

Chapter 1: Setting the Captive Free Part 1

From the outset, let us understand we are ALL involved in this spiritual war between the Kingdom of Light and the counterfeit kingdom of darkness, if we like it or not. As disciples we need to be aware of the spiritual war that is raging around us. As disciples of the Lord our participation in this spiritual war is not debatable.

Our calling and mandate and gifts empower and equip and determines how we operate and function in this war, but if we truly walk in authority and make a stand of authority against the power of darkness as the children of light then it should be naturally supernatural for us to come against forces of darkness and whatever bondage or yoke.

Let us also understand, setting captives free is very comprehensive, for it deals with deliverance from demonic activity, but also deliverance from sickness and the deliverance from wrong mind-sets (such as the religious spirit), deceptions, false perceptions, habits and behaviour. This is why it is always important to remember we deal here with the spirit, soul and body, and all three needs to be healthy for us to serve God and all three needs to be liberated by the Lord. We are redeemed in the spirit on the day of our salvation, but the wrong mind-sets, ideas, believes, perceptions, trauma, hurt and pain rest in the soul while illnesses and sicknesses attack the body. We need to understand as disciples we are called to set the captive free in spirit, soul and body.

For now, let us look at setting the captive free regarding demonic activity. You may already cringe at the thought. The reality is that the world is flooded with the occult and Spiritism more than ever, and more people are being manipulated, oppressed, harassed and even possessed by demonic forces as society pulls further away from the Lord. So the chances are very good we as disciples will be encountering a demonic

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presence and we need to be able to set such a person free in the Name of Jesus.

Remember, Jesus sent out **disciples** to preach the gospel, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, and TO CAST OUT DEVILS according to Luke 9.

Now let us be reminded of the following Scripture in Mark 16: *He who believes [who adheres to and trusts in and relies on the Gospel and Him Whom it sets forth] and is baptized will be saved [from the penalty of eternal death]; but he who does not believe [who does not adhere to and trust in and rely on the Gospel and Him Whom it sets forth] will be condemned. 17 And these attesting signs will accompany those who believe: in My name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new languages; 18 They will pick up serpents; and [even] if they drink anything deadly, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will get well.*

It says those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons ...

Those who believe imply the disciples of the Lord! And yes, what will they do ... cast out demons. Are you a believer, therefore a disciple? Then you have been called for deliverance. It may not be your ministry, but WE have all been called to set people free by driving out the demons, breaking strongholds and smashing the yokes that bind people.

This is after all the ministry of Jesus according to Isaiah 61, and thus our ministry as disciples: *“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, 3 To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of*

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praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.”

But wait, deliverance is not our calling we may cry! Surely the Lord has not called us to engage in spiritual warfare, or to tackle demons, or to deal with the sick or to deal with oppressions or afflictions. In Luke 9 Jesus said the following: *1 Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. 2 He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.*

The Church might be shocked by the following truth: EVERY believer has been called to be engaged in spiritual warfare, because we are all involved in this battle against darkness that seeks to destroy mankind.

Yes, you and I, as disciples of the Lord, are not just called to evangelise or lay hands on the sick, but to actually set the captives free, meaning those who are oppressed spiritually, and even those who are under the yoke of spiritual bondages. Casting out demons and breaking of spiritual strongholds is the work of any disciple. What is needed to cast out demons? One word... authority.

After all, a disciple walks in the authority of God. Who has such authority? God's children, who are the followers [disciples] of the Lord. How do we exercise our authority? Through a spoken command in faith directed at the unclean spirits. The more faith we have, the more authority we can exercise.

The work of the Lord is to set people free from spiritual darkness, from deceptions, lies and false believes. Therefore it is our work as disciples. It says in John 8: *31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” ... 36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.* Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth to demonstrate to the world that HE is the Way, Truth and Life. In Him

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there is not death and no damnation. He is the Light and He is Love. He is the hope of salvation and the answer and the solution to our bondages, afflictions and torments.

And we as the disciples of the Lord should know that the true power and authority rests with the Lord to set the captives free.

We have to realise that Satan wants to place everyone under a yoke of slavery, under his dark dominion and he wants everyone to be spiritually imprisoned. He wants to be the false king who rules people's hearts, and he will do it any way possible. He is after all known as the one who steals, destroys and kills (John 10). He is the father of lies right from the beginning and he will seek to deceive just to bring us into bondage. He got it right with Adam and Eve, with Cain, Judas and even Solomon. Why not us? The devil is a sly fox, so we need the wisdom and guidance of the Lord to overcome him.

The Church (you and I) is the answer to the spiritual darkness. There is no other answer. Paul was talking about the spiritual war in 2 Corinthians 10::

1 Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—who in presence am lowly among you, but being absent am bold toward you. 2 But I beg you that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

Yes, we are all involved in this spiritual war, and we fight on a spiritual level, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in the power of the Lord, covered by the Blood and led by His wisdom. This is our mandate as disciples – to set the captives free.

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Again, deliverance is **NOT THE EXCLUSIVE WORK OF A SELECT FEW**. Sure, some might be called unto a ministry of fulltime deliverance, but the reality is that ALL disciples are called to set people free from demonic oppression, manipulation, influence, harassment, infestation and affliction.

And you may say but this is surely not your place. Sadly, this is why the devil is having a field day. We believe deliverance is for a select few, instead for all disciples. We are called as the Lord leads to set the captives free. And you can only do so by the leading of the Spirit, under the command of God and by His wisdom and direction.

To stress, every believer has authority to cast out evil spirits, but it's also necessary to understand the importance of using the name of Jesus when driving out unclean spirits. It says in Mark 16:17, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues."

Matthew 28:18: "And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." The word of God tells us that all power is given unto Jesus, both in heaven and in the earth. According to Philippians 2:8-11 it pleased Almighty God, the Father, to highly exalt His Son Jesus and give to him a name that is above every name that is named, both in heaven and in the earth and also under the earth.

In other words Jesus, the name of Jesus carries all authority and all power in heaven, in earth and under the earth. And all this power and authority come from Almighty God himself. The power that is behind this mighty name of Jesus is none other than the Father, with Jesus seated next to him in heavenly places. Unto the Son has been given authority over everything.

Jesus makes it clear that we are to cast out the spirits using His name. Now if we look into the early church, we see Paul using Jesus' name to

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drive an evil spirit out of a woman: *Acts 16:18*, "And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour."

The word hour simply means 'time', and when used in conjunction with the word 'same' means instantly or now. This deliverance did not take all day. There was no long drawn out conversation, Paul did not bother telling this spirit who he was because this unclean spirit already knew that Jesus was in Paul and Paul had the right to use this mighty name. There is only ONE name that matters and there is only one name that demons, devils and unclean spirits must obey - Jesus. Paul had the right and authority to use the mighty Name of Jesus, and he did. This same right and authority belongs to every believer who knows enough about God's Word, and has 'enough' faith in what God said.

As disciples, we abide in the Lord and the Lord in us, and so we move in the authority of Jesus (note, not our own) in order for the captives to be set free.

The disciples even found somebody who was not a disciple who was using Jesus' name to cast out evil spirits: *Mark 9:38-39*, "And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbade him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me."

Jesus sent us forth into the world as He was sent forth (*John 20:21*), to do the works He did (*John 14:12*), and He gave us the authority to do the work at hand (*Mark 13:34*). As said before, we need authority to drive out a demon. As we can see in *Luke 4:35*, Jesus was not afraid to exercise His authority either, "And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not."

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Luke 10:17-19, "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. 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."

How strange is it that out of all these wondrous accomplishments, the thing that thrilled the disciples most was the power to cast out devils. The part you must not miss, however, is to understand by 'what power' these followers of Jesus were able to do all these things. It was the power that God placed in the NAME OF JESUS. Do you realize that all these deeds were done by using that same power? They raised the dead by using that same NAME. They cleansed lepers by having faith in that same NAME.

Does every believer have authority over demons? Yes, but it is the authority of Jesus and that authority comes by our relationship with the Lord! We are all seated with Christ in the heavenly realm (Ephesians 2:6), which means we are above the demons in rank of authority. Mark 13:34 also tells us how we are given authority to carry out the work that is laid before us.

It is also important for us to exercise our authority through faith. It says in Matthew 17:19-20: "Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why not we could cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief..." Obviously they had the authority, but they weren't able to use it because their level of faith wasn't high enough to access the level of authority that needed to be exercised to drive out that particular kind of unclean spirit. Some evil spirits are stronger and harder to drive out, and sometimes prayer and fasting is necessary to build our faith up so we can drive them out.

As believers, we have been given authority in Jesus' name to drive out demons. We access our authority through faith and exercise our authority with a spoken command directed at the unclean spirit.

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The reasons why the world is so afflicted by spiritual torment, and the reason why so many Christians are struggling with strongholds and oppressions is because too many believers have forsaken the notion that in fact, if one is a true believer then deliverance is a natural outflow of such a believer and that to engage in the spiritual warfare is not an option but our ultimate destiny and calling!

It is actually amazing that for the believer the supernatural realm has become strange and weird, while in fact, if we are reborn in the Spirit and walk by the Spirit then the spiritual realm should be normal and be familiar to us! Let us also be reminded there is an authority that rest upon all disciples. It is the authority of Jesus Christ, made possible by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was poured out so that we can have power from on high.

When Jesus said in John 15 that if we abide in Him then He will abide in us, He was saying that the more we die to the self the more we will be living in the fullness of God, meaning the fullness of His authority, the fullness of the anointing and the fullness of His glory. His holiness and glory will then be manifested in us. And so we are reminded of Romans 8 that speaks of there being no condemnation for those who are in Jesus, but only if we walk in the Spirit and live according to the dictates of the Spirit.

The Lord has given us – His disciples – this authority according to Matthew 28 to firstly be His messengers and to be His instruments of service. The authority is given so that we can fulfil our purpose, our calling and our mandate. Again, let it be stressed, Jesus' first ministry work was to get rid of the devil out of His life. When the devil tempted Jesus in the wilderness, Jesus stood on the authority of the Word and put the devil in his place. Just so, we have the authority to make sure the devil has no part of our lives, and we have the authority to lead others also to freedom and liberty. The authority invested in Jesus, now invested in His disciples, is the authority over death, sin and the forces of darkness.

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Jesus walked with authority, for He WAS authority. *We, as the warriors of the Lord, have been tasked to make sure that we firstly are not ensnared once again by the devil's schemes and secondly to set others free who have become spiritual prisoners unto the devil.*

It is important to note a deliverance ministry will glorify Jesus. Deliverance is not about the demons, it is about Jesus. It is about the person being gloriously set free in Jesus' name. The focus of the disciples was on the demons, instead of glorifying Jesus. And so always, but always, our attention should not be on the demons, but on Jesus, and how His work on the cross has defeated the demons and disarmed them. We are simply walking out the victory that Jesus won on the cross by exercising the authority that He gave us to drive the intruders out of our lives and the lives of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

We often see the ministry of deliverance as being scary and negative, this is because our focus is not on the work of the Lord but on the work of the devil. When we work in the love of the Lord, deliverance is beautiful and glorious. It is after all about the liberty a person finds in the Lord.

Again, as a disciple you have been called for deliverance, for this will truly determine if you are walking in the Spirit and thus in authority. Authority comes as a result of our position in the Lord and by that position we mean our relationship with the Lord. Those who have a relationship with the Lord abide in Christ and Christ in them. Those who have a relationship with the Lord are those who obey the Lord and they follow His commandments and they will obey Him and they will stay faithful unto Him. A true believer is the one who is a true disciple of the Lord and he does what the master tells him to do.

The demonic presence (s) knows if someone is in Christ or not. Deliverance is not a game. It is a reality. When you are dealing with the demonic presence or demonic influence you are dealing with something

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which is ancient and very powerful and very strong. It is true that all power belongs to Jesus but then we must be in Jesus so that we may walk in the authority of Jesus and by that authority we can exert authority over the unclean spirits.

Why is the Church so afraid of the devil? It is because we are filled by doubts and fears and confusion which comes when we are not reborn in the Spirit or it comes when we are not walking in submission unto the Lord.

When we seek to dance with God and the devil [which also comes by seeking after the pleasures of the world] then we struggle to truly know our place in the Lord and we struggle to know the authority invested in us.

In conclusion, we as disciples have been called to set the captives free, even if it means from demonic oppression. It is part and parcel of the life of a disciple, for we walk in the authority of Jesus.

We have been called not to run away from setting the captives free or turn a blind eye. Jesus is the ANSWER to those who are afflicted so it is our duty as the disciples of the Lord to lead people to the Lord in the power and authority of Jesus.