

Walking In The Authority of Jesus Christ

By Paul D. Norcross

God's blessings to you in the wonderful name of Jesus Christ.

An interesting thing happened to me a couple of weeks ago. As I was punching the pages for binding some Acts 29 workbooks on walking in the power of the Holy Spirit, I suddenly lost all strength in my right hand and wrist. It came out of nowhere, but for quite a while that evening I thought I might have stressed the tendons because of the force needed to operate the manual punch machine I was using.

But as I thought it through, I recognized that I really didn't do anything differently than normal. However, in so thinking that I had stressed the wrist in some unusual fashion, I was failing to see the demonic source of this attack on my health. I was reminded that such attacks are usually from curses being thrown from some source, especially when there is no identifiable sin issue visible.

I prayed for it to be healed, and so did a fellow pastor who was staying with me for a recent conference. My hand was painful and tingling with numbness. The symptoms improved by about 50 percent, and I felt in my spirit that it would be completely restored by morning.

When I woke up in the morning, it was indeed fully restored, except the tip of my little finger was numb and hard -- it felt and looked like a tourniquet was tightly cinched around it. So all day long I demanded the healing come forth, and proclaimed the promises of I Peter 2:24 over it. It got better throughout the day, and finally by the evening, all was back to normal.

A week later I managed to let my emotions take me out of bounds, and had a wrestling match going on in my heart. It wasn't long before, again out of nowhere, the same loss of strength and tingling occurred in my right hand. I had repented prior to the onset of the symptoms, and thus I knew sin was not the issue for achieving my healing, though this time it was an obvious trigger for the attack.

My healing came as I spoke to the hand and proclaimed I Peter 2:24. My hand immediately improved a great deal, and spurred me to get very bold and loud in proclaiming the promises of God. I spoke directly to my hand in the name of Jesus Christ, demanding it obey the healing promise of the Scriptures (I Peter 2:24, 3

John 2, etc.) The rest of the healing was immediately received, and I haven't had a problem since. It took a lot less time to heal than the first time, and I realize now this was because my faith and wisdom to deal with it had grown. I could more quickly lay hold on His promises.

I am sharing these things for two reasons. First, to declare that there is a relationship between sin and infirmity. Second, to show how claiming our rightful authority in Christ can be a very important aspect of both receiving and keeping our healing. We can think of the process as both taking a city and then standing in faith to occupy it. Often our spiritual focus is on taking new cities, new Promised Land assignments for the Lord, and we forget to boldly stand and withstand on the spiritual ground we have already taken.

Eliminating A Doctrinal Impediment To Healing

There is a tendency to dismiss reaching up for Scriptural, miraculous performance as a "name it/claim it" error. But I have found that when it comes to healing, that is precisely what is needed when the enemy is trying to steal our health. We find applicable promises in the Word, and we proclaim them to make them our own. I don't think we can err in claiming promises from the Scriptures, as well as genuine rhema's given to us by the Holy Spirit. I believe a great undermining of Christian faith to receive the promises of God often occurs when our faith is molded by old slogans that generate doctrinal error, such as "name it/claim it."

I John 5:14-15 is a powerful blank check (and there are nine other similar expressions in the New Testament). It exists for every believer who determines to believe it, and put hackneyed slogans aside. It's boundaries are that which is according to His will.

I John 5:13-15

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

For healing, we already know his will -- as for example 3 John 2:

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

I have found who people believe that "name it/claim it" is an error are usually folks who tend to minister out of their souls instead of out of the Spirit. They are often sick, usually anti-Holy Spirit, and from a faith that is based in Calvinist doctrines which believe that miracles such as noted in the book of Acts cannot really happen today. One cannot walk by the Spirit with such strongholds against faith for the genuine works of God!

At the name of Jesus Christ every knee must bow (and every wrist, elbow, heart, liver, kidney, and cancer). Sin gives authority to the enemy to bring on infirmity, sickness, disease. Repentance, forgiveness, etc. denies the adversary a large measure of authority to afflict us. Repentance resets our relational spiritual authority. Often this alone enables the healing to take place.

Dealing With Curses

Sometimes extra offensive measures are required, for example when curses are involved. The curse that was sent against me had to be broken, just like a roadside bomb has to be defused, and a blessing is a powerful way to fill the hole left by the curse.

When a curse is sent against us, especially from someone who has significant spiritual authority such as a witch, or especially a pastor with issues (or a husband against a wife or a parent against their child), that curse lingers. It can hover over the target for a long time until a cause is found, enabling it to light. Sin provides the cause, of course. Pastors are cursed constantly. Many of them are unable to suffer the loads that these curses bring due to ignorance regarding how curses work or even not realizing curses exist, how to discern them, or doctrinally how we get our authority to overcome them in Christ.

Once I learned the key of speaking the blessing of Genesis 12:3 over myself, my church, and my family, life got a whole lot easier. It was then I realized how pervasive curses really are, and what an effective secret device of satan they have been against God's people. It's an authority thing. When we regularly send curses back to where they came from, I've found that far fewer get sent to us. Spirits know when their curses are coming back to them, and they don't send as many.

Understanding Spiritual Authority

I have found that spiritual authority issues arise a lot, for example, in marital problems between believers. Satan has no authority of his own. He has to steal it from somewhere in order to exercise any power. The people who have much spiritual authority are believers. Jesus gave it to us.

Because words transmit that spiritual authority, satan also tries to operate effectively in word-based communications. He loves to send out word curses. If he can get a believer to gossip, he gains authority to act from the gossip, against the person being spoken against. If he generates strife among believers, especially pastors or church elderships through their soulish doctrinal differences, attitudes, whisper campaigns, etc. then he can gain tremendous maneuvering space because each negative confession increases his spiritual authority. This is compounded and used against the saints on a daily basis, probably even in your own fellowship.

I believe the first incidence of fasting in the Bible (Judges 20) demonstrates an aspect of the problem of believer against believer, and the spiritual authority this gives to satan. Judges 20 is the record of the man who visited the town of Gibeah in Benjamin. The homosexuals desired him, and got his concubine instead. When she showed up dead on the doorstep in the morning, the man cut up her body parts and sent them out to enrage the rest of the tribes of Israel to action. Some 426,000 troops were able to be marshaled against Benjamin. Judah's army was selected to go against the lesser army of Benjamin.

Judah got wasted! Some 22 thousand men died from Judah that day. Yet they were in the right! The next day, God gave them the go-ahead, and they lost 18 thousand men! How could this be?

The third day they fasted. At the end of the day, they asked the Lord whether they should give up and go home, or fight again. The Lord told them to fight, and they would be victorious. "Great Lord. Why did you have us go through two days of losses?" I suspect that had they known about the spiritual authority issues involved, perhaps had they remembered what Joshua learned to do from his battles at Jericho and Ai, they would have realized they needed revelation instead of relying on their past experiences.

I believe the issue was over spiritual authority. Both sides were God's people and had equal, God-given spiritual authority. Maybe Israel was cocky with their superior numbers and moral high ground. But I believe if the matter merely hinged on God's help going to the more righteous, the battle would have been over in the first day.

(You married couples with issues against each other would do well to pay attention to what I am saying here.)

I believe that Benjamin was propped up by satanic power that was given license by their God-given (but mis-appropriated) spiritual authority. When it comes to victory in spiritual warfare, righteousness does count indeed, but it is not the whole story. Spiritual authority is a huge factor. Regarding curses as one part of satan's whole arsenal of weapons, they gain their effectiveness from the spiritual authority of their source. If that source is able to exercise legitimate spiritual authority and in greater degree than the people of God, guess who is going to gain some ground, at least for a season?

I believe it was the fast that enabled Israel to overcome the spiritual authority of Benjamin. The fast dealt with the spiritual authority issue. Jesus declared in Matthew 17:20-21 (and Mark 9:14-29) that "this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" in response to the unbelief of the father and the disciples, Jesus' point involving prayer and fasting heavily rests on the extra spiritual authority that prayer and fasting contributes.

It would appear from the record in Mark that the Father was a Jew. His unbelief for healing stood authoritatively in the way of the disciples. When Jesus confronted the father's unbelief, and the father repented, satan's authority was removed -- the authority he had stolen from the father in order to afflict the son. Prayer and fasting involving repentance affected the solution, else Jesus would not have mentioned it.

Here's what I believe is one of the operative Biblical principles involved. What Jesus rescued us out from under in Colossians 1:13 was the authority (exousia) of darkness. What He gave the twelve and then the seventy was power (exousia = authority) to heal the sick and cast out devils. Spiritual authority is what God gave to Jesus, and what He will restore back to the Father at the end of the events of Revelation. Spiritual authority is what Jesus gave to the church which chooses to use it properly, under His rhema direction. It is this authority to use His name which evokes the ridicule of the unbelieving church with "name it/claim it" sloganizing. It is raw unbelief at best, and at worst it is a demonic doctrine to undermine faith in Christ's ongoing miracles.

The understanding of how to steal and use believers' God-given spiritual authority is not lost on satan. If he can get us to give away our spiritual authority to him through the negative confessions of our own mouths and disobedience, he will gain a lot of power over us which he should not have at all. This is why, for example, a church that is run by a pastor who is secretly having an affair with women in the

church is a church with rampant adultery all over the congregation. The authority is given through the pastor to devils to afflict the whole congregation.

There is a huge difference between criticism of other believers, and Godly reproof in love. The first gives license by the "criticizer" for satan to work against the "criticizee." The second, Godly reproof, enables a brother or sister to choose to be restored from error. Are you hearing me wives, husbands, parents, church members, and pastors?

Here's a good rule to follow: when you are tempted to speak out something negative, DON'T! Pray first and make sure that what you want to speak is coming from the Spirit of God in love, and not your flesh. Second, not everything you are tempted to speak is supposed to be spoken (giving authority to satan when it is). Often the Holy Spirit is alerting you to something He wants to deal with if you authorize Him to do so by releasing it to Him in prayer.

When should you speak? As the Lord inspires you through the Holy Spirit. What about "touching the Lord's anointed" if you are called to speak out against public Biblical error? This is a whole other subject which is well handled in the book "Breaking The Authority Of The Bastard Curse: Restoring The Congregation of the Lord," which you can obtain from our bookstore. This book shows the difference between goat ministries and genuine ministries, and how to tell them apart. Briefly, speaking up about Biblical error is what David did against Saul, waving a piece of Saul's underwear from a cave, and it is what Paul did against Peter for causing dissembling between former Jews and Gentiles who had become Christians over the issue of eating meat. Both were Godly confrontations done in love.

Keeping Our Faith When The "Facts" Seem Contrary

In affliction, we often unknowingly yield spiritual authority to satan. As with all affliction, there are often a lot of intertwined permissives which enable satan to gain a foothold. A close study of the book of Job shows this remarkably well.[1] Some of these footholds are obvious by experience in dealing with similar situations -- satan is never original, like the second time he tried to hit me with a similar wrist problem. And some must be discerned by revelation, and dealt with as the Lord specifically directs. Some can be dealt with in normal fashion, some require the greater faith engendered by prayer and fasting in order to overcome the legitimate but mis-used spiritual authority which satan has been able to find to use against us.[2]

Our past experience, or knowledge of facts in a situation, greatly colors our faith to receive the promises of God, and can disaffect our ability to walk by revelation. Like anything else, what we know to be "true" is often merely the facts of our situation, and which in spiritual reality are only as temporary as our faith permits. God changes "facts" when we apply the higher spiritual law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus over the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2).

What I am saying in all this is that there are dimensions to keeping our healing which require the exercise of Godly principles on several planes. We'll never exhaust satan's variety of wily devices, but we can defeat each one by hearing from the Lord on it and obeying it. I can't help but figure that since we have a personal Savior in Jesus Christ, we also have a personal devil (or devils) assigned to us to defeat us. They study our habits, and strategies. They love it if we get formularized and learn to depend on formula ministry exclusively for our deliverance. And they love it if we fail to check in with The Master, Jesus Christ, for His specific instructions.

God is so good. May He continue to give us His understanding and wisdom, which is always pure and gentle, and easily entreated. Peace and love and grace to you and your family, and all the family at WellSpring. May the Spirit of the Lord enable you to fulfill all your assignments from the King on your trip!

All our love in Christ,

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[1] See *The Continuing Works of Christ*, by Art Mathias

[2] Ephesians 6:11-12