

STAND YOUR GROUND

- A. Introduction: For several weeks we have been talking about authority. Authority is delegated power. Authority is permission to act for another, in their name, backed by their power.
1. God made men to reign on this earth as His under rulers. Gen 1:26; Ps 8:4-6; Rev 5:10; etc .
 - a. Man's God-given authority was lost when Adam sinned in the Garden. But, Jesus, through His death, burial, and resurrection regained man's lost authority and dominion. Eph 1:19-2:6
 - b. Because we are born again we now have the same position of authority Jesus has at the right hand of the Father, and we are now to reign in life by Christ Jesus. Rom 5:17
 - c. We are to show Jesus to this world by exercising His authority in His name and by doing His works by His power in and through us. I John 2:6; John 14:12-14; Matt 27:18-20; etc.
 2. If you are going to walk in the authority that Jesus obtained for you in His resurrection victory you must understand some things about the nature of life in this sin cursed earth.
 - a. At the Cross the devil was judged but he is not yet subjugated. The devil's authority over the human race was broken but he has not yet been removed from human contact.
 1. At the return of Jesus every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord -- including the devil. And he will be permanently removed from human contact. John 12:31; Rev 20:10
 2. Right now, the devil still has some time left on this earth, and he goes about seeking people to devour. I Pet 5:8
 - b. When we say "devil" we are using the term as an inclusive word meaning the devil himself, his works, and the multitudes of demons who inhabit the invisible realm on this earth. Remember:
 1. The hardships and suffering of life are here because of sin (beginning with Adam's sin) and are ultimately traceable back to Satan as the first rebel in the universe.
 2. The devil and his demons are actively at work influencing the hearts and minds of men to keep them blinded to the reality of God and His kingdom and to motivate them to continue to act in ways that are contrary to God.
 3. The authority we have been given does not mean that we can stop or remove all the troubles and hardships of life (John 16:33). It means that like Jesus we can exercise authority over the devil and his demons and the conditions they produce through manipulating the minds of men and the circumstances on this earth.
 3. Eph 6:11,12 says we wrestle with the devil. Wrestle comes from a word that means to vibrate. The devil tries to shake us or sway us off of God's word through wiles or mental strategies or deceit.
 - a. Satan presents us with lies. A lie is anything that contradicts God's word. Satan comes to steal the word of God through thoughts, circumstances, persecutions, afflictions, etc. Mark 4:13-20; Matt 13:18-23
 - b. We don't battle the devil because we already defeated him and his works through and with our Substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ. We must enforce his defeat in our lives by using God's armor which is His word. Ps 91:4--His faithful promises are your armor. (Living Bible)
 - c. In this lesson we want to continue our discussion of how to enforce the devil's defeat.
- B. The same epistle that tells us how we were raised up with Christ and hold the same position of Authority Jesus has, far above principalities and powers, also tells us how to enforce the devil's defeat. Eph 6:10-17
1. To deal with the devil we are told to put on the armor of God. Put on means to sink into as clothing. The word can be used literally or figuratively.
 - a. Some have mistakenly taken this to mean: To deal with the devil, imagine yourself putting on the specific pieces of armor listed in the passage. But, that misses the point and it doesn't work.
 1. Everyone to whom this epistle was written would have been familiar with Roman armor and how effective it was. The Roman army was unbeatable. The idea being conveyed here is

that if you use God's word properly you will be unbeatable in your encounters with the devil.

2. The pieces of armor listed represent specific categories of information from the word of God which we need if we are going to effectively enforce the devil's defeat.
 - b. The Greek word ENDUO (put on) is used elsewhere in the Bible to describe what happens to us at the new birth -- we put on Christ (Gal 3:27) -- and what happens to us at the resurrection of the dead -- our bodies put on immortality (I Cor 15:53,54).
 1. The idea is that there is a complete and permanent transformation when you put on Christ and when you put on immortality.
 2. To put on the armor of God means that your thinking is permanently transformed or your mind is renewed. Rom 12:2--But be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind -- by its new ideals and its new attitude... (Amp).
 2. In other words, if you are going to effectively enforce the devil's defeat, you must learn to see reality as it truly is. Reality is everything as God sees it.
 - a. Reality is found in the word of God. God's word is truth (John 17:17). The word truth means "the reality lying at the basis of an appearance". (W.E. Vine's Dictionary)
 - b. There is more to reality than the information your senses give you. There are unseen realities. If you are going to enforce the devil's defeat you must learn to see things from God's point of view.
 1. Luke 13:11-17--Jesus encountered a daughter of Abraham, a woman in covenant relationship with God. God was her healer, her doctor, (Ex 15:26; etc.), yet she was bound by the devil for eighteen years because, for whatever reason, she did not know and act on who she was and what she had in reality.
 2. Matt 14:25-33--Peter, in reality a man who could walk on water, almost drowned because he had more faith in what he could see and feel than he did in the word of Jesus.
 3. Matt 10:1; Matt 17:14-20--Men who were empowered by Jesus to cast out devils were unable to cast a devil out because of their unbelief. They did not see and act on reality as it truly is and were unable to enforce the devil's defeat..
 3. The challenges of life, the hardships and pain of life are real but the power of God is more than enough to enable us to stand our ground until we experience victory in our situation.
 - a. The devil knows that if you know who you are and what you have because of the Cross and the new birth there is NO STOPPING you. His only power over you is the lie -- to convince you to believe and act on a lie and give up or back down in the situation.
 1. So he bombards you with lies: You aren't! You can't! You have no power here. This is hopeless. It's not working. It hasn't worked in the past, it won't work now, etc., etc.
 2. We aren't saying problems aren't real, we are saying that, according to the word of God, according to reality as it truly is, everything you see is temporary and subject to change by the power of God.
 - b. So, you have to learn from the word of God how to release the power of God in your situation and then be able to stand your ground while the power of God through the word of God works in your situation.
- C. Eph 6:13 says it this way: We put on God's armor so that we can withstand, and having done all, stand.
1. The word withstand means to set oneself against and is translated resist in I Pet 5:9 and James 4:7.
 - a. To resist the devil you must know that Satan is the source of the trouble (directly or indirectly) and that you are authorized to stand against and destroy the works of the devil in your life.
 - b. You must recognize the lies of the enemy in your situation and stand against them or resist them with the truth of God's word.
 2. Having done all literally means having overcome all. All, in context, is the devil and his attack.
 - a. Rev 12:11 speaks of the saints of God overcoming the devil by the blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and loving not their lives unto death. We'll focus on the first two elements

(blood of the Lamb and word of our testimony) but consider a few points about the last one.

1. The context is dying as a martyr. Most of us won't be called to do that, but, if we are, God's grace will be there to enable us to do it. Acts 7:54-60
2. But, if you can develop this attitude as you face the hardships of life: The worst thing that can happen to me is that I'll die and go to be with Jesus, that attitude can help you deal with fear. Fear can keep you from exercising your authority effectively. (another lesson for another day)
- b. The blood of the Lamb has to do with what Jesus has done for us, provided for us, through His death, burial, and resurrection which made possible the new birth.
 1. Because of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus we now have authority. Through the new birth we have become partakers of eternal life and have union with Jesus Christ.
 2. Paul began his instructions on how to enforce the devil's defeat with the statement: Eph 6:10--For the future, find strength in your union with the Lord and in the power which comes his might (20th Cent). You are in union with the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ who triumphed over death, hell, and the grave.
 - a. You faced and defeated the devil legally two thousands years ago in and through your Substitute, Jesus Christ.
 - b. You now face the devil in vital union with the Lord Jesus Christ. You are the victor!!
- c. To the blood of the Lamb, you must add the word of your testimony. Testimony is authoritative evidence based on observation or knowledge. When you give testimony in court you tell what you know to be true to the best of your knowledge.
 1. There are two elements involved in the word of our testimony. One is knowledge of God's word which reveals what He has done for us in the through Jesus Christ. The second is action. We believe and then we speak what God has done for us.
 2. Believe comes from two Anglo-Saxon word: Be, which means to live or exist, and lifan, which conveys the thought of accordance. To believe means to live in accordance with. The number one way you express your agreement with anything is through the words of your mouth. Authority is exercised through words. Matt 8:8,9
- d. At the moment you believe and say what God says about you the situation, you have overcome. The moment you take your stand on God's word and speak it out you have enforced Satan's defeat. You have won. I John 5:4
 1. Once you have recognized the devil's lies and resisted them with the truth, you have overcome. Then, you stand in the power and authority of the Lord until the devil and his works back down.
 2. Eph 6:11--Clothe yourself with the whole panoply (armor) that comes from God, for the sole purpose that you may have explosive and dynamic power to stand proud and upright, face to face, and eyeball to eyeball against the roads that the slanderer would try to pave into your mind. (REV)
3. Once you have resisted the devil or set yourself against him and have overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of your testimony you must now stand. This word is used three times in the passage in Eph 6--v11,13,14.
 - a. The word means to cause to stand, to stand firm, to establish, to firmly place. To stand means to stand your ground, your position of victory, in and through Christ.
 - b. Once you take your stand on God's word the attack doesn't always stop immediately. The devil seeks to intimidate you. If you back down from your stand on God's word he won't go, he won't stop. We see that clearly demonstrated in the ministry of Jesus.
 1. In Matt 8:28-32 Jesus came upon a man who was possessed with many devils. Notice: The devils knew who Jesus was and said to Him, "If you cast us out". Jesus' presence there as a man of authority did not mean they automatically had to leave. Jesus had to use His authority and command them to go.

2. In Mark 1:23-27 Jesus went into the synagogue one day and there was a man present who had a devil. Jesus commanded the devil to leave and the devil threw one more fit before he left -- and the unclean spirit threw the man into convulsions. (NEB)
 3. In John 4:47-53 Jesus prayed for the son of an official. The son was at the point of death. As the man returned home he was met by servants who told him that the son was not dead. The man asked when he began to get better. The fever broke at the hour Jesus prayed, but the implication is that a process of recovery took place.
 - c. Why does it work this way? No one knows for certain at this point. But, consider these thoughts.
 1. It seems that Satan has been given free reign for a time. Bible scholars sometimes call this "Adam's lease". Adam was given rulership (which he relinquished to Satan) for a specific period of time and Satan is finishing out that "lease".
 2. Satan is reluctant to go and only does so in the face of one who knows his authority. Remember the seven sons of Sceva in Acts 19:13-17. Although they used the name of Jesus to try to cast out a devil it didn't work.
 - d. This didn't seem to bother Jesus so we don't need to let it bother us. Just accept it and deal with it. The problem for most of us is that we pray and, if there are no immediate changes, we waver.
 1. Jesus told us in Mark 11:23,24 that the faith that moves mountains, the authority that kills fig trees, does not doubt or waver.
 2. What if Jesus would have wavered when He cast the devil out of the man in the synagogue? The devil would not have come out -- just like it didn't for Jesus' disciples in Matt 17.
- D. Conclusion: We haven't said all there is to say about enforcing the devil's defeat, but consider these points.
1. If you are going to experience the victory that was purchased for you at the Cross you have to learn to assess yourself and your situation -- not according to what you can see -- but according to what you can't see. Your senses don't have access to all the pertinent information about your situation.
 - a. II Cor 5:15-17--Christ died for us all, so that being alive should no longer mean living with our own life, but with his life who died for us and has risen again (Knox). Once convinced of this, then, I estimate no one by what is external; even though I once estimated Christ by what is external, I no longer estimate him thus (Moffatt). Therefore, if any one is in union with Christ, he is a new being (20th Cent), his old being has passed away, and behold, all has become new (Conybeare).
 - b. From the outside, according to the flesh, Jesus was a Jewish carpenter. In Matt 17:1-8 Jesus was transfigured in front of His disciples. There is more to that than we can talk about now, but consider this point: Jesus looked a lot different on the inside than He did on the outside.
 2. Because of your union with Christ you are much bigger and much more powerful on the inside than on the outside. You are part of His body and that THING you are dealing with is under His and your feet. We are to be strong in the power of His might. Stand your ground and enforce the devil's defeat.