

Believers Authority - 30 minutes

As I have said before, I am not the perfect example. I have my share of major problems in my life. The very things that I am speaking against I have done myself. I have not arrived, but I have left.

Please turn with me to:

Romans. 6:16. ./././

- Here begineth the reading of God's Holy Word.

Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

- Here endeth the reading of God's Holy Word.

Most people have a humanistic view of how life works. Even though Christians do not like this terminology, many of them function day by day with this same mentality. By only looking on the surface level, they do not recognize the spirit realm behind it all.

Humanists do not acknowledge God. As a whole, they are either agnostic or atheist, believing that everything in life has a natural, physical cause. It is sad to say, but many Christians have this same attitude. They do not realize the spiritual dynamics behind what is happening in the physical realm.

We are in a spiritual battle! Every single day, there is a battle raging, in the spirit realm, for the heart of each person, for each society, and the world as a whole. God is trying to draw people toward Himself and towards righteousness. He is trying to influence people to live consistent with Him so that His blessings can manifest in their lives. At the same time, Satan is trying to steal their hearts away from God. In an all-out battle against the Lord and His kingdom, the Enemy is pouring all the trash and corruption he can into people's lives.

Most of us, even Christians, do not recognize the intense battle waging all around us each and every day. We do not know the spiritual significance of our choices, words, and actions. We are functionally ignorant of how these things determine whether we are yielded to God and releasing His power and blessing into our lives or whether we're yielded to Satan and releasing sin and death into our lives.

There's much more to life than just this physical, natural, and surface level. Spiritual dynamics are constantly taking place. Whether or not the person you're speaking evil about ever knows it, you will be affected. Venting anger, frustration, resentment, or unforgiveness affects you whether it affects anyone else or not. I've actually become very vocal in traffic when someone cuts me off. I've told myself, "That person doesn't know what I said. They didn't hear me." It doesn't matter whether they ever hear you or not. If you get angry and bitter, you've just yielded yourself to Satan. Whether you recognize it or not, the devil is the one who influences us to respond in the wrong way.

James 1:20 says, "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." In other words, giving place to anger and bitterness does not accomplish the righteousness of God. You are not going to accomplish God's purposes by getting in the flesh, giving in to anger, and losing your temper. That's not the way God's kingdom works. So whether anyone else ever hears you or not, what you say is having an effect on you.

The devil can not control you outside of your will. However, your lack of awareness and understanding of the battle only works to his advantage. If you choose to believe God's Word and learn to recognize what is happening in the spirit realm, you can begin taking the proper action to improve your situation. You can cooperate with God to manifest His power and blessings.

Let us turn to James 4:7. ./././

- Here begineth the reading of God's Holy Word.
- Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
- Here endeth the reading of God's Holy Word.

You can resist the devil, and he will flee from you. However, your passiveness and lack of resistance does not mean that the battle is not raging; it simply means that you are not winning. Satan is beating you in this area.

The revelation of God's Word has the potential to transform your life. As you begin to understand and exercise your authority as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, Satan will flee, and God's power and blessings will manifest in your life greater than ever before.

We're in a Spiritual Battle.

Please turn with me to:
Ephesians 6:10–12./././

- Here begineth the reading of God's Holy Word.
- 10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.
- 11. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.
- Here endeth the reading of God's Holy Word.

God's Word reveals that we are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but demonic powers. Our fight is not against people, but the spiritual forces influencing them. However, most of us simply do not recognize the role that the spirit realm plays in what occurs in our daily life. We think it is just human, natural, but the devil is busy influencing people every day.

It is useless to debate whether or not an individual is possessed, oppressed, or just depressed. When the New Testament calls someone demon-possessed, the Greek word there literally means

"demonized." They are under the influence, and therefore, control, of the devil. This issue people make about whether someone is possessed, oppressed, or just depressed is not in the Scriptures. The truth is that people all around the world today are being influenced, controlled, and used, to whatever degree, by the devil.

Many westerners honestly believe that all the demons are over in some third-world country. But anyone who is spiritually perceptive knows that there is an abundance of demonic activity anywhere you go in the world, including the West. We just tend to look at things as being normal and natural for this day and age. We miss the fact that the origin of many things that happen in our day, things that tick us off and come against us, is spiritual. We fail to recognize the spiritual influence behind it.

If you were to adopt the biblical mindset, it would make a huge difference in the way you respond. You would recognize that it's not that person who sits next to you at work, it's not your neighbor, your spouse, or your circumstances that are really what is coming against you. They can be influenced, inspired, and used of Satan, but they themselves are not really the source. When you genuinely understand that this is not a physical battle, it changes the way you respond.

We often get a lot of criticism because of the things we say. We could take these things personally and think, Why is this individual so upset with us? We could just look at their criticisms and always try to deal with them on the human level. Or we could come to recognize that Satan is the one who is trying to get our attention off of what God has told us to do. Satan the enemy uses people to come against us. He tries to gain an inroad into our life so he can steal God's Word from us.

Turn with me to:
Mark 4:16–17. ./././

- Here begineth the reading of God's Holy Word.

16. And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

17. And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

- Here endeth the reading of God's Holy Word.

As it was ministered to us last week, don't assume that you are good ground. But because we look beyond the individual and do not take their comments personally, we are able to put things into proper perspective and deal with it differently.

Sometimes we actually have good friends that come against us. Even though they might do some pretty mean things, we should be able to look past that and forgive them. They may have a sensitivity in some area that Satan takes advantage of and uses them against us. We should not be angry or bitter toward them because we should understand what the devil is trying to do. If we can, they may turn around and realize what happened. We may be able to completely reestablish our friendship based on our recognition that it was not those people, but Satan trying to get at us.

Satan Uses People.

Jesus exemplified this same perspective. He recognized when the devil was trying to get to Him through a person.

Turn with me to:
Matthew 16:16. ./././

- Here begineth the reading of God's Holy Word.
And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.
- Here endeth the reading of God's Holy Word.

After Peter, under the influence of God, confessed Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God", the Lord started explaining to His disciples about His soon coming crucifixion, death, and resurrection. Immediately, Peter began to rebuke the Lord, saying in Matthew 16:22. "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee."

Apparently, Peter had missed Jesus' statement that He would rise again on the third day. Peter did not even want to consider the thought of his beloved Lord being taken and killed. This was the same man who just moments before had been inspired and controlled by the Holy Spirit. Yet now Jesus turned, and said unto Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

The Lord recognized that Satan was speaking through Peter. This was not something coming from God. Jesus knew it was inconsistent with what the Father had clearly revealed to Him of His will. So even though Peter had previously spoken forth a glorious revelation by the Holy Spirit, Christ knew that the inspiration for this rebuke was from hell.

There are times when the devil speaks to you through people. He will use people to get at you. Of course, they may be unaware of the fact that they are being used of Satan. Peter was probably shocked, hurt, and offended when Jesus turned around and said, "Get behind me, Satan!" However, there are times when you need to rebuke the devil that way too.

Now do not misunderstand me and go around blasting people. I am not saying you should rebuke everyone who disagrees with you, declaring, "You are of the devil. Satan is using you in my life." That is not what I am trying to get across. You just need to recognize that Satan, as well as God, can speak through, and use the people in your life. Like Jesus, you need to discern whose voice is coming through.

We are in a spiritual battle! Unfortunately, most of the time people do not recognize it. They are just looking at things from a natural, human perspective. They factor God, the devil, and the whole supernatural realm right out of the equation. The average person does not realize the spiritual dynamics taking place. God does not send bad things our way. It is not just happenstance or fate. There is a real enemy out there that we must learn to deal with.

I have actually loaned people money before who have never paid me back. They said they would, but for whatever reason, they did not. Instead of taking an offense and getting mad at the person, I recognize that this is Satan. Of course, the person cooperated in some measure and allowed him to do it, but I recognize that the devil was trying to get me into unforgiveness. So I just forgave them. My attitude is, "Hey, just take it as a gift. I'm not going to sit here and harbor any animosity over this. It is not worth it."

You might think, Man, I would never do something like that. But I recognize that there is a spiritual battle raging, and nobody is going to rent space in my mind! Nobody is going to occupy my heart except God. I refuse to harbor unforgiveness toward anyone. I will not allow bitterness even a toehold in my life. I am aware that Satan uses such things as an inroad against me.

Like it or not, there is a spiritual battle raging right now for your heart and mind.

Turn with me to:
Proverbs 23:7. ./,./,./

- Here begineth the reading of God's Holy Word.
For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.
- Here endeth the reading of God's Holy Word.

As you think in your heart is the way that you will be. Your thoughts become what you say and do, with your actions being the greatest expression of your authority. Therefore, you will be influenced, dominated, and ruled by whomever you yield yourself to, God or Satan

Sevenfold

My first reaction was shock. Is this really true? Then came a fleshly twinge of wanting to beat up this loaner. But I recognized who the real culprit was. Satan had come against me and was trying to steal from me.

Immediately, Proverbs 6:31 came to mind.

But if [a thief] be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house. I recognized that this was not just a person trying to steal from me. Obviously, there were demonic entities working behind the scenes. After a while of getting this news, I realized, This is the devil stealing from me, and I've caught him. Therefore, according to the Word of God, I demand it back seven times! I took a piece of paper and figured out seven times what I loaned or seven times the debt. Instead of being angry, depressed, and hurt, I started dancing and praising God, saying, "Hallelujah, this is awesome. I'm getting a large sum back!" As I continued praising God, that situation never did get me down or discouraged.

Sin is conceived in your emotions. Every time you have a negative emotion, whether it be sadness, anger, fear, strife, or one of many others, you conceive something. Many people are conceiving things that they don't want to birth. They don't want depression, strife, or suicide. Yet they allow these negative emotions to flow through them without recognizing that we're in a spiritual battle. When you give in to your flesh and start saying and doing these things, you are releasing spiritual forces. There is a battle raging and the enemy is looking for an opportunity to come against you.