



VESSELS OF HONOR

We want people to **KNOW GOD** through a personal relationship with Jesus—this begins with **SALVATION**. We want people to **EXPERIENCE FREEDOM**, meaning true **DELIVERANCE** from anything that holds them back. We want people to **DISCOVER THEIR PURPOSE** and use it to make a lasting difference in the lives of others.

Here are three common reasons we find ourselves in bondage—situations from which we need to be set free:

1. **WHAT WE'VE DONE TO OURSELVES:** Often life has become more difficult than it needs to be because of the things we have **done to ourselves**. Sin—which literally means “to miss the mark”—creates barriers in our lives. Through poor decisions and harmful entanglements, we often create our own bondage, leading to unnecessary suffering and preventing us from experiencing the fullness of God’s intended plan for our lives.
2. **WHAT PEOPLE HAVE DONE TO US:** A lot of times we don’t live the life God intended us to live because of wounds inflicted by others. Betrayals, rejections, and painful experiences leave lasting impressions that can overshadow our potential. We have no joy because we have wounds.
3. **THE ENEMY:** The third reason we often find ourselves in bondage and outside of the Will of God for our lives is the deliberate opposition of spiritual forces (the devil). This real enemy is actively seeking each and every day to trip you up and strategically derail God’s purposes.

THE ENEMY DOES NOT WANT YOU TO BE FREE!

“...God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.” ACTS 10:38

The enemy is not just a symbol of evil—he is real. That’s why, as a church, we are committed to prayer. Prayer is one of the most powerful tools God has given us to engage in spiritual warfare. We must never underestimate the enemy’s activity in people’s lives. This is why we pray, and why we need intercessors—because beyond what we can see, our greatest battle is spiritual. More than anything, the enemy seeks to **distract people** and **keep them from opening their hearts to receive the Word of God**.

HERE'S WHAT I NEED YOU TO KNOW

- 1. DEMONS ARE REAL—this isn't to scare you, but to equip you.** I want to walk you through the biblical truth about demons, spiritual warfare, and the authority you've been given as a believer. You have the power to engage in this battle, experience true freedom, and live the full, abundant life God desires for you—not just temporarily, but for the rest of your life..
- 2. DEMONS WANT TO DESTROY YOU.** Day and night, they operate in various ways to trip us up and tear us down. Jesus made this clear in **JOHN 10:10**: *"The thief comes only to steal, kill, and destroy."* That's his entire agenda. This is why **1 PETER 5:8-9** urges us: *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."*

The sobering truth is this: too often, **we allow the devil to work harder at destroying us than we work at resisting him.**

- 3. DEMONS RESPOND TO A HIGHER AUTHORITY!** Demons recognize authority, and they submit to it. They answer to the one who outranks them, and that One is **JESUS!** That's why **EPHESIANS 6:10-12** urges us: *"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."*

A lot of people think that our battle is just with flesh and blood and that which we can see and touch, but the true battle is against principalities and wickedness and rulers of darkness. The good news is found in **1 JOHN 4:4**: *"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."*

God IN YOU is GREATER THAN anything the enemy wants to do, tries to do, or schemes to do! The enemy has got to submit to the authority that is higher than him—Jesus Christ.

THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY IS THE NAME OF JESUS.

The devil and demons have to submit to the NAME of JESUS.

In **LUKE 10:19** Jesus goes on to say - *"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."*

You have that authority by virtue of the **NAME OF JESUS**. **PHILIPPIANS 2:10** says *"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth"*

Every tongue shall confess Jesus is Lord. HE is the highest authority. And if you've accepted HIM as your personal Lord and Savior, **that same authority lives in you!** Why? Because *greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world*. The highest authority we have is the **NAME OF JESUS**. That's why we seal every prayer in **Jesus' Name** because there is no name, and no authority greater than His!

THE SECOND HIGHEST AUTHORITY IS THE WORD OF GOD.

Why? Because the **Word is Jesus**. **JOHN 1** tells us *"the Word was made flesh and dwelled among us."* In both Matthew 4 and Luke 4, we see this authority in action. When Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil, He didn't argue or reason—He responded with the Word. Every time the enemy tried to attack His identity, His purpose, or His destiny, Jesus declared: *"It is written!"*

"It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." **MATTHEW 4:4**

You are witnessing the **power of the Word**, because the enemy cannot stand against it. There is real authority in the Word of God.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE BLOOD

REVELATION 12:11 *"And they overcame him (triumphed) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."*

How do we overcome? By the shed blood of Jesus. HIM going to the Cross was the greatest defeat to every trick and scheme of the enemy. HIM shedding HIS blood for us took care of the penalty and punishment for all of our sin—past, present and future. There is power and authority in the blood of Jesus—and that's how we overcome.

THREE DAILY STEPS TO LIVING OUT YOUR AUTHORITY

MATTHEW 10:1 *"And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease."*

1. Submit yourself to GOD's authority

JAMES 4:7-8 *"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded."*

Notice the order—**Submit yourselves** to God **THEN Resist** the devil. A lot of people want to exercise their authority and come against the enemy—but here's the problem: your authority is only as strong as your submission to God.

The Bible gives us multiple examples of people trying to confront the enemy without being fully submitted to God—and the result? A spiritual beatdown.

If you want to walk in true authority, you must first submit yourself to God. Only then can you stand firm and resist the enemy effectively.

2. Close any open doors

2 CORINTHIANS 2:10-11 *"To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ;" Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."*

Unforgiveness is something we must deal with—because the enemy uses it to outwit us. When we hold on to unforgiveness, it weakens our spiritual authority and opens the door for the enemy to operate in our lives. That's why we spent several weeks addressing it—because bitterness and unresolved offense act like blockages in the spirit.

If left unchecked, they give the enemy access and hinder the freedom and power God intends for us to walk in.

EPHESIANS 4:26-27 *"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: ²⁷ Neither give place to the devil."* Refusing to deal with your anger is another open door—another avenue the enemy uses to gain access to your life. Just like unforgiveness, unchecked anger creates spiritual vulnerability. That's why Scripture urges us not to let the sun go down on our wrath—because if we don't confront it, the enemy will exploit it.

3. CONFRONT YOUR ENEMY DAILY

When you pray, remember—prayer is not just communion with God; it is also confrontation with the enemy.

As **2 CORINTHIANS 10:3-5** reminds us: *"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: ⁴ (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) ⁵ Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"*

Prayer is where you take your stand. It's where you push back. If you want to walk in authority as a believer, you must:

*****Submit to God. Close every open door. And confront your enemy Daily!*****

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of the three sources of bondage—what we've done to ourselves, what others have done to us, or the enemy's attacks—have you found most difficult to overcome, and why?
2. What does it look like in everyday life to "submit yourself to God," and how does that submission strengthen your authority as a believer?
3. Can you identify any "open doors" in your life (such as unforgiveness or unresolved anger) that may be giving the enemy access? What practical steps can you take to close them?
4. How can we develop a consistent practice of prayer that not only connects us with God but also empowers us to confront the enemy daily?
5. Of the three spiritual weapons—the Name of Jesus, the Word of God, and the Blood of Jesus—which one do you personally rely on most often, and how have you seen its power in your life?