

Reigning Through the Word

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

As a pastor, one of the saddest things is to see a marriage collapse for no obvious reason. There is no adultery, no abuse, yet the union falls apart because the individuals involved have become incompatible to God's divine provision. Neither party has the Word of God as the authority in their soul. Both of them can recite chapter and verse from the Bible. They could supply good theological discourse, and yet they have no power in their souls to apply the truth of God's Word in their marriage situation.

According to recent studies, I have learned that a great number of married men in America suffer tremendously from rejection by their wives. In return, their wives become the objects of verbal abuse in a negative reaction to that rejection. The problem for these couples is that they do not highly esteem the authority of God's Word in their souls.

Just as the pastor-teacher is delegated to

head the congregation, so is doctrine delegated to be the head over the soul. The pastor preaches and teaches, but after he is done, he does not invade the believers' privacy and follow people around to make sure they obey the Word. Inside the soul, categorical doctrine is given to direct the believer's thought-life, with the Holy Spirit continually leading.

In this booklet, we will examine the importance of letting the Word of God reign as the authority over our souls. When the Word is reigning, we can live in the breadth, the length, the height, and the depth of all that God has for us.

Chapter One

REAL HUMILITY

“But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble” (James 4:6).

What qualifies a person as “humble”? A humble person is not necessarily someone who doesn’t own anything. A humble person is not always someone who is quiet. Quietness may be a personality trait or even self-effacement. A humble person is not someone who sits back and does nothing. That is a false assumption as it is often passivity.

Humility is represented in the person who has the Word of God as the authority in his soul.

I could be a preacher who has great perception, understanding, and awareness of the Word of God and not have the Word reigning in my soul. God seeks to give His people spiritual authority in their souls. Yet, if the Word of God—which I believe in, which I honor, which I hear

several times a week—is not reigning in my soul, then I will never exercise spiritual authority.

Oh, it is so important that authority from God be established in the human spirit of our new hearts and in the mind, conscience, self-consciousness, emotions, and volition of our souls. We must learn the great principle of letting God the Spirit store the Word of God in our memory center and have it become resident in our souls.

When this happens, we enter into the reflection of God's nature. As we respond to the promises of God in the Word, we claim them as our own. I am not speaking of a name-it-and-claim-it kind of faith. That kind of faith has no substance. Faith that has authority in the soul, which claims promises given by the Spirit, develops into a bona fide, living faith.

The Action of Submission

"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matthew 23:12).

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

If I have real humility, I do not think lowly of myself or highly of myself. Real humility

means that I am filled with God's self-life, the essence of God's nature—for me to live is Christ! That is the essence of real humility. God promotes the humble, but He resists the proud. He will always promote the person who is receptive to the Word of God, which produces the authority of Jesus Christ in the soul.

James 4:7 tells me to submit myself to God—that's the first action. The second action is to resist the devil. These actions bring about this provision: the devil shuns me and runs from me.

"Submit" is translated from the Greek word *hupotasso*. This verb form represents a mandate to receive greater grace by continually subordinating every part of my soul to God so He can bring in His authority. "The" is a definite article speaking of *the* only God, represented in the Trinitarian authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. So we are to submit to God the Father's plan, to God the Son's execution of that plan, to God the Holy Spirit's revelation and guidance of that plan, and to the Word's definition of that plan.

Recognizing Authority

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though

it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

“Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory” (1 Peter 1:7-8).

How do we submit to the God we cannot see?

Consider the structure of the military. There are generals, and under the generals there are lieutenants, and then come captains and sergeants and so on. The average soldier takes orders from his sergeant. He may never see the general, but he receives the general’s instructions through the chain of command.

God, likewise, has established a chain of command throughout His Kingdom. I haven’t seen God with my eyes, but I submit to Him by submitting to the pastor-teacher of the local assembly where I am called.

A pastor-teacher has a very serious responsibility. Having a gift to communicate the Word of God, he magnifies God, and he never lords his authority over people, which would degrade them. The pastor-teacher motivates, but he does not manipulate. He is never to invade people’s

privacy. He communicates the truth in love and exhorts them to obey God, but he does not legislate. His responsibility is to preach and to teach the whole counsel of God exactly as it is written. He is to say exactly what God leads him to say from the pulpit.

According to the Word of God, the pastor-teacher is God's delegated representative authority. He has been given one of the highest responsibilities in the world. Failure to carry out his responsibilities properly will bring him a double measure of discipline. Therefore, it is vital that he understands what it means to reign through the Word in true humility, preaching line upon line and precept upon precept, declaring the *whole* counsel of God.

Chapter Two

THE BREADTH, LENGTH,
HEIGHT, AND DEPTH
OF OUR VICTORY

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

“May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

“And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God” (Ephesians 3:17-19).

God establishes a system of precise categorical doctrine in our souls so that we can clearly understand God’s purpose, even if we do not know the details of His plan. To comprehend the “breadth” means that through doctrine I have a defense against internalizing the pressures that come my way. I am absolutely free from pres-

sure so I can function in the Word of God. With the Word living in me, with Jesus Christ rooted and grounded in me by faith, I am rooted and grounded in the love of God.

The second aspect of God's defense system is "length." From eternity past until I am perfected in eternity future, the Word of God preserves, promotes, protects, and produces godliness, giving me divine patience and endurance to go through everything I face in time.

The "height" speaks of our superior power over demons and the oppression they try to produce against our souls. We are seated above those things. Our conversation, our manner of living, is above all of these things as we live in the Holy of Holies—hid with Christ in God (Colossians 3:3). The middle wall of partition is broken down. The veil has been torn in two and we live in the Holy of Holies as members of God's royal family and royal priesthood.

Deep Roots of the Mind of Christ

Finally, there is "depth" to our spiritual defense system. The mind of Christ is deeply rooted in our memory center, and, as a result, life is being produced in the conscience. We become self-conscious of the abundant grace of God

coming through, causing us to rebound when we fail. It is a great principle that gives us precision according to the Spirit of God's power in us. The deep calls unto the deep (see Psalm 42:7), and the love of God gives us comprehension of how deep His love goes in the spiritual kingdom.

This love surpasses knowledge. It doesn't live without knowledge, but it gives us the grace to go beyond knowledge, filling our souls with all the fullness of God, according to the authority of the Word of God. We are able to receive from God above all we ask or think because we have a love that goes beyond knowledge in its operation of grace, mercy, forgiveness, joy, patience, peace, kindness, and—most of all—wisdom.

These four dimensions of God's love work in helping us to stand against and oppose the devil. With Bible doctrine and the Holy Spirit's power, we have something in our souls that Satan fears. He is afraid of the power we have to reign as the Word of God becomes our final authority in whatever we are doing as believer-priests, standing before the Lord.

On the other hand, when we become negative and reactionary, we have no authority over our emotions. Anxiety and worry come in and

we lack the protection that comes from comprehending God's Word in its breadth, length, height, and depth. These absolute dimensions bring in a harmonious provision of protection from the amazing authority of the Word.

Inconsistency will reign in any area of the soul that lacks the authority of God's Word. The soul will eventually have emotional outbursts in the man who acts one way in private and another when he is around other believers. He may end up being moody because of something that happened in the past (which reveals that the past influences the present in the one who is not being protected by the Bible's categorically precise truth).

Steps Ordered by the Word

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men" (Colossians 3:16-

17, 23).

Iniquity has no dominion over me when my steps are ordered by the Word of God (Psalm 119:133). The Holy Spirit leads me so that I experience the spirit of adoption in my life, and I never have to fear going back to the spirit of bondage again (Romans 8:15).

This is why Jesus said we must live by every single word of God. Without this kind of lifestyle, we are no match for what the devil throws at us through the invisible powers of the air. It takes having the Word of God inside as the authority of our souls to keep us from growing weary mentally. We must let the Word and the Spirit quicken us (Psalm 119:154; Romans 8:11).

A woman becomes a real lady and a man grows into a gentleman because of what he has in his soul. It is not about the appearance on the outside; it is about having substance on the inside. His whole value system—his virtue, his ability, and his capacity—comes from the soul. Having these areas in godly order is the key to having overwhelming victory through Christ (Romans 8:37).

Chapter Three

CHOOSE TO OVERCOME

“Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

“Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.

“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up” (James 4:8-10).

“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world” (1 John 4:4).

“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4).

These verses speak about having the authority in our souls to pray and to bless others. It's about having the authority to claim the promises in God's name and to get things from God. Furthermore, it is about having the authority to be

obedient and to rebound when we fail.

James 4:9 (“Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness”) is a passage that is especially misunderstood. This is not speaking about giving special merit to those who wear long faces and endure days of depression. This verse is simply saying that when we sin and rebound, we are not to be lighthearted about it. Instead, we are to draw near to God with reverential awe, cleanse our hands, and purify our hearts according to the authority that is in our soul.

Who Is a Greater Grace Believer?

“My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me.

“This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope” (Lamentations 3:20-21).

The greater grace believer is the one who advances after situations that involve failure. He humbles himself and receives the authority of the Word through his personal study and as it is preached and taught by his pastor-teacher. Christ dwells in his heart by faith, he is rooted and grounded in love, and he comprehends his system of defense, which is derived by categorical

doctrine.

The depth of the greater grace believer's character of love depends on his being transformed every day by the mind of Christ, which is always new. He is able to recall a precise word from God in the category of doctrine he needs because the Word of God has been transferred and retained in his heart, ready to be recalled by the Holy Spirit in his moment of need.

The Holy Spirit cannot bring to remembrance what we have not been taught (John 14:26). We cannot recall something that is not hidden in our soul. God can only bring to the memory what we have learned—and there is nothing subjective about it.

Moving Beyond Perceptions

“Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you” (Luke 10:19).

“For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed” (2 Corinthians 10:8).

Sixty-five percent of all sicknesses come from a source outside of God. Oppression is from

Satan, and the soul that cannot fight its negative influence is a soul that never understands how to use the authority of the Word of God. Furthermore, the Word is really never allowed to reach such a soul. The perception of the Word is there, but it never goes beyond a superficial acknowledgement of truth.* Busy schedules, details of life, and domestic difficulties come in and destroy the authority of the Word. This soul is helpless. He does not know how to use the Word objectively with spiritual authority.

Christians must realize that godly authority only comes from learning, receiving, and self-discipline. The Word must become the sergeant of the soul. They must refuse to be negative toward the Word of God and their pastor-teachers.

Paul showed us that real authority is meant to edify (2 Corinthians 10:8). Edification, the building up of believers, is what those in authority are commissioned by God to do. Pastor-teachers and other church leaders are not given by God to destroy lives. They are given authority to restore and revive lives.

Still, Jesus Christ has given every individual the gift of free volition. It was God's first gift to man. With this volition, each of us can choose what we receive and what we do with what we

receive; but as believers, we have a God-given responsibility to choose life.

No one has to take drugs or drink alcohol. No one has to lie or live in promiscuous affairs. But it is important to understand that a wrong choice may result in an ecstatic superficial chemical production of relaxation. As wrong choices are continually being made in sinful areas, the chemistry of the body develops a need and a demand. Soon, without these sinful experiences, the person becomes incapacitated. His wrong choices result in a state of mental confusion as he abuses the chemical balance of his body.

People who are like this need help. They need renewal. They need to have the mind of Jesus Christ reigning in their soul.

Lifted Up to Possess Authority

“And be renewed in the spirit of your mind” (Ephesians 4:23).

The verb in the Greek text of this verse is passive, meaning simply that the subject of this sentence receives the action of the verb. In this case, the verb shows how a damaged soul can be healed, as it points to the process and the agent of change.

The agents of revelation and change are the

Bible and the power of Jesus Christ. The damaged soul needs to receive the Word of God continually as he develops a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ in order to overcome wounds and problems in the soul.

This is part of humbling ourselves before God. Then, He lifts us up.

Remember God's chain of command. He is in heaven and we cannot see Him or touch Him, but we can submit to the authority He has delegated to the pastor-teacher in the local church where we have been called. As we submit to the Word that we hear, we allow the Word to become the "sergeant" of our souls. The Sergeant then orders our every step according to the Word. The words of the Bible show us how to think every thought (see 2 Corinthians 10:3-5). Then, we can be led by the Holy Spirit of God, who gives us life.

We now enjoy the action of being built up in the most holy faith, a faith that is separated unto God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Word brings in definition about our relationship to Him. Because we come under authority, we *possess* authority. Subsequently, we can confess authority over things that are not of God, and we become overcomers by the Spirit

that is now reigning within us. Spiritual authority through the Word and through Christ becomes the agent of defense and offense within us. We recognize our position, which is high above our enemies, and the depth of doctrine rooted inside so that our subconscious mind never has its way over us.

Finally, we walk in the love of Christ that passes knowledge, though it never excludes that knowledge. Instead, our knowledge produces the fruit of righteousness, and we learn to excel in judgment and discernment as we reign with Christ through the Word (Philippians 1:10).

** Refer to The Hearing Heart, a booklet by Pastor Carl H. Stevens, Grace Publications, 1996.*

CONCLUSION

We have the privilege to make a fantastic difference with our friends, our families, our peers, and even nations. We can make an impact on the world because of the authority we have by the Word of God.

The Word of God is in us. We can apply those spiritual truths that reach back in length to eternity past but are now present in our experience. By this application, the Word of God can govern our souls. The Holy Spirit brings the knowledge of God into our memory center and lets it flood our conscience as it occupies our self-consciousness.

When this happens, Satan must declare his inferiority:

“That little person is executing Christ’s authority that brought about my defeat. Curses! Now I have to flee. I can’t be around this person at all.”

Satan literally has to get out of our presence.

He flees, runs, and shuns us because he doesn't want to experience the embarrassment of showcasing his once-and-for-all defeat as a supernatural invisible being. He wants no part of us when we execute the authority of the One—Jesus Christ—who defeated him through His Cross, His Resurrection, and His Ascension. We have been set free, not just to hope but to reign with Him in life by the power of His Word. Amen!