earth. He had the victory. He won the victory. As the Head, He's in heaven, and all authority is His (cf. Eph. 1), but just like you when your head makes a decision, the members of your body are necessary to walk out the decision that your head makes. Well, the Head of the Body, Jesus, has the authority. He has made all the good decisions for righteousness, for peace and joy to fill the earth, but He's dependent upon His Body to walk out the decisions and the victory that He won. He has set it up this way. It's His own decree that it operates this way. Why? Because He wants relationship with His people. He wants to govern the earth with and through His people. It's His authority; it's His leadership, but it's walked out through the people who consciously come into unity with Him. He did it for love's sake because He loves His people. He wants to rule with them and through them.

He didn't do it because He felt overworked. He didn't say, "You know, I'm going to rule heaven. You rule the earth. I need a break." It wasn't like that. He said, "I can do it without you, but because of love I'll do it through you." Jesus actually honors those boundary lines of redemption. He said, "I won't do it without you. I want you. I insist on you agreeing with Me in order for the victory to be manifest between now and the second coming." So, the victory that we walk in is linked to our faith. It's dynamically linked to our belief system and our acting out that belief system.

FAITH IS CONFIDENCE TO ACT

Paragraph B. I have written here that, "Faith is confidence with urgency to act." You can use the word *faith* interchangeably with the word *confidence*. When it says that they had faith, you can put the word *confidence*, but sometimes people water down what real confidence is. They reduce it to an intellectual agreement like, "Hey, that sounds like a good idea!" But if that confidence doesn't incorporate an urgency to act, it's really not faith. Many people believe the things that I'm saying and they have a positive feeling about them. They say, "I agree with that. It's wonderful." They don't actually act it out. They have an intellectual agreement, but they don't yet have faith in that area. The enemy is attacking their family. They sit back and watch. They say, "Oh, what a tough day this is."

And the Lord is saying, "Do more than that. Do more than acknowledge the attack, complain about it, and get a few friends to love on you. Use the authority that I've given you to stop it!" So, we don't really have faith if it isn't confidence that has urgency to act it out. It's more than just knowing; it's acting. There are many things that we can stop in terms of the enemy's attack against us and our family. There's so much happening like that from the Lord's point of view, and I believe when we stand before Him, He'll say to many people, "That didn't need to happen. That really could have been stopped. I did My part. You had to do your part, but you didn't. You neglected the place of authority and you allowed the enemy to devour you. It grieved My heart."

There are even people who cry out to God, "O God, stop the enemy!"

And the Lord would say: "I gave the authority to you; now you do it. I'm the Head. I'm in heaven. It's My authority. You're My Body on the earth. We're joined together. Now, you stop the enemy."

Paragraph C. Again, this is still review from the first two sessions. Notice the three phrases of James 4:7. Number one: “Submit . . . to God.” Number two: “Resist the Devil.” Number three, the promise: “He will flee from you” (Js. 4:7). Now, we have to do steps one and two. We must submit to God, and we must resist the Devil. A lot of people submit to God and Jesus. They’re very sincere, but they don’t actually resist the Devil. They don’t do it. They submit to God, and then they’re confused about why the Devil doesn’t flee. “I love You, Jesus. I trust Your leadership. Why is the Devil attacking my life?” They don’t do step two.

Some people, but not many, resist the Devil, but they don’t submit to God. They live in presumption. They’ve learned some of these Bible truths and say they want to use their authority, but without being connected and in agreement with the Head of the Church, who is Jesus. That’s not where most are, though. Most sincere believers do step one, but they don’t do step two. They submit to God and then they ride out the storm when the Devil is attacking them. They don’t need to ride out the storm. They need to resist the storm. I’m talking about the onslaught of the evil one.

SATAN RETURNS AT AN OPPORTUNE TIME

Now this phrase, “resist the Devil,” is talking about a continual resisting. This isn’t a one-time thing; it’s a continual resisting. In Ephesians 6:12, Paul called it a wrestling match. It’s continual. If we stay with it, we won’t back down. If we stay with it, the Devil will flee. Now understand this: the Devil returns again at an opportune time (Lk. 4:13). The fact that he flees in one battle, over one issue, doesn’t mean he won’t return and attack again. In Matthew 12:44, Jesus says Satan will return with seven stronger demons and see if there’s an entry, a reprieve. If we take our stand and maintain our stand, even though he comes back with seven stronger demons, he can’t gain a victory in our life. I want you to know that when he flees, it isn’t a permanent fleeing. While we’re in this age, it’s a continual war.

Most believers just skip the part about resisting the Devil. They submit to God and endure the storm, which is tragic, because so much difficulty could have been avoided. Others submit to God; they resist the Devil once or twice. It’s not a continual resisting; it’s an experimental resisting. They say, “OK, I read the Bible verse; I hear the teaching, but here’s the deal, God: I’m going to resist the Devil, but on my own terms,” meaning, “I want a dramatic breakthrough and I want it instantly.”

That’s not what the verse says. It doesn’t say, “Resist the Devil in an experimental way for a week, and if you don’t get a dramatic and instantaneous victory, then quit.” No, it’s a continual resisting all the days of our lives. Well, the options are really bad if we don’t do that. We can lay our weapons down and be devoured. That’s the only other alternative to staying in the battle and resisting. We base our faith on what the Word says. The Word says that if we submit to God and resist the Devil, he will flee, though the fleeing may not be immediate and the fleeing isn’t permanent. Sometimes the fleeing is immediate. Sometimes the fleeing is partial and then, eventually, it’s complete; but either way it goes, he’ll come back again at an opportune time.

So people look at their circumstances and say, “Hey, it isn’t working.” No, we base our confidence on what the Word says. The Word says he will flee. If we don’t get the dramatic, immediate results, we can’t back away from this promise. It is written, “He will flee.” This is our confidence. It has nothing to do with our feelings. We may be tired and in a bad mood, but here’s the good news: when we’re tired, that doesn’t mean the Holy Spirit’s tired. I’ve seen people in meetings who say, “Well, I’m really tired tonight. Tonight will probably be a tough night.” No, the Holy Spirit isn’t tired when we are. The authority of Jesus isn’t worn out because we’re worn out. We use it. It doesn’t matter how we feel. It doesn’t matter that our prayer life has been really bad for the

last week or month, and we've not done well. This isn't based on your track record. It's based on the historical facts of what a Jewish man did 2,000 years ago. He died. He was raised from the dead. He ascended to the right hand of the Father. He was enthroned at the right hand with all power and authority, and then God gave Him to us as a gift. We're joined to Him and we have His authority. It's a finished fact. It isn't based on your mood, your energy level, or how good your prayer life or your spiritual life has been for the last couple of weeks.

“BEHOLD, I GIVE YOU THE AUTHORITY”

Let's go to paragraph D. Now this is good news. This is part of the good news that we can't neglect. Jesus said, "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions" (Lk. 10:19). Now we have the authority to trample over them. This is a clear, biblical description of demonic powers. You can read Psalm 91:13. It describes the demonic powers in this context as scorpions and serpents. Satan was the serpent in the garden of Eden. This is clearly what Jesus was talking about. "I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and the authority over all the power of the enemy" (Lk. 10:19, paraphrased).

That's an amazing reality. We have authority over all the power of the enemy and his attacks against us. Nothing shall by any means hurt you in terms of the enemy's attack. It's talking about the long-term, permanent sense. We can't be destroyed by the Devil. If we'll use our authority, we can drive the Devil out of the sphere of influence or sphere of responsibility the Lord has given us. Now again, it isn't necessarily immediate. Usually it's not; it's a wrestling match. We stay with it. We don't give up and give in when it doesn't look like it's going well.

AS LONG AS WE HAVE BREATH, WE RESIST THE ENEMY

You know, there are some who have resisted the enemy and fought for someone's life, and the person dies. Then what? I say, "We don't need to have complete and full answers. We would like to have them, but we don't need to have them." A lot of people attribute one thing to God and another thing to the Devil. There are so many theories about who should have done what. I don't even want to go there. All I know is this: as long as we have breath on the earth, we're going to resist the enemy. If a person goes home in death in the midst of a battle, we don't need to have an opinion as to why or why not. What we need to do is to be continually resolved to resist the enemy all the days of our life. As long as there's breath in our body or breath in the person that we're standing with, we will resist. We will resist. We will resist. Then, on the other side, the Lord can sort out the times where it didn't work in the way that we thought it should. We don't want to be overly conceptual and theoretical about it now. We want to stay steady on resisting, because I've seen people change when a battle was lost. They become very introspective and conceptual about it, and they actually get out of the war. Not only was a person's life lost in a warfare context, but now we've lost a soldier who is so discouraged and confused that they get out of the battle. That's also what the enemy is after. So, I know this: between now and when we meet the Lord, we must continually resist, and never, ever, do we yield, regardless of what happens in the natural. Jesus says, "I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions" (Lk. 10:19).

FOR PRINCIPALITY ATTACKS, WE PRAY TO GOD

Now, I'm going to take a ninety-second qualifier. In the New Testament when a spirit is attacking a person, we address the spirit. When a spirit, a principality, and a power are over a region, we address God. There's no place in the New Testament where a demon unrelated to attacking an individual is addressed. All the prayers in the New Testament for the breakthrough of God in a region are addressed to the Father. Where a disembodied principality is the resisting force, we talk to the Father: "Release Your glory, Lord; release Your power." When we're dealing with a person, and a spirit is directly attacking that person, sometimes it's an embodied spirit

dwelling in a person, and at other times it's connected to a person. Then we address the spirit directly. So, to sum it all up, when a person, individually is being attacked, we address the demon. When it's a region, a city, or a nation being attacked, we address God. That's the rule of the New Testament. There are exceptions, but that's the general rule.

The reason I say that is, some people take the teaching of addressing a demon that's related to an individual's torment, and then they use the same teaching as the basis for addressing the demon over a geographic area. Again, there's no biblical precedent for doing that. It's logic by deduction. If we address a demon with an individual, it's an embodied spirit. It's a spirit that's directly related to an individual. It's a different situation than taking on the powers and principalities, the hierarchy in the spirit realm over cities and regions. That's just a point I want to make. That's why we pray the apostolic prayers, the prayers of the apostles. Those are the biblical models for addressing the powers of darkness in a city or region. Again, there are exceptions to that, but that's the general rule of the New Testament.

“YOU WILL NOT BE AFRAID”

Now in terms of our personal lives, we have authority over all the power of the enemy. One common tactic of the enemy is what I call, “terror in the night.” This is something that often attacks children, though not only children; it's a common tactic of the enemy. It's a horrifying nightmare that's caused by a demonic spirit, or not even a nightmare, but you're lying in bed and a very dramatic, evil presence comes into the room. It's more than just fearful thinking. There's a presence that's seemingly tangible. You can't really put your hand on it, but there's a presence in the room, and it's not right. It's the terror that's associated with a demon manifesting. Children struggle with this, but so do adults.

COMMAND THE EVIL SPIRIT TO LEAVE

When that happens, we don't just take more medication. That's not the answer. We address the demon. When the child is fearful, we go in there. We explain the authority of the believer. We teach them to use it. We give them confidence. They can take authority over the spirit. Say, “It's spiritually here, and we can take authority over it,” and command it to leave. I'm talking about the children who would be old enough to understand that concept. As adults, most of us have had experiences in our life where there's an evil, demonic presence, whether it's a terrifying nightmare, or even more dramatically, when you're wide awake and there's an evil presence in the room. Most believers I've talked to have had that kind of attack come against them. I've had maybe eight or ten of those. I don't know the exact number, but I've had a number in the last thirty years when I'm wide awake, and there's an evil presence. It's actually a demon in my room harassing me, attacking me, but I understand what's going on. So, I don't have to retreat in fear. I don't have to flee the battle. He has to flee the battle, not me. I'm not the one drawing back from the battle. I'm not fleeing; he's fleeing. If we understand that, we can boldly and fearlessly address the spirit and command it to leave. If we just stay with it, it will leave. Say, “In the name of Jesus, I command you to leave.” Now I've done that eight or ten times over the years, whenever I encountered a really dramatic, evil presence. OK, I did turn the lights on, but not for my sake. You know, it was really for their sake.

WHEN YOU THREATEN THE ENEMY'S AGENDA

I remember the first night that I moved from St. Louis. We were in St. Louis for seven years, church-planting. We moved to Kansas City. The very first night we were here, we were attacked in this way by demonic spirits, right in the middle of the night. A screeching noise came into the duplex we were living in. It was terrifying.

Diane and I were both suddenly awake. There was an evil presence in our room. Someone might say it was thick. In other words, it was really powerful. I took authority over this.

Really, it's backwards. It is a back-door compliment because the enemy is troubled by what you're doing. So, we don't retreat and say, "Oh no, this must be wrong." On the contrary, we must be in the right place, not the wrong place. The attack of the Devil isn't the sign that you're in the wrong place. Often, it's the sign that you're in the right place, because the enemy is threatened. Now, I didn't realize what I was stepping into and what the Lord was doing with a youth movement, and the future of all that, but I knew something was happening. We took authority over it. And actually, once in those early days when I was being attacked by a spirit like this, I actually saw, with my eyes wide open, two demons. It's the only time I've ever seen demons while awake. I looked at the end of the bed and I said, "What's...?" I didn't really say, "What?" but my eyes did, and I said, "Oh my goodness, there are two beings in my room!" I looked again. It's the only time I've ever seen them with my eyes. I rebuked them and commanded them to leave. I didn't want to talk to them. I don't care what they have to say. We don't need to be afraid of them. We have authority over them. They know we have authority over them, but they're counting on us not knowing it. They'll continue to assault and torment us as long as we allow them. We command them to leave in the name of Jesus and they'll leave. They'll leave every time.

So, it was my first night in Kansas City and I was attacked by demonic spirits. Seventeen years passed. The very first night when I understood, back in 1999, that IHOP-KC-KC was to start soon, the very first night when it became clear to me, I encountered the same attack. A demonic presence came into the room. I was wide awake. The room was filled with evil, but I was completely aware of what was going on. I took authority over it.

Now some of you know the significance of John Wimber in my life, a man who's with the Lord now, a man with a very powerful international ministry, and with whom I was connected in the Lord. The first time I went to visit him, I had a very intense demonic attack. This was in January of 1988, and it was exactly the same thing. It was the day I went to see him. On the first day of my first trip to England with John Wimber, in November 1988, about ten months later, the same thing happened. That was when I began to understand. Whenever I'm touching something important, many times, a demonic spirit will come and attack in a dramatic way. Instead of concluding that I'm wrong, I conclude that I'm in the right place, and that I'm stirring up something that I don't fully grasp. The point is not to grasp it. The real point is this: we don't conclude that something is wrong; rather, we conclude that something is right, because he wants to trick it. He wants to spin this thing on us so that we retreat instead of standing with boldness.

LUTHER SHAMED THE DEVIL AND WENT BACK TO BED

Now there's a well-known story about Martin Luther, who lived in the 1500's, the leader of the Protestant Reformation in Germany. Martin Luther received a number of physical death threats against his life. People said they were going to kill him. One night, he heard a noise in his room. It was very overt, and it was troubling. He lit the candle. They didn't turn the light switch on back in those days, so he lit the candle. He looked, and there was a demonic being staring back at him. He looked at it and saw that it wasn't a person who had broken in to kill him, but a demonic being. The way he told the story, he looked at it and said, "Oh, it's only you." He rebuked it in the name of Jesus, blew the candle out, and went back to bed. In other words, he was so confident in his authority over that being that he said, "Ah, it's just you. In the name of Jesus, go," blew the candle out, went back to sleep, and all was well. We need to have that kind of confidence.

OVERCOMING WITH THE SPIRIT OF VICTORY

Now, there are many different ways that the enemy attacks us. Last week, just last Monday, we had our all-staff meeting where a thousand staff members all came here into the auditorium. A number of you were here. There was a terrible announcement. Someone for the last two, three, or four months—I don't have the exact time frame—has been stealing from us. We have ten different properties here on the IHOP–KC missions base. They've been going into different ones and stealing the really expensive equipment, like the keyboards and sound equipment, and they stole over \$100,000. They've been doing it, I'm guessing, for three or four months. It wasn't a staff member, but a contract laborer who knew how to get in and what the rhythms were. They came at just the right times at night, and they were avoiding the different alarms. They knew how to do that because they were familiar with it. It's been going on for some months. Well over \$100,000. was stolen.

So, the announcement was made last Monday. I thought, "Man, this isn't good." It was sad. The next night, on Tuesday, we had a worship team meeting with about fifteen or twenty of the worship leaders. At the end of that meeting I said, "Let's do this: let's take authority over this situation." It only takes a few minutes. I said: "Let's take authority. Let's bind the spirit, because, you know, Satan is the ultimate thief." We understand that he comes to steal, kill, and destroy (Jn. 10:10). He steals in a number of ways, but some of it is literal. He steals spiritual and physical things from us. He actually steals physical things as well. He uses the agency of other people. I didn't want to deal with the person stealing; I wanted to deal with the spirit that was inspiring and operating in that person. So, I took authority over the spirit. I commanded him to leave, and I asked God to expose him. There were maybe fifteen of us in the room. We only took three or four minutes and prayed. Then, at the end of it, I said, "I believe God is going to expose this man." I didn't know when, but I figured in the next few weeks. Six hours later, he was caught. They found the equipment in his house. Six hours later. He had been doing it for months. There's a direct correlation.

Now, the reason that I wanted to stop and pray is because, wherever two or three gather in His name in agreement, more happens. I was inspired by something that happened thirty years ago when I was just a young pastor, still in St. Louis. Two or three men broke into our church. The policeman came to us and said, "These men are good at this." They had been doing this for about a year or longer. They had broken into twenty different places, and he told us, "We know it's the same group because they have the same patterns, but we can't find them. They're really good at this."

I was teaching on the authority of the believer. I got four or five people and I said, "OK. Let's pray, and bind the spirit, and ask God to expose them." Within a day, they were caught. That was so exciting.

Now that was the last time in ministry that anyone ever stole from us. So I've been waiting for the next opportunity to see if it would work again. I mean, I wasn't hoping we would get stolen from, but I said, "Hey, one time it happened. No one could catch them for a year, and within a day, they were caught." I thought, "I wonder if it would work again," and I believed it would. So then, this happened. Just a few of us gathered and prayed. Six hours later, they were caught. I look back on thieves and say, "Lord, You're two for two in my experience."

"RESIST THE DEVIL, AND HE WILL FLEE"

But, you know what, it isn't just about pastors and churches and church buildings. This is about anyone stealing in any realm of your life. It's the same principle. I gave the analogy, or the illustration, on the first message—

the first session of this three-part series. Again, we're finishing with this third part here. I told the story about the lady who had so much trouble. We bound the spirit, and the trouble went away. I gave the details of that. Then I gave the experience, just recently, when I was with my son Luke in a really, really hostile situation. We gathered together and prayed and bound the spirit, and when we met the man, he was radically different. It was remarkable. I said, "Let's deal with the spirit that's moving on this man." I mean, this man had made murderous threats. He was a tough dude, and he was really demonic. We addressed the spirit, and the man became sound in his mind. He could think and reason, and the problem left. Now, that doesn't mean that it won't come back again; because "the enemy will return at an opportune time" (Lk. 4:13, paraphrased).

Well, it isn't just thieves. It isn't just terror in the night. There are other times the enemy comes. I use the word *heightened*—heightened temptation. I don't mean regular temptation. I mean when it goes to a fever pitch, to a whole new level. Maybe it's only there for five minutes or five hours. For a short time, it's heightened temptation. Or, it's a heightened fear, which is different than a temptation. Or, it's an anxiety that's not normal. There's human anxiety and there's anxiety caused by a spirit. Or, maybe it's depression, and it's beyond just natural, physical dynamics. There's actually a spirit involved. It has a kind of obsessive dimension for a few moments or a few hours. It escalates to an unusual level. Beloved, when that's happening, there's a spirit involved. Don't ride the storm out. Submit to God, resist that demon, continually resist him, and he will flee.

Now, when I talk about continually resisting a demon that is coming against us, I really have learned the value, over the years, of ninety-second prayers. Ninety-second prayers really do matter. They really, really do. When you're under a really intense attack, when the enemy is attacking you or a family member in a really intense way, if you would pray four or five minutes, four or five times a day, it can be profoundly effective. I'm talking about an unusual, intense attack. I'm not talking about the routine troubles in life. If you do that, and you stay with it for several days, or maybe several weeks, I want to assure you that you'll see a difference. Things will be different.

THE VALUE OF PRAYING FOUR OR FIVE MINUTES

Here's my point. Resisting the Devil—which means continually resisting him, not just resisting him once—doesn't take a five-hour prayer time. It really will change in four or five minutes, three or four or five times a day. I'm not saying you have to put it on the clock in that way, but I'm saying you just address it. You stay with it. It doesn't mean five- or ten-hour prayer meetings, although I'm all for those as well. If you have the grace for that, then go for it. I'm certainly not discouraging that. Don't wait until you have a five-hour slot and then think to yourself, "Man, that's a hard thing to stay with." See the value of praying for four or five minutes, four or five times a day. Get one or two people to agree with you during some of those times. Other times, just do it privately. Other times, get one or two other people to agree with you, and bind the spirit that's stirring up that person or that situation. Command it to go, and release the blessing of God. I tell you, it really matters.

THE POLICEMAN HAS THE POWER OF GOVERNMENT

As I said in the first two sessions, when the policeman wants to stop the traffic, the policeman can do it. The minute that policeman is commissioned and gets his badge, within sixty seconds he can use that badge and stop the traffic. He doesn't have to grow up and be a mature policeman, and wait for five years to prove that he's a real one. The minute he has that badge, he can stop the traffic. He can stop the bad guys; not by his own power, but it's the power of the government behind him; it's his authority, and he exerts the power.

The moment we're born again, we can use this. When we use this authority, we actually command the demon. The policeman commands the traffic to stop. It isn't like the policeman is standing on the road in a crisis situation with cars driving by, and he says, "Hey, please, please, would you stop?" The cars zoom by. "Well, maybe the next one. Hey, please, stop! Please! It would be so helpful. There's trouble down the road. If you would cooperate, it would be so helpful!" Zoom, the car goes by.

A policeman doesn't do that. They don't beg and plead with the cars to stop. They simply put their hand out, knowing they have the entire power of the government behind them. That's how it operates. So, when there's this heightened attack, this obsessive compulsion of fear and anxiety and depression and temptation; beloved, there's a spirit operating behind that. Yes, there might be natural fear and natural depression and anxieties, but there's a heightened, escalated dimension. Sometimes there will be a family member, maybe even a believer. Believer or unbeliever, it doesn't matter. They're making wrong choices and they're under this really heavy cloud where nothing makes sense to them in terms of righteousness. I can assure you, there's a demon operating in it. I'm not talking about an exaggerated sense, but an escalated, heightened sense. They're absolutely fixated on something and it's wrong. There may be some who don't want any part of it, but you can get two or three family members and take authority over the spirit that's driving them, whether believer or unbeliever. Then the cloud lifts, and they have a far better chance to choose righteousness. They say, "Wow, that was a weird mindset I was under!"

I've seen people become obsessive and leave their families, following after some steamy affair. It's a demon that's heightening this. They leave everything; they lose everything. They go follow this person. Then, a few months later, the power of it is broken, and they say, "What was that? Why did I do this?" It was a demon. We can take authority over that demon. We really can. They're not going to do it, more often than not, but we can do it as family members. We can do it in our neighborhood. We can read the newspaper and hear about the human trafficking or the man who's kidnapping the children or the man breaking into the stores. We can take authority in our city and our sphere of influence in our neighborhoods. We can stop bad people from having the support of demonic powers helping them and inspiring them. We can do this. We can use our authority in that way.

I remember the dramatic time when we first had the day of prayer and fasting for human trafficking. Never was there a bust of human trafficking in the Kansas City area. We might have spent twelve hours focusing on it that day. The next day there was a bust. They had it in the newspaper. People were saying, "Wow, that's amazing. We've never had a bust in Kansas City!" Well, they never had a twelve-hour group of people binding the enemy and calling on the name of the Lord for that to happen. My point is this: there really is a correlation. Things really do matter if we use our authority. It's an issue of life and death.

"IN MY NAME THEY WILL CAST OUT DEMONS"

Let's look at just a few more verses. Most of the notes are for you to review in your own personal time. Let's look at Mark 16. "And these signs will follow those who believe: in My name they will cast out demons" (Mk. 16:17). This promise is for all who believe, not just the famous prophet, not a select few. This is for the brand new believer. The moment that policeman gets his badge, he can stop the traffic. We don't get a physical badge, we get the use of the name of Jesus. That's how we stop the enemy—by simply declaring the words. If we don't declare the words, he won't stop. If we do declare the words and we stay with it, he'll stop. It's the simple act of invoking the power of the government we represent. The policeman represents a natural government; we represent the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God.

“In My name they will cast out demons.” When the enemy comes to us, we can say, “It is written... In Your name, Jesus, we can cast out demons. We command the demon to leave.” Now that’s casting a demon out of a person. That’s the primary meaning of this, but it has a secondary meaning, which is casting the Devil out of attacking our life. Again, we can quote this verse. I have about ten or fifteen verses in these three handouts for these three sessions. You only need to use a few of them. You don’t need to use every one of them. Pick the ones that really grab your heart. They all, in essence, say the same truth: Jesus has won the victory, and we enforce that victory by using the name of Jesus. Say to the enemy, “It is written...” Pick a few of these verses, however many there are, find the ones that really get hold of you, and speak right to the enemy. Speak the Word of God and command him to leave. “It is written; we will cast out demons in the name of Jesus. Go, demon.” It’s as simple as that. You don’t need to engage the force of your personality. You can whisper it. You can shout it. It doesn’t matter what mode you’re in, because the authority is in Jesus’ name. It’s in the historical fact of what Jesus did.

Now we don’t need an all-or-none approach. Some people have an all-or-none approach. They say, “If God will give Me an obvious victory that I can measure, instantaneously and really dramatic, then I’m going to do this for all my days. But, if I don’t see something instantaneous and dramatic, ah, I’ll try it. I’ll experiment with this for a week or two, but then I’ll back off of it.” No, we stay with it. We don’t measure how much victory we can see; we just stay with it. We leave the results to the Lord.

GREATER IS HE WHO IS IN YOU

Paragraph F. “...He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (1 Jn. 4:4). The One who is in you is greater than the one attacking you. Now the one attacking you, the one who is in the world, Satan, knows the One who is in you is greater than he is. The question is, do we know it? We know it in theory, of course we know it; but do we know it enough to act on it continually? One of the reasons why John designates, “the One who is in you,” is to show that He isn’t a far-away authority. The authority is in you. I mean, He’s in you; He’s near you. It isn’t like you send in your application, saying: “Hey, would you intervene, government?” They get back to you a few months later. No. He’s in you. He’s near you. It can’t be closer than in you. You carry the authority wherever you go. You don’t need your legal papers. You don’t need to apply to a far-away government. He’s in you. That’s what this verse is saying, and He’s greater than the one attacking you. You can quote that verse to the enemy.

JESUS DESTROYED SATAN’S ABILITY TO DESTROY HUMANS

“For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the Devil” (1 Jn. 3:8). That is one of the reasons why Jesus was manifested—why He came to the earth. There are a number of reasons, but one of them is that He wanted to destroy Satan’s ability to destroy humans. He wanted to give humans the authority to destroy Satan, to turn the tables on him. Satan has been destroying humans for many years. Jesus became a human, defeated Him as a Man, and gave us authority, so that humans under His authority could destroy the Devil instead of the Devil destroying us.

Now, one of the reasons that this passage is so straightforward is that John wants us to know that it is in Jesus’ nature to destroy the Devil. In other words, we don’t have to convince Jesus; He’s trying to convince us. Some people approach it this way: “Oh, Jesus, would You help? Would You please help? The Devil is so bad; he’s so evil.”

Jesus would say: “No, no; I’m convincing you. You don’t need to convince Me. I’m fully God from eternity. I became human. One of the reasons I became human was to destroy the Devil, and give humans the ability to destroy the works of the Devil by using My name. Don’t convince Me; I’m convincing you.”

Paragraph E. In 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, I won’t read it all, but notice the word *ambassador* in verse 20. We’re His ambassadors. Beloved, we’re the ambassadors of the government of heaven. Now, if the U.S. ambassadors go to a foreign nation, they have the government of the United States behind them. If they don’t have the government behind them when they go to another nation, they’re tourists. They can’t appeal to any power. Beloved, we’re not tourists down on the earth, just hanging around and seeing what happens. We’re ambassadors. The very definition of an ambassador is someone who represents a governing power. They have authority to invoke the name and release the power of that government. We have authority. That’s what the nature of an ambassador is. We’re not tourists and we’re not victims. We’re ambassadors. We have a government behind us.

JESUS HAS GIVEN US THE KEYS

Let’s go to paragraph F. Look at the final verse, Matthew 16:19. Jesus gave the keys of the kingdom to His people. Now, many of His people don’t use the keys, but they have them. They take the keys; they put them in a back room somewhere, and they talk about the keys, but they never use them. How many of you know that if someone gave you the keys to a mansion and you never used them, you would never, ever enjoy what’s happening in that mansion, or that car, or whatever analogy you want to use? You have to use the keys to open the door. He gave them to us, and He means that we use them. Many believers don’t use the keys.

AUTHORIZATION TO ENFORCE THE VICTORY OF JESUS WHERE THE ENEMY ATTACKS

Here’s what the keys will do. Look at what it says. “Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven...” (Mt. 16:19a). That’s a pretty big statement. The implication here, according to the context of Scripture, is whatever you bind in the will of God. It isn’t a blank check for people to operate in the flesh, but it’s an authorization to enforce the victory of Jesus wherever the enemy attacks. *Binding* means stopping the works of the enemy. To *bind* means to stop the works of the enemy. He goes on. He doesn’t stop there. “Whatever you loose...” (Mt. 16:19b). In other words, whatever you release. That’s the blessing of God, the power of God. You have the keys to stop—to bind—the works of the Devil, and to release, or loose the power of God, the blessings of God.

Most commentators agree that, rather than the verb saying, “Whatever you bind will be bound,” as it reads in the New King James, it would be better translated, “Whatever you bind shall have been already bound” in heaven, meaning, in the government of heaven. Jesus determines what is bound. He determines what is released. When we agree on earth with what He has bound and loosed in heaven, then we can release it into the earthly realm. So whatever Jesus has bound, whatever He has forbidden to go forward because of His victory, He says, “Now, enforce it. Now you enforce that binding decree that I’ve won the victory to enact; but I’m only going to enact it through you on the earth. Stop the enemy, now. I’ve already released that governing power by My death and resurrection. Now, I’m going to allow you to invoke it from heaven, and release that blessing on the earth, but you have to do it.”

We do it by saying words, by agreeing and by staying with it—not experimentally—not for a few days or a week or two, and then declaring, “Well, it didn’t really work.” No, we stay with it until the end. There is no escape hatch. There is no plan B. We’re binding and loosing until the end. When it doesn’t line up right, we

don't try to pretend to have all the answers. We know we are going to resist the Devil. We are going to bind and loose until we meet the Lord. That is the end of the discussion. When we have that kind of resolve, we will see many, many victories. We won't always understand why some things didn't happen, but many other things that are good will happen. Again, the enemy's tactic is to get us so confused by what didn't happen that we quit doing the things and releasing the things that are going to happen. We are not going to yield to that. Amen.