

Spiritual Maturity - Sermon

Our mission is to raise up sons and daughters of God by teaching the Gospel of Grace, bringing people to spiritual maturity, and providing a culture of true worship and family.

- **Spiritual maturity** – These are the following areas that we believe makes for a mature believer:
 - Know the depth of the Father's love for you
 - Understand your Identity in Christ
 - Experience God's grace as the only power for holy and Spirit-filled living
 - Know God's Word and how it applies to our lives today
 - Understand the authority that every believer walks in
- I am just going to focus on the last 2 today.
 - The love of the Father is displayed in the Gospel of Grace – that He would sacrifice His son and freely give us righteousness even while we were in sin. But this topic deserves much more than that.
 - Identity. We did a series from October through November called the Reborn Identity and that covered it quite well. I am sure we will cover that again.
 - Experiencing God's grace we covered last week – but really getting a revelation of that as the only power to defeat sin will help bring you to maturity, where it is no longer striving, but resting in His power.

Know God's Word and how it applies to our lives today

1. Know the Word.

- **1 John 2:24-26** Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life. ²⁶ These things I have written to you concerning those who *try to* deceive you.
 - Knowing the Word helps us abide in Him and protects us from deception.
- Sola Scriptura -This is the belief that “only Scripture, because it is God’s inspired Word, is our inerrant, sufficient, and final authority for the church”
- **2 Timothy 3:16-17** All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.
- Sola Scriptura came about because the church made traditions superior in authority than the Bible.
- What happens when this principle is ignored:
 - We begin to make up our own doctrines
 - Prayers to saints/Mary
 - Indulgences
 - Separation of Clergy and lay people
 - The Immaculate Conception
 - Legalism
 - We make up our own spiritual disciplines
 - Confessionals
 - Infant baptism
 - No marriage for priests
 - We value outside opinions over the Bible

- Branch David
- Cults
- Never questioning what a Bible teacher/preacher says
- We value cultural norms over Scriptural truth
 - What is right/wrong.
 - What is sin?
 - Views on Gay marriage, transgenderism, abortion, sex before marriage, and more.
- **John 17:17** Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.
- **Act 17:10-12** Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. ¹¹ These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily *to find out* whether these things were so. ¹² Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men.

2. Apply it

- **John 5:38-40** But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. ³⁹ You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. ⁴⁰ But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.
 - Jesus to the Pharisees – It is not enough to just know the Scriptures.
- **James 1:23-25** For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴ for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of

man he was. ²⁵ But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

- What does it mean to be a doer of the Word? It means we allow it to change us.
- How many times do we go to a Bible study and immediately act contrary to what we just learned?
 - Ex – Authority conference cheesecake story
 - Ex - Preaching one Sunday on Grace, next Sunday on behaving properly or God won't hear your prayers
 - Ex – Me learning to walk in the Spirit and it making me encouraging without trying.
- **Act 18:24-28** Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man *and* mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. ²⁵ This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶ So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. ²⁷ And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; ²⁸ for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.
 - Apollos is a great example – He knew the Scriptures. He was applying them
 - Then when more mature believers instructed him, he humbly learned and applied this

The Authority of the Believer

We receive authority automatically when born again. Cannot earn it. *When does a policeman get his authority?*

Genesis 1:26-28 - Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." ²⁷ So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸ Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Authority is coming into agreement with God about what He has said about a situation and then declaring that.

To the measure we agree with God is the measure blessing is released.

- We all have a governing sphere, some are small in number, others larger. We can use our sphere of influence either to affect positive change or negative change. We cannot be passive with it.
- Our actions really do matter. What we say or do really does matter. Our deeds and words today impact our tomorrow for our individual lives, our sphere and our planet.
- Our actions and words do not affect the way God sees us, it affects our environment!

So what did Adam do with all this privilege and authority?

He committed high treason. He gave allegiance to Satan in that moment and broke an alliance with God and he gave his primary governing of the world to Satan.

Luke 4:6 And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for *this* has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.

When God gave the authority of the earth to Adam it was really Adam's. Adam could give it to whomever he wanted as it was his to give. And he gave it to Satan.

The second Adam did not fall. He resisted.

Jesus does not correct Satan, because it was true. Instead He resisted Satan and earned the authority back by defeating Satan and establishing righteousness for man so that man could not lose that authority again.

Jesus won back authority in 2 stages.

- First He was victorious as a man – Man lost it and a man had to get it back! This is one reason God became man, and not just God being God to die for us.
- Second He offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sins on the cross
 - He won authority as a man so man would have authority, then He made man righteous and changed the rules from works to faith so that man cannot lose that authority again.

Colossians 2:15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

- Who are the principalities and powers? They are the demonic hierarchy that has government over the earth.
- What Paul is declaring is a fact of history: that at the cross and in the resurrection, Jesus disarmed Satan. He took the authority away from the powers and principalities, from the demonic hierarchy. He triumphed over them by His death and resurrection.
- Public Spectacle – All of heaven and the demonic witnessed this event. It is an historic fact witnessed by multitudes.

Key point – All spirit beings know of this authority shift – but humans in the flesh do not necessarily know it. By the triumph of Jesus over Satan, the victory was won. But the people of God on the earth, who are actually alive on the earth, have to identify with that victory. They have to exert that

victory, and they have to enforce it, in order for it to be manifest openly before all to see.

- This is where the war is. As long as we do not know that Jesus has the authority over earth and has delegated it to us, Satan can continue to operate to undermine that authority. If Satan is not challenged, he will just continue as he is. When challenged, he must submit. If not challenged, he can go forward as he always has.
- Jesus triumphed over Satan. The victory is won. But the people of the earth have to identify and enforce that victory in order for it to be manifest.

GOD HAS ALREADY taken care of the enemy. God does not do our part. God has a role and people have a role.

- Similar to a farmer praying for favor over his crops but never planting any seed. We have a part in this.
- When we pray and ask God to do our part in something that is not faith. That is presumption.

One of the common errors in the Body of Christ today, in relationship to Spiritual warfare, is not realizing, or acting on, that the demonic government is already defeated.

For the time being, between the cross and the resurrection, and the second coming of Christ, Satan will try to continue to exert his authority. If he is not challenged, he will continue to do it. But when he is challenged, **he has to submit. He knows it.** His goal is to make sure we do not know it, even though it is in the Word.

- Many people do not read the word, so they live in ignorance of their authority and their rights.

Authority is delegated power.

A policeman can stop a car, but the power is not with the policeman. He stops it by authority. He does not have to lean into the car and stop it with

his shoulder. He uses the power of the entire government to stop it. So where is the power? The government.

So where is our power? Jesus. Jesus has the raw strength. The real power. Our identity is hidden with Christ. So exercising that power (that comes from Christ) through the authority granted to us should be very natural when we walk according to our identity.

- **Galatians 2:20** I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

But, here is the problem. The car comes, the believer says, "Oh God, stop the car. Stop the car. Stop the car!" God says, "Raise your hand and stop the car." "Oh God, please stop the car!" The car runs them over—I am talking about a demonic attack—"Oh God, thank You. I just trust You, God."

Our Authority comes from our Union with Jesus

- Our authority is based on what Jesus accomplished, not on our mood, feelings, fervor, or recent victories.
- **Philippians 2:9-10** Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,
- There are many places in the Bible where all authority is given to Christ.
- **Ephesians 2:6** - and raised us up together, and **made us sit together in the heavenly places** in Christ Jesus
- We have the same Authority as Jesus Christ – When we abide in Him. We were made to sit with Jesus!
- **1 John 4:4** You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

Know and practice the Authority that you have in Christ.