

### **Chapter 3: Setting the Captives Free Part 3**

*In the previous two chapters of this module, we looked at how the disciple has been called to set the captives free, which means laying hands on the sick, and also laying hands on those who are under spiritual attack.*

*This is the mandate of the believer according to the Great Commission of Matthew 28 and Mark 16.*

*We looked specifically at how healing, however, is not just about outward illness. Many people are “sick” when it comes to the spirit and the soul. To heal the spirit is therefore a matter of evangelising and leading someone to the Lord, because in the love, acceptance, grace and mercy of the Lord do we find our strength, redemption and restoration. To heal the soul is, however, a very complex matter for the soul is very complex.*

*We also need to keep in mind healing is about restoration. And restoration is all about the Father’s heart. When we are healed physically, we are restored in health. But then your soul and spirit is also uplifted and restored. All that God does is about restoration. This is why it is so important for disciples to lay hands on the sick, and to see them healed in the power of Jesus, because it is about restoration. So when we lay hands on the sick, it is about declaring the Father’s heart, which is about restoration, for restoration is about love, life and hope.*

*A disciple is not just called to lay hands on those who are outwardly sick, but to help those who are suffering in the spirit and the soul to find healing and therefore restoration. Let us be reminded healing is very important, because healing deals with restoration and atonement – if it be healing in spirit, soul or body.*

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To fully comprehend setting the captives free from the ailments of the soul, and the scope and the magnitude of such deliverance, we need to consider that man is a spiritual being and he was first made in spirit before he was encased in flesh and by that flesh and by his physical birth his soul began to breathe and become alive.

And to speak of the soul speaks of intelligence and our will and our emotions and our thoughts and our feelings. Man has a spirit and man has a soul. They are not the same. Life is in the spirit, yet your soul is the trinity of the will, thoughts and emotions. Just as our Lord is the Trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we are also one person yet we are flesh, soul and spirit. We cannot set the captives free unless we understand and discern in Spirit and Truth the concept of spirit, soul and body.

The day that we are redeemed and saved by the Blood of Jesus is the day that our spirit has been redeemed and reborn. Our spirit therefore becomes righteous and holy by the blood of the slain Lamb [Jesus]. This is part of the healing process. Let us revisit Mark 16: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." The very concept of preaching the gospel implies evangelising, and therefore leading people to Jesus, for then as they are led they are restored by the Blood of the Lamb, redeemed, and they are now under the headship of the Lord. A spirit not redeemed is apart from God, therefore wounded, bruised and broken.

So we are called by the Blood of Jesus to eventually be reborn in the spirit (John 3), which means for our spirit to be sanctified and consecrated. And once our spirit has been reborn, we embark on a journey of our soul to come into alignment with God so that our mind and heart and will are one with the Lord.

The disciple is therefore called to lead people to the Lord in salvation for this is the process of healing of the spirit. And once the spirit is healed and restored, one can begin to deal with the soul, and of course also the

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flesh (body). Let it be stressed that once the spirit is redeemed, this does not mean that our soul is in a state of holiness and purity. Our soul (mind, will and emotions) also need to be renewed, healed and restored. The mandate of the disciple is therefore not only to pray to bring healing not only to the flesh, but also to the spirit and the soul.

Whatever the form of deliverance, it always produces HEALING – for a person is made whole and complete when delivered from the afflictions of the spirit, soul and body. When we submit to the Lord and follow Him then our lives become whole, stable and without inner affliction. Leading someone to Christ is deliverance, for that person is led out of the spiritual darkness and into light. Such a person is afflicted by the curse of sin, but under the Blood of Jesus, he has a right standing with God.

Deliverance is therefore not just about deliverance of a demon.

Deliverance has many forms and shapes and shades, and it deals with the realm of the spirit, soul and body. A person is only really DELIVERED when the spirit, soul and body are dealt with, and most of the times this can happen simultaneously. All three dimensions are intertwined. Many times the flesh is in bondage because the spirit is in bondage, or the soul can be in bondage which leads to a corruption of the spirit, or the corruption of the soul which can lead to the decay of the flesh.

Throughout His ministry on earth, Jesus dealt with deliverance on all levels – be it delivering someone from a demon, from a physical affliction or from the stronghold of the soul (manifested in the mind, heart or the will). This is also part of our mandate. The mandate of the disciple deals with specifically healing of spirit, soul and body, because the disciple has been called to not only lay hands on the sick, but also deal with the realm of the soul and the spirit.

Many people, including believers these days are still suffering from bondages of the soul, which are caused for example by trauma, unforgiveness, false perceptions, teachings, upbringings and habits. The way we think and operate is a result of what has happened to us

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throughout life. Traumas and painful experiences can radically alter our perceptions and reality when we view life. It says the truth shall set us free (John 8), and everyone, be it a Christian or a heathen, needs deliverance from strongholds that has taken hold of our thoughts and emotions. The disciple's mandate is to lead someone on that path of the restoration of the soul, by walking in the wisdom and discernment of the Holy Spirit.

After all, a sickness or illness or whatever other bondage of the soul needs to be addressed and needs to be challenged by the Blood of Jesus, which translates into deliverance by authority. At times such torment within a person will be demonic, at other times the answer will be found in the soul or merely in the flesh. For this reason we need to seek to walk in the gift of discernment, word of knowledge and word of wisdom.

**Remember, as disciples it is our mandate to walk in the glory of the Kingdom of God, establish its dominion in the hearts of man, take up the keys of authority, bind the works of the devil, loosen people from the chains that bind [soul and spirit and body] and ultimately see the lost come the Throne Room of Grace.**

When it comes to the restoration of the soul, our minds needs to be renewed DAILY, and we need to submit to the Lord, deny the self, guard the heart, and tame the tongue (James 3), because these things speak of yielding to the Lord within the realm of the soul. It is in the soul where we think and where we feel and where we form habits and where our traditions are birthed. Out of the soul comes the way that we speak and operate and function. It is the soul where our truth and reality is shaped and moulded, and by this truth and reality we shape our lives.

We at times wonder how we can keep on sinning or keep on feeding our wrong habits, even after we have been redeemed in the spirit. The problem lies with the soul. If our soul is not renewed and not cleansed and not submitted to the Holy Spirit - meaning conformed and transformed by the inner working of the power of a divine King - then it

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means that our flesh and our body (meaning our five natural senses) will also not be submitted to the Lord and will therefore be subjected and susceptible to the ways of the world.

We will therefore remain vulnerable and open and subjected to the influences of the world and we will act upon these influences because our soul is still caught between the divine kingdom of God and the sinful world. We need to therefore from the outset understand that when we speak of setting the captives free we speak of a deliverance that needs to take place within the spiritual realm and also the realm of the soul. If we fail to discern the difference between the soul and the spiritual realm and we fail to discern that there is a difference between the realm of the spirit and the realm of the mind and heart then we will fail to truly bring ourselves or someone to complete deliverance.

The greatest battlefield in a believer's life is the mind. Our mind determines our actions, behaviour, thoughts, and reality. If our mind is not submitted to God, we will follow the ways of the rebellious world. This is why Paul writes in *1 Corinthians 10: 3* *For though we walk in the flesh [as mortal men], we are not carrying on our [spiritual] warfare according to the flesh and using the weapons of man. 4 The weapons of our warfare are not physical [weapons of flesh and blood]. Our weapons are divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 5 We are destroying sophisticated arguments and every exalted and proud thing that sets itself up against the [true] knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought and purpose captive to the obedience of Christ, 6 being ready to punish every act of disobedience, when your own obedience [as a church] is complete.*

Take note of how he writes about taking thoughts (your soul) captive and to punish every act of disobedience (our will). Spiritual warfare is not just dealing with demons and fighting the powers of darkness, but a lot of it deals with bringing healing to someone's soul. And this means that a person has to learn to bring his or her mind under the subject of the

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Lord, to align their will with the higher will of the Lord and to allow the Spirit to lead and not be solely led by the emotions.

The mind is a very powerful agent and so are the heart and the free will of man. Satan loves to attack free will, for to submit to the Lord means submitting one's will to seek the Lord's will. A person who holds onto free will, therefore holding onto control, are those who walk in rebellion, which in its own right is idolatry [exaltation of the Self above God].

Even if you have been saved [redeemed in the spirit], the devil can and will scheme and trick and manipulate and deceive in order to corrupt the soul. He will lie and cheat for the purpose to see our soul become alienated from the living Lord. For if someone's soul is still influenced by the world, then one's thoughts and emotions and your will eventually runs counter to the ways and thoughts of the Lord.

Our soul – be it the soul of the believer or the non-believer – therefore remains an open battleground. When we speak about casting our mind on the Kingdom above, and when we are speaking about taming the tongue and when we are speaking about renewing the mind, then we are speaking of action because the word 'taming' and 'renewing' and 'casting' is a verb, therefore by implication a momentum and progression of action is needed to enforce such a decision.

When disciples like Paul and James and Peter speaks about perseverance and diligence and keeping guard, they speak of action that needs to be taken in order for us to be submitted to the will and to the plan and the purpose of the Kingdom of God. And such action translates into the choices and decisions we make and what we believe, how we act, how we speak and our general attitude. We are called to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, for we are ultimately responsible for our own walk of salvation and spiritual growth. The decision WE make can either destroy or prosper us; therefore the devil seeks to influence us so that we can make the wrong decision. The Holy Spirit, however, wants to lead us in all truth to His glory.

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Paul realised that one's soul remains the gateway through which Satan can attack and corrupt us. Satan will always attack the world and the believer through the soul. And let it be known that the devil can attack and he can corrupt the spirit of the believer once he has found enough footholds within a soul. Once Satan has found a legal foothold into a believer's life, he can exert his negative influences.

This is why Ephesians 6 speaks of the armour of God, for we are reminded of the helmet of salvation and it speaks about the breastplate of righteousness and it speaks of the belt of truth and the sword of the spirit and the shield of faith. Paul speaks about such armour because we need to guard and protect and shield our mind and heart against the schemes and plots of the enemy. If we fail to do so, then Satan will simply continue to attack the realm of the soul.

Man has been given a free will and a free choice and by our choices and by our actions and by our thoughts we dictate the condition of our soul. Satan uses his influences in the world to deceive and to lie and to distort the truth of God so that man will live in a false reality and a truth. And when man lives by his own false sense of reality and truth, he sets himself up for a fall. If we seek not God's way, we walk in idolatry and rebellion, and so Satan will bring darkness upon our path and he will present us with choices and he will present us with a journey of self-destruction (Romans 1).

Ultimately the condition of our soul, if we can be brutally honest, is the product of our own choice. What we choose will dictate our lives. It is the product of our free will because we have chosen to listen to lies and deceptions and we have chosen to submit to the pain or the bitterness or the hurt that has come across our paths in so many different forms. We can choose to be offended, we can choose how we react to trials and tribulations, and we can choose to either fight evil with evil or we can counter the evil with good. To hold onto pain, anger, bitterness and unforgiveness is a choice, and the devil wants us to make the wrong

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choices so that we give him the legal ground and the permission through hate and darkness to destroy us.

Satan cannot force us to embrace anger or bitterness or rage, but he can bring it on our path and he can tempt us to give into the evil or the pain in order to embrace the darkness and spiritual corruption. We cannot just wake up one day and walk in supernatural love or a hope or a peace or forgiveness, but we first need to address these issues within the soul realm, by submitting not to the world but to the Spirit and to the Truth of the Living Lord.

When it comes to setting the captives free and healing of the soul and the spirit, you will find someone who does not forgive or refuses to forgive is often in terrible bondage. Jesus' expression of love was to die on the cross so that we as sinners may be forgiven and be redeemed. If we fail to forgive, we mock God's sacrifice and His price of love.

Unforgiveness is the opposite of love and mercy, and Satan knows this. The devil thrives upon unforgiveness, for it opens doorways of anger, hate, bitterness, envy, jealousy and loathing which can even lead to greater emotional turmoil such as depression and murderous rage.

One of the greatest battles anyone faces, especially believers, is the matter of the will. For in the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6 it speaks about seeking the Lord's will and for His Kingdom to come. When we serve the Lord, only His will, purpose and plans must prevail in our lives. We need to therefore lay down our own kingdoms and crowns of self-control and self-glorification, as we seek the Lord's Kingdom. If we fail to do so, we walk in rebellion, and so often our choices, decisions, plans and agendas lead to trouble. As a disciple of God we need to firstly make sure we are abiding in the perfect will of the Lord but then also to help others to discern and to walk in the will of the Lord. For there is life, peace, hope and power in His will, for He has only goodness planned for us.

There is power in the soul because of free will. A believer can wake up one day and decide by free will not to follow the Lord. And the devil

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knows this and he knows how powerful the mind and the heart are and how powerful the soul can be. So he will attack the soul every day, all day long. Satan has a field day with those who have not yet submitted to the Lord because they have chosen by free will not to follow the Lord and by that choice they have therefore chosen a path of rebellion and idolatry. Therefore their spirit and soul remains open ground through which the devil can attack and corrupt. But sadly for so many Christians it remains clear they are not guarding the soul and they are not wearing the armour of God and they are not being mindful of the influences of the world or the influences of the devil.

The disciple needs to walk in discernment, so as to know what plagues a person and how to set a person free. And the disciple needs to walk in the authority of God, and the power of the Holy Spirit, to understand the complexities of the spirit, soul and body and how they are intertwined.

With all of this in hindsight, consider it is the mandate of the disciple to preach the Gospel, which deals with redemption of the spirit, but also to go and make disciples. To make a disciple is about teaching someone the Scriptures, but even more importantly, healing someone to walk in the Presence of the Lord as a worshipper in Spirit and Truth. For when that new believer begins to abide and dwell in the Almighty Presence, and learns to submit, and learns to hear the voice of God, then they will begin to learn about God's will, about the heart and mind of the Lord, and they will begin to learn what it means to yield, to submit, and to work out one's salvation with fear and trembling.

To be a disciple means we need to be able to lead someone on that road of restoration of the soul, by teaching and showing them how to lay down the old self, how to deal with unforgiveness, rage, bitterness, anger, and all the other works of the flesh. We need to be able to disciple someone so that they learn how to walk in the Spirit, how to walk in the will of the Lord and how to bring their soul under the submission of the

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*Spirit. We need to be able to walk with someone a path so that through counselling, love and fellowship they can find their healing, and therefore find their restoration.*

*You see, we all have a have a choice to make. A choice in what we believe and how we are going to act, and we have a choice regarding our attitude, a choice regarding our walk and a choice if we are going to live for God or Satan. Free will that functions hand in hand with our mind and heart is incredibly powerful, because it means man is free to decide and to choose what he wants to do. Young believers need to understand the dynamics and the challenges of the spiritual walk, and the importance of free will, choices and the consequences of our decisions.*

*Everything comes down to choices and to the decisions that we make, and by these choices we either give the devil a foothold into our soul or we give the Lord the right to abide in our lives. These spiritual principles need to be taught, and thus it is the mandate of the disciple to do so. Jesus said in Matthew 28 in verse 20 teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you. The mandate of the disciple is to teach the truth of God, and therefore also the principles of the Kingdom that impacts our spirit, soul and body.*

*Again, this is the duty of the disciple – to teach and to also show how to guard the heart, the mind, how to tame the tongue, how to deal with emotions and how to deal with the free will. Jesus came and healed and delivered people from their afflictions, setting them free from their bondages and strongholds so that they may walk in the glory and liberty of the Kingdom of Heaven. This is what the Kingdom of God is about – restoring the lost and the broken unto the divine embrace of the Lord by loosening them from the bonds of sin and darkness. The Kingdom of God is also about the restoration of the soul – helping people to be restored in their mind (thoughts), heart (emotions) and in the will.*

*The strongholds of our soul are real and Jesus dealt with it and He has given us the authority to also deal with them. Jesus demonstrated that*

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He HAD the discernment to know when He was dealing with a demon, or when he was dealing with a mere physical illness, or when He was dealing with a stronghold of the mind which is caused by our wrong mind-sets, habits, perceptions, worldly knowledge, upbringing and education. This is why we NEED spiritual discernment.

As disciples of God we need to therefore listen to the Lord and act accordingly to His Glory and for His Glory. It remains the mandate of the disciple to set the captives free, but not only to lay hands on the sick, but to make sure they are delivered in the spirit and soul in order to walk in the life and victory of our Lord Jesus.