

Transformed by Receiving the Spirit of Revelation, Part 4

INTRODUCTION

Tonight I'm talking on Ephesians 1:16-19. This is actually my fourth message on it in the last couple of months. For those who are here for the first time, I'll actually give a minute's review on some of the other parts. We really want to focus in on the revelation of the greatness of God's power working towards us who believe.

Let's read Ephesians 1:16-19.

Paul said, "[I] do not cease... making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, would give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him" (Eph. 1:16-17).

Now here in verse 18 he goes on to describe what that means—"the eyes of your understanding" —or the eyes of the heart, depending on which translation you use—"being enlightened"—supernaturally by the Holy Spirit—"that you may know" (Eph. 1:18)—in the New Testament, when it says "to know," it means to know by experience, not just by information. It's experiential knowledge.

He says, "That you would experience three things: that you would experience the hope of your calling; number two, that you would experience the glory of being God's inheritance; and number three, that you would experience the exceeding greatness of God's power that works in us who believe" (Eph. 1:18-19, paraphrased).

Roman numeral I. Ephesians 1:17 is a very important prayer. It's been the most-prayed passage at IHOP-KC in the last seven years. I love that! It's a passage with so much implied in it.

The passage focuses on God imparting the Spirit of glory to us: the Father of glory releasing the Spirit of glory. Paul prayed one general prayer: "Father, give us revelation of Yourself, of Your heart."

THE DIMENSIONS OF GOD'S REVELATION

Then he gives three different expressions, three different aspects of God revealing His glory, or revealing Himself to us:

Number one, that we would understand God's calling for our life. There are many dimensions of God's calling on our life that we looked at.

Number two, that we would know who we are to God as His inheritance, that we would feel a little of what God feels when He looks at us. It radically changes our life. We call it the bridal paradigm, though it's more than just being the bride: It's the whole relationship with the Father and the Son and how they feel about it.

The third aspect of experiencing God's glory is that we would actually experience the power of God, but listen, this is important: not only that we would experience God's power by faith, but that we would rightly perceive how the power of God operates.

THE MULTITUDES OFFENDED AT THE REVELATION

That's a huge point. It takes revelation to understand how the power of God operates. Many people have wrong ideas about how the power of God operates. They end up getting offended at God because their assumptions are that God's power operates this way in their life. It operates in a different way, and they don't have insight into it. They end up offended at God; they lose their walk of pursuing a life of pursuing the power of God.

Many people get offended because they don't know God's wisdom in the way that He releases His power. He releases it in small measures; He has time delays; He has all kinds of dimensions that He uses when He releases His power. So a lot of us say, "Well, His power isn't even operating, forget it!"

Paul says, "No. Rather, you need revelation of how God's power does operate in your life." So it's not only the experience itself; it's the insight into how the power of God operates—that's how Paul is praying—which keeps us from being offended, which keeps us pursuing a relationship where we're eager to experience the power of God.

Most believers in the Body of Christ have given up their expectation to experience the power of God in a daily way. Those who have been walking with the Lord ten, twenty, thirty years, many of them don't think about it anymore. It's not even really a part of their expectation. That's tragic because it's not just that they don't experience it, it's because they don't know how to experience it. They don't understand it rightly.

We're not really going to cover all this in the notes tonight, although I've got a page or two on that—pages three and four. Those of you who have the notes, and those who want them, you can get the on the Internet or at the back on the way out or in the foyer area. I want to encourage you to read that part; we're not really going to have time to get to it.

THE DIMENSIONS OF CALLING

OK, paragraph B. This is review. When we receive revelation of our calling, there's an internal and an external expression of our calling. There's a temporal and an eternal; there's a private, an individual, and a corporate. There are many dimensions of our calling. I wanted to mention that without spending a lot of time on developing it again. My point is, it's a big subject, and it takes revelation to grasp it.

THE REVELATION OF GOD'S INHERITANCE

Paragraph C. We need revelation that we are God's inheritance: that the great prize of all the ages is being given to Jesus by God the Father. Jesus has an inheritance. The great prize that the Father has chosen to give Jesus is a church of voluntary lovers of God. This is what Jesus wants most, and this is what God is most committed to doing.

This is near and dear to God's heart—the Body of Christ. If Jesus could get anything He wanted from the Father, He would want you; that's what He wants. We look at ourselves and say, "Oh my! Are You sure, Lord?" It takes revelation to grasp this. It's a very, very important revelation.

THE REVELATION OF GOD'S POWER FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

II. Now we're going to focus in on our subject tonight: the revelation of the power of God, and rightly perceiving how the power of God operates.

We need revelation, paragraph A, of seven components of God's power that I've outlined here. Each one of these seven components are opposite of what we would naturally think in our natural mindset. Therefore, it takes revelation.

First of all, we need revelation about God's power and how it operates in our hearts to walk in righteousness. The revelation of this power is in Romans 6. Most believers don't really think much about that; they really don't understand it.

THE REVELATION OF GOD'S POWER THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Secondly, there's a revelation of God's power that's related to the Holy Spirit's life in us that empowers us to fellowship with the Holy Spirit that lives in us. This is where we receive prophetic impressions; it's the whole basis of operating in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We need revelation; we need insight that this reality even exists.

Again, I'm not trying to be negative about how many people don't do it. Most believers don't think about fellowshiping with the Holy Spirit living inside of them. Therefore they don't pay much attention to the subtle, but regular impressions the Lord gives them. Their mind is tuned in a different direction. It takes revelation actually to know this dimension of God's power.

THE REVELATION OF OUR AUTHORITY IN CHRIST

Paragraph B. This is what we're mostly going to look at tonight, because it's a big need in the IHOP-KC community. It's something that we haven't sufficiently given foundational teaching on. But in pouring over this prayer and looking on it, I feel really convicted as a shepherd here that we're coming up short on this, in such a way that the Lord is saying, "I really want you to fix this by sowing the Word of God in this area."

That area is, paragraph B, number three, the revelation of our authority in Christ; our authority in Christ. This authority, when we have revelation of it, cancels out the demonic assignments that Satan gives to demons to torment our life. So, when these assignments are cancelled out, inevitably the blessing of God begins to touch our life and circumstances. There's increase of favor, there's increase of finance, there's increase of many things happening when the devil's devouring attacks on our life are cancelled out.

THE PURPOSE OF GOD'S POWER

The fourth revelation is the purpose of God's power. The percentage of believers who understand their authority in Christ is small. There are thousands and thousands, maybe millions, but the percentage is small. Most believers don't have revelation of their authority in Christ.

Again, this is a revelation that's deficient in our foundation there. That's not good, but those who have it—I've watched this over my thirty years of ministry. I've had different seasons that I've been really focused on this for years at a time. Then I get focused on other things; weeds grow in the garden and then we've got to go and tend to those weeds. We pull them out and sow the right seeds in.

I've seen people who have been focused on their authority in Christ, and it's about cancelling out demonic assignments against their life and using the authority of Jesus to dismiss them. What happens is that people begin to receive God's blessing. Not all the time, but many times, they begin to focus only on the financial blessing. Then they use the financial blessing to get bigger houses and more cars.

They don't have a revelation of the purpose for which God is releasing blessing and cancelling out demonic assignments. It's to give us favor, it's to give us increase, it's to release financial blessing, but it's actually so that the harvest goes forth, and then we meet the needs of the poor in the earth, and we can be vessels that do the will of God—not vessels that camp out and get more stuff for ourselves.

So often today in 2006, authority in Christ is almost synonymous with living in or pursuing covetousness. It's not exactly synonymous, but it's nearly synonymous in terms of our nation. Authority in Christ has meant, "Get more money to get more stuff." The authority of Christ isn't meant to lead to that.

It takes revelation of the purpose for which God wants to give the wealth of the nations. God wants to open up doors and give us favor and stop Satan's devouring in our life. He wants us to do the will of God in our lives. It's not only the harvest and touching the poor; it's to bring glory to God, not to get more stuff.

So often the people who have this third dimension lack the fourth one. Some who have the fourth dimension lack the third one. Hey, we don't have to choose between them; we can have them both.

THE REVELATION OF BREAKTHROUGH

Paragraph C. Now we're looking at the revelation of the fullness of the breakthrough of God's power. This is a revelation that IHOP-KC has at an unusual level, with an unusual level of revelation. On a scale of one to ten, we might be a four or five; but we still might need to grow in this a lot.

As I've observed the Body of Christ over the years, very few groups have a really steadfast revelation about how vast is the break-in of power that God wants to give the Church, particularly in the end times. This isn't only in the end times, though; it's throughout history. It's a revelation with which He wants to break in in full power.

Now, if you have that revelation, you can fuel the ministry with it. I've taught on this for over thirty years: the revelation that revival, historic, massive, break-in of power is on God's agenda. So, over the years that I've had prayer ministry in the Church, and we've done it hours a day for years, I've always had pastors say, "Hey, I want to get a prayer ministry going like you guys have—an x-amount-of-times-a-day type thing." This is back when I was pastoring the church.

I would always tell them, "You have to get a revelation of the massive in-breaking of power that God wants to give His Church."

Often, they look dazed and fuzzy. They say, "What?"

I say, "You know, the idea that God wants to break in. You will never have prayer meetings consistently without that revelation."

More often than not, they say, "Huh... I don't get that part. I just want to have prayer meetings like you guys have."

"They go together; you've got to have a revelation that fullness is coming."

That's part of the revelation of the power of God: the magnitude of the measure God wants to give is a spiritual revelation. It's something that the Lord has strengthened at IHOP-KC. Still, on a scale of one to ten, we're a three or five. But one of our strongest dimensions, in our spiritual DNA, is that conviction.

VALUING WITH GRATITUDE THE DAYS OF SMALLNESS

Then, revelation number six is the opposite end. It's not an opposite end; it's the opposite end of great breakthrough. It's valuing with gratitude the days of smallness.

Some people who get the vision of the great break-in, they despise the day of little. They think, "Bah, humbug! I don't want to bother with this. When the big stuff happens, call me!"

The Lord doesn't want us to have that response. He actually wants us to value and see the reality of His power in our midst and say, "Thank You!" and be faithful in light of it—to be grateful and to be awed by it. *Awed* probably isn't the right word, but to be aware of it and really esteem it.

That's another thing that's been the foundation of IHOP-KC, that we have a dimension of seeing: Though we don't see much now, what's happening is that the little ripples of wind, so to speak, are really important and really supernatural. The Lord really likes that, but it takes revelation to see it, rather than despising the day of small beginnings.

REVELATION OF OUR ETERNAL CALLING

Then, D, number seven. This is another massive one. We got a little revelation on this as a spiritual family: the revelation of the power of God in terms of our eternal calling—in our eternal experience, in the resurrected body, in the new earth, in the millennial kingdom, all these things.

When we have revelation of that, it really anchors us to use the power of God in this age in a right way. We know eternity is real, but it isn't really a power dimension that we feel and relate to in a personal way. That injures us today.

Having revelation of the power of God in the age to come is really a major part of the apostle Paul's life and the way he carried his heart. So when he says, "I pray for the spirit of revelation, that you would know the exceeding greatness of the power," he means all these dimensions and more, undoubtedly, than this. In other words, it's not a small thing he's asking God to reveal. Every one of these, the Church doesn't see them by nature; we see them by a specific revelation of the Holy Spirit.

THE POWER OF MULTIFACETED REVELATION

Let's go to the top of page two. The revelation of our authority in Christ was the third revelation I mentioned a minute ago, of the seven I outlined. It was the third one. Again I feel—I mean, I'm not sure, but it's not just a feeling—that we're deficient in this, and the Lord wants to correct it and strengthen it in our midst.

As a shepherd, what I want is the whole gamut of Ephesians 1:17-19. I want us to have a multifaceted insight into our calling: the internal calling, the external calling; the temporal calling, the eternal calling; the individual calling, the corporate calling. I want us to see our calling. Then I want us to see how dear we are to God. We are His inheritance. Then I want us to see these seven dimensions of God's power.

I believe that the three of them together, these three tremendous arenas of truth, will strengthen us and bring us to maturity.

THE REVELATION OF OUR UNION WITH CHRIST IN GOD

Roman numeral III. The revelation of our authority in Christ.

Paragraph A. Paul prayed that we would receive revelation of our authority, and it's the authority we have because we're joined to Jesus. That's the key: We are joined to Jesus.

There's a passage I don't have written down; it's 1 Corinthians 6:17. It says that those who are joined to the Lord are one spirit with God. The reason we have authority is because we're joined to a man, a human being who physically ascended to the right hand of God the Father.

That is the most remarkable concept. It's not remarkable that Jesus is God; Jesus is fully God and has forever been God. He's the second Person of the Trinity, and always will be God. But Jesus hasn't always been human; that happened at the Incarnation. That was a new experience.

It's not surprising that God, the second Person, Jesus, is at the right hand of God the Father. That's not surprising. What is surprising is that a human being, a Jewish man who walked on the earth for thirty-three years, was raised from the dead and given His physical body back. His actual physical body was raised from the dead in the power of God. Then, He was standing on the earth, raised from the dead. That's pretty awesome, but it did not end there. He ascended; the ascension was more than the resurrection. In the resurrection, the physical body came to life with supernatural qualities. He had that walking on the earth for a time after the resurrection. The ascension meant that in His physical body, He went past all the checkpoints.

I don't know how many checkpoints there are between here and the throne of God. I imagine there are several. You can bear with that language; I'm saying it tongue-in-cheek. He went into the eternal realm, past all the angels, past the twenty-four elders, past the cherubim and seraphim, right to the throne of God, and nothing stopped Him. He has the access to sit there as a man in a physical body, at the right hand of the Father.

CONTINUAL ACCESS TO THE THRONE OF GOD

That's the most remarkable reality. There's only one thing more remarkable than that: When he ascended and was seated at the right hand of the Father, in the ultimate place of power, because we are joined to Him, we have access to the same power.

Now, that is really remarkable: that the authority at the right hand of the Father is made available to us, right here on the earth. That's so very remarkable, in fact, that most believers don't think about it; it's not a part of their everyday life. They have this tremendous ability to drive Satan away from tormenting them, to cancel out Satan's torment, and they don't use it because they never think about it. Of course, Satan wants it that way.

FAR ABOVE ALL POWERS AND PRINCIPALITIES

Let's read Ephesians 1:18-23. "That you may know" —or experience; the idea is to know experientially— "...what is the exceeding greatness of [the Father's] power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph. 1:18-20).

This seating at the right hand of the Father is now being described. It is “far above all angelic and demonic powers and principalities” (v. 21, paraphrased). Powers and principalities are ranks; those are ranks of authority in the angelic realm and the demonic realm. Jesus isn’t just above all demonic and angelic principalities; He’s far, far above all demons. He is far above Satan’s power.

I’m talking about Jesus as a man, as a resurrected Jewish man, sitting on the throne. The reason I say “Jewish” is because in His full humanity, in all His lineage, that’s a part of who He is. It takes revelation to see this. He is far above principalities.

“The Father has put all things under His feet” (Eph. 1:22, paraphrased). All authority is under this Man. Then the Father did something so remarkable: He gave Jesus “to be head over all things” (v. 22). He gave Him to the Church. The point of that is that now the Church has access to all of His power. When this phrase says that the Father gave Jesus to be the head over all things, it means He gave Him to the Church.

The point is that the Church on the earth can function in the power that Jesus possesses when it is being tormented by Satan. Satan comes to torment, and it’s the name of Jesus that cancels out Satan’s assignments, or the demonic assignment against us. The demons come back with another one, and it’s cancelled out. They come back again—they do it our entire life. It’s a struggle our entire life, but we actually have authority to cancel out that assignment.

“HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS UNDER HIS FEET”

“He” —the Father—“put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things in the Church, which is His body” (v. 22-23). Here’s what it means: As the Body of Christ, the Church is the vehicle to express the fullness of God’s power. When it says the Church is the body, the fullness of God, the fullness of Jesus, we are the God-ordained vehicle to express Jesus’ power on the earth, in the earthly realm. That’s what it means when it says the body is the fullness of Christ: We are the vehicle that expresses the fullness of His authority in this age and in the age to come.

What Jesus wants done, He does through the people connected with Him. Even when Jesus comes at the second coming, He will subdue the nations through the Church. He won’t just wave His hand, and everything is in order. He will express the fullness of His wisdom and the fullness of His power through human beings connected to Him by the Holy Spirit.

This is a remarkable revelation. I mean, it is an absolutely remarkable revelation.

AUTHORITY IS DELEGATED POWER

Paragraph B. Authority is delegated power. Jesus has the power, we have the authority. It’s delegated power.

The example I’ve heard over the years by different preachers, and in different books—this is the best one I can think of—is the example of the police officer. When the police officer puts his hand up to stop a car, he stops the car by authority, not by power. He doesn’t use his physical power, when the car is coming down the street, and stop in front of it; he doesn’t say, “Ugh!” and stop it by power.

The police officer doesn’t stop a car by power; the power is with the U. S. government. If the police puts his hand up and the car doesn’t stop, and things get extreme, the entire U. S. army will be around that car, if it gets

to a certain level. Obviously, it would never get to that level. The point is, the power of the entire military of the United States is behind that policeman if things escalate to a certain level. So the policeman puts his hand out and shows his badge; that's authority. Power is with the whole military which backs up the authority structure of the nation.

We don't have power in ourselves. This is different; this is authority. We speak the name of Jesus, and the authority that Jesus has over demons, when they come to attack our sphere of authority—our life or the life of our family—we don't have the ability to drive demons off of every piece of real estate on the earth, or we would do it. That's going to happen in the second coming, when Jesus comes back.

Now, not all of our problems are demonically-oriented. Many of our problems have a demonic dimension that heightens the problem. If the demonic element is removed, the problem doesn't necessarily go away entirely. Some of our problems are because we've made wrong choices. Some of our problems are because other people are doing wrong things by the act of their will. It's not all demonic, but the demonic involvement brings an added energy, a heightened energy to the problem. It makes it far more difficult.

So, we don't have authority over someone's will; we don't have authority to change all the natural choices we've made. We can use the name of Jesus to remove the demonic energy that is heightening the problem. We can take authority over that in the name of Jesus, and we do that by authority.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION

Paragraph C. God's power in raising Jesus from the dead was the greatest display of power in the Bible. It even surpasses Genesis 1. Satan sought to stop the resurrection. "There's this Man with a physical body, raised from the dead! He's ascending!" I should say, Satan sought to stop the resurrection and the ascension. Jesus ascended to the Father, and Satan thought, "No! That Man defeated me by His obedience!"

When Satan came to Him and tried to get Jesus to do the same thing that Adam did, Jesus said, "No." Where Adam yielded, Jesus said, "No." He defeated Satan by His obedience to the Father. Then, on the cross, He paid our debt. When this Man ascended to the right hand of the Father, it was absolutely terrifying to Satan.

This Man, by the Spirit, is joined to men on the earth. We can use His power—it's called authority—by speaking the name of Jesus against demonic attack. We can dismiss these assignments of Satan. Again they came back against us, and we dismiss them again. We cancel them out, but most believers I know, and I've known a lot of them over the years, don't have a revelation of this authority, and they never use it. So when Satan comes to kill, steal, and destroy in their house, in their family, they moan and groan about it, but they don't actually tell him to leave. He doesn't mind if you groan about it; he doesn't even mind if you pray to God about it, as long as you don't actually tell him to leave. As long as we're blinded, he goes on, moving through your sphere of life—your house represents your whole sphere of life, and your family—destroying.

You cry, "Father, stop him!"

He says, "No, it doesn't work that way. You stop him by the authority of My Son."

You speak it, and again, not all of our problems go away when the demonic element is stopped, but I tell you, the problems are significantly reduced when the demonic element is out of the equation.

WE ARE SEATED IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES WITH CHRIST

Paragraph D. We have been raised up together and made to sit together in the heavenly places with Jesus (Eph. 2:6). This is a most amazing reality, that not only is Jesus seated in the heavenly places (Eph. 1:22), but we're seated with Him, while our physical bodies are on the earth.

Now, we are seated with Him. I've read different accounts of this; some guys get confused on it. They're trying, in some symbolic way, to figure out how we're really there, but we're here, but we're... there? No, we're really here. Your physical body is really in the chair. To be seated with Jesus in heavenly places doesn't mean that we're physically there, but this is the Body of Christ, and your prayers, by virtue of oneness with Jesus, by virtue of being connected to Jesus, by having a oneness with Him in the body of Christ—your prayers are not only heard, but they are received and honored with authorization to release power.

When your prayers reach the throne of God with full endorsement from the Father, the Father approves them when they're in the will of God. That's what it means that we're seated right now. It means that our prayers have access. We gain a hearing at the throne of God, is what that means. We have access to all the benefits of the throne of God; our prayers do in terms of being answered. When they are in the will of God, they're approved.

So, while our physical body is on the earth—that's key—but having connectedness, access, to the throne of God, which is how it's seated, we have our prayers enter into the arena of God's throne and God's court. Our body is on the earth, so because we have that access we can speak down here and demons have to move at our word—not because we're specially anointed, but because we have the name of Jesus, which is higher than demons. But we have to use the name of Jesus. We are seated together in heavenly places.

RECEIVING AUTHORITY AS THE BODY FROM THE HEAD, CHRIST

Paragraph E. The Body of Christ receives Jesus' authority because we're joined to Him as the head. The revelation of the Body of Christ speaks of our oneness to Jesus as well as our oneness with each other.

Now, those are two separate dimensions of the revelation of the Body of Christ. See, when we think of the Body of Christ, most of us think of the 1 Corinthians 12 reality, that we are one together. That's real, that's powerful. 1 Corinthians 12 says that though we are diverse in our gifting, we have an essential unity by the Spirit. We are one, we have the same Father, the same family, the same overall purpose—the kingdom of God on the earth. We're on the same team. We're working together; we have diversity but there's unity because there's oneness between us.

That's 1 Corinthians 12, but there's another revelation of the Body of Christ. This doesn't contradict it, it's in addition to it. It's a different aspect of our oneness to Jesus, that He is the head and we are the body. It's not just our oneness to each other as members of the body, it's our oneness to Jesus that He is the head and we are the body.

So the revelation of the Body of Christ is actually the key revelation that releases the authority through us. Our head is a physical man at the right hand of the Father, far above all demonic power. We are connected to Him

by the Holy Spirit, so when we do the will of God and we pray on the earth, He's nodding in heaven. Our prayers are heard and received in the court session of heaven. Therefore, we are seated there. Our prayers enter into the court session of heaven. They really make a difference, they're valued there, they're meaningful in that session.

EXERTING HIS POWER THROUGH THE BODY

Now, this is the will of God, the plan of God, from the beginning, that Jesus would exert His power on the earth through physical human beings on the earth who agree with Him. He said, "I'm not just going to show up, through the 2,000 years of Church history, every time there's a problem in My physical body."

Jesus isn't going to do this Himself; He isn't going to appear from heaven and fix the problem. He says, "No, I'm going to do it through My connectedness with human beings in the natural realm who understand their connectedness to Me as the head of the body. If they understand it and stand boldly in this relationship, and in confidence in this authority, when they speak My will, demons have to move."

They have to move! They don't necessarily move the first time we say it; more often than not, the first time we say it, we don't even believe it. There's an element of revelation, or you can call it faith. Faith and revelation are synonymous: Faith is far more than head knowledge or information. Faith is when the information has that spark of light in our spirit. It's alive in our spirit when we have revelation knowledge; when faith has the revelatory dimension, because that's the one time it works, and we speak, and demons have to move.

Now, the exciting part is that this is completely unrelated to the coming revival. The revival that we're believing God for doesn't make this more true. This is completely true, pre-revival. Our place of authority is based on what Jesus did at the cross, during the resurrection, and in the ascension. It has nothing to do with the outpouring. The outpouring causes a lot of great things to happen, that's why we're praying for it, but the outpouring doesn't change our relationship to Jesus in terms of authority over demons harassing our life.

Now, it will give us more anointing in terms of breaking the power of demons in other spheres. In terms of our own authority sphere, we have power over demons right now. Again, it's not one word and then it's over. It's according to our faith; it's a war and a wrestling match. We wrestle against these demons.

We say, "Leave!"

They say, "No!"

We say, "Leave!"

They say, "No! We will not move."

We hold our confession, we hold our stand, and in time they leave—sometimes really quickly, and sometimes a step or two later. I don't want us as a spiritual family to get to the place where we have to figure out all these sub-units of thought as to why they leave quickly, why they leave slowly, why they leave for him, why they leave for her, why they don't leave. I don't want to be like the know-it-all family that had one-stop shopping—"Get all your answers here!" I don't want us to assume in our hearts that we've got this thing so clearly we know all the dimensions involved in this, but we want to be clear on our authority.

AUTHORITY TO REBUKE THE DEVIL

Paragraph F. At the cross, Jesus defeated or dethroned Satan in terms of our life. Now, Satan still has a right in the lives of the people who say “yes” to him, and the lives of the people who don’t know they have authority—even believers. If Satan marches into your life and you don’t stop him, I tell you, he has no conscience; he will not stop. He’s not going to stop because you’re sad. He’s only going to stop by authority.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE CROSS

We don’t have power, but we have authority. There’s a big difference. It says in Colossians 2:15 of Jesus, “Having disarmed principalities and powers” —again, that’s a rank of authority in the demonic realm—“He made a public spectacle of them, openly triumphing over them” (Col. 2:15). Jesus openly triumphed over them; He humiliated them publicly in the audience of heaven, in the audience of hell, and the audience of believers on the earth who have understanding. Jesus made a public show of Satan when He rose from the dead and ascended to the Father. He triumphed over them.

Beloved, Jesus will not have any more victory over Satan than He did at the cross, resurrection, and ascension. He fully triumphed over Satan. Satan only has a small amount of time on the earth until Jesus returns; then Jesus throws him in prison Himself. Jesus as a man commands him to go to prison, and he goes to prison for a thousand years.

But in the 2,000-year period between the resurrection and ascension and the second coming, the enforcers of this victory are the Body of Christ. The enforcers are only those who are joined to Jesus by the Spirit in the Body of Christ, but that’s not enough. They have to have revelation and understanding of their authority. That’s why Paul prays, “Father, that you would open the eyes of their hearts, that they would see the surpassing greatness of the power.” Paul is using the whole sphere of God’s authority and power in our lives.

THE ENFORCERS OF THE VICTORY

Paragraph G. We are to use our authority; we are those who enforce. We are the enforcers of the victory that Jesus gained at the cross.

We use our authority against Satan’s work in seeking to steal, kill, and destroy God’s blessing in our life. In John 10 it says, “The thief” —that’s clearly Satan, in context—“does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy” (Jn. 10:10). Satan comes into your life to kill—to kill relationships; to kill your vision in God; to kill you physically. He comes to steal your passion for Jesus, your vision, your faith. He comes to steal from you, to kill you, and to destroy everything that God has given to you. Jesus came to release life.

THE ENFORCERS OF THE PRESENT AGE

Paragraph G—let’s read it again. We are to use our authority against Satan. We are the enforcers between the resurrection and the second coming; we are the ones enforcing the victory by our confession—by speaking the name of Jesus over demonic powers. I’m talking about powers that are affecting our lives; I’m not talking about demonic powers over a nation, over a city. That isn’t our subject right now. I’m talking specifically in the sphere of our personal authority. It’s a big subject. It’s bigger than that, but that’s all I’m referring to tonight.

NATURAL AND UNNATURAL FEARS

Now, to give you a sense of the areas where Satan wants to steal, kill, and destroy—it's to create fear. Not all fear is demonic, and we have natural fears because of wrong information about things. Some fears are healthy—like fear of electricity to touch a live wire. That's a healthy fear; that's called wisdom.

Some fears are because of emotional oppression. I'll use the phrase "emotional oppression." Not all emotional oppression is demonic. Some emotional oppression is, because there are psychological things, things that we think, the places we've put our mind and the belief systems we've established that are related to emotional oppression that's not demonic.

There are chemically- or physically-based fears related to food or chemical substances that touch our bodies that bring us into oppression. They're not demonic, they're chemical or physical. When psychological oppression, our ideas and belief systems, along with the chemical and physical oppressions, are touching us, then the demonic energy heightens that oppression to a whole new level.

We have authority over the demonic dimension of it: We can rebuke it. You cannot rebuke a demon and make the chemical dimension of your body change. The way we change the chemical part of our body is that we don't take that negative thing anymore; we don't ingest it. That's how it changes over time. You cannot rebuke a demon and then have a brand-new belief system. You have to read the Word and renew your mind; there's a process. Getting rid of that heightened energy of Satan, of a demon, really is helpful.

There's division. Some division, in a family or in relationships, is because two people are selfish, or one person is, or both, or there are wrong ideas. There are human, natural reasons for division. There's a spirit, a demon that gets involved in it, and brings it up from a level three to four to an eight or nine. We can rebuke that demon and command it to leave. Then we're just dealing with the natural problems of the division, which is significantly easier to solve.

It's the same with sickness. Not all sickness is a demonic spirit, but when a demon gets involved, it's a far more difficult problem. Some financial oppression is because of bad decisions; some financial oppression is the judgment of God because of disobedience in the arena of finances.

"I rebuke you, Satan, in the name of Jesus!"

Jesus says, "I'm sorry, I'm the One troubling you right now. I'm trying to get your attention so that I'm the King over your finances."

There are clearly times where Satan oppresses people's finances, and we can rebuke the demons directly. "Well, how do we always know?"

I don't always know, but I go for it anyway. I take a shot at it, but I don't always know. I repent of anything that the Holy Spirit puts on my heart, so I know that it's not God causing it. I search out the natural wisdom so that I'm lining up with God's laws. Then I rebuke the demon.

“GOD HAS NOT GIVEN US A SPIRIT OF FEAR”

Satan has no legal right to torment a believer, but he still torments the believer. He has no legal rights to do so, but Satan has always been a thief. He doesn't obey these protocols, he comes as a thief, but he can be stopped by the name of Jesus.

Now it says in 2 Timothy 1—I don't have the verse there—“God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind” (2 Tim. 1:7). It isn't always, but some fear is a demon. Many phobias are demonic, but it doesn't mean the person is demon-possessed, it means they're being tormented by a real spirit, a demon. That spirit needs to be rebuked many times. If it doesn't leave right away, stay with it; do not yield. Again, not all fear is driven by a spirit; there are different categories of fear.

It's the same with an unbeliever. If you have an unbeliever in your family, it says in 2 Corinthians 4:4 that Satan blinds the minds of unbelievers. Part of the unbelief is a demon blinding them with the spirit of blindness. We can say, “In the name of Jesus, I rebuke that spirit of deception that is blinding that person.”

It really does make a difference, because that spirit isn't going to leave just because it's inconvenient. We are called to be the enforcers of the territory that God has given us because we are joined to Jesus. When Satan comes on our turf, we are to speak the name of Jesus against him.

AUTHORITY OVER ALL THE WORKS OF SATAN

Paragraph H. The day that we're born again, we receive authority over Satan's works in our lives. Authority over Satan is ours, whether we understand it or use it. It's still ours. This is true of every born-again believer, though many believers never use it. They don't have revelation of it.

How many times in the last twelve months have you actually rebuked a demon in terms of the warfare of your life? Or did you just ask God to do it for you? “Lord, make this go away!”

The Lord says, “Well, that is part of your sphere of responsibility.”

Jesus has already won the victory; we have to drive him out of our sphere of authority by using the name of Jesus and our confidence as the Body of Christ joined to a man seated at the right hand of the Father. I'll say it again; I've already said it several times: Satan will continue to work to devour our lives unless his works are boldly challenged in a consistent way.

“RESIST THE DEVIL, AND HE WILL FLEE FROM YOU”

Paragraph I. It says in James 4, “Resist the devil and he will flee from you” (Js. 4:7). We must resist Satan and force him to flee in the specific way he troubles us. God has made provision for us to walk victoriously over Satan's works, but we have to do our part. A lot of people will say, “God, rebuke the devil!”

He says, “No, I sent My Son. My Son defeated him in obedience, through a life of obedience. Then He paid the price for you on the cross. I raised Him from the dead, and He's seated at the right hand of the Father. You are joined to Him by the Holy Spirit. We have done our part. Now you resist the devil.”

There's nowhere in the Bible where it tells us that we pray to God and ask God to rebuke the devil for us. We're called to rebuke the devil. If we rebuke him, he will flee, if we are consistent and do it in faith, in confidence.

“BE SOBER; BE VIGILANT”

Paragraph J. “Be sober, be vigilant” (1 Pet. 5:8). Really pay attention, is what Peter is saying. My question is, are you sober about this point, or is this point a nonchalant point? This point is low in terms of understanding in our midst, and I take responsibility for that. We need to emphasize this more, along with intimacy with God and being messengers of the end times—the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle.

The reality of the power in the Spirit is a critical part of our message and who we are as a people. “Be sober, be vigilant” —go for it! —“because your adversary, the devil, walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith” (1 Peter 5:8-9). Resist him. Do you do this? Do you resist him? Or do you ask Jesus to do it for you?

We’ve said it in other contexts: It’s a non-biblical confidence in the sovereignty of God. When we’re trusting God sovereignly to do the part that God commanded us to do, that’s called presumption. “Father, I’m trusting You to do it!”

The Father says, “No. I’m not going to do it. I’ve commanded you to resist him and rebuke him. I’m not going to do your part. You cannot trust Me to do your part, the part that I’ve commanded you.” That’s called presumption; it’s not called confidence in God.

WE WRESTLE AGAINST PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS

Paragraph K. I’ll end with this. We are to wrestle against principalities and powers.

It says in Ephesians 6, “We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but we wrestle against demonic principalities” (Eph. 6:12). We wrestle with them by speaking the Word: by them tormenting us and us saying “no” and speaking the name of Jesus against them. That is how we wrestle with them. Then they come and convince us that we’re not going to get anywhere; we’re just going to lose anyway. So they get us on our back. We say, “No, we’re not going to lose anyway, because of who Jesus is, and what He did. We are joined together.”

We use the name of Jesus, and then the devil comes and torments us and convinces us, “What’s the point? It’s never going to change. Just forget it and accept it and trust God with it.”

The Spirit of God is saying, “No, wrestle! Speak the Word against him. Do not receive this!”

What we think of sometimes, without really thinking about it, is that Jesus is going to wrestle with principalities. We wrestle with principalities. Jesus already wrestled with them and defeated them.

“GREATER IS HE WHO IS IN YOU, THAN HE WHO IS IN THE WORLD”

1 John 4:4 is the last verse here. The power of God that is in us, is greater than Satan’s power. “He who is in you” —the One who is in us, Jesus—“is greater than he who is in the world” —the one who rules the unbelieving dimension of the world. In 2 Corinthians 4:4 he’s called “the god of this world.”

Satan is called the god of this world. But the One who is in us has more power than the prince of this age, who is attacking us.

Amen. Let’s stand.