

Part 15: Elevate Your Life!

Text:

Ephesians 2:6 (NIV) - *“And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.”*

Luke 9:1 (NIV) - “When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases.”

Mark 5:1-17 (NKJV) - “Then they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes. [2] And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, [3] who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one could bind him, not even with chains, [4] because he had often been bound with shackles and chains. And the chains had been pulled apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame him. [5] And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting himself with stones. [6] When he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him. [7] And he cried out with a loud voice and said, “What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me.” [8] For He said to him, “Come out of the man, unclean spirit!” [9] Then He asked him, “What is your name?” And he answered, saying, “My name is Legion; for we are many.” [10] Also he begged Him earnestly that He would not send them out of the country. [11] Now a large herd of swine was feeding there near the mountains. [12] So all the demons begged Him, saying, “Send us to the swine, that we may enter them.” [13] And at once Jesus gave them permission. Then the unclean spirits went out and entered the swine (there were about two thousand); and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and drowned in the sea. [14] So those who fed the swine fled, and they told it in the

city and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that had happened. [15] Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one who had been demon-possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. [16] And those who saw it told them how it happened to him who had been demon-possessed, and about the swine. [17] Then they began to plead with Him to depart from their region.”

A. Our last teaching was on the fifth level of “The Twelve Dimensions of Spiritual Authority.”

1. It's important to understand these twelve dimensions are all different; they are not the same.
2. Speaking of differences, someone sent me an interesting article about how different the meaning of words can be that we presume to be similar, such as: COMPLETE and FINISHED. Are they the same or not? Something to ponder.... no English dictionary has adequately explained the difference between the two. However, in a recent linguistic conference in London, England, attended by some of the best linguists in the world, Samsundar Balgobin, a Guyanese, was the clear winner. His final challenge was this: Some say there is no difference between COMPLETE and FINISHED. Please explain the difference in a way that is easily understood. His astute answer was: "When you marry the right woman, you are COMPLETE. But, when you marry the wrong woman, you are FINISHED. And when the right one catches you with the wrong one, you are COMPLETELY FINISHED!"
His answer received more than a five minute standing ovation, a call from the Queen to dine with her, a trip around the world, traveling in style, and a case of 25 year-old Eldorado rum.
3. To ensure that this subject of authority over demonic systems has been thoroughly explained, I want to spend another session on:

"Authority Over Demonic Systems"

B. Let's rehearse several things we have discussed about our text.

1. A demonic man came running to worship Jesus, but the spirits prevented that by demanding that Jesus leave him alone!
2. Clearly, the spirits did not want to leave the geographical area that had been assigned to them. This was their "place."
3. Notice also that the townspeople did not rejoice about the deliverance of this pitiful man. Instead, they begged Jesus to leave! Why would anyone ask Him to leave after a hopeless demoniac had been set free?
 - a. Another question: why were these spirits so territorial? Why were they so insistent that Jesus would not force them to leave the area of Gadara?
 - b. These two facts seem to indicate that the demoniac of Gadara was not only possessed, but that the primary spirit controlling him was the region's ruling principality.
4. The reason Jesus was asked to leave and no one rejoiced over the man's deliverance was that the culture of their society had begun to accept the placement of the enemy's structure and demonic system in their region.
5. They would rather Jesus leave than to have their system upset.
 - a. This deliverance not only affected their economy, but damaged their societal structure.
 - b. Certain systems thrive when people are in bondage, such as drugs, alcohol, gambling, banking, etc.
6. As previously discussed, the enemy can so skillfully work his way into a society, its systems become demonic.
7. Governmental structures, education, entertainment, economics—and much more—can become thoroughly entwined in demonic systems.

8. A demonic system would be defined as any system that enslaves men by encouraging the population to reject God's laws and principles.
9. Inevitably, these systems result in pain and suffering for the enslaved, while benefiting a few at the top. Eventually, even those who seem to benefit will pay a horrible and *eternal* price.

C. Notice that Jesus always addressed the demonic spirit BEHIND the problem, rather than the victims who had the problems.

1. In **Mark 5:6-7**, while Jesus was still at a distance, the possessed man ran to worship Him. Then a strange thing happened. An angry, demonic voice began pleading with Jesus to go away, wanting nothing to do with Him.
2. With a voice of authority, we must command those spirits that are holding the world in bondage to leave!
3. My problem with the modern church is its method of dealing with ungodly issues. Borrowing a page from the world's 'playbook,' they seek to bring change by protesting, marching, and sending emails.
4. Again, may I remind you that the Apostle Paul never organized a march against Rome, led a protest or signed a petition—even while living in one of the most wicked regimes in all of history! I'm not opposed to these demonstrations, but if that is our only strategy, I don't believe it will produce lasting results.
5. Notice that the evil spirits' only movement was to transfer from the man to the swine. It reminds me of the prairie dogs in West Texas. Until forced to leave the area, they will just disappear from one place and pop up in another.
6. It's good to desire a godly government, but only God can change the hearts of men.
7. Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 10:3-4 (NIV)** - "For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with

are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds."

8. Paul encouraged the church to pray for world leaders. Jesus did likewise when He taught us to pray to the Father: "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven!" **Matthew 6:10 KJV.**
9. Forcing the world to live as believers has never been the solution. Rather, we must seek to move the hand of the One who **can** change the world!
10. The early church also believed that the values of an authentic Christian could so impact their world, people would **want** to change. Never did they lose sight of the forces responsible for promoting evil deeds, nor did they try to negotiate peace or change the enemy's agenda.

D. Before we're qualified to address the forces of evil, we must discern who they are. A major problem of the modern church is their inability to recognize the enemy's face.

1. Remember that our enemy is the ultimate "shape-shifter."
 - a. In eternity past, he was the anointed angel who led heavenly worship before Jehovah God.
 - b. In Genesis, he is the serpent who deceived mankind in the garden.
 - c. In the Gospel of Matthew, he is the tempter.
 - d. In the Gospel of Mark, he is the strong man.
 - e. In the Gospel of Luke, he is Beelzebub, the lord of flies.
 - f. In the Gospel of John, he is the thief who comes to kill, steal and destroy.
 - g. In 2nd Corinthians, he is the deceiver who transforms himself into an angel of light.
 - h. In 1st Thessalonians, he is the wicked one.
 - i. Simon Peter saw him as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

- j. In Revelation 10, he is the great dragon.
 - k. In Revelation 12, he is the accuser of the brethren.
 - 2. This means that he simply chooses the appropriate mask to achieve his destructive objectives.
 - 3. In our day, people are so deceived, they deny that Satan even exists. Any talk of a malevolent, evil force called the 'devil' is said to be superstition based on ignorance and a lack of education. If only they were right!
 - 4. Even in the church, many have become so desensitized, they have no comprehension of the evil all around us.
- E. How must we address demonic systems and bring them under the control of the Kingdom of God?
- 1. First, what we offer must be better than what the enemy has. We must offer more comfort than alcohol, more 'highs' than drugs, more hope than illegal gain, and a deeper relationship with God than a one-night stand.
 - 2. Second, we must learn to be truly obedient to God.
 - a. **2 Corinthians 10:6 (NIV)** - "And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete."
 - b. How does this happen? Our flesh, emotions, thoughts and attitudes must be brought into obedience.
 - 3. We cannot have authority over demonic systems until we first exercise authority over ourselves, over our families, secular systems and ministry structures.
 - 4. If the church does not have its own house in order, how can we expect to take authority over the kingdom of darkness? This is why the messages of the last several weeks were so important.
 - 5. Third, our prayers and fasting must be done with insight.
 - a. **Mark 9:28-29 (NKJV)** - "And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?"

So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting."

- b. Jesus taught that demonic systems must be addressed through prayer and fasting. Not through legislation or social reform programs, but by taking control of spirits that seek to destroy lives.
 - c. Every tool we have been given is useless—if we fail to take authority over the enemy.
6. Demonic systems can never be controlled through education. While I have been in school most of my life and firmly believe in its importance, education alone cannot deliver mankind.
- a. My reason for saying this is because the more educated we become, some—even in the church—tend to discount the existence of spirits and the value of spiritual warfare.
 - b. I've seen both Christians and Christian leaders ridicule those who still believe in praying for the sick and the oppressed and in casting out demons.
7. Why is prayer and fasting so effective?
- a. You are demonstrating to the enemy that you have taken authority over self! You'll have no authority over demonic systems until you have authority over your own thoughts, emotions, will, and desires.
 - b. Prayer and fasting prepares you to face the enemy. It's much like working out in the gym and roadwork prepares a Mixed Martial Arts fighter for his next match. It's not just a way to twist God's arm!
 - c. Similar to Gideon's band of 300 men who put a huge army to flight by blowing trumpets and breaking clay pots that concealed fire brands, when we fast and pray, we declare God's rulership. We allow the hidden power within our human vessels to be clearly seen. And that terrifies the enemy!

- d. Since He has so graciously given us power over all the forces of the enemy, let's use it!

F. **Life Application Points:** What should happen if you or someone in your family is being oppressed by the enemy?

1. Begin by praying and fasting for *yourself*. Don't wait for someone else to do it for you.
2. Know what the scriptures say about Satan's defeat—and then declare that truth!
 - a. The enemy works most effectively in darkness.
 - b. When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness for 40 days and nights, He didn't have to command Satan to leave. All He had to do was declare the Word!
3. Close any doors you may have opened that have given the enemy access into your life.
 - a. **Ephesians 4:27 (NKJV)** - "Do not give place to the devil."
 - b. **Ephesians 4:27 (NIV)** - "Do not give the devil a foothold."
4. Stop doing anything that dishonors God; honor Him in all you do.
5. Do those things that entitle you to LEGALLY put the enemy in his place.
 - a. For example, it's impossible to rebuke the devourer if you aren't tithing.
 - b. So, if you should ask for God's financial blessings, Satan could say, "Sorry, God, but You can't bless this person—even if You want to. They aren't tithing."
6. Refuse to live in fear. Satan thrives in such an atmosphere!
7. Trust in the work Christ finished at Calvary. There's still power in the blood of Jesus! The Good News of the Gospel is that He has defeated the wicked one!