

G R A C E M I N I - B O O K

**THE
BELIEVER'S
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CREFLO DOLLAR

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The Believer's Authority

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LESSON 1

THE AUTHORITY OF THE BELIEVER

Did you know that you have dominion and authority in the earth as a Christian? So many Believers live far below their potential and rights as sons and daughters of God simply by not walking in the God-given authority that rightfully belongs to them. As followers of Christ, we have been endowed with authority over every aspect of the curse and every force of evil that is arrayed against us. In addition, through our authority in prayer, we have the power to halt the activities of the devil in this world. In order to see the manifestations of this type of power, we must know and walk in our authority. When we refuse to bow to natural circumstances and, instead, respond according to the Word of God, He will release a supernatural response into our lives.

One definition of authority is, “the right to command,” and, as Believers, we are authorized dealers of God’s power. God’s authority in the life of Jesus was demonstrated throughout His earthly ministry. He healed the sick, cast out demons, and raised the dead. He spoke to things, and they adjusted to His Word. He was a man walking in the authority of God, fully divine, but in human form, which allowed us to have an example to follow. If we are in Christ, we also have the ability to walk in the same authority that Jesus did.

All we have to do is realize that it belongs to us and then enforce it by speaking the name of Jesus over the situations and circumstances we face in life. When we do, we have the right to expect powerful manifestations.

YOU HOLD THE POWER

Jesus has given us the same authority granted to Him by the Father, but many Christians are unaware of what they possess. For example, the disciples were bestowed with the ability to cast out unclean spirits and heal sickness and disease (Matthew 10:1). He granted them the ability to get results! Every born-again person has that same power.

Luke 10:19 says, “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.” What an endowment! Jesus gave His appointed messengers the supernatural authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, which symbolize demonic power. He promised that nothing would hurt them. Nothing! If Jesus promised that no demonic power would hurt a Believer, why are so many Christians being tormented by these things? It is because they do not know their authority. We have the same authority that Jesus did to completely disable the enemy. When we submit to God and fight against the devil, he will flee (James 4:7). Everything the enemy brings your way will be forced to move out of your life.

FOLLOW THE LEADER

There are so many powerful examples in the Scriptures of how Jesus exercised His authority and passed it on to His followers. Consider Acts 3:1-8:

“Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. And a certain man lame from his mother’s womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.”

What a powerful example of the authority of God in action through followers of Jesus. Peter knew the authority Jesus had given him and used it to heal the man. And there wasn’t a delay either! The healing was immediate, and the man stood up and began leaping and praising God. The power coming out of Peter’s mouth and heart was present, and it connected with the faith of the crippled man. That combination created a spontaneous combustion of manifestation that demonstrated

the power of God in the life of this man and those who heard his testimony. That can be a reality right here today, in your life and in the lives of those with whom you come in contact. God supplies us with the power, but we must do our part to flip the switch to activate that power. We release it the same way that Peter did—by speaking to the situation.

Jesus was our primary example of how faith-filled words release the authority of God, even over inanimate objects! The account of Jesus cursing the fig tree is a powerful one. Mark 11:12-21 says, “And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry: And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it... And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away.”

When the fig tree did not produce fruit, Jesus spoke to it and cursed it. The next day, the tree was dead. In this situation, Jesus didn't pray but, instead, spoke directly to the tree. The manifestation took twenty-four hours to appear. Likewise, don't give up when you do not see instant results when you speak to a situation. Asking or speaking with the belief that you will receive what you requested is what brings it to pass.

In Mark 11:22-25, Jesus gives some important power

keys to walking in your authority. Verse 22 starts by saying that Jesus “answered,” which means that the disciples were most likely asking questions pertaining to how the fig tree could have withered within twenty-four hours. You see, though they walked with Jesus every day during His earthly ministry, their revelation about who He was and what He was teaching them was progressive: “And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any.”

There is a lot to unpack in this scripture as it pertains to faith and authority. The first key to supernatural authority is to have faith in God. This scripture is actually translated as “have the faith of God.” At the time you received Christ in your life, the faith of God was deposited in your spirit. You possess the ability to believe like Jesus did! So to have the faith of God means you believe in and appropriate the faith force of God Himself, which resides in you, in order to get supernatural results.

Jesus then goes on to say that whosoever will “say” will get results. The power of words is directly connected to the Believer’s authority. Faith first, then releasing that faith

through words. He also says that you can speak to a mountain. When Jesus said this, He wasn't referring to a spiritual mountain, or using a metaphor. He was speaking of an actual mountain! The example of the mountain just gives us a frame of reference to let us know that we can indeed speak to actual *things* and affect those things with our words. We can cause things to move out of our lives through our words. What we don't want to see has got to go! Jesus spoke to a fig tree, and it responded to His faith words. We have the same power.

The next thing we see is that when it comes to speaking to things, we must not have any doubt. Doubt, like faith, resides in a person's heart. So when you speak to something in faith, you have to make sure you are not doubting whether it will happen. If what you are speaking is based on the Word of God, you have no business harboring doubt. It will absolutely short-circuit the faith you are trying to release. This Scripture also lets us know that we must believe in the power of our words; we must believe that what we are saying is happening and coming to pass as we say it. When the force of God's faith, the creative power of words, the absence of doubt in our hearts, and believing what we are saying combine, results are inevitable. We will have what we say and see what we say, just like Jesus did with the fig tree and every other aspect of His life and ministry. In following His example, we can also get the same results.

Walking in our authority is absolutely vital for a successful life as a Christian. But you have to know about

it in order to believe in it. The more you study the life of Jesus and meditate on His words and ministry, the more the reality of it will become a part of your consciousness. And the more it is infused in your heart, the more confidence you will have to boldly walk in it. Spend time daily meditating in the Word of God and on the words of Jesus and His disciples. The authority you possess is powerful enough to change the world!

LESSON 2

MANIFESTING SUPERNATURAL RESPONSES

Living a supernatural lifestyle is the way God intends every Believer to live, but in order to access this type of life we must believe it and receive the truth about God's grace. Manifesting a supernatural response to everything that happens in our lives eases us into regularly operating in the supernatural. We have a right to this type of life but we must be willing to step out of the natural. Verbally declaring that we live in this higher spiritual realm begins the transformation process. There are things we simply cannot accomplish through our own ability. Depending on the Holy Spirit as our Helper and Comforter allows God's ability to work on our behalf. He makes things happen that we could never make happen ourselves.

Manifesting a supernatural response begins with faith in God's grace. What is the grace of God? It is God's ability, His love, His blessing, His anointing. It is the power key that is responsible for everything supernatural that takes place in our lives.

Grace is best understood in contrast to the Law, which is based on self-effort and performance-based living. Galatians 4:31 says, "So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free." The discussion of the

bondwoman versus the free woman references Hagar and Sarah, in the Old Testament. Hagar represents the Law, or old covenant, and her son Ishmael represents self-effort because he was the product of self-effort on Abraham's part. Sarah, on the other hand, represents the covenant of grace. She and Abraham bore a son, Isaac, through the power of God and not their own ability. Isaac was a product of grace and the supernatural power of God. When we are born again, we move from being children of the natural to being children of the supernatural. This is why the scripture says we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

Living in the supernatural is entirely dependent on faith, and our faith operates by the grace of God. Romans 4:16 says that God's promises are accessible to not only those under the Law but also to those of the faith of Abraham. The grace of God is what makes everything in the Word of God available to us, but we must have faith. And that faith must be communicated verbally. Releasing faith-filled words is essential to activating the supernatural.

One way to do this is by acknowledging every good thing that is in us because of Christ, Who lives in us. This acknowledgment is a way of manifesting a supernatural response. For example, if you are facing financial challenges, acknowledge that the power of God to get wealth and have provision is yours. Acknowledge verbally that the resources you need are already available and, in fact, you possess those resources already. The same thing goes for

healing and deliverance. Healing is a manifestation of God's supernatural power, and it resides in your spirit. You can get into agreement with what already belongs to you by verbally acknowledging that you possess it *now*.

Anything good that comes from God belongs to us, and we communicate our faith effectively when we speak what is ours. Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). So if you haven't yet seen the manifestation you are believing for, it is time to release your faith in the grace of God to bring those things to pass. We have to prepare our minds and keep hoping for the things Jesus promised us that He would bring. Healing, wholeness, freedom from condemnation, deliverance, and prosperity are all manifestations of the supernatural. They are all available to those who believe they receive them, and acknowledge that these things are in their possession through the finished work of Christ.

UNDERSTANDING FAITH

Having a thorough knowledge of faith and how it operates is an essential component of getting the supernatural to become a reality in our lives, and there are several examples of faith throughout the Bible. First, Believers have to know what faith is and what it is not. Faith is our positive response to God's grace. It is not something we do to get God to respond to us. And contrary to traditional religious belief, faith does not move God. The idea that faith "moves" God demonstrates

a complete misunderstanding of how the faith system works. Remember, now that we are under the new covenant, the lens through which we are to view every promise in the Bible is the lens of Jesus' finished works. With this in view, the promises of God become things we lay hold of, not things we try to get God to do for us. Shifting your perspective about this will remove the notion that your faith will get God to do something. Everything has already been done!

So, faith does not cause a positive response from God, but it is our positive response to what He has already provided. It is true that it is impossible to *please* God without faith, but your faith isn't a magic trick, and God isn't a genie. Faith takes possession of what God has provided by grace, and if God has not already provided it independent of our efforts and prior to our needs, then faith cannot make it happen.

You don't have to look any further than the pages of the Word of God to find examples of faith that will boost your belief in God's supernatural power. Jesus was saturated with the faith of God, and He demonstrated the way to live a faith-based life. Mark 6:45-52 shows us how Jesus' faith was able to override natural circumstances:

“And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray. And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind

was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed them. But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.”

There is so much to unpack in this passage, as it relates to faith! First, Jesus specifically told His disciples to do something that He already knew would challenge their faith. God is always going to allow us to be faced with situations and circumstances that force us to develop in a supernatural response—a response of faith. The situations will also give us the opportunity to choose between fear and a host of negative emotions, or to choose the Jesus way to respond. Jesus told them to get in a ship when He already knew that they would face turbulent wind and contrary weather. He knew they would get to a point in their journey when it would *look* like they might not make it.

Jesus saw them struggling to control the boat and went to them, walking on the sea. Jesus lived the supernatural life and was our example. So we see that He saw them struggling, but He didn't leave them to struggle without assistance. God never allows us to face situations alone; He is always

present. Having faith in this is so important.

When the disciples saw Jesus, their initial response was actually a fear response instead of a faith response, and He chided them for it. Like us, they were still developing in their trust and faith in Him. But through circumstances that challenged their faith, they eventually became the forerunners of the supernatural. Jesus saw their fear and reassured them of His presence, and when He got in the boat, the storm immediately stopped. The disciples had to learn how to live in the supernatural, and they had to learn what faith looked like. Jesus's presence was so saturated with the faith of God that anything that challenged that faith had to immediately cease. The situation had to line up with an atmosphere of peace because Jesus *is* peace. When we learn to respond in faith rather than fear, we will see supernatural things happen.

Another example of Jesus manifesting a supernatural response is when He fed the multitudes with just a few pieces of fish and bread. Mark 6:41, 42 says, "And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. And they did all eat, and were filled."

Jesus' initial response to not having enough food was a supernatural one. He blessed the loaves and thanked God for what He did have. It was after He blessed the food and broke it that the miracle of provision happened. His faith response released the supernatural.

In Acts 16:25-28, we see Paul and Silas responding supernaturally to a negative situation and getting supernatural results:

“And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one’s bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.” Paul and Silas’ prayers and praises in the midst of being imprisoned are what activated the supernatural. They responded in faith, and it set them free from their captivity.

There are many more examples of faith manifesting the supernatural in the Word of God, and these examples all give us the ability to access the power of God to change our circumstances. Don’t shun difficult situations but, instead, use them to develop in the supernatural lifestyle that God has intended for you to live.

LESSON 3

WALKING IN JESUS' POWER

The authority of the Believer is something that is vital to living a victorious life on this earth. We can no longer allow the devil to wreak havoc in our families, finances, and world when we literally possess the power of Jesus Himself. Through unmerited, undeserved favor, God has given us authority to do the same things Jesus did during His earthly ministry. Those things include supernatural acts, such as healing the sick, raising the dead, and casting out demons. We may see ourselves as ordinary people, but if we are to use this authority we have been given, we must change the way we see ourselves. This power is given to every born-again Believer through God's love and grace.

Jesus Himself has passed on this authority from the Father to us. What an awesome privilege! The amazing thing about it is that there was nothing we did to qualify for it. When we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and personal Savior, we automatically become beneficiaries and recipients of God's power and authority. We can walk in it and demonstrate a supernatural lifestyle as a result. Adam made the mistake of forfeiting his authority in the Garden of Eden by succumbing to the wiles of the devil. His choice to disobey God brought death and sin into the earth. But those who receive abundant grace through Jesus shall rule in life (Romans 5:17).

As Believers, we are no longer subject to sin and the curse. We can reign like kings over sin and every other contrary situation that challenges the Word of God. That's exactly what Jesus did, and He is our example.

Jesus gave His disciples power over unclean spirits, and the power to heal sickness and disease. Matthew 10:1, in the *Amplified Bible* says, "Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority and power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness." They were given the authority to drive out all those spirits and cure all weaknesses and infirmities in the lives of the people they encountered. Evidence of the supernatural followed the lives of the disciples, and it can follow our lives as well.

Jesus also commanded His disciples to use this authority by preaching the Gospel, healing the sick, raising the dead, cleansing lepers, and casting out demons (Matthew 10:7, 8). We have the power to absolutely annihilate demonic activity and defeat the power of the enemy on a daily basis. There is nothing that can hurt us when we walk in our God-given authority, which is the power of Jesus.

YOU'VE GOT THE POWER!

A lot of times Believers walk around living defeated lives because they simply don't know what they possess on the inside of them. We have already received the authority to defeat the devil without being harmed in any way. But when

you don't know what belongs to you, you simply can't use it.

Religion has played a big part in keeping Christians in a defeated position, which is why we have to start really learning more about what it means to have a true *relationship* with God. A relationship with Jesus is personal and allows you to be intimate with every aspect of who He is. Relationship is what gives you access to the power keys that He possesses and has allowed you to possess as well. Religion draws a line between you and God and requires effort and performance to be close to Him. But relationship allows you unlimited access to Him and to all that belongs to Him simply by faith, through grace. Luke 10:19 assures us that we have the strength to walk in this authority.

STAYING CONNECTED

God has given us so many promises, but His power is only activated through Jesus. John 15:5 says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." Jesus is the vine, and we are extensions of Him. As the vine, He provides the life and sustenance that enables us to be fruitful in doing His works and walking in His authority. We have the ability to get results when we are in Him and He is in us. Staying connected to Him at all times is the key.

We can stay connected to Jesus through regular fellowship with Him through the Word of God, prayer, praise, and meditating on Him and His promises throughout the day.

Just like any other relationship of significance, it must be nurtured in order to be beneficial to us. Jesus wants to have fellowship with us in such an intimate and personal way. He wants us to become acquainted with His personality, ability, and love for us. In fact, it is His love for us that enables us to participate in His authority. Jesus wants us to win, and He has equipped us to do so.

God promises to never leave us on our own. Hebrews 13:5 says, “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” Jesus will never relax His grip on us, desert us, or forsake us. He says that those who believe have power through Christ, who was raised from the dead (Ephesians 1:19, 20). God will never change or alter His covenant or go back on what He has said. The final word is that He has given us dominion over sin, death, sickness, disease, and every kind of evil. He cannot revoke His Word.

Knowing that everything is held together by the word of God’s power is critical to remember as a Christian walking in your authority. The Word is self-fulfilling and is packed with the devil-busting power of God. We are made in His image and, therefore, have the same authority of Jesus. We should never accept the devil’s lies that try to tell us we are powerless and weak. If you are facing something that seems insurmountable, it is the perfect time to start executing your authority over it. That authority is in your mouth, so,

in order to release it, you have to speak faith-filled words with boldness and confidence. Boldly declaring what God has said in His Word is the way you activate your authority.

What giants are facing you that require you to walk in your authority? It could be sickness, financial trouble, or issues in a relationship. Perhaps there is someone who is speaking against you or slandering you. The enemy has a variety of ways to try to get Believers to falter in their faith, but don't fall for his lies or submit to his attacks. The greater One lives in you, and He has provided you with supernatural equipment that will defeat Satan every time. When you submit to God and resist the devil, he will flee. How do you do this? By refusing to take his thoughts, refusing to speak his words over your situation, and refusing to retreat in fear. Spiritual battles are not physical; they take place in our minds. By refusing to accept the devil's lies and remaining steadfast in our identity as possessors of Jesus' power, we can walk in absolute victory over every demonic attack and do the works Jesus did.

Like anything else in the kingdom of God, walking in the power of Jesus requires faith. Fill yourself with the Word of God so that when the attacks and opportunities to exercise authority come, you will be prepared. When the devil puts the squeeze on, the only thing that should come out is the authority of God. It is your right and kingdom privilege as a son of God!

LESSON 4

ESTABLISHING THE FOUNDATION FOR SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY

In order to be successful and victorious as Believers, we must learn how to walk in our authority. This is a vital piece of the Christian life that is severely lacking for so many in the body of Christ. It is not uncommon to see Christians struggling and living defeated, mediocre lives, just like those in the world who do not know Jesus. Why is this? The same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives in every single Believer, so why are so many Believers not living on the level of power that Jesus desires for them? It is simply because they really do not have a revelation of their authority in Christ. As a result, they continue to live beneath their privileges and remain victimized by the devil. This is not the will of God. However, establishing a strong foundation for spiritual authority is vital to being able to rise above such attacks.

Spiritual authority is a subject that must be understood in order to fully walk in it on the level necessary to see victory and results in every area of our lives. God has given us all power over the enemy, but too often we do not use that authority to our advantage. We buy into the lies of the devil and give him more access into our lives than we give God! The devil is a defeated foe because of what Jesus has already

done. Satan has no business interfering in our lives or having the liberty to destroy anything that belongs to a follower of Christ. But we have to know what we possess.

Once we understand God's grace, we can begin to see our spiritual authority in a whole new light. This means we can stop trying to make things happen that Jesus has already made happen. Under the old covenant, the priests had to make continual sacrifices for the people's sins, but Jesus' blood was the perfect sacrifice that forever took away the need to do offer any other sacrifices. Through His blood, we are made righteous, sanctified, holy, and wise. We actually possess all power to rule and reign in this life on earth, walking in total mastery and dominion over the devil at all times. Through Jesus we are able to do everything we could not do under the Law of Moses.

STANDING ON THE WORD

Standing on the Word of God is what makes us strong, and choosing to accept the authority Jesus made available to us empowers us to defeat the enemy. God has given us everything we need to win.

Ephesians 6:10-12 gives us a foundational strategy for spiritual authority, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 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.” He instructs us to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Then he tells us to put on the whole armor of God. Our struggle is not a physical battle but a spiritual one. The principalities and powers he references in this passage of Scripture are actually demons. Yes, we face very real demonic spiritual forces every day, and we must be on guard against them. The armor of God is our protection against the devil and is key to walking in our spiritual authority. Verses 13-18 describe the armor and how each part of it protects an aspect of our spirit. We put it on by declaring and enforcing it with our words.

Unfortunately, Believers can, at any time, yield to the enemy by leaning to the tendencies of the flesh rather than walking in the Spirit. Whoever or whatever we yield ourselves to is what and whom we become servants to, whether it is the flesh, and sin and death, or life, obedience, the Spirit of God, or righteousness (Romans 6:16).

For example, in Matthew 16:16-23, we see Simon Peter initially yielding to the Spirit of God and getting a revelation of who Jesus truly was but then turning around and yielding to the enemy:

“And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto

thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ. From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.”

Jesus had to rebuke the devil for operating through Peter, but it is interesting to note that a follower of Christ can also be used of the devil to try to thwart the plan of God. Peter yielded to his flesh for a moment, and Satan gained access. The same is true for us today. In order to walk in our authority, we must refuse to yield to the enemy because, when we do, we become his slave and he can operate through us. Submitting to the Word of truth and obeying it keeps us in our position of authority and enables us to maintain our mindset of right-standing with God. This is the confidence that we need in

order to operate in the fullness of the dominion Jesus has entrusted to us.

Just as he did with Peter, the devil uses emotions to forge inroads into our lives and establish strongholds over us. When we use our God-given authority and refuse to yield to him, we are pleasing God.

God gave us emotions, but He never intended for our emotions to control us. Emotions are wonderful because they can indicate things we need to pay attention to, address, take note of, or make adjustments in. They can also allow us to feel after God and experience levels of intimacy with Him that know no boundaries. But emotions are also the arena in which Satan has a field day with people. The decisions that people make oftentimes stem from their emotions at any given time.

The problem with leading an emotionally-led life is that it can take you down the wrong path and move you from operating in your authority. Satan does this through circumstances, situations, relationships, and anything that can be perceived with the five senses. He is the god of this world, and this is the way he gains the upper hand in people's lives. He plays on our emotions to get us to yield to our flesh rather than the Spirit of God and the Word of God. Part of what it means to walk in our authority means to walk in authority over our emotions, refusing to let them have control over us and, instead, submitting our emotions to the Word of God.

Emotions such as wrath and anger do not work the righteousness of God (James 1:20). Giving in to emotions like resentment and bitterness also opens us up to the devil's influence. Wherever envy and strife are found, confusion and every evil work are there also (James 3:16). We must be sober and vigilant against the enemy at all times by remaining grounded in the Word of God and actively renewing our minds to its truths. Satan is always looking for someone to devour, and he does it through our emotions.

A great way to remain established in spiritual authority is by remembering that words form our thoughts, thoughts dictate how we feel, feelings lead us to make certain decisions, and decisions will move us to eventually take action. Our actions create habits, and our habits shape our character, which leads us to our ultimate destination in life.

If we want to maintain a position of spiritual authority, we must let everything be founded on the Word of God, which is the "word" we need to input in order to make sure our thoughts are properly aligned with God's authority. This is where we play a part. We must actively pursue meditating on the Word of God and letting it be the only thing that shapes the way we think. The Word of God is living seed that has the power to absolutely revolutionize our lives. By keeping it before us at all times, and reading, studying, and meditating on it, we receive the proper inputs that keep our mind, will, and emotions submitted to the truth. With that foundation in place, when the enemy comes knocking at the

door of our minds we can respond confidently, as Jesus did, with: “It is written.” If Satan can’t have your mind, he can’t have your emotions or your decisions and actions.

The foundation for spiritual authority starts with the Word of God. It is your safeguard and the way you are able to defeat the devil every time. You can walk in your authority with confidence by receiving what Jesus has given you and meditating on the reality of it until your automatic reaction is to reject the suggestions of the devil and demonstrate the power of God.

LESSON 5

ACCEPTING WHAT IS OURS

Have you ever accepted a gift from someone and didn't open it until a later time? Even if you've never kept a gift for a long period of time without opening it, think about what it means. You could have something amazing in your possession, something that rightfully belongs to you, but because you never opened the package you could not take advantage of the beauty and benefit of the gift. You could be walking around with something that could help you or be a blessing to you, but because you won't open the gift, it remains useless. This is how it is when we neglect to "open" the gift of God's authority that He has freely given to us through Jesus Christ. In order to start dominating life's circumstances, we have to start walking in what is rightfully ours, without reservation.

The authority of the Believer is simply the grace-given right to command into existence all of the finished works of Jesus Christ. By grace, we have been healed, delivered, redeemed, and made righteous. This authority is not ours because of anything we have done to deserve it. It is ours because God loves us, and it comes with the salvation package, which is a free gift. Because of what Jesus did over two thousand years ago, when we accept Him as Lord and personal Savior, we are automatically endowed with the

same power that He walked in. We have to renew our minds to who we are and what belongs to us in order to reap the benefits of it in our daily lives.

Just like the gift that was just described, the authority and power of Jesus is ours if we choose to accept it. We must purposely decide to walk in this authority, and it begins with a decision to acknowledge that we do, in fact, have this power. We are encouraged to be strong in the Lord and in His power, and to use the armor of God to stand against the devil and his tactics. Jesus has given us all power to tread on demonic forces, and nothing can hurt us because of this authority! That is such a powerful revelation because there are plenty of Christians who are being hurt by the enemy and it shouldn't be this way. This is not to say that the devil will not come against us, but when we are operating in our authority he *cannot* hurt us. It is time to rise up in this revelation and begin to live it out.

Remember that our fight is not against flesh and blood but against the forces of darkness that exist in the spiritual realm. Because of this, we must use spiritual weaponry to enforce our victory. Many of the attacks that come against us, for example, come through people. Often we get caught up in striking back at a person when the real problem is a spiritual force operating *through* a particular individual. The devil will try to steal the Word of God from us by using other people to pull us into the flesh and our emotions. We should never get into battles with other people but, instead, do battle in our prayer closet by

binding the spirit operating behind or through a person against us. This is a powerful way to walk in our authority.

The enemy will always try to get us to yield to him and serve him by obeying the dictates of our flesh and emotions, but we have to be on guard against him when he tries to do this. We never want to give him any inroads into our thoughts and emotions, so it is important to keep our minds girded up with the truth of God's Word at all times. Because there are consequences for every action we take, we want to make sure that we don't give ourselves over to negative emotions. Meditating on the Word of God is the key to avoiding this familiar trap.

Serving God and walking in our authority also involves carefully monitoring our behavior, attitudes, and speech. When we submit ourselves to Him, we are the sweet aroma of Christ (2 Corinthians 2:15). A bad attitude emits a bad spiritual aroma, and it attracts demons into our lives and atmosphere, so we want to make sure that we are keeping our minds and emotions saturated with the Word of God.

Satan cannot just devour anyone, but he targets those who are allowing their words, thoughts, and behavior to be influenced by the world and the flesh. We have to take authority over our minds by actively rejecting any thoughts that do not line up with God's Word. Second Corinthians 10:5 instructs us to cast down imaginations and every high thought that tries to exalt itself against the knowledge of God. We must bring negative thoughts and emotions into

captivity to the Word by declaring what the Word says when those thoughts and feelings rise up. Sin is conceived through negative emotions and will derail us from being able to truly walk in our authority.

Accepting what belongs to us as it relates to spiritual authority involves acknowledging the good that is in us, as we have studied. Any time you feel defeated or in a low place in life, that is when you need to open your mouth and declare, “I possess the authority of Jesus Christ! I am victorious, and I release the authority of God into my situation. My spiritual authority is a finished work of Jesus Christ, and since I am in Him, this authority is in me!” By declaring what belongs to you, you appropriate it and can begin walking in it.

Don’t allow the devil to intimidate you or keep you bound in shackles of fear and hopelessness. You have the power to overcome whatever you are dealing with. You have *already* been given the power to defeat it. Meditate on the Word and speak it every chance you get. Watch the supernatural power of God begin to manifest in your life as you accept and walk in the spiritual authority that Jesus has given you.

