

The Authority of the Believer: Exercising Our Dominion in Christ, Part 2

Please refer to the teaching notes for this message.

INTRODUCTION

Father, we ask You for revelation; we ask You for living understanding, we ask that we would see what You've made available to us in Christ Jesus. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Well, I want to continue from the last session that I taught on the subject of the authority of the believer. This is part two, and I'm going to cover some of the same ground I covered in part one, both for those who were here with us, and for those who are new.

On the day that we were born again, a very glorious thing happened: the authority that Jesus possesses at the right hand of the Father was delegated to us. It is given to us as a gift on the day we are born again. We didn't earn it; we can't do anything to enhance it. It's a free gift of God. And, we can use that authority to release the works of the kingdom and to stop the works of darkness. So, there's a positive dimension and there's a negative dimension.

GOD GAVE DOMINION TO HUMAN BEINGS

Paragraph A. Genesis 1. This is the first statement that God made to the human race. These are the very first words that He spoke over humans. Adam and Eve were together, and the Lord said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion . . . over all the earth" (Gen. 1:26, paraphrased). This is a remarkable statement: God gave the dominion, or the authority, or the government of the earth to human beings.

Adam and Eve are before Him, and He's speaking this to both of them. He says, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen. 1:28). In other words, "Bring the earth to its full potential under My leadership, and then bring it into order under My authority and under My government. Have dominion over everything that moves on the earth" (paraphrased). Again, this is a most remarkable statement; it was our job description. He didn't tell us the *why* behind the *what* until later on in the drama. The reason He did this is because He desires relationship with us. But, His first statement was the "what," meaning, "I've given you the government of the earth in relationship to Me. We will govern the earth in partnership with you, My people, under My authority."

Again, we say, "Why did You this?"

He says, "I'll tell you as the drama unfolds."

And then, we find at the end of the book, in Revelation 19, that it's all about a wedding. It's about a wedding that He was planning from the beginning, a partnership with His Son, and an eternal companion called, "the Bride of Christ." He planned that they would rule together under the Father's authority, but it begins right there with that remarkable declaration. He said, "The dominion, or the government, or the authority of the earth, I will give to human beings." Wow! And, together in partnership with God, we will rule the earth.

Now God did this out of desire for relationship—not because He was overworked. He didn't say, "I'm really busy in heaven and it's wearing Me out. So, why don't you guys take your part of the workload? You take the earth." It wasn't like that. He said, "I want you to have this huge sphere of My kingdom on the earth because I want to do it to enhance our relationship together." This was an eternal decree, even in the age to come. God will rule the earth through His people, so that as His people respond to Him in agreement, then God's works increase and spread and multiply across the earth.

"HE HAS GIVEN EARTH TO THE CHILDREN OF MEN"

Again, this is by way of review. In Psalm 115, we read, "The heavens . . . are the Lord's, but the earth He has given to the children of men" (Ps. 115:16). So, the heavenly realm, the realm of the angels, God leads directly. But the earthly realm He has given to humans. And so, God's involvement with humans is in His providing leadership to the earth. His work will not be done apart from us. That was a huge statement of God, to give the earth to the sons of men. He was saying, "I won't break into the earth outside of the context of My relationship with My people. I will work through you and with you." Again, I want to say this: His work will not be done apart from us. He wants us deeply involved with Him. This changes the way we view our life. This changes the way we view our future.

David commented on this in Psalm 8. He actually quotes the statement God spoke to Adam and Eve in Genesis 1 in the passage we looked at. David was awestruck by this. He said in Psalm 8:4, "What is man" (Ps. 8:4)? In other words, "It's amazing that You have so many thoughts and plans for us." He was awestruck by the dignity and the significance that humans have in God's plan to govern the earth. He said, "I don't get it. Why are we so important to You? Why are You so mindful of us? Why do You have so many plans with us being at the center of them?"

"DOMINION OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS"

He goes on in verse 6 and mentions again the statement from Genesis 1 that God spoke to Adam and Eve—the very first statement that God ever spoke over the human race. David is talking about mankind. "You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet" (Ps. 8:6). He has put everything in the earthly realm under the feet of humans. David is saying, "It's amazing how important we are to You, and how valuable we are." Now, this isn't just until the second coming, but forever and ever.

MAN DELIVERED THE AUTHORITY TO SATAN

Paragraph B. If God gave such great authority to humans, what went wrong? The world is in such a mess. Darkness is increasing and there are strongholds of wickedness all over the earth. What went wrong? In Luke 4, Satan made a statement to Jesus that gives us insight into what went wrong. Satan was tempting Jesus. And when tempting Him, he made the statement, "The authority over the nations has been delivered to me" (Lk. 4:6). He meant that it was given to him by Adam. When God gave the leadership of the earth to Adam, Adam could literally do with it whatever he wanted. God really gave that authority to Adam and Eve. This wasn't figurative or symbolic; it was real. And they did the unthinkable: they committed high treason. They broke their alliance with God, and they yielded to Satan. In that moment, they abdicated their position of authority and influence over the earth. They gave what was rightfully theirs to give; they gave it to Satan, and Satan mentioned this to Jesus. He said, "I have authority over all the nations." Satan was tempting Jesus. He said, "And I can give it to whomever I wish" (paraphrased) in the same way that Adam could give it to whomever he wished. Satan was tempting Jesus, but Jesus, in these same temptations as Adam had before Him, refused Satan on every point. He had victory over Satan as a man.

WHERE ADAM FELL, JESUS CONQUERED

Now Jesus is fully God, from eternity past to eternity future. He's fully God, but He was standing before Satan as a man anointed with the Holy Spirit in the same place that Adam was. Where Adam fell, Jesus conquered. He was victorious. But it was in that same moment, in the garden of Eden, that Adam allowed Satan to become the god of this world. Adam's authority over the earth was handed to him. Paul called Satan, in 2 Corinthians 4:4, "The god of this age," or, as one translation says, "the god of this world." He blinds the minds of unbelievers, and he blinds the minds of believers as well. He has a place of influence and impact to deceive and to blind so that people can't understand what's happening.

JESUS DISARMED THE PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS

Paragraph C. Well, Jesus was the first, as a Man, to be victorious over Satan. He chose righteousness in the face of temptation, but then He took it to the next level. He went to the cross, and He had victory over Satan at the cross and resurrection. He paid for Adam's sin and the sin of the whole human race. First, He was victorious as a man before Satan, and then later, He offered Himself as the sacrifice for man's sin on the cross. Paul talks about this in Colossians 2:15, saying this about Jesus: "Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:15)—in the cross. Jesus disarmed the principalities and powers.

Now, most of us know that "principalities and powers" is a reference to the demonic authority structure that's in the heavenly realm, the invisible realm. All around us there is an invisible spiritual realm, which the Bible calls the heavenly realm, the spiritual realm. And when Jesus went to the cross, and when He rose from the dead, He disarmed the demonic hierarchy, the demonic authority structure that has many different levels of authority. He made a public spectacle of the demonic realm, which means that when He paid for man's sin on the cross and then rose from the dead, He openly triumphed over Satan and the realm of darkness, and all that were in the demonic realm. They saw it. It's documented in history. A real man with a real physical body died, and He was raised from the dead and given a new body. And this real Man ascended in a physical body to heaven, and in that He triumphed openly. All heaven saw it. All the hosts of hell saw it, and a number of the believing saints in the first century. They saw Him raised from the dead. He appeared to them. It was a public triumph that was documented with witnesses from the demonic hosts, the angelic hosts, and even among some of the redeemed. He appeared to over 500 at one time (1 Cor. 15:6).

THE VICTORY MUST BE ENFORCED

Well, Paul is mentioning this, or declaring that Satan has been disarmed. Satan has been defeated. He has lost his place of authority, but Satan will not submit to this. Satan will continue to try to rob and steal and kill. He'll still try to exert his authority wherever he can. Even though Satan is a defeated foe, even though he was defeated at the cross and resurrection of Jesus, the victory of Jesus must be enforced by the Body of Christ. For over 2,000 years, from the resurrection until the second coming, the victory is final, but it must be enforced in the earthly realm by the people of God. Satan will continue to attack. He'll continue to seek to kill and steal and destroy; and when challenged by the authority of Jesus, he'll back down. But if not challenged, he'll continue to devour; he'll continue to attack and destroy.

IF WE DON'T RECEIVE CLEAR TEACHING, WE REMAIN IMMATURE IN OUR FAITH

Now the problem is this: that many in the Body of Christ in the last 2,000 years don't know that Satan has been disarmed and defeated. They don't know that the authority that Jesus received when He rose from the dead and went to the right hand of the Father has been delegated to them. And if they don't use that delegated authority,

then Satan continues to devour and attack. If no one will stop him, he'll continue to go forward. He can only be stopped by one group of people: born-again believers who have the authority of Jesus, but who know that they have it and who use their authority. Lack of teaching in this area has had disastrous results throughout history. If we don't have clear teaching on our authority in Christ Jesus, we remain immature in our spiritual life. We may have godly character, but we still remain immature in our life in the Spirit. We must have clear teaching; we must have a clear foundation as to what the Word says about the authority that we received as a free gift. If we don't have this understanding, we live in defeat, and it is unnecessary that we live in that defeat. The authority has been delegated to us. Why? It's the most remarkable thing. We know it, but I love to say it, and I know you love to hear it. There was a Jewish man 2,000 years ago. He died. His body was laid in a grave. Three days later, the Spirit of God touched this dead body, completely renewed it, and made it new with a supernatural, resurrected body. He came out of the grave with a new body.

“Wow! That's intense!”

Well, that's only the beginning. No one has ever had a supernatural, physical body like this. People have been raised from the dead; but in essence, they were resuscitated. They weren't resurrected with a new body. Jesus is the first One. That's why He's called the “first fruits,” “the firstborn from the dead” (Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5). So, He has this new body; then the power of God comes on Him by the Holy Spirit and lifts Him, with a physical body, straight through the heavens. There He goes, up. I mean a real man with a body, not a spirit being. This is a real human. It's called “the ascension.” He ascends right up to the gates of heaven.

“ALL AUTHORITY HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ME IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH”

Well, when He gets to the gates of heaven, it goes to the next degree. The doors open and the Father calls Him forward. He doesn't just ascend to heaven; He's placed at the right hand. He's enthroned at the Father's right hand. It's one thing to go to heaven. The angels are in heaven, but to be enthroned at the right hand of the Father; that's remarkable.

Well, it even goes beyond that. After He's enthroned, He's sitting there. The Scriptures tell us in many places that the Father gave Him all authority. He says, “Now that You're in Your place, here's Your reward. All authority over all angels and demons, and all heaven and earth, all of it is Yours—not as God, but as a Man.”

Now, Jesus is eternally God, but when He was enthroned, He was then given the inheritance of authority over the earthly realm, the spiritual realm, and all demons, angels, and people. This was given to Him as a man. This is remarkable. No man has ever had a physical body raised from the dead, supernaturally renewed with supernatural abilities, lifted up to the heavens, seated at the Father's hand, and then received all authority from God. But it happened to this Jewish Man.

JESUS DELEGATED HIS AUTHORITY TO US

But, it goes on, even beyond that. The Scriptures say that God gave Jesus to the Church. And we're joined with Him and we have His authority on the earth. He's the Head in heaven; but His Body is on the earth. The authority that He wants, that He has in heaven, He only exercises through His Body on the earth. This is a most remarkable reality. We have delegated authority.

Now what is delegated authority? *Authority* is one way to say it; “delegated power” is a more accurate way to say it. The analogy I've used over the years is one that many have used since: the analogy of the policeman. A

police officer stops traffic when it is necessary—not by power, but by authority. In other words, he raises his hand. Maybe he blows his whistle or shows his badge. But he raises his hand and the traffic stops, because the power of the national government is behind him raising His hand. He doesn't stop the traffic by his own power. I mean, if he did that, he would jump in front of the car, slam into it, and hit it hard. That would be stopping the traffic by power. He doesn't do that. It isn't his power; that power resides in the national government. He has the authority. Authority is delegated power. He simply puts his hand up; and he knows that all the power of the government is behind him putting that hand up.

Well, that's what happens with us in the Spirit. We don't use our power to wrestle a demon. We use our authority. We speak; we don't put our hand out and blow a whistle and show a badge. That's what the police officer might do. We simply speak the name of Jesus, which is parallel to what the police officer does, and we stop the attack of the enemy. He rages, but if we speak the name of Jesus against him and resist him, he stops. Then he attacks again, and we stop him again. And he'll continue to attack until we resist him. It's like the police officer who stands on the side of the road and says, "I sure wish those cars would stop." They're not going to stop until he raises his hand and exerts his authority.

Many believers stand at the sidelines in the midst of the drama and war, and they say, "I sure wish the Devil would stop."

And the Lord would say, "Use My authority and stop him."

They might say, "Well, no, I'm not going to do that. I'm just going to think about it. I'm going to cry over it and I'm going to be sad about it. And I'm going to endure his attack."

But the Lord would say, "Why don't you stop it? Why don't you resist him and tell him to go?"

Because the authority that the Head of the body, Jesus, has in heaven, He only exercises on the earth by stopping the Devil through the redeemed. He stops Him through the Body. It's just like us. You can think thoughts with your head, but you need your body to walk those thoughts out. Maybe you have a building project. You think it through, but you need your hands involved to do it. Maybe you're going to cook a meal. You think of the meal, but without your hands you can't do it. Jesus as the Head has all the authority, all the wisdom. But He says, "I'm committed to intervene in the earth through My Body when they agree with Me. If they don't understand their place of authority, many things will happen that I would have stopped if they had just understood My Word and taken a stand on it."

So, a lot of believers are blaming God for things that God would actually stop—if He had people who stood before Him, took their place of authority, and stopped them.

"RESIST THE DEVIL, AND HE WILL FLEE"

The Scriptures tell us in James 4:7 that if we submit to God and resist the Devil, he will flee. We need to challenge him when he attacks us. We need to resist him. If we don't resist him, he'll keep attacking, keep attacking, keep attacking. But if we do resist him, he'll flee. And, what that means is that he'll draw back from our sphere of authority, our sphere of influence. All of us have a certain sphere of influence. Maybe it's over one or two people. Maybe it's over more. Maybe our sphere of influence is little, maybe it's big, but whatever your sphere is, it involves your family, the marketplace, and the people you influence. You can use the authority

of Jesus to release the works of God and stop the works of darkness within your sphere. And, if you say no to the Devil, he must leave your sphere. Now, it's not a permanent leaving. He leaves for a time, and he'll return at an opportune moment. Then we say no again. He'll draw back. Then he'll attack again. We say no again, and this goes on throughout all our natural life in this age. He'll never give up. Most of the few who say no, only say no for a short time, and then they give up. So, the Devil knows that if he stays steady, most of the time he'll be able to continue to devour and attack.

But God is raising up a people all over the earth whom the Word of God describes as steadfast and resolute in the authority the Lord has given them. They will continue to say no and resist the enemy.

HE HAS GIVEN THE EARTH TO THE CHILDREN OF MEN

Now here and in the next paragraph, paragraph D, I've written two common errors I see in the Body of Christ in responding to Satan's attack. Error number one is that people ask God to resist the Devil for them. They cry out.

They say, "Oh God, do something! The Devil is attacking Me! Would You please resist?"

And the answer is, "No. I'll not do what I entrusted to you. I won't do your part, and you can't do My part."

There's a division of labor in the kingdom of God that God honors. The reason there is a division of labor is because that's the way God has decided we would grow in relationship with Him. He has given the earth to the sons of men.

Jesus would say, "I've already defeated Satan. Now I've risen to the right hand of the Father. All authority is Mine. Now I'll destroy Satan's works through My hands and feet, through My Body on the earth. So I won't do it Myself. I've already done My part. You must do it."

And many people think it's really devout to ask Him to do it, but it's wrong. They're asking Jesus, who is the Head in heaven, to do their part on the earth as the Body. And Jesus will not do it. He's already done His part.

HE WON'T DO WHAT'S ENTRUSTED TO US

There's an analogy I've given many times about the farmer. The farmer has to plant the seeds and pull the weeds. The farmer might go to a prayer meeting and say, "What I'm going to do is spend more time in prayer. I'm not going to plant seeds or pull weeds anymore. Father, would You please plant the seeds? Would You please pull the weeds? I love You. I trust You."

And the Father's answer would be, "No. I'll provide the sun and rain and the processes of life in the plant. You plant the seeds and you pull the weeds. It's not because I'm overworked and tired; that's not the problem. It's that there's a division of labor. I'll not do that which I've entrusted you to do." So, the farmer that "trusts God" to plant the seeds and pull the weeds, that farmer will starve to death outside of the will of God. But God won't pull those weeds for him. He won't do it. The same is true in the spiritual realm. "Father, would You rebuke the Devil? Would You move the Devil?"

He says, "No. You move the Devil. You have the authority, My Son's authority is yours. Speak the Word. Speak the Word."

GOD' WILL IS TO DESTROY THE DEVIL'S WORKS

Well, that's one error. The second error is more common: devout believers accept Satan's attack under the banner of honoring the sovereignty of God. They say, "I just trust Your sovereignty. Whatever You want is what I want." And that's a really good prayer if it's applied in the right way. But they say, "God, whatever You want, I want."

God says, "I want the Devil's works destroyed." Jesus came to destroy the works of the Devil (1 Jn. 3:8). God says, "If you want what I want, use My authority to say no to the Devil."

They say, "Well, if Satan comes and destroys my life, I'll just trust You always."

God would say, "I would rather you obey Me and trust Me by doing what I told you to do."

WE DON'T GET OUT OF THE WAR

It's easier for some people to see everything as sovereignty. Therefore, they have no responsibility in it. And they imagine that if they see the sovereignty, they can get out of the war. Beloved, I have news for you, and you already know it: we don't get out of the war because we refuse to fight. The war goes on. Satan would much rather attack us without us challenging him. He would much rather have it that way. There are many people who are very devout, but they're confused. It's a misappropriation, a misapplication of the glorious doctrine of the sovereignty of God.

WE MUST RESIST THE EVIL ONE

It's like Satan knocks on the door. He says, "Hey, I have a package for you."

We open the door. The package is full of snakes. And we say, "Well, I just trust God."

The Holy Spirit would say, "No. Tell him to be gone in the name of Jesus. Don't take that package. Don't accept it. Say no. Command it to go."

We say, "Well, I just love Jesus. Come on in, Satan, and just release the snakes on my family and just whatever God wants. Just let His will be done."

That's deception and confusion. It seems like holiness, but it's confusion and deception. We must actively resist, not passively accept the attack of the evil one. Peter makes the same point that James makes when he says, "Be sober" (1 Pet. 5:8). In other words, take this very seriously. This is weighty. This isn't small. Give this the appropriate weight of concern that it deserves. Be sober about this, and be vigilant (v. 8), or diligent. In other words, don't be casual and don't be lighthearted about this. This isn't a small subject. Take it in a weighty way as very important. Be sober and vigilant. Be diligent. Go after this thing.

Peter says, "I'll tell you why: "because your adversary, the Devil . . ." (v. 8b) and the implication is, all the ranks of demons under him—that hierarchy of demonic powers that are under the Devil—"walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (v. 8c). He's trying to devour the Church. God has given us authority to stop him. God will not stop Him because He wants us to agree with Him and have us do our part in the relationship. Satan is devouring many people whom he doesn't have the right to devour, but they don't

know any better. They just grit their teeth and endure the attack of the Devil. Satan walks around like a roaring lion. He roars. His roar is terrifying, but when we have a revelation of who we are in Christ, then we're no longer terrified by the roar. We see through it. He roars at us all the time in various ways, and we get very nervous and very afraid and panic strikes us.

Then the Word of God comes to us: "Wait a second. You don't have to panic before his roar. You have authority. You already have authority over this evil one and all of his ranks." Peter says, "Resist him, steadfast in the faith" (1 Pet. 5:9). Peter tells us he will flee. Beloved, it's not a permanent fleeing. He does come back, again and again and again, and we resist him in a steadfast way. We must be steadfast. It's not a one-time deal. All the days of our life we're doing this.

WE WRESTLE AGAINST POWERS OF EVIL

Let's go to the top of page 2. Paragraph E. We looked at that in our last session. Paragraph F. We looked at that as well. But I'll mention a point or two separately from our last session. I'll add some new things from last time.

"We don't wrestle against flesh and blood, but against demonic powers and principalities" (Eph. 6:12, paraphrased). We wrestle against demonic powers. The principalities and powers speak of the demonic authority structure in the invisible realm. The heavenly place is the invisible realm. Paul is saying, "Flesh and blood isn't our main adversary." "Flesh and blood" means humans. Now all of us have humans who trouble us. What Paul is saying here is, "Yes, humans really do contribute to trouble in our life. But," he says, "I want you to see the big picture. There's actually a more powerful adversary behind the human. The human you can see, and they do contribute to the trouble. But behind the human, there's a hierarchy of invisible demonic powers that are involved in it" (Eph. 6:12, paraphrased). Paul is saying, "Don't get locked into wrestling only against the human. See the big picture. See the invisible realm. See the power that's energizing the human dynamics."

Paul then says, "Take up the whole armor of God . . . so that, having done all, you may stand" (Eph. 6:13, paraphrased). Now, "to stand," means you're not going to accept the attack of the Devil. When he comes and hits us, we say no. We stand, and we never, ever become passive receivers of the attack of the enemy. We stand. Standing is the opposite of passively receiving the attack of the enemy. We stand. I have it edited here in the notes, but when you read Ephesians 6 in its whole context, it says "to stand" three times. In other words, refuse to quit. Refuse to passively accept the attack of the evil one. Use your authority. Speak against him. Refuse to accept this as the will of God. Accept this as an intruder who has no right to intrude, but you must use your authority to command him to leave. It's the Lord's authority, but He has delegated it to us.

EXTINGUISHING MISSILES

In verse 16, Paul goes on and says, "Take up the shield of faith. And with the shield of faith you are able to quench all these darts" (Eph. 6:16, paraphrased). These are "flaming missiles," one translation says (AMP). They are arrows, these darts of the wicked one, and these darts have fire on them. Think of arrows, think of missiles; they strike us and they really hurt, but they can be stopped. They come for a moment and they strike us physically. And not every physical trouble is a demon, but many physical troubles are related to demons. I believe that's a simplistic approach to physical problems. But, many times, there's demonic involvement. These darts touch us physically. Ouch! The Devil comes to torment people's bodies. These missiles, these arrows, these darts, touch us mentally, and we have this heightened sense of depression, or fear, or this exaggerated, heightened sense for a few moments where everything looks so distorted. It's a dart. It's a flaming missile touching our mind. It touches us emotionally. It touches us financially. It touches us relationally in our ministry,

our workplace, our family, our children, our parents, our siblings, our aunts, our uncles. It comes to invade, to destroy. Satan always comes to steal, kill, and destroy. Whenever he shows up, it's for the purpose of destruction.

So these missiles touch us. They are wicked, but they can be dismantled. They can be extinguished. They can be quenched. And sometimes they'll hit us, and they'll hit a realm of our relationships, or cause financial or physical or mental dilemmas, and we say, "In the name of Jesus, we are not accepting this. We refuse to accept this." We stand against it instead of passively receiving it and thanking God for it—or even asking God, "God, would You please remove the Devil?"

He says, "No. Don't thank Me for the Devil and don't ask Me to remove the Devil. I've already won the victory. Thank Me that I gave you authority. Now use it." That's how He wants us to thank Him.

TAKE UP THE SWORD, THE WORD OF GOD

Look at verse 17. We take up the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Now the way that we swing the sword of the Spirit is simply by speaking the Word. It's very simple and it's all throughout the Bible. It's as simple as speaking God's Word. And we speak it to the Devil, or demons. We don't see the demons, but we know from the Scriptures that they are harassing us. We know that these darts are coming. These arrows, these missiles, are striking us physically, emotionally, mentally, financially, relationally—in all these spheres. And we want the Devil to flee from our sphere of authority.

Again, it's not a permanent fleeing; he'll come back and attack again. We speak the Word. We say, "It is written. In the name of Jesus, I command you to go." And it's very simple and it doesn't have to be fancy language. "In the name of Jesus, we cancel your assignment against my marriage, my children, my parents, my brothers, my sisters. You're attacking my ministry, my marketplace assignment, my finances. You're attacking me. I cancel that assignment in the name of Jesus."

AGGRESSIVE DOESN'T EQUAL AUTHORITY

We must speak the word. It must be spoken. It's not OK to think it; it has to be spoken. You can whisper it. It doesn't have to be loud. Some people think that if they really get serious, if they get loud, it will help. Now that doesn't help it at all. Being loud is OK, but it doesn't enhance your authority. Someone said, "Well, they'll leave when you are really serious: 'Satan, leave in the name of Jesus!' I get mad and say, 'This time I really mean it!' And I get mad and get red in the face and start screaming, and the Devil will say, 'Well, he means it this time.'"

No, that means nothing. Being loud isn't a problem. I'm loud because it's my personality. It doesn't help the authority. I mean, when I'm at home, I say, "PASS THE SALT!"

My wife says, "Dial down. I'll give it to you." She says, "Settle down and relax."

I talk loudly. That doesn't help my authority. And the reason I'm saying that is because you don't want to get into a mode. It's not a ministry mode or style that enhances authority. The reason we need to know this is because you can be in a public place and whisper it. Or, you can be in a bad mood or tired, and it still works, because it's not based on your volume or your mood or your mode. It's based on a Man who was exalted at the right hand of the Father.

Sometimes we think that if we feel great, there's more power and authority. No, no, no. The power and the authority works in the invisible, but you can't fully measure it when you're speaking the Word. I mean, you can't measure it with your five senses; you can't measure what's really taking place.

Sometimes the enemy comes. I'm tired, I'm in a bad mood, and so I mumble and grumble, "In the name of Jesus, go." And it still works. You don't have to be loud and articulate and bold, and you don't have to drink three cups of coffee so that you have plenty of energy. No. It's about a human being agreeing with Jesus in even the simplest, weakest way. It works if we stay with it. We have to stay with it.

WE SPEAK TO THE DEVIL IN THE NAME OF JESUS

We speak the Word of God. That's how Jesus defeated the Devil. In Matthew 4, the Devil came. Jesus said, "It is written, it is written." We speak the word to the Devil in the name of Jesus. When we do that, something like the impact of a sword goes forth in the kingdom of darkness. The ideas that we speak in the natural have an impact that's akin to a military strike in the kingdom of darkness.

Now some people can get a little mixed up, and they think they have the sword in their hand. No, the sword isn't in their hand. No, you don't even have to swing the sword and hack all the demons with swords. I mean, if you do that, that's OK. But that's not doing anything. It's not moving any demons or angels. It's the Word that does it, and the authority of Jesus.

You know, some people get into prophetic symbolism. And I think prophetic symbolism has a place in the Bible. But I'll be really honest as a pastor: looking back over the years, I think most of it is silly, non-biblical, and unhelpful. It's just drawing a lot of attention to people. But, having said that, there's a place in the Bible for prophetic symbolism. But, the minute you bring this up, people want to swing the sword and cut off everything over everyone. I think, "Stop. Stop. Let's not draw attention to you! It's the name of Jesus. Just speak in the name of Jesus, "Go." And the demons will listen to it if you believe it.

We can drive the enemy out of our sphere, whether it's family, or finances, or relationship, and it's not easy and it's not automatic. But we stay with it, and we stay with it, and it's a war, and we continue. Now, if believers don't do anything about it, then it won't be done. The enemy will not stop. God will not stop him, and the enemy will not stop himself. It has to be stopped by the mouth of a believer. That's what the Word of God says.

WE WRESTLE WITH THE WORD OF GOD

Paragraph F. "We wrestle" (Eph. 6:12). I want to say one word about the word, *wrestle*. When we wrestle against these demons, we wrestle by speaking the Word. We don't touch them physically, and we don't symbolically wrestle with them. We don't do that; we just speak the Word to them. Now wrestling is an interesting word. It's the perfect word, really, because it's up close and personal. It's not at a distance, like shooting the arrow over the ridge. No, it's up close and personal. It's really close. In a wrestling match, at one moment the first man looks like he's winning; then, a moment later, that same man looks like he's losing. Then he looks like he's winning again. The battle goes back and forth, and you don't quite know who's winning at any given moment. Now, I'm speaking in terms of the natural manifestation of that oppression going away. But we know the victory has already been won. We stay with it. We stay with it. And the wrestling match isn't automatically over. Paul doesn't say, "Get in the wrestling match and say, 'In the name of Jesus, the match is over!'" No, it's a wrestling. It's a battle. And sometimes it takes longer than other times, but we stay with it. We stay with it.

WE CONTINUE TO RESIST

Now someone says, “Well, you know, we stood against the enemy and the brother died. What do we think, then?” We don’t need to have all the answers. It’s better not to have all the answers. All that we know is that we’re going to wrestle as long as the brother has breath. And if he dies, we don’t know exactly how to interpret it, but we wrestle for the next one. So, we continue for as long as we have opportunity to resist. Resist. Resist. We don’t need to have all the answers if it doesn’t end up right. We just get back in the battle and jump in there again.

Paragraph G. I talked about this in the last session, so I won’t go into it again. There are a number of different human dimensions that are involved. Not all of our problems are demonic. Demons bring a heightened dimension of negativity. They bring a demonic energy to other human dynamics that also contribute to the problem. I don’t want to go through that because we talked about it last time. When we rebuke the demonic dimension, the human problems still have to be solved, but they’re easier to solve without demonic interference.

“GOD HAS NOT GIVEN US A SPIRIT OF FEAR”

Let’s go to paragraph H. “God has not given us a spirit of fear. He’s given us a spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind” ((2 Tim. 1:7, paraphrased). This is a very important passage to declare. We say, “It is written.” When the enemy comes, he brings a heightened sense of fear. I mean, the whole human race has experienced this at various times; all of us have, though some much more than others. Every human being has experienced this at different times. A demon comes and brings a heightened sense of fear. It may last five minutes, or five hours, or five days. But, a demon comes, and it’s an illogical fear. When the cloud lifts, we take a step back and say, “What was that? That didn’t make any sense, but I had this intense, illogical preoccupation with this fear.” Beloved, it’s a spirit.

Now, not all fear is a spirit. Not all fear is caused by a demon. I mean, it’s really good to teach a child to be afraid to play in the traffic. It’s good that a child looks at the car and says, “I’m afraid.” That’s a good fear. It’s good that a child is afraid to touch the hot stove. That’s good. Many fears are protective and good, but some fears, actually, many of them, have a spirit behind them. Though we can have counseling and get our brain cleaned up, and though some people even take drugs, counseling and drugs will not deal with the spirit. There are different ways to solve the whole problem of fear. At this moment, I’m not trying to give a whole overview. My point right now is to say, “We have to address the spirit behind the fear when it appears.” A demon of fear is what a spirit of fear is.

God says, “I didn’t send it. So if you use the authority of My Son’s name, I’m behind that. I didn’t send that spirit of fear. I’m against that spirit of fear attacking you. Resist it. Resist it. Resist it.”

Some say, “Oh God, make it leave.”

He says, “No. I gave you the authority; you resist it, and it will flee.” Again, there may be other mindsets or physical dimensions that contribute to the fear as well. But my point this morning is to address the demonic influence that heightens the fear in an exaggerated way.

God promised us a sound mind; that’s called *peace*. When a fear hits us, we can say, “We have received a sound mind. Thank You for the peace of God, Holy Spirit.”

HIS POWER TOWARD US

Let's go to the final few moments here. Paragraph A. Ephesians 1:17-13 is one of the most exciting and dynamic passages of Scripture. Every phrase is a gold mine. This is the prayer that has been prayed the most in the twelve years of IHOP–KC-KC: this prayer right here. Line for line, it's filled with treasure. Let's see what it says. I've already laid it out, so I can do this quite briefly here; then we want to pray for people and rebuke the spirit of fear.

Paul prays, "That . . . the Father of Glory may give to you the spirit of revelation in the knowledge of Him, that you may know"—or, in other words, know by experience—"what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe" (Eph. 1:17, 19, paraphrased). This is the power that works within those who believe. This power is the very same power that the Father worked in Jesus, "when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places" (v. 20, paraphrased). "And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body, the fullness of Him . . ." (v. 22-23a, paraphrased).

REVELATION TO SEE AUTHORITY

There are a few things that I want to point out. Number one: Paul prays that the Father of glory would give us revelation of our authority here. Information isn't enough. Head knowledge isn't enough. We need heart revelation. We need the Spirit. We need to study this passage, confess it, pray it, and thank God for the truths here, until it becomes a living revelation, a living understanding in our hearts.

It takes revelation to see this place of authority. Most believers will agree that they have authority, but they don't do anything about it in their everyday, practical life. Practically, they don't have the revelation in the way that they live, but theologically they know, technically, that they have it. But, if they never use it, what good is it? Notice what it says in verse 17: that we would have revelation of, that we would know or experience, the "exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe." There's an exceeding greatness of power that is working in your life right now.

Now at first glance, we read that and say, "Paul, it sounds like you're exaggerating, because there's not an exceeding great power that I can see."

WE'RE THE VEHICLE OF HIS POWER

And that is exactly the point Paul is making. This power, though it does manifest itself in the natural, is difficult to measure and track in the natural. We have an exceeding great power. We can speak words that move angels and demons. Now think about this: if you had the mightiest army in the earth, with the greatest military and the most sophisticated weapons, and you shot all of the weapons against even the weakest demon, that demon wouldn't move one inch. The greatest power on earth can't move a demon. But beloved, you can speak a word and the demon moves. You have an exceeding great power. You can speak and move an angel. All the money in the world and all the armies in the world can't move an angel. You can't offer an angel a million dollars, or threaten an angel and get him to do a thing. There's no power you have that can move an angel or a demon. But, you can speak a word. Connect that word to the will of God and the authority of Jesus, and demons and angels move. It is exceeding great power. It is real. And although you can't measure it by your five senses, beloved, there is only one group of people who can move angels and demons, and they are believers in the name of Jesus. It is an exceeding great power, which you not only have when you die, but even now—if you would use it.

Don't get overly preoccupied with measuring how much the demon moved; we know from the Word that it moves when we speak, so stay with it. It is remarkable; but again, if we try to measure it with our five senses, and we say, "Well, I guess I don't have any power," still, the trouble is there.

In the last session, I gave a few examples of the realm of strife, where people had tremendous strife, and I began to address the spirit behind them, and there was a supernatural turnaround. I gave a few examples on that in the last session. We can address the spirit that is causing a heightened problem. And again, you can have all the military power in the world, all the money in the world, and the political power of the president of the United States, and you can't move those demons with that power. But, you have an exceeding great power if you speak the word. And in the spirit realm, it is operating. It really is.

Some people read that verse and say, "Paul exaggerated. That doesn't mean much to me." No, no, no. You need to underline that verse. It means a lot to you. You can move angels and demons.

Then in verse 20, Paul says, "This is the same category of power that God used when He raised Jesus from the dead" (Eph. 1:20, paraphrased). It is a supernatural, heavenly power. It is of a different order altogether from political or military or financial power. It is the category of power that God used when He raised Jesus. It is that unique demonstration of power to which only believers have access. No one else can have access to it. Only Jesus and believers can touch it. Wow! He said, "It is that category that God used when He raised Christ from the dead" (v. 20, paraphrased).

WE ARE HIS BODY

Again, here it is. A human being rose from the dead. I mean, this was a Man with a real body. That body was made new, supernaturally. Then, He ascended into heaven. His body was picked up by the Spirit and went right through the clouds, right up through the heavens. His body stood at the entryway to heaven, the gates opened, and He was seated at the right hand of the Father. He was enthroned at His Father's right hand.

You know what happens next? He was enthroned there, Father and Son united. Now, as God, Jesus has all authority, but something new is happening: He has been given all authority as a Man. That has never happened before. The Father says, "You're seated. You've been resurrected. You've ascended. You've been enthroned. Now, here's My next thing: I'm giving you all the authority in every realm. As a Man, as a Jewish Man raised from the dead, You will hold this authority forever" (Eph. 1:22, paraphrased). Then He takes it a step further. Look at this: He put everything under His feet. Then, finally, He gave Jesus to be Head over all things. He gave Him as a gift to the Church. This Man who deserves all the authority, who possesses all the authority, was given to us by the Father, and we're dynamically connected to Him by the Holy Spirit.

Beloved, what an amazing reality: the Father gave Him to us. He's the Head and we're the Body, and it is a dynamic connectedness. It's not figurative; it is real. He says, "We're the Body." And the idea here is, "We're the vehicle through which the supernatural Jesus expresses His power, from the right hand of the Father, in the earthly realm." We are the vehicle through which He expresses the fullness of His power. What an amazing reality!

WE HAVE INSTANT ACCESS TO THE THRONE

Now, Paul talks about the Body of Christ. He talks about our connectedness to Jesus in 1 Corinthians 12:12–14, he talks about our connectedness to one another in the Body of Christ, when there is unity in diversity. It's a revelation of the Body: we're connected to one another. Ephesians 1 is another revelation of the Body: we're connected to Jesus and His authority. There are two different points of emphasis in the revelation of the Body of Christ. Beloved, we are the Body of Christ. We're connected to Jesus. We're the vehicle that expresses His power and His fullness in the earthly realm, forever—not just in this age—but forever and forever and forever. Who are we to Him, anyway? How did this happen? By the kindness of God.

Then, in paragraph B, Paul simply says it again. He says, “Not only is Jesus raised to the right hand, but so are we” (Eph. 2:6, paraphrased). Now, since our body is on the earth, in what sense are we raised to the right hand of God? We are sitting with Christ in the sense that we can speak the word, a prayer, and it is instantly received at the right hand of the Father. Within the second you speak it, it is instantly received there. We have a connection; we have access. We have a reception at the right hand of the Father, even though our body is on the earth, because of Jesus. In that sense, we're seated there now, because our impact and our influence is received and felt at the right hand of God through the Holy Spirit. So, our body is down here on the earth, doing things. We stop and speak the word, and right then we have full reception. We have full access to everything that is there. What an amazing reality. Our goal is to walk in that more and more as the years unfold.

Amen. Let's stand.