

THE ENEMIES WE FACE

It is a very dangerous situation to have powerful and active enemies working against you
and *not even be aware that you have those enemies!*

The enemies that we face are not persons of flesh and blood
but they are *invisible spirit beings*.

PART ONE – THE STRUCTURE OF SATANS KINGDOM

PART TWO – THE NATURE OF WITCHCRAFT

PART THREE – THE SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST

PART FOUR – THE CHURCHES VICTORY

This is from an audio teaching by international Bible teacher Derek Prince

This text study was compiled by Albert Chipps

THE ENEMIES WE FACE

PART ONE - THE STRUCTURE OF SATAN'S KINGDOM



I trust that all of us who are committed to Jesus here this evening do realize that we face enemies, because it is a very dangerous situation to have powerful and active enemies working against you and not even be aware that you have those enemies. The enemies that we face are not persons of flesh and blood but they are *invisible spirit beings*.

The theme that we are going to deal with in these talks concern things which are *not discerned by human senses*. The Bible speaks about things which ***“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man,”*** things that are *invisible* and *spiritual*. The things we are going to talk about can *only be understood through the Scriptures*. There is *no other source of reliable information*.

A lot of people imagine, I think, that the things we see, touch, hear and taste are the truly real things. Actually, all through the ages philosophers have come to the conclusion that they are *not* truly real. They are temporary, they are impermanent, and they are very often deceptive. You cannot rely on your senses. It is amazing how many different philosophers down the ages have come to that conclusion. *The Bible says the same*. Paul says, ***“the things that are seen are temporary; the things which are not seen are eternal”***. In other words, the things of the sense world are only temporary. They are only *partly* real; they do not endure. But the things of the spiritual world that we cannot see, that we cannot perceive with our senses, are the *truly real things*. They are the things that endure.

So when we come to a theme like this we have to begin by making a mental adjustment and say to ourselves, ‘I’m not going to limit myself to the things that I can see and touch and hear and taste, but I’m going to open my heart and mind to the revelation that is given me in Scripture through the Holy Spirit to things that are of a different world.’

Paul prayed for the Ephesian Christians that God would give them a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him and I pray that for us here that God may grant us, as we

open our hearts to His Word, a spirit of *wisdom* and *revelation*, because we are dealing with things that can *only be known by revelation*.

What we are going to deal with in essence is two kingdoms, two opposing kingdoms that are at war with one another. But they are not natural kingdoms, such as Britain and Sweden or other nations, but they are invisible spiritual kingdoms. One is the kingdom of God and the other is the kingdom of Satan. I would like to begin by reading from Matthew Chapter 12, just two verses, 26 and 28. Jesus had been accused by the Pharisees that He was able to drive out demons because He was in league with the prince of the demons, who is called Beelzebub. And He pointed out to them that was a very illogical explanation and it could not possibly be true. In pointing that out to them, He said these two things. First of all in verse 26, ***“If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand?”*** So Satan *has a kingdom*, as Jesus Himself has indicated. A lot of Christians, I think, find it difficult to understand that, but here it is clearly stated. And then two verses further on Jesus says, ***“But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.”*** There is the other kingdom, the Kingdom of God. So here are two invisible spiritual kingdoms, the *kingdom of God* and the *kingdom of Satan*. And Jesus points out that there is one particular aspect of His ministry that brings the two kingdoms out into the open and that is the driving out of demons by His power and authority. The demons, invisible spirit beings, represent the kingdom of Satan. Jesus, and then those who are His servants and follow His ministry, represent the Kingdom of God and in the driving out of demons the visible clash of the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan is *brought out into the open*. Also the fact that Jesus and His servants can drive out the demons of Satan is convincing evidence that the Kingdom of God is *more powerful than the kingdom of Satan*. Personally I believe that is why Satan particularly dislikes and opposes the ministry of deliverance, because it brings out into the open things which he would rather keep secret and it also demonstrates that the kingdom of Jesus is more powerful than his kingdom.

Now I want to speak in this talk about the nature and the structure of Satan’s kingdom and we will turn to Ephesians Chapter 6 and verse 12, which is, I think, the main verse that brings this out. And again, I want to remind you we are now talking about things you cannot perceive with your senses. I will read from the New King James which is like the old King James but a little bit modernized. Ephesians 6:12, ***“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”*** The word “places” is in inverted commas. It is put in by the translators. I think it is better to say *“in the heavenlies.”* Somebody commented once that most of the church has punctuated that verse wrong. The way they read it is like this, “For we do not wrestle. Full stop!” That’s *not* what it is saying. I want to give you the ‘Prince’ version of this particular verse. I studied Greek since I was 10 years old and I am qualified to teach it on university level. I do not say that to boast but at least it gives me the right to give my opinion. I do not mean I am right but I’m entitled to an opinion. I’d like to begin by taking a phrase from The Living Bible which says, *“Our wrestling match is not against persons*

with bodies.” I think that is very vivid. It is *extremely important to understand that we are dealing with persons*. Until we grasp that we are really like a blindfolded boxer. We are dealing with persons but they are *persons without bodies*, spirit beings. Now we’ll go on. “. . . For our wrestling match.” Again, I would point out that this is a very intense conflict. I think of all the forms of interpersonal conflict, wrestling is the most intense. It is one person totally pitted against another person. It is no accident that Paul uses that phrase for our warfare against Satan’s kingdom. It is total warfare. **“Our wrestling match is not against persons with bodies.”** Now here comes the Prince version: **“But against rulerships with various areas and descending orders of authority, against the world dominators of this present darkness, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenlies.”** What I want to point out to you is that Satan’s kingdom is no jumble, it is a highly-organized kingdom, for which he gets no credit because he was, I believe, (and I will deal with this in a few moments) one of the chief angels in charge of a large section of the angels. And as such he had a divinely given organizational system. And when he rebelled against God and led his angels in rebellion he simply took the system with him but turned it against God. So don’t imagine that Satan does not have a highly organized kingdom. For which, as I said, he gets no credit. The credit goes to God. But let us take into account the fact that he is no simpleton. He is a very astute, powerful and evil being. Let us now go briefly through the revised version, the amplified version that I gave you. “Against rulerships.” I say “rulerships” because the Greek word is abstract. It is not rulers, although most of the modern translations say that. It is “rulerships.” There is a certain level of the spiritual authority in Satan’s kingdom which is the level of rulerships. And under these rulers are sub-rulers with various areas of authority. And under them are sub-sub-rulers with smaller areas of authority. So one ruler has a major area of authority. Under him are lesser rulers, each of whom has a small area part of that. Under them are sublesser- lesser rulers that have smaller areas of authority. All right, that’s the first picture and in a little while by turning to the Old Testament I will give you some very clear examples of how it functions.

Then it says: **“Against the world dominators of this present darkness.”** I deliberately chose to use the word “dominate” because it is a satanic word. God *never dominates*. Where you encounter domination, somewhere behind it is Satan, and Satan’s ambition, desire and strategy is to come to the place where he dominates this entire world. But he will dominate it with a system of darkness. You see, God’s Kingdom is a kingdom of *light*, Satan’s kingdom is a kingdom of *darkness*. Those who are in God’s Kingdom know Whom they are serving and they see pretty clearly what they are doing. Those who are in Satan’s kingdom, most of them do not even know whom they are serving, nor do they know what they are actually doing. And then the third phrase is, **“Against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenlies.”** Whole armies of wicked, powerful, rebellious spirit beings in a realm which is called “the heavenlies.”

It has been a sort of accepted tradition in the church that Satan is in hell. Most people think that way. My comment on that is, It would be nice if it were true, but it isn’t. And there is no warranty whatever in the Scripture for assuming that. Now we will come back to that in just a few moments, but let us consider briefly how this satanic kingdom came into being. I want to

turn to Isaiah Chapter 14 and read a few verses there. These verses deal with a being called 'Lucifer.' The word Lucifer, which is from a Latin root, means "the one who brings light; a shining being." The Hebrew word means "the morning star." At any rate, whichever form or name you use, it means a very bright, shining, glorious person. And I believe myself he was what is called an 'archangel'. Now the word 'arch', again from a Greek root, don't worry about all that, means "ruling." So an archangel is a ruling angel, an angel who rules others. The same word occurs in 'archbishop'. An archbishop is a bishop who rules other bishops. And here we have, I believe, a picture of one of the main archangels in God's heavenly hosts. His name was Lucifer. He was called that because he was so glorious and so beautiful. But he made a sad error. He turned in rebellion against his Creator and sought to make himself equal with God.

Very interesting, we have a comparison between Lucifer on the one hand and Jesus on the other. Lucifer was a created being, *not* equal with God. He sought equality with God and fell. Concerning Jesus it says in Philippians, Chapter 2, "He did not think equality with God something to be grasped at. He had it by divine right. But He humbled Himself and God exalted Him.

Now let's look at this little picture here, beginning in verse 12, "***How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning*** [morning star]! ***How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!***" Now we get the *motivation* of Lucifer's rebellion. And in the following verses we get the phrase, 'I will', five times. It's the will of the creature set against the will of God. The key word is *rebellion*. ***For you have said in your heart.*** [Remember that God knows what we said in our hearts.] ***You said in your heart I will ascend into heaven. I will go up, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will also sit in the mount of the congregation on the farther sides of the north; I will ascend*** [you know, the whole thing is going up] ***above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.***" The "most High" is Almighty God. And the word means also "*I will be equal to God.*" So Satan's ambition was to *elevate himself to a position of equality with God*. He was motivated because he was so wise and so beautiful and so glorious that he said to himself, 'Well, I could be like God!' My personal opinion, and this is just an opinion, is that he motivated the angels who were under his charge to join him in rebellion. And I just picture this . . . if you can imagine this kind of thing going on in heaven. It all started in heaven, believe it or not, but it did. I can imagine him going around to the angels who were under his charge and saying, "Now, you really have talent, you are unusually gifted. God does not really appreciate all that you have. But if I were in charge, you see, I would give you the position that you really deserve." And apparently, again, this is a matter of inference, he undermined the loyalty of one-third of the angels to God. And through them, with him in his rebellion and in his fall. And so God says: ***"You shall be cast down to the sides of the pit."***

Let us look also to what is said in Ezekiel Chapter 28, where we get another picture of this same remarkable being. Ezekiel chapter 28 has got two sections. Each of them is a lamentation or a pronouncement of woe. The first is on the prince of Tyre. The second is on the

king of Tyre. Now if you study the chapter in detail, which we do not have time to do, you'll find that the prince of Tyre was a human being. It is very clearly stated he was a man, even though he claimed to be god. On the other hand, it is very obvious that we read the description of the *king* of Tyre that he was no human being. And we have here a little interesting picture of how Satan's kingdom operates. We have the human ruler, the prince of Tyre, but behind him in the unseen realm we have the satanic ruler, the king of Tyre. And in a sense the human ruler is really not much more than a puppet who moves as the strings from the unseen realm dictate his moves. When you begin to see these truths, history and politics take on a *very different meaning*. I think many, many of the so-called great men of history were simply satanic puppets who were moved by invisible strings from the kingdom of Satan to do the things they did.

Anyhow, let's look at a little of what the Word of God says of this second being, beginning in Ezekiel 28 verse 12, ***"You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, the sardius, topaz, diamond, beryl, onyx, jasper, sapphire, turquoise, emerald, with gold.*** [A totally glorious resplendent being.] ***The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created.*** [Also a master musician.] There are quite a lot of Bible teachers who believe that Satan, let's say Lucifer, he hadn't yet changed his name then, Lucifer was responsible for orchestrating the worship of heaven. I think it is important to know that Satan, as he is today, knows a lot about music and he uses music as one of his means to captivate people. Going on in verse 14, ***"You were the anointed cherub who covers.*** [Who covers what? The throne of God. See, the Scripture makes it pretty plain there is a cherub, or there are cherubs who with their outstretched wings cover the very throne of God. What a position of honor, glory!] ***You were on the holy mountain of God. You walked back and forth in the midst of the fiery stones.*** [This is no human being. You can see that!] ***You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created.*** [God reminds him: you were *created*. You are *not* God, you are a created being.] ***You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created till iniquity was found in you.*** [I prefer to use the word rebellion. Till you became a rebel] And then we read in verse 16, ***By the abundance of your trading.*** Now the same word in the book of Proverbs is used of a tale-bearer. It is used of a trader, because a trader goes to and fro presenting his wares and selling them. But is used of a tale-bearer because a tale-bearer goes to and fro telling tales. Now that's why my thought is that Satan went around just telling his angels, "Well, look, if I had that position, you would really be appreciated. I would promote you. You would get the authority you really deserve." So that's just my opinion. ***"By the abundance of your manipulations, your scheming, your plotting, you became filled with violence within and you sinned. Therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God. And I destroyed you, o covering cherub from the midst of the fiery stones."*** Notice the "therefore." What does the "therefore" indicate? God's judgment on rebellion.

And then we get the real motivation of Satan, or Lucifer. Let's call him Lucifer until he becomes Satan. Verse 17, ***"Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty. You corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor."*** What was the initial motivation of Satan? What was

the first sin? *Pride!* We need to remember that always. The first sin in the universe took place in heaven, not on earth. It was not drunkenness, it was not adultery, it was not even lying. It was *pride!* And believe me, it is still far the most deadly and dangerous of all sins. And lots of churchgoers who would not commit adultery or get drunk, are very easily enticed into pride and don't even realize how dangerous it is.

Now I want to deal with a question that comes up in many peoples' minds. They say: "Well, if Satan was cast out of heaven, how can it be that he's still in the heavenlies?" The answer is very simple. There is *more than one heaven*. "The heavenlies" are plural. In the first verse of the Bible heaven is presented as plural. ***"In the beginning God created the heavens,* [plural] . . . *the earth,* [singular]."** You trace it all through the Bible, heaven is presented as plural.

We will just look at two Scriptures. In 2 Corinthians, chapter 12, verse 2, Paul is talking about people who have had remarkable experiences in the supernatural realm, and he says, ***"I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago (whether in the body I do not know or whether out of the body I do not know), God knows) such a one was caught up to the third heaven."*** Now before I became a preacher I was a 'logician'. Someone once misheard me say I was a magician, but that's not so. And logic has still stuck with me and my logical mind tells me, If there is a third heaven, there has to be a first and a second, you cannot have the third of anything without the first two. So if there is a third heaven, as Paul indicates, then there are at least three heavens. Heaven is plural. One other Scripture, just to confirm that, in Ephesians, chapter 4, verses 9 and 10. Speaking about what happened between the death of Jesus on the cross and His resurrection and ascension, it says, ***"Now that He ascended, what does it mean that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?"*** [This is talking about Jesus.] ***'He who descended is the one who ascended far above all the heavens that He might fill all things.'*** You notice the phrase "all the heavens." Again, it is not correct to use the word "all" of less than three of anything. That is the minimum. So when Paul says, "Jesus ascended far above *all heavens,*" again, the minimum that will qualify is three. Personally, I think that is the total. That is my personal opinion.

Now I offer you an opinion. This is simply something that seems probable to me. You don't have to believe it. (You can go to heaven without agreeing with me!) But I believe the third heaven into which this man Paul knew was caught up, is the heaven of God's Presence, God's dwelling. And there, he says, he heard unspeakable words. The very words of God Himself. Now I'm inclined to believe the first heaven is the visible heaven that we see. So the second must be between the first and the third, somewhere between our planet and the heaven of God's dwelling there is *another heaven*. This is again my opinion. I think there are a lot of things in the Bible that confirm it, and in our experience. So between us and God is a satanic kingdom.

I think this has a lot to do with things that happen in our lives. I'm sure you have heard the phrase "praying through." Praying through what? I know, when I first sought the Lord, as a

person who did not know Him, I tried to pray for an hour and could not utter a word. I was earnestly seeking. And then somehow I broke through. I believe, looking back, I broke through satanic forces that were opposing me coming into direct personal contact with Jesus. That was the turning point in my whole life. So don't laugh at the old-time Pentecostals who talk about "praying through." Some of their methods may be a little bit unconventional but the truth is there. This is part of our spiritual warfare. I'll give you a few examples in just a few minutes, but I think if you begin to realize that there is an opposing kingdom between you and God, it will make a lot more sense in your spiritual experience. It will teach you lessons in prayer.

I want to turn now to the book of Daniel which contains a great deal of useful information in these areas. And I want to take an incident in the life of Daniel which, I believe, illustrates the principals that I'm trying to bring out. The chapter that I want to turn to is chapter 10. And if you are really interested, in your own time you need to study this chapter carefully, but to economize on time I'm not going to read the whole chapter, I'm just going to give you a brief background. At a certain point, when Daniel was a very mature believer, he gave himself to fasting for 21 days with what has become called a "Daniel fast." He did not abstain from all forms of food, but he ate only very simple basic food and he took no wine, no fancy drinks. As it says in The Living Bible, "Of course no desserts." He was earnestly seeking God for an understanding of the future destiny of his people, the Jewish people. And for three weeks he prayed and nothing happened. See, this is the illustration of what I'm talking about. And a marvelous, mighty, heavenly being came with the answer to his prayer. So powerful was the presence of this being that the other people with Daniel simply fled in terror. And Daniel was left absolutely bereft of physical strength, just almost like John later when he saw Jesus after the resurrection and ascension, and he said, 'I fell at his feet like one dead'. But this angel had come with the answer to Daniel's prayer. He had been sent from God. The point that I want to emphasize is: The first day Daniel started to pray the angel was sent. But he did not arrive till three weeks later because on the way from God's throne to Daniel's presence on earth he encountered satanic opposition. The opposition he encountered was not from human beings, no human being can withstand an angel like that. It was not on earth, it was not in God's heaven, but it was in some area between the heaven of God and earth. I believe, *the area of Satan's kingdom*. In other words, the angel had to break through Satan's kingdom to arrive with the message that God had sent him with. And this is what he says, and he's going to be talking about certain 'beings', one called "the prince of Persia," others called "the kings of Persia," and later "the prince of Greece." And as you look at these, you'll find that *none of them are human beings*. They are all angelic beings, satanic angels who did their best to oppose the coming of the angel to Daniel.

Let me point out something that, I think, is thrilling. *Daniel's prayer set all heaven in motion!* It set the angel of God on his way and it stirred up the angels of Satan to oppose. And Daniel had to pray *through*; he had to *hold on for 21 days before he got the answer*. So, dear brothers and sisters, sometimes when you are praying and you don't get an answer, it's not because you are praying for the wrong thing. In fact, it is because you're praying for the right

thing, but there is opposition. And one of the things we'll be seeking to look at in these talks is how to overcome the opposition, how to pray through, how to break through, how to win the victory over these forces.

Let's look at what the angel said to Daniel in verses 12 and 13, ***"Then he, the angel, said to me, do not fear Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and to humble yourself before God . . . (How did he humble himself? By fasting! Bear that in mind. Fasting is an appointed way to humble ourselves before God.) From the first day that you set your heart to understand and to humble yourself before God, your words were heard and I have come because of your words."*** In other words, God sent me the first day you started to pray. Why didn't he arrive? Not because the journey from God's throne to earth takes an angel 21 days, that's not the reason. Now verse 13, ***"But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me, [resisted me] 21 days."*** Who is the prince of the kingdom of Persia? Probably Satan, but at any rate, it is the satanic angel whom Satan has set over the Persian Empire to resist God's purposes in the Persian Empire.

Now let me pause for a moment. Why was the Persian Empire important at this time? Well, if you study the history of Israel, there were four successive Gentile empires that dominated the Jewish people after they had turned against God in rebellion and been exiled from their own land. The first was Babylon (which took them into exile), the second was Medo-Persia or Persia which was the one that was in power in Daniel's time, the third was Greece, the fourth was Rome. And all God's purposes for the human race centered in the Jewish people, because only from the Jewish people could come the Messiah, the Savior. And because God's purposes centered in Israel, Satan's opposition likewise centered in Israel. In other words, *when you're in the center of God's plan, that's where you have the most satanic opposition*. It is important to bear that in mind. So what Satan was seeking to do was to keep the Jewish people, Israel, under bondage and away from returning to their own land. What Daniel was praying for was the return of Israel to their own land. So this satanic prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood him. And then the angel goes on, ***"And Michael, one of the chief princes, (or one of the archangels), came to help me."*** So this angel could not break through on his own. This is really a fascinating picture and why did Michael come? What is Michael's particular job amongst the archangels? He has one very important assignment. Keep your finger in Daniel 10 and turn for a moment to Daniel 12 verse 1, ***"At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince [that's the archangel], who stands watch over the sons of your people."*** Who are the sons of your people when Daniel is being addressed? The Jewish people, that's right. So any time Michael is in the center, you can be sure that the Jewish people are center stage in history, because his particular task is to watch over them, protect them from Satan's attempts to destroy them which have been, as we all know, very numerous.

Going back to Daniel chapter 10 and verse 13, the angel concludes with, ***"I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia."*** Now *kings* is plural. And I think, contrary to our usual usage, the prince was the supreme ruler and the kings were under him. So there was one prince

and under him a number of kings. That's what I said, *"Rulers with various areas and in descending orders of authority."* What were the jobs of those kings? We have no word from God but I personally believe that for instance, let's take Great Britain, Satan has a prince over Great Britain (which I don't doubt he has. By no means do I doubt that!). Under that major prince there are lesser rulers who probably dominate each of the main cities of Britain. As a preacher going round I have learned by experience to put out my antennae when I come to a city and try to discern what is the particular satanic power over that particular city. Then in the Persian kingdom there were many different ethnic groups and I'm inclined to believe that there's a satanic power over each major ethnic group.

If I can say this without offending anybody, I think this is particularly obvious in the case of the American Indians, which is a very tragic story. Because in all the spiritual and material blessings that have come to America, the American Indians have hardly tasted any of them. And they are *extremely deep in witchcraft*. And I personally believe that that particular satanic person to whom has been assigned the task of keeping the American Indians in darkness and bondage has prevailed basically up to this time. We could go through many other ethnic groups but time does not allow us. Then, of course, there were also in the Persian empire a lot of different religions and I'm inclined to believe each religious group or cult or sect had a particular ruler over it.

So here was God's angel being resisted by a whole group of satanic angels opposing his coming to Daniel. However, when Michael came he broke through, delivered his message, but he said to Daniel, "I want to tell you what's going to happen when I go back." So we go on now to verse 20 of Daniel chapter 10, ***"Then the angel said: Do you know why I have come to you? Now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia."*** In other words, the battle with the prince of Persia is not finished. What would happen to the Persian empire when the prince of Persia had been dealt with? In all probability it would collapse (which it did a little later). But it was not the last empire. And so he says: And when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. The satanic ruler over the next major empire. Under Alexander the Great the Greek empire totally crushed and defeated the Persian empire and assumed dominion over a tremendous area of the earth's surface. And Alexander in ten years conquered from Greece in the West to India in the East, including also the area of the South coast of the Mediterranean, one of the most tremendous feats of military conquest. But there was *another person*. There was a *prince behind him*. I'm really inclined to believe that most of the major events in human history can only be fully explained in those terms. And then he says, the angel, in verse 21, ***"But I will tell you which is noted in the Scripture of truth."*** In other words, I really came to tell you what the Word of God says. And you'll find the next chapters contain that. And he says, ***"No one upholds me against these, except Michael, your prince."*** [And then he goes on in the first verse of the next chapter which is part of the same talk:] ***"Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, even I stood up to confirm and strengthen him."*** Now Darius was the first Medo-Persian ruler that crushed the Babylonian empire and moved in and took its place. And Darius, and Cyrus after him, opened the way for the Jewish people to begin to return to their own land,

so in a certain sense the defeat of Babylon by Darius was a major spiritual victory in the purposes of God and of this angel said, 'I was the one that strengthened Darius.' Again, we see that human rulers and human commanders don't operate in a vacuum on their own. Behind them are unseen angelic forces, both divine and satanic. The angels of God strengthen those rulers and men who will forward the purposes of God on earth, the angels of Satan resist those men. That's a very major reason why Christians should pray for the rulers of their nations. If it is possible, they should *inhibit the activity of satanic angels and release the activity of God's angels*. But remember, in this particular situation *nothing happened until Daniel prayed!* I don't know of anything that challenges us more to prayer than this revelation. And it seems to me, although this may seem strange, that Daniel's prayer was *one of the forces that enabled the angel of God to break through!* So brothers and sisters, maybe you've been underestimating the possibility of what your prayers can do.

So Satan, fallen from being Lucifer, having set up his rival rebellious kingdom in the heavenlies, rules there over a host of rebellious angels. The key word to describe Satan and those who are with him is the word 'rebel'. *Rebellion against God*.

Now Satan also has a lower, shall we say stratum, of his kingdom on earth. And again, the key word that describes those over whom he rules on earth is the word 'rebel'. This is made plain in Ephesians chapter 2, and these words are addressed to Christians, ***"And you God made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins..."*** Now he describes how people live before they are converted and come to serve God. ***In which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air.*** Who is the prince of the power of the air? Satan, that's right. ***The spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.*** What is the word that describes the sons of disobedience? Rebels, that's right. *Anyone who is in rebellion against God automatically comes under the control of Satan!* You understand? It is not enough to go to church and sing hymns. You have to lay down your rebellion against God and submit yourself to Jesus. That's when the change comes. Lots of churchgoers are still rebels. And as rebels they are actually being controlled by Satan. Now Paul goes on saying in verse 3, ***"Among whom also we all once conducted ourselves."*** Any of us who disagree here? One thing I know, I certainly did. I have no doubts about where I was before the Lord found me. I was a rebel and in the kingdom of rebels. I did not know it. I thought I was very clever, very successful. I thought I had all the answers to everything. Until I started to read the Bible, and then I discovered I did not. I cannot go into that but I just want to say, Paul said, "We apostles, including I, Paul, we were *all* in that category, rebels being manipulated by Satan through spiritual power which we did not understand. We did not know who was pulling the strings. We just moved as our strings were pulled." ***"Among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind."*** Notice it is not only the desires of the flesh, but our *minds* are alienated and in enmity with God until we surrender. The intellectuals are some of God's most fervent enemies. And then he says, ***"We were by nature the children of wrath, just as others."*** So that's a description of a lower stratum of Satan's kingdom. Humanity on earth. All human rebels, regardless of their race or their denominational label. Unless they

are truly submitted to Jesus Christ, God's appointed ruler, are rebels, *and Satan, by spiritual power, controls them.*

Now there is a very interesting phrase there. He says, ***"He is the ruler of the power in the realm of authority of the air."*** I cannot dwell on this, but there are two main Greek words for air. One is 'aer', from which we get the word 'air', the other is the word 'aither', from which we get the word 'ether'. Now we are not concerned with the words they come from but the fact is that aer is the lower air contiguous with the earth's surface; aither is the higher, rarer air. Which word do you think is used here? The lower air. In other words, Satan rules the *surface of the earth*. That's his realm. There's a lot of interesting speculations, because when Jesus comes it says we will be caught up to meet Him in the 'air'. Which air? The lower air. We cannot go into all of that; there's a lot we could theorize about that but we will restrain ourselves.

Let me just give you one remarkable picture of Satan which you may have never noticed in the book of Job, chapter 41. Now the *whole* of this chapter deals with a creature named 'Leviathan', which is some kind of marine monster. We don't know very much about the leviathan but do you think that the Bible, which is so economical, would devote 34 verses just to a marine monster? No. The truth is, *leviathan is a type or a picture of Satan*. You can study this carefully and see this. I only want to point out to you the closing statement, in Job 41, 34, ***"He beholds every high thing. He is extremely proud and he is king over all the children of pride."*** That's Satan! Wherever pride enters the human heart, (for that's the influence that caused Satan to rebel against God), pride brings us under the control of Satan. It doesn't matter whether we are Pentecostals, Baptists, Catholics, that's not the issue. The question is, *what is our heart attitude toward God?* And unless we have a heart that is truly submitted and surrendered to God through Jesus Christ, we can use all sorts of nice religious language, and lay claim to all sorts of titles, but the fact is that we are under the kingdom of leviathan. Because he is king over all the children of pride. How many sermons do you hear against pride? You don't need to answer that. Basically, I think the church today is majoring on minors. I know when I was a pastor years ago I was right down on people's smoking. I was terrible. The problem was we would not have people in our congregation at that time that smoked. But we did not say anything about people that quarreled with their wives. And I felt such a hypocrite that I told a young man that he could not be a member because he smoked. And I knew there were people in the congregation that were very wrong in their attitude and relationships to their wives or to their husbands. See, things like smoking, drinking and drunkenness are just little *branches* on the tree. But you know what the root is? *Rebellion*. And the Gospel of Matthew, in introducing the Gospel, causes John the Baptist to say, ***"Now also the ax is laid to the root of the tree."*** That's what we should be aiming at.

I want to give you just a little closing summation of Satan's ambitions, his purposes. He has very definite purposes. He has two main ambitions:

1. To dominate the whole human race. You remember one of the phrases used in Ephesians 6:12: ***"The world dominators of this present darkness."***

2. To receive worship.

We need to understand this. You see, he laid claim to equality with God, but was disqualified. But he has not given up the claim. And there is one way he can still assert the claim. What is that? By receiving worship. Because worship is due only to God. So whenever Satan receives worship, he is saying, "There you are. I still am god!" And when you really analyze anything Satan does, his *ultimate purpose is to receive the worship of the whole human race!* And in my judgment, from a prophetic perspective, he is very near to achieving his ambition.

Satan and his angels in the heavenlies were, I believe, the gods of paganism. All gods recognized and worshiped by all pagan societies and races are just different ways of describing Satan and his angels. Zeus, Hermes, Poseidon, all the Greek gods that I used to know so much about, and care so little about now, are just different labels for satanic angels. And as you look through all the cultures of human race you see different titles, but the same beings. And when they worship, what are they worshipping? *Satan and his angels!*

And there is one particular way that fallen man has to relate to a satanic kingdom. The generic word is *witchcraft*, which is prevalent in all pagan societies under different forms. You can hardly go to any major section of the human race which still has some kind of pagan background without encountering a person who is called a *witch doctor*. You will find a different name in different languages but the same person. The witch doctor, in a certain sense, is Satan's priest. He is the one who *enables people to get in touch with Satan's kingdom*. Why do they want that? Two main reasons:

1. They are terribly afraid of the disasters that Satan would bring upon them and most of their sacrifices and their rites are to propitiate these very cruel and temperamental beings.
2. They want power and witchcraft is a means to power.

I tell people in foreign mission fields, don't ever go to Africa or India and tell people that Satan is not real. They all know he is. Demons are real. They know them well. What you have to tell them is demons are real, but Jesus is real, and He has defeated the demons. And He gives us power to defeat them.

So ultimately witchcraft as a religious practice is an expression of man's rebellion against God. Witchcraft is the natural religion of fallen man and it permeates the whole human race. It is not something very strange or unusual. And the last thing I want to say, and it is important in our days, is, Witchcraft is making a determined come-back. It is like where Christianity came, the satanic beings were forced back, but they were never totally defeated. And now they are saying, "It is our turn. We are coming back."

PART TWO - THE NATURE OF WITCHCRAFT

In our previous talk we looked at the nature and the structure of Satan's kingdom and we saw that his kingdom operates on two levels. The upper level is in the heavenlies, somewhere in the heavenly region that is not the heaven of God and that is not the visible heaven. And his upper level consists of rebellious angels who are in opposition to God. And then the lower level consists of men who are not surrendered to God and to the righteous government of Jesus the Messiah, the Savior. And I pointed out that the *key word* that describes all those in Satan's kingdom is the word *rebel*. They are *all* in rebellion against God, whether they are angels or whether they are men.

And then we saw that the gods of the pagan world, whether they're Greece or Rome or whatever other nation, are different ways of naming and depicting Satan's kingdom of angels. And all those who have been worshiped by pagan religions and pagan societies *are satanic angels*. The particular generic name for the way that men seek to contact these satanic angels is *witchcraft*. You could say that *witchcraft is the religion of fallen humanity*. It has got countless different forms and ceremonies but it has this one common feature that it's different ways of contacting different satanic spiritual beings. There are many different ceremonies. Most of them are in some way sensual or cruel or defiling. The things that men have done through the ages to somehow ingratiate themselves with Satan and his kingdom have been really terrible to contemplate. I spoke a little bit about the American Indians as an example of a racial group that have for the most part not escaped from the dominion of Satan. And just as a matter of interest, I was reading in the National Geographic magazine, their main ceremonies, what they call "the sun dance," is one in which they fasten hooks in their skin and then hang by those hooks and tear great portions of their skin out. They do this in order to worship their god. There are countless other different forms of such worship all over the earth. As I said, go to any kind of society that still retains the marks of its primitive nature and there is one kind of person that you will find everywhere with a different name in each language, but it is the *witch doctor*. And in many of those societies really *the most powerful person is the witch doctor*. We have a remarkable example even in the Bible. It says that Philip went down to Samaria and preached in the city of Samaria. But there was a man there who *dominated the whole of that city*. His name was Simon. He was a *sorcerer*, that is, a *practitioner of witchcraft*. And it says the whole city was in fear of him because of the magic that he used. That is not an unusual situation in a certain sense, that's a pretty typical picture of pagan primitive society.

So there is a direct connection between *rebellion* and *witchcraft*. When I say rebellion, I mean rebellion against God. This is brought out very clearly in 1 Samuel 15 and verse 23. These are words that were spoken by the prophet Samuel to King Saul after Saul himself had become a rebel. He had refused to obey the particular charge and commission that had been given him by God through the prophet Samuel. And here Samuel is telling Saul God's estimate of his conduct and he says, ***"Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to heed than the fat***

of rams.” And now he goes on with this, the definition of witchcraft, ***“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He also has rejected you from being king.”*** Samuel makes two comparisons there. Rebellion is a twin of witchcraft. Stubbornness is a twin of idolatry. I’m not going to comment on idolatry at any length, but let me point out one way in which a stubborn person is an idolater. A stubborn person makes idols of his own opinions and that is a form of idolatry.

You see, it is very interesting to consider our attitude in the church today. We will not accept, for the most part, drunkards or openly immoral people, but how many stubborn people do we have in church? And in God’s eyes they are idolaters. We would not have somebody who came into the kind of churches we are used to with a wooden idol, fall down and worship in front of the church. We would say, ‘we don’t tolerate that!’ But, alas, I’m afraid we tolerate a lot of stubborn people and often we let them get away with it.

But let’s return to the other comparison. Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. Very, very important. The *root* of witchcraft is *rebellion* and wherever you find rebellion you can anticipate witchcraft. I learned this in the ministry of deliverance. For instance, I learned that if a person needed deliverance from a spirit of witchcraft almost invariably they also needed deliverance from rebellion. And conversely, where you encounter a spirit of rebellion, you’d better check to see if there is not also a spirit of witchcraft. They are close together.

Let me try and explain to you simply how this comes about. You see, rebellion rejects God’s legitimate authority, just like King Saul rejected the authority of God’s Word. But you cannot exist in life for long without authority. So if you don’t have legitimate authority it’s going to be replaced by illegitimate authority. And if you have illegitimate authority it has to be supported by illegitimate power. And the *illegitimate power that supports rebellion is the power of witchcraft*. So really, wherever you find illegitimate authority being exercised, *you’d better be prepared to deal with witchcraft*.

There is a very clear example in the United States in the 1960s. This was the rebellious generation. They turned their backs on almost all accepted forms of authority, parents, church, government, whatever, and they became a generation of rebels. Now I have dealt with many of them, many of them that met the Lord are my friends today. But almost without one exception, all those who went into rebellion went into the occult, went into the satanic supernatural, went into witchcraft! This is the logic of spiritual experience. It is almost impossible to be deeply involved in rebellion without sooner or later coming under the power of witchcraft.

If we go back to the example of King Saul for a moment, if you remember the story, he disobeyed Samuel’s injunction to slaughter all the animals that had been captured. And he kept, as he called it, “the best” to offer to God. God said, “I’m not interested in your sacrifice, because it comes out of disobedience.” Now Saul himself as king of Israel had actually put away all the witches from Israel. But just before his death, in desperation, when he could not hear from God, he himself sought a witch. That’s not an accident. That’s cause and effect. I want to

emphasize this, *wherever there is rebellion, sooner or later there will be witchcraft*. And another point is this, that when you want to deal with witchcraft, the satanic supernatural, the occult, in all its forms, *if you only deal with the occult, you have not dealt with the root because the root is rebellion*.

Now I want to give you a little picture of what witchcraft is like. This is something that God has given me when I took, I could call a 'post-graduate course' in. I didn't apply for it. I just got enrolled. Ruth and I got enrolled together. As a matter of fact, I'll tell you briefly how it happened. We were in a conference in the center of the United States in 1979 less than a year after we married and it was a family conference. And the theme essentially was dealing with family relationships. But in the middle a young man stood up. I don't think I ever met him and I don't know who he was, but he gave a tremendously powerful prophecy which was fortunately recorded on tape. And in this prophecy God said that all that He had been doing against witchcraft up to that time was merely preliminary skirmishes. But from that point onwards, (1979), He was declaring total war on witchcraft. And He said the reason is this, "because witchcraft has millions of men bound who I need in my end-time army." And then He also told us something else which we didn't really understand at that time. He said, "If you will join Me in this war (and we understood that He was calling us to join Him, and we did) you will encounter people who are under curses that have been passed down through families from generation to generation. But you do not need to be afraid, you will be able to release them."

Now at that time that was just a statement to Ruth and me. But in the subsequent period of nearly ten years, we have encountered thousands of people under curses passed down through families and God has given us, by His grace, the ability to release them. This confirms to me that this prophecy was from God, because it contained a prediction which we did not know anything about, which has been *absolutely fulfilled*.

So that is how I have come to know something about witchcraft. As a matter of fact, I had gotten involved somewhat earlier in brief encounters with witchcraft. At a certain point I think I could say I was a kind of 'pioneer' in the ministry of deliverance. And I was a very controversial figure at that time. Some people loved me, some people hated me, but very few people were indifferent. And a lot of the cases that I dealt with, the person who needed deliverance had the spirit of witchcraft. Now I was a pretty orthodox Pentecostal at that time, and I am still a Pentecostal, (but maybe not quite so orthodox), and the people that needed deliverance were somebody like, you know, the pastor's daughter or the deacon's wife or the church soloist! I mean *the last people who ought to have needed deliverance!* And I really became concerned about this. I said, "God, I do hope I'm not getting into something that's not right. So please," I said, "would You tell me what is witchcraft?" And I believe this is the answer He gave me, "*Witchcraft is the attempt to control people and make them do what you want by the use of any spirit which is not the Holy Spirit.*" And then He said, as a kind of corollary: "*If any person has a spirit which he or she uses, it is not the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit is God and no one uses God.*" I'll say that first part again: ***Witchcraft in its essence is the attempt to***

control people and make them do what you want by the use of any spirit which is not the Holy Spirit. And then I saw why the church was full of witchcraft, because there are a lot of people who feel they want people to do something and they use any means they can do to get them to do it. Most of them don't realize what they are doing.

Now I want to take three aspects of witchcraft:

1. As a work of the flesh, (which many people don't realize)
2. As an evil spiritual power
3. The working of witchcraft within the church

Let us take it, first of all, as a work of the flesh. Turn to the list of the works of the flesh in Galatians chapter 5, verses 19 and 20. Now I want to say that in various translations different words are used. Some translations say 'witchcraft', some say 'sorcery', and so on. In just a little while I'll give you a delineation of the three main branches of witchcraft, that's *witchcraft*, *divination* and *sorcery*. But you will find here in this passage some translations say witchcraft, some say sorcery. Let me say they are really just different names for the same power. So Paul says in verse 19 of Galatians 5, ***"Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery"*** [but the old King James says 'witchcraft'] So there right in the middle of the list of the works of the flesh are idolatry and witchcraft. That is, they are the expression of man's carnal fallen nature and I say that's the way the flesh, the fallen human nature, is. We in our fallen nature *desire to control people*. We desire to get people to do what we want and very often we use illegitimate means to get that. Now this kind of operation, I say, has three key words and I want you to listen carefully, because wherever you encounter these operations, you are encountering witchcraft. And it may be you have never realized it up till now. The three key words are:

1. Manipulate
2. Intimidate
3. Dominate.

Now the end purpose is dominate, to control people, make them do what you want. There are two alternative routes, one is manipulate, the other is dominate. And it depends on the situation and the purpose which route a person will follow. But whether they use manipulation or whether they use intimidation, the end purpose is control, that's domination. Now in the natural (we're not talking about anything supernatural yet) in the natural, witchcraft, as a work of the flesh, operates really in *every area of society*. Some of you are going to go out of here and you are going to see things in a different light. I hope the *first thing you do is to look in the mirror*. Before you point out your husband or your wife or your grandmother or your mother-in-law, whoever it may be, just check on yourself. Okay? Let me give you a few examples. For instance, in the family life. Now, whether people like it or not, God has ordained a certain order in the family. The husband is the head of the wife. People can stand the family up on its head, but God hasn't changed the order. And beneath the authority of husband and wife there are

children who are, in God's order, subject to the authority of their parents. Now, what witchcraft will do is use either manipulation or intimidation to *set aside the divine authorized order*.

Let's take children first. Children are master-manipulators. You don't have to be old. A child of five can be a master-manipulator. Suppose a mother has guests to tea or coffee (depending on the social situation). And there are biscuits and the little child of five knows that Mamma does not want it to have cookies, biscuits. But she knows that when guests are there, it is very difficult for Mother to say 'no'. So when the guests are there, she comes in and says, "Mamma, may I have a cookie?" And you know, what is the mother going to do? Well, she probably gives way. She has been manipulated. Years and years ago my first wife and I lived next to a Pentecostal family, father, mother and I think the daughter was about three years old. Now in those days people used to go grocery shopping on Saturday nights. So when they dressed up to go out grocery shopping, the little girl was a little angel, you see; she toddled along happily. When they wanted to go to the Sunday school on Sunday morning, that little creature would lie on its back and scream with her legs in the air to prevent the parents getting to the place where they needed to be. Now that little girl did not *reason*, but there was a force in her that had no objection to the parents going to the grocery store but *strongly rejected* the parents going to the place where they could hear the Word of God. So you begin to work that out. A fellow preacher of mine said: A little baby of six weeks is in its cot and it is wet and it needs to have its diaper or its nappy changed. So it cries. Along comes mother, picks up the little baby, changes it and then cuddles it, which of course the baby loves. Well, next time the baby wants to be cuddled, it cries, even when its nappy is not wet. You see, what's that? Manipulation! You see, this is something *natural to fallen man*. It's not only children, it can be mothers and fathers. Now the *normal* way for a woman to operate is manipulation. The possible way for a father to operate is intimidation. But each of them has the same aim: *control the other*. So if the wife does not get her way, she throws a tearful fit, burns the food and makes her husband's life miserable. So at the end, what does he do? He gives way. Or it's the husband. Now, there's many different ways it can happen, but the husband may be a brute. He may be a strong man with a bad temper. And if he does not get his way, he shouts and becomes violent and threatens. And the whole of the family tiptoes around. The one thing they want to avoid is another fit of temper by Daddy. What is he doing? He is *intimidating them*. What is his aim? To *get his way*.

You see, it can well be that the husband and wife have differences. The divine order is that they talk it out face to face, prayerfully and seek God. But manipulation never faces the real issues. It always goes round behind. The real issues are never brought out into the light. There are who knows how many millions of married couples even in this land that never really bring their differences out into the open. But each tries to go round behind the other to get what he or she wants. *That's manipulation!* To take the church. There are many, many examples of manipulation in the church. We'll take a Pentecostal congregation. There's a young pastor, it's his first pastorate. There's only about a hundred people in the congregation and he is a little bit nervous and timid. And there are two very spiritual sisters. I mean, not just

spiritual, but super-spiritual. And they know how the church ought to be run. They don't sit down prayerfully and talk it over with the pastor, but one of them gets a tongue and the other comes with the interpretation. And between them they tell the pastor what to do. You think that does not happen? *I can tell you it certainly does!* What is that? Manipulation!

Many other areas, business people manipulate one another. The boss may manipulate his secretary, or the secretary may manipulate her boss. I cannot take a lot of time this evening, but you see what I'm talking about is something that's natural to fallen man. This is witchcraft as a work of the flesh and its three trademarks are *manipulate*, *intimidate* and *dominate*. And I would like to say, *wherever you encounter those things, behind them is the power of witchcraft*. And when your eyes are opened, it is *so much easier to deal with it*.

One of the most common tricks of witchcraft is to make you feel guilty. "Why didn't you come to see me when I was sick? There I was all alone!" They never regard the fact that the other person had a lot to do. I have learned this, If ever I found a person is making me feel guilty, I stop and ask myself, "What is working through them?" You see, as I understand Scripture, *the Holy Spirit does not make people feel guilty*. He convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment. He will put His finger on specific things and say: "You did that wrong. This is what you have to do. You have to repent and make it right." But guilt is something you never finish with. "Did I really do enough, or ought I to have done more? What did I say wrong? Why does she not talk to me in church any longer?"

Another operation of witchcraft is trying to make you feel that the person's opinion and approval is very important. "If you don't do this I won't approve you." They don't say that, but that's the implication. Again, I've learned to ask myself when I'm confronted with that: "Is that person's approval really so important to me that I'm going to allow myself to be manipulated by him?" And generally it my conclusion is, It does not matter so much! Let me point out a connecting link in James, chapter 1 and verse 14. You see, this desire for power, for control and also for knowledge is a strong feature of every human being. *And Satan exploits this desire to get power over us*. This is what James says, ***"Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desire or lust, and enticed."*** So there is in you this desire for power, for control, for appreciation, for knowledge. It is in all of us, it's born in us. But if Satan can begin to *use* that, he'll *get us under his control*. You could not count the number of people in this nation today who are involved in the occult. I'm sure it must be at least 75% of people in this nation who are today involved in the occult. What is the motive that Satan uses? The desire for *power*, the desire for *control* and the desire for *knowledge*. What was the desire that first got the human race into trouble? Have you ever stopped to think? What was Adam desiring, in one word? *Knowledge*, that's right. And when he reached out for knowledge in an illegitimate way, *he became a captive of Satan*. Uncounted millions of people are lured into the occult by the *desire for knowledge*. "Where did my son go when he died?" What do they end up by doing? Going to a séance. "Am I going to have a happy marriage?" So what do people do? They go to a fortune-teller. That's the motivation. And that's what Satan exploits.

Now let's look at witchcraft as a spiritual power. Now we are talking about something that's supernatural. It's more than human ability. It is very important to understand that not all supernatural comes from God. A lot of it comes from Satan. There are, I believe, only two sources of the supernatural available to men, God or Satan. Any supernatural power that *does not* come from God *does* come from Satan. As I said before, God's Kingdom is a kingdom of light. Usually you know where you are at in God's Kingdom. Satan's kingdom is a kingdom of darkness: *you don't know what's manipulating you, what's controlling you, what's driving you.*

There are, I think, three main branches that we can describe in the English language. In some other languages you might have to use somewhat slightly different terminology. They are:

1. Witchcraft
2. Divination
3. Sorcery

I'll try to give you a little picture of each. I think they cover the whole field of the satanic supernatural. Now witchcraft is the '*power arm*'. Its product is power and it operates through such things as *spells* and *curses*. I think perhaps the *single most powerful weapon of witchcraft is curses*. It is a very old practice. If you turn to Numbers, chapter 22, you'll find that Balaam was what we would call a 'witch doctor'. Balaam was one of the most difficult people to classify, that we still encounter today, because he was open to the supernatural from *both sources*, from God and from Satan. There are a lot of people like that. And they are the hardest to deal with, because sometimes they are right and sometimes they are wrong. If a person is only open to God, he will always be right; if a person is only open to Satan, it's wrong. But the people that are really difficult to deal with, and we have them in all congregations, are people who are *sometimes open to God* and *sometimes open to Satan*. I tell you, for a pastor to deal with them that requires insight, authority and courage.

Now let's look at what Balak, king of Moab, said to Balaam, the witch doctor. In Numbers 22 verse 10, Balaam is actually explaining to God the proposition he has had from Balak. Balaam said to God, ***"Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, has sent to me, saying: Look, a people has come out of Egypt and they cover the face of the earth. [What people was that? Israel, that's right.] Come now, curse them for me. Perhaps I shall be able to overpower them and drive them out."*** Now this is standard practice in the cultures of the Bible. It was normal for kings or others going to war, not merely to fight them on the natural plane, but to make war on the supernatural plane. So they would get their witch doctor to curse the other people. There is a list of curses pronounced by the Egyptian Pharaohs in the 19th century B.C. and there are 66 nations against which they pronounced curses. See, what's the point of cursing them? You bring them to a place where you can defeat them in war.

It's very interesting, when Goliath came against David, he cursed him in the name of his gods. That was not just a display of vulgarity. He really was asserting: "My gods can deal with

your God.” So in a certain sense, ancient warfare was often not just a conflict between nations but it was viewed as a test of power between the gods of those nations. For instance, when God dealt with Egypt and brought Israel out, the Psalm says, “He judged the *gods* of Egypt.” Not just the natural rulers but the spiritual rulers. So Balaam was hired as a good curser. That was his profession.

Ruth and I visited Bath a few years ago. They had just then excavated a pagan temple. And they discovered that one of the main functions of the priests in that temple was to write curses for people who came. They did not trust themselves to write a good enough curse for themselves, so the function of the priest was to write a really horrific curse against the person whom they wanted to see destroyed. Believe me in a certain sense it works. People would not spend thousands of years in a certain way of doing things if there was not some reality in it.

Then we look at ‘divination’, which in most modern translations is called ‘fortune-telling’. This is the ‘knowledge’ element of witchcraft. The product is not now power, but it is knowledge which, as I pointed out, is the first that led man into sin. And there is a picture in Acts 16, very clear. Acts 16 verses 16 and following. This is what happened when Paul and Silas first arrived to preach the Gospel in Philippi. ***“Now it happened as we went to prayer that a certain slave-girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us.”*** Now what the Greek actually says is, “*having a spirit of python*” or a “*python spirit*.” In other words, a ‘snake’ spirit. And remember, snakes have always been regarded in pagan society as somehow the source of unusual knowledge and wisdom. There is a well-known lady in Washington, D.C., who is a well-known fortune-teller, who in her own autobiography stated the power came to her when a snake came in bed with her. Now what I want to point out to you is what this girl said was absolutely true. And she did not know it by natural means, she knew it by supernatural means. She was just a slave-girl. But she brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling. [Because she was a slave, the profit did not go to her, it went to her masters.] ***“This girl followed Paul and us and cried out, saying: These men are the servants of the most high God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation.”*** Wasn’t that amazing? It was absolutely true. I have sometimes commented that in contemporary missions that lady might have been made a charter member of the church in Philippi! She was the *first person to recognize who Paul and Silas really were*. But Paul knew that is not God’s Spirit, that’s a divining spirit, a fortune-telling spirit. In the end he turned around and commanded it to come out in the name of Jesus. And it came out and she was no longer able to tell fortunes. Her masters were so angry at the profits they had lost that they brought Paul and Silas before the magistrates, and you know the rest of the story. The whole city was in an uproar because a single slave-girl was *delivered of a spirit of divination*. See, at that point not merely was Paul dealing with Satan’s kingdom on the natural, physical plane, but Satan’s kingdom in the heavenlies intervened because their strategy against the church was being frustrated.

It is a remarkable thing almost everywhere Paul went there was a riot. And later, in 2 Corinthians, he said, “There was an angel of Satan that buffeted me.” I believe that was exactly

correct. It's not a metaphor. It was a satanic angel that organized a riot in every city where Paul went. So, why don't we have riots? Maybe we don't bother Satan enough! I really believe when the church is what it ought to be, there will be a lot more riots. There will also be a lot more revivals. I don't know how many revivals we can have without riots. So you have to decide. Is it worth the price?

Then there is sorcery. Sorcery, I think, and this is not always used this way, operates through objects, potions, charms, anything that is called 'lucky', like a 'lucky horseshoe', all that is occult. People carry things that give them luck. It also operates through 'love potions'. It is very, very common. You know, "I want this man to fall in love with me. So I go to the witch doctor and get a potion, put it in his food and after that he's going to fall in love with me." And, of course, to a certain extent, it works!

Ruth and I, were in Zambia together with brothers and sisters. We offered a prayer for all ladies who were barren and could not have children. For Africans that's a real disaster. About 400 ladies gathered in front of us. Before we prayed, someone asked the question (they were all professing Christians), "How many of you went to the witch doctor for a potion to deliver you from barrenness?" and *all but two of them raised their hands!* See, we are not dealing with something that's very rare and uncommon.

Sorcery also operates through music. You remember that we saw that very probably Lucifer was in charge of the music of heaven. He knows a lot about music. He knows its power. And a lot of contemporary music, what's been called 'acid rock' and others, is simply sorcery. You watch a young person that's been listening to that for an hour and their eyes are starey, they've lost contact with reality.

And then another *main branch* of sorcery is drugs. The Greek word for sorcery is directly formed from the Greek word for a drug. And the whole drug culture with all its accompaniments of acid rock and so on, is just a *clear example of sorcery at work in our culture*. And almost all those people as they come to Jesus will *need to be delivered from that power*. In fact I have come to the place myself where I doubt whether it is much use working with people in that particular strata of society if you *don't understand how to deal with demons!*

Let us look at just one picture of sorcery in Revelation, chapter 9 and verse 21. Well, this describes a future scene, I believe, in human history when God's judgments are being manifested and falling on the wicked and it says in verse 20 and then 21, ***"But the rest of mankind who are not killed by these plagues did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons and idols of gold"*** [Notice, idolatry is the first thing. Gold, silver, brass, stone and wood, which can neither see nor hear, nor walk. Notice which goes with idolatry.] ***"They did not repent of their murders or their sorceries, or their sexual immorality."*** And for the word sorceries, the alternative translation in some versions is "drugs." And together with sorcery goes *sexual immorality and violence*. And the tremendous upsurge of violence in

our contemporary civilization is *largely the work of sorcery!* So when you want to pray about it, don't just pray about the branch, *you have to deal with the root!*

Now we come to the third area of this subject, which is witchcraft or sorcery *within the church*. And here is an area where some Christians have no idea what is really going on. I want to turn to Galatians chapter 3 and read the first five verses. ***“O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you?”*** Did you ever absorb that fact? They were charismatic Christians, Pentecostal Christians. They knew the Lord, they were saved, they had received the Holy Spirit, they were witnessing miracles, but they were *bewitched!* And this is the standard Greek word for “bewitch.” Interestingly enough, it is still used in modern Greek. The word ‘vaskanía’ is the modern Greek word for the evil eye. I happen to know because a Greek Orthodox priest who has come to know the Lord Jesus came to me some years ago and he said to me, “Pray for me. I want to be delivered from this ‘vaskanía’.” It is exactly the same word that is used here. ***“O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth that before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?”*** How did Paul know that witchcraft was operating? What was the evidence? Very important! *Witchcraft had obscured the revelation they had received of Jesus Christ crucified! That's the supreme aim of witchcraft in the church is to hide the reality of Jesus Christ crucified!* Now look at the description of what happened in the following verses. ***“This only I want to learn from you. Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?”*** [Notice they had received the Holy Spirit. Paul says: “How did you receive it? By keeping the law of Moses or by hearing the Gospel with faith?”] ***Are you so foolish having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?”*** I really am inclined to think that text could go up over the entrance of most churches! ‘Are you so foolish having begun in the Holy Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?’ ***‘Have you suffered so many things in vain? If it be, it was in vain. Therefore, He who supplies the Spirit*** [do you notice the Spirit was ministered to them?] ***and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?’***

So the root problem was *the reality of Jesus crucified had been obscured by an evil satanic power that had moved in*. And the two problems that resulted were *carnality* and *legalism*. They had gone back to fleshly attempts to do the will of God, to please God, to keeping all sorts of rules as a way of achieving righteousness with God. And they had missed the purpose of Christ's death.

And the final result is stated in verse 10, ***“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that does not continue in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.”*** In other words, Paul says, “If you have gone back to achieve righteousness by keeping the law, remember, you have got to keep the whole law all the time or you are under a curse, because when Israel came into the land of Canaan, one of the first things they had to do was to pronounce a curse upon themselves if they did not keep the whole law all the time. See, keeping a little bit of the law some of the

time does not do you any good. If you are going to be justified by keeping the law, you have to keep the *whole law all the time*. And *none* of us, in God's sight, can ever be justified by the works of the law. It is a deception of Satan. It is a deception that appeals primarily to human pride. As Paul says, Abraham, if he had been justified by works, would have had something to boast of. But not before God, because it says, "Abraham *believed* God and it was *counted to him as righteousness*." You see, basically all of us would like to have something to boast of. In some way or other we would like to be a little more righteous than our neighbor. And if we have a set of rules that we are keeping, somehow we can convince ourselves that makes us righteous.

When I was in the British army years ago and came to know the Lord, I became a witness for the Lord and because I lived a life that was so different from my fellow soldiers, lots of them would come up and talk to me and I would tell them, "No, I did not get religious, *I got saved!*" And then I would tell them about salvation. You know, the first reaction of almost everyone was that they'd start to give me a little list of the rules they kept. And each one had a list tailored to his own particular life. In other words, the first reaction of man confronted with God's demand for righteousness is, "*I'll keep a law.*" I have said many places, and sometimes I've shocked Christians: *Christianity is not a set of rules!* Once we reduce it to that, we have lost the vision of the cross. And we have lost the power of God.

Now, why does Satan want to obscure the cross? Let me just interject this, I personally, as I travel around most of the earth and I minister to Christians of many different backgrounds, I think there are two main needs in the church. The first is to restore the centrality of the cross of Jesus to its rightful place, because that is the *one thing that totally distinguishes Christianity from any other religion*. There is nothing like it in any other religion. And when we displace the cross and its uniqueness we just go back to living by a set of rules. Human psychology. See, psychology can tell you what's wrong but cannot enable you to do what's right. That power comes only from one source, which is *the cross*. The other and its related problem is the church needs to give Jesus back His headship, because God made Him head over all things to the church. And the problem is that basically the church does *not really acknowledge the headship of Jesus*. The head is the thing that makes the decisions, the body follows. *In how many churches are the decisions really made by Jesus through the Holy Spirit?* How many churches actually *invite* Jesus to make the decisions? Let alone listen what He has to say. What's the problem? What is the force at work? You tell me. *Witchcraft!* That's right. You see, I have given you a diagnosis. If you will use this diagnosis it will totally change your attitude and your perspective on many of the things that concern you most closely. Because Satan *likes to operate in the dark!* He *does not like* people to know what he is doing or how he's doing it. I tell you that *I HAVE FACED TREMENDOUS PERSONAL OPPOSITION TO PREACHING THIS PARTICULAR MESSAGE HERE TONIGHT*. And I know why. Because this message is bringing out into the light the things that Satan does not *want* to be brought out into the light. Whether it is the nature of witchcraft in the natural as a work of the flesh or whether it is the nature of witchcraft in the

supernatural. And the last thing he wants is the Christians to realize that witchcraft is at work in the church.

Why does Satan want to obscure the cross? Let me give you three reasons.

1. It is the only basis of all God's provision for His redeemed people.

There is no other basis. Hebrews 10:14 says, ***"For by one sacrifice God has perfected forever those who are being sanctified."*** By the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross *God has done all that will ever be needed for any human being in any period of history.* It is *all* done through the cross. Now our appropriation of the cross is progressive. We are *being* sanctified. What Jesus has done is perfect, finished, complete. But our appropriation is progressive. I don't believe there is a single person here, myself included, who has yet appropriated all that has been available to them through the cross. But if we will go through the process of sanctification, *being made holy, being conformed to God, thinking God's thoughts, living His way,* we will appropriate more and more. But if witchcraft moves in, *witchcraft will obscure the cross* and although we should be living as children of the King, we will begin living like beggars and paupers. Because all the benefits that God has provided come to us *solely on the basis of the cross.* Satan is very astute. He knows exactly what to strike at. He knows that if he can obscure the cross, he has the church at his mercy.

2. The cross was the means of Satan's total defeat.

I cannot go into all the Scriptures but *through the cross Jesus ministered a total, eternal, irreversible defeat to Satan.* Satan cannot change that. But what he can try to do is conceal the fact from us so that we no longer live in the victory because we don't realize the victory that was won for us.

3. It is the only source of power for real Christian living.

You can quote the sermon on the mountain as much as you like and all sorts of psychiatrists will say that is the way that people ought to live, but the only way we get the *ability* to live that way is through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Because His sacrifice dealt with the *old man*, the *fleshly nature*. Paul says, ***"Our old man was crucified with Him."*** He says a little later on in Galatians, ***"Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections."*** Until you learn to apply the cross to your carnal nature it masters you. You cannot master it. Paul says in Romans 6, ***"Our old man was crucified that we should no longer be the slaves of sin."*** That's the provision of the cross.

I have mentioned, I have an Anglican background and I thank God for many wonderful things that came to me through that, but I know some of you here would appreciate this, but in those days, which is long ago, we used to have the general confession about 11:15 every Sunday morning and one of the things we used to say was, "Pardon us, miserable offenders." And I used to look at the people around me and think, "That is surely a good description." But I thought to myself, "What good is religion if it only makes you a miserable offender?" And my

ultimate conclusion was, “I can be an offender without religion and not being so miserable!” So that was what I did. But you see, another thing I said to myself was, I confessed my sins on Sunday morning but I know I’m going to go out this week and commit the same sins. Am I pleasing God by confessing sins I’m going to go on committing? Now I was not insincere. I was just ignorant. I did not *know* that there had been a provision made to put that old rebel inside me *to death!* But it’s made through the cross.

Now, instead of the power that comes from the cross, witchcraft substitutes fleshly effort and legalistic means. You make ten rules and people don’t keep them. So you say, “We’ll have twenty rules, and they keep still fewer, so you made forty rules. *But making rules does not make people righteous.* Did you know that? Judaism today has 613 commandments! One of my grandsons is part of a very ultra-religious orthodox Jewish group and they say, “We keep 32 of them!” And they keep more than anybody else. The truth of the matter is, we can have all the rules, but we don’t keep them! *Going back to rules is the effect of witchcraft in our lives.* I personally believe that this has happened in almost every major section of the church. You can disagree with me. I think every major move of God in the church produced something that was significant, lively, powerful, but within a generation or two they lost the vision on the cross and they went into carnal effort and rules and organization and such things.

Let me close by quoting Jeremiah 17:5, ***“Cursed is the man who makes flesh his arm, who trusts in man and whose heart departs from the Lord.”*** See that’s the curse that witchcraft brings upon the church. We are no longer trusting in the supernatural grace and power of God, we are trusting in the best we can do with our own efforts.

PART THREE - THE SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST

In our first two talks we dealt, first of all, with the nature and the structure of Satan's kingdom. I pointed out that there are two opposing spiritual kingdoms, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. Both of them spiritual and both of them at this time invisible to the natural eye but extremely real. And we attempted to trace the origin of Satan's kingdom to an archangel originally named Lucifer who led a group of angels in rebellion against God and set up a rival kingdom in a region which is called in the New Testament "the heavenlies." That phrase "the heavenlies" actually occurs five times in the epistle to the Ephesians, which is the main section of Scripture that unfolds God's revelation of the church. I think it is no accident that the emphasis there is on the heavenlies.

The church of Jesus Christ is supposed to be operating in the heavenlies against another kingdom also established in the heavenlies and, for the benefit of those who are confused, I would like to point out that in the Bible from the first verse onwards the word "heaven" is plural. There is more than one heaven and somewhere between our planet and God's throne in the heaven of God's Presence there is a rival satanic kingdom in opposition to God.

And then we dealt in the second talk with one of the main activities of the satanic kingdom, one of the main ways its power is manifested, which is *witchcraft*. For many people witchcraft has a kind of old fashioned sound, like something from the Middle Ages, which has long ceased to be relevant, but *that is totally untrue*. Witchcraft is very real and I think has *never been more active in human history than it is today*. And many nations which a generation ago would have been described as 'Christian' are today pervaded with intense activity by witchcraft.

I've tried to give a brief definition of witchcraft in three areas. First of all, as a work of the flesh, one of the ways that man's fallen nature expresses itself, and I gave the three key words: to *manipulate*, to *intimidate* and to *dominate*. The aim of witchcraft simply is to control other people and get them to do what you want them to do. And it does not use legitimate means. Witchcraft is closely allied with rebellion. It is the *outworking of man's rebellion against God*. In the second area witchcraft is a sort of supernatural satanic religion with many different aspects and phases. The priest of witchcraft in most countries is called the *witch doctor*. And you cannot find a single area of the earth's surface where people have not been engaged in witchcraft, mostly from time immemorial. And in many, many areas of the world it is still the prevailing spiritual activity.

And then, thirdly, we dealt with witchcraft *in the church*, which is one of Satan's master strokes. Paul wrote to the Galatian Christians and said, "*Foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you?*" And we saw that the evidence that they were bewitched consisted in the fact that the work of Jesus on the cross had been obscured. And through that they had been deprived of all the benefits that Jesus had obtained for them. And this work of witchcraft expressed itself in the church in two main things: *carnality*, relying on the flesh rather than on the spirit; and an

outworking of carnality, *legalism*. And I suggest to you, and I don't believe I'm exaggerating, that very possibly *most* of the professing Christian church answers to that description. It has turned away from the supernatural grace and power of the Holy Spirit, resorts now on human methods, human efforts and is in a sense tied up in all sorts of legalistic systems. I've told people in some places that Christianity is not a set of rules and sometimes people have looked at me in amazement. I think they could almost more easily have accepted the statement if I had said, "There is no God."

We're now going on to the next main outworking of Satan's kingdom, of Satan's opposition to God and to the church of Jesus Christ, and we are going to deal with something that I have headed *The Spirit Of Antichrist*.

We need to turn, first of all, to the passage in 1 John where this is primarily described. 1 John, chapter 2, beginning in verse 18, "***Little children, it is the last hour: and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.***" [Notice that the advent and the working of the spirit of antichrist is going to intensify the closer we get to the end of the age.] ***They*** [that is, these antichrists] ***went out from us*** ["us" being the church of Jesus] ***but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out that they might be made manifest that none of them were of us. But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.*** [Or an alternative reading: 'You all know,' which is probably the right one.] ***I have not written to you because you do not know the truth but because you know it and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either. He who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.*** Let me, first of all, try and just briefly explain the real meaning of that strange phrase "anti-christ." You need to bear in mind, first of all, that the word "Christ" is from a Greek word 'christos' which exactly corresponds to the Hebrew word 'Mashiach' from which we get Messiah. It is amazing how many Jews and Christians do not realize that Messiah and Christ are two different words for the same thing. So when we say "antichrist," that means 'anti-Messiah'. And it is probably easier for us to get the picture if we use the phrase Messiah. And then again the preposition "anti" is a Greek preposition. It has two meanings and both of them apply. First of all, it means "against." So the first operation is *against* Messiah. The second meaning is "in place of." And so the *ultimate purpose* is to put a *false* Messiah *in place of* the true Messiah. So this force operates, first of all, by excluding Messiah; and secondly, by replacing Him by a false Messiah. So the total operation is in two phases and when you begin to recognize that, I think you will see that the spirit of antichrist is *extremely active* *almost throughout the whole professing church*.

Ruth and I have friends in America who belong to a church which would be called in the old-line evangelical stream. I don't want to name the denomination. And they said to me one day, they said: "In our church you can talk about Buddha, you can talk about Socrates, you can talk about Plato, you can talk about Martin Luther King, and no one gets upset. But if you talk

about Jesus everybody gets upset!" And what is that? It is the *spirit of antichrist*. It's in its first phase of *getting rid of the true Messiah*. But we all need to bear in mind that that is not the end of Satan's purpose. His purpose is to replace the *true* Messiah by a *false* Messiah. So that is what we are dealing with.

It becomes obvious when you see that, that this particular operation of Satan is only applicable where Jesus has been preached. You cannot reject Jesus if you have never heard about Jesus. So witchcraft is different. Witchcraft belongs to the whole fallen human race. It is, in fact, as I said, the universal religion of the fallen race with many different manifestations and forms and ceremonies. But antichrist can only be manifested where Christ has first been preached.

In the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness at the beginning of His ministry, it is recorded in Matthew's Gospel that He said to Satan, "*Get behind Me,*" which is the normal way to translate it. But it is perfectly possible to translate that, "*Follow behind Me.*" And I believe that is spiritual reality that wherever Jesus and the Gospel are proclaimed, God *will permit the opposite claim to follow*. In fact, humanity is *going to be forced to choose between the true Messiah and the false*. It is part of God's way of dealing with us that He *does not exclude the false options and it is our responsibility to make the right choice*. I think this is extremely relevant to our generation. I believe this generation in one form or another is *going to have to make a decision: true Messiah or false Messiah*. And the spirit of antichrist is extremely active, much more than most of you have any idea, pressuring us into the wrong decision.

Now let's take some historical examples and I have to confess that what I'm going to say is somewhat controversial. The problem with the truth is, it is liable to be controversial. I have certainly no desire to offend anybody and I have no particular desire to attack other religions. What I want to do is present the truth. But the first and most persistent and long-standing manifestation of the spirit of antichrist is in Judaism. We always used to think that Christianity kind of branched off from Judaism and that is what the Jewish people basically will tell you. Let me say, I'm not Jewish, although my wife is, and we are very, very close to the Jewish people. I have come to see that that is not true. What has happened is, Christianity (that is, the teaching of Jesus and His disciples, not the whole lot of "Church"ianity that has followed ever since, but the teaching of Jesus and His disciples) is the true continuation of the religion of the Old Testament. And Judaism has branched off from it. That is a very important thing to see, especially in contact with Jewish people, as we often are. So that is the first mark. It started in association with the people of God. I'm no expert on Judaism but if you analyze its teaching, much of it is an unacknowledged refusal to believe in Jesus. A great deal of what is taught is a way of denying the claims of Jesus. The second manifestation of antichrist in Judaism of course is very simple. It denies that Jesus is the Messiah but it believes in the Messiah who is to come. Third, it denies the Father/Son relationship within the Godhead. It rejects the claim of Jesus to be the Son of God and does not accept that God has a Son. And fourthly, as I have said, it denies that Messiah has come.

If you talk to Jewish people in a sympathetic attitude and you use the name Messiah, something changes in their eyes, because it is a word that has a special significance for Jewish people. Now I want to offer you a suggestion, a thought that I have and you are perfectly free to disagree with me. I want to turn to Matthew, chapter 27 for a moment and just read one verse. I suggest to you that in this verse we have the first actual powerful manifestation of the spirit of antichrist. Matthew 27, verse 21. Jesus has been brought before the governor Pontius Pilate. Pilate can find nothing wrong with Jesus, but the Jewish religious leaders persist in accusing Him and stir up the whole Jewish multitude to turn against Him. And we need to bear in mind that any of those people in that multitude must have been in the same multitude that just one week earlier had welcomed Him to Jerusalem, had put palm branches in the way and said, *"Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord!"* which illustrates something that we ought not to ignore, but that humanity is extremely fickle. It did not take them more than one week to totally reverse their attitude, but I don't believe it was just a natural human reaction. I believe there was a tremendous spiritual war going on in the unseen realm and unfortunately the spirit of antichrist prevailed. And this is what happened. The governor Pontius Pilate brought Jesus out and said, *"It is your privilege that I release one prisoner to you this season every year. Shall I release Jesus or shall I release Barabbas?"* Barabbas was a political agitator, a murderer, a man of violence. He had never done anybody any good, whereas on the other hand Jesus had never done anybody any harm. He had healed thousands, blessed thousands, fed thousands. There was no logical reason whatever to turn against Jesus. It was not logic, it was a spiritual force at work. And this, I believe, is the key verse, Matthew 27:21: ***The governor*** [that's Pilate] ***answered and said to them*** [the Jewish crowd], ***which of the two do you want me to release to you?*** And so Israel is a kind of antitype of what will happen to humanity, in my opinion. Because I believe all humanity ultimately is going to be faced with this choice, *"Which of the two?"* Do you want Jesus, the Savior, the Healer, the Righteous One; or do you want Barabbas, a wicked, violent, political agitator? In a certain sense Barabbas is a type of the antichrist. And they chose, Barabbas! Let us not point a finger at them. Let us be very careful when the time comes we don't make the same mistake. There was a spiritual force at work that swept through that crowd and changed them. And they became almost insane with anger, jealousy and rage without any cause whatever. And I personally believe that is when the spirit of antichrist *first impacted humanity*. And it has in a sense sought to dominate the Jewish people from then until now.

Now Jesus warned them, if you turn to John chapter 5, and verse 43, they were at this point disputing His claim to be the Messiah, the Son of God, ***"And Jesus said, 'I have come in my Father's name and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.'***" Now that has been proved abundantly true. In other words, *"I am the true Messiah but you will not receive Me. If a false Messiah will come in his name, you will receive him."* And the Jewish encyclopedia records approximately 40 false Messiahs who have come since then and have been received by Jewish people. To name just one or two or three of them, the most famous probably is 'Bar Kochba' who led a revolt against Rome in 138, I believe. Then there was

'Moses of Crete', I think about the fifth century, who persuaded people that they should wade out into the sea from Crete and they'd meet the Messiah and thousands went into the sea and were drowned. And then in the year 1666, which was supposed to be the miraculous year, Sabototsfe claimed to be the Messiah and was enthusiastically received by multitudes.

One of the false teachings of Judaism, I don't say all Judaism, but there is a teaching in Judaism, is that the one who gives us back our temple is the Messiah. You know, I am sure that the temple area, the sacred site of all Jewish people, is still occupied by a Moslem mosque and the Jews are not even permitted to go there although they actually control, politically, the whole area. And I personally believe that if a political personality would arise who could somehow intervene in the Middle East and obtain for the Jewish people the right to build their temple there, they would enthusiastically hail him as Messiah. And he would appeal to the whole community of Jewish people worldwide. And I would suggest that that might not be very far away.

Now let us look at another main manifestation of the spirit of antichrist. This is one that's extremely importance for us as Christians to be well-informed about at this time, that is, *Islam*. Which is the name for the religion of Mohammed. Islam means perfection, completeness, fulfillment. Mohammed arose in the 7th century of this era in the Arabian Peninsula, claimed to be a prophet, claimed to receive in a cave from an archangel the revelation of the religion which then became Islam. And he claimed that his religion, Islam, was the true fulfillment of the Old and the New Testament. He claimed that the Christians and the Gospels had perverted the real truth, but he through Islam was restoring it. That is the basic claim of Mohammed. And he first believed that because he rejected idolatry and because he rejected the claims of Christianity, the Jewish people would follow him. But he was disappointed. And when they did not follow him he turned against them and became a persecutor of them.

Now let's consider the teachings of Islam. Personally, this is my own opinion, at the present moment, I think Islam is the most sinister, powerful force opposing the truth of God at work in the world. It is a tragedy that so many Christians in the West have totally misunderstood and underestimated Islam. If it once gains power, it will first and foremost suppress the Jews and second suppress the Christians. In Moslem countries throughout the centuries Christians and Jews have been given the title 'dimny' which means second class people. It rather suits Islam to have some of them around but to keep them in such a low and debased condition that the superiority of Islam is manifest to everybody.

Ruth and I were in Pakistan in 1985 preaching the Gospel there. One of the first things that happened to us was that we were taken to visit the Christian community in Karachi. And I still remember the awful sense of physical sickness when I saw the squalor, the poverty, the debased condition. They had open sewers running in the streets. They just went to the toilet out in the open. And this was the picture of Christianity presented to the people of Pakistan. It suited them, you understand. They did not want to eliminate them totally, they just wanted to

demonstrate the total superiority of Moslems over Christians. For instance, Moslems will never clean latrines. So all cleaners of latrines in Pakistan are Christians. That is basically the Pakistani vision of Christianity. This is just one of countless examples of how the Jews and the Christians have been a totally suppressed, inferior minority in Islamic countries. The oath of a Christian is not accepted in Islamic courts. The evidence of a Christian against a Moslem is not accepted. It is true that Islam has a long record of thirteen centuries of suppression and contempt for Christianity. It is hard for you who are not familiar to realize with what total contempt they view Christians.

You see, the things that we through Christian inheritance and tradition regard as excellent, like mercy and forgiveness, to Moslems they are just weakness. You see, at the present time the situation in the Middle East, Western politicians, even if they are not Christians, have got a Christian viewpoint. They have a background, they talk about mercy, peace, forgiveness. To the Moslems that is nonsense. In the Moslem thinking revenge is a sacred duty. I just want to bring out the totally different spirit that there is, because it is not always obvious.

Now, as I pointed out, Islam again has the marks, most of them. It started in association with the Old and New Testament. It claimed to be the outworking of that revelation of God. But it denies certain basic fundamentals of the Christian faith. It denies the atoning death of Jesus on the cross. Mohammed taught that Jesus did not die. An angel came and spirited Him away from the cross before He died. Because there is no death, there is no atonement and because there is no atonement, there is no forgiveness. And no Moslem has the assurance of sins forgiven at any time. Second, and this they deny with fanatical intensity, that Jesus is the Son of God. You can talk to the Moslems about Jesus as a prophet and they will give you careful attention. In fact, the Koran acknowledges Jesus as a prophet, even as a Savior, even as a Messiah. But when you say He is the Son of God, you bring out the most intense, bitter opposition. In the famous mosque that is called the 'Dome on the Rock' that is built on the site of what was the Temple of Solomon at one time, in the Arabic inscriptions around it, twice it says God has no need of a son. Until you've encountered this, you have no idea of the intensity of the opposition to this. And then, as I have said, it denies the Father/Son relationship within the Godhead.

So, interestingly enough, you see, both these two religions that we have looked at, Judaism and Islam, originate in the Middle East. If you go on a tour in Israel and you have a guide, they will probably tell you at some point that the Middle East is the origin of the three great monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. It is my guess, and I just offer this as something for you to think about, that the spirit of antichrist will succeed in the professing Christian church in eliminating Jesus. We will ultimately have a Christianity without Jesus. It will be a moral system, a legal system, a system full of all sorts of pageants and religion, but without Jesus. And you see, once you have eliminated Jesus, you have opened the way for a synthesis of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. I am inclined to think (this is just a personal opinion) that the

antichrist will head up such a religion, uniting Judaism, Islam and apostate Christianity. I think we are a very long way toward it. When you consider that both the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury have in recent years conducted *in* Christian churches ceremonies where Islamic priests and all sorts of Hindus, American Indians, were all welcomed as brothers together. See, you can just read that in the newspaper but *that is the spirit of antichrist*. Its purpose is to eliminate Jesus. *He is the stumbling block*. The *cross is the stumbling block*. Do away with Jesus on the cross and Christianity can merge with all sorts of religions and I personally think we are far on the way toward that. That's my personal opinion. I think we have to be very cautious in our attitude and our approach to these things, because I think the spirit of deception is at work.

Then, as I said, there have been many lesser anti-Christian persons or systems. For instance, about thirty years ago I was in Kenya in educational work. And I personally have a great respect in a way for Jomo Kenyatta, the first president of Kenya. But in the period leading up to the independence of Kenya, under what they called the Mau-Mau Uprising, the followers of Mau-Mau took all the Christian hymns that the missionaries taught them and reworded them, putting Jomo in place of Jesus. So that is again just a simple example of the spirit of antichrist. I'm not saying Jomo was an antichrist, I think he was a good man in some ways, although he was never a Christian. But I think he did a good job, I don't want to be lined up as a critic of him. But the spirit that was at work was the spirit of antichrist.

Now, let's come to the final manifestation of the spirit of antichrist in *the* antichrist. Now we are dealing with something which is, as far as I know, still future. If it is not future, I have not discovered it yet. So there is always a possibility of error and I am not by any means laying down the law claiming that everything will be exactly the way I present it, but I want to direct your attention to these very important passages of Scripture so that at least you are not ignorant of them. That you are not unaware of what Satan is planning and you may be able to form some opinion about how far he has come in carrying out his plans.

We will turn first of all to 2 Thessalonians, chapter 2, which really is mainly given over to dealing with the appearance, revelation, manifestation of the antichrist. It is also dealing with preparation for the Lord's return. And of course they are very closely intertwined, because the final satanic act before the return of the Lord will be *the antichrist*. In fact Paul says, The Lord will destroy the antichrist with the brightness of His coming. Personally I have no real aim to be a hero. I'm prepared to let Jesus deal with the antichrist. I think He is the *only one who can*. I think the *true* Christ, the true Messiah, will deal with the *false* when He comes. I think that's one of the main purposes of His coming. It is to defeat, cast down and overthrow the antichrist. Anyhow, if we turn to 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, beginning in verse 1, and just read to verse 3, ***"Now brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*** [That is the theme of this passage. And the word 'coming' there is the word 'parousia' in Greek, which is normally used for the second coming of the Lord Jesus.] ***Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him*** [the church which is to be caught up to meet Him] ***we ask you not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled*** [don't be disturbed, don't be deceived] ***either by***

spirit or by word." As some prophetic message that circulates, like the one that was circulating recently that Jesus was coming on the twelfth of September. I don't know whether this circulated in Britain, but I was just amazed that *multitudes* of Christians who believed it in the United States. It shows me the *appalling, abysmal ignorance* of at least American Christians and I don't know whether Christians in other nations are much better; I'm really not prepared to say. I mean, there were *thousands* of people who believed this teacher who said that Jesus was coming on Rosh Hoshana, which is the Jewish New Year. I don't suppose they were really embarrassed that He didn't come. That is the amazing thing. They can still go on believing people after they have been totally wrong. Anyhow, I just understand why Paul wrote these words. **"Don't be shaken or troubled, neither by spirit, or by word or by letter as if from us."** See, the nerve of Satan, that he was capable of people getting the letters in Paul's name, sign them with Paul's name as if they were written by Paul. ***Don't be deceived as though the day of Christ had come.***" [Some people were teaching that He had come, even then.] ***Let no one deceive you by any means. For that day will not come unless the falling away comes first.***" The word "falling away" in Greek is 'apostasia', it means an apostasy. It means a deliberate rejection of revealed truth and I think we are living in the days of apostasy. I'll come to that a little later. Unless the apostasy comes first, and the 'man of sin' [or the man of lawlessness] is revealed, the 'son of perdition'. So there are two further titles of the antichrist. He is the man of lawlessness. He is the supreme embodiment of man's rebellion against God and rejection of God's laws. And he is the son of perdition, the one who is headed for a lost eternity. It is interesting there is only one other person in the New Testament who is called son of perdition, Judas Iscariot. He was a false apostle. So we see here again the implication that this person will start in association in some way with the Christian church. Personally, I think he will be charismatic. Super-charismatic. I really mean that. But there we have now three different names for the same being: the antichrist, the man of lawlessness, the son of perdition.

And we have one other important name in Revelation 13. Let us turn to Revelation 13, beginning in the middle of verse 1. This is part of a vision that John had in this revelation. ***"I saw a beast rising up out of the sea having seven heads and ten horns. And on his horns ten crowns and on his heads a blasphemous name. Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power, his throne and great authority."*** Who's the dragon? Satan, that's right! That is absolutely clear. So here is some person that is going to arise to whom Satan will give his power. Why will Satan give his power to this person? Because that will enable this person to gain the dominion over the entire human race and to either persuade or force the entire human race to do the *one* thing that Satan wants most, to *worship him*. This is his goal. He has been working on that patiently and perseveringly for many, many centuries and he is very near to the achievement of his goal at this time. ***"I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded. And this deadly wound was healed, and all the world marveled and followed the beast."*** There is a sort of false resurrection here. I don't know whether this person will be assassinated, he will apparently be dead and he will return to life. What would have happened

in America if John Kennedy came back to life after his assassination? There would not have been many people that would not have sold themselves to John Kennedy. Going on, verse 4, ***“So they [that’s the people of the earth] worshiped the dragon [Who’s that? Satan.] who gave authority to the beast and they worshiped the beast saying: Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?”*** That’s the fourth title: the ‘beast’, the wild beast. It is a word in Greek that means a wild creature, an animal of prey, such as a leopard or a lion or one of those. Now in Revelation there is a very deliberate contrast between two persons. The wild beast, who is Satan’s ruler, and the Lamb, who is God’s ruler. And I think it is very important for all of us to bear this in mind in our spirit that we do not cultivate the nature of the beast, but we have to cultivate the nature of the Lamb. You see, when the Holy Spirit descended in the beginning of the ministry of Jesus and looked for somebody to settle on, what nature did He look for? The Lamb, that’s right. John the Baptist said, *“Behold the Lamb of God,”* and on Him the Holy Spirit descended. I think this is one of the great issues that concerns every one of us. Because in the world today it is so competitive, it is so intense, people are so extreme and violent that it is pretty easy to let the nature of the beast begin to infiltrate us. But what God wants in us is the nature of the Lamb.

Let’s look at a little picture of the Lamb in Revelation 5. Beginning at verse 5. John had had this vision of a scroll in the hand of God and there was no one who was found worthy to open the scroll. ***“So John was weeping. But one of the elders said to me, ‘Do not weep but behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.*** This is dramatic, really, for John was looking for a lion and what did he see, ***“And I looked and behold, in the midst of the throne and the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders stood a Lamb as though it had been slain.”*** So the lion is a lamb. That is a deliberate contradiction. So God’s appointed ruler does not have the nature of the beast. He has the nature of the Lamb. And He is highly exalted above all others because He laid down His life. Because He humbled Himself. Because He went the way of meekness, humility, because He did not resist His arresters and His persecutors and I really believe *that the church in these days is going to have to display the same nature.* And I don’t believe it is easy. I suggest to you this, and it’s not a popular suggestion: I think the church may go home the same way as her Lord, by the way of the cross. I think we’ll conquer as the hymn says, *“God’s strength will be made perfect in our weakness.”* I believe that is a lesson we are going to have to learn. And there is a lot of teaching in the church today that talks all about we can do, in all our power and all that faith can accomplish, but I believe it really is inflating the natural man, the fleshly nature, and that nature *has to be crucified before we can enter into God’s purpose for us.*

Let’s return now to Revelation 13 and just look, have a glimpse at a few parts of this description. We have seen that they all worshiped the beast. And they all were convinced it was hopeless to make war with the beast. Now who knows what will be brought about, but suppose a world ruler came to power, who accumulated all the nuclear weapons and no one else was allowed to have any, well, nobody would make war with him. It would be suicide even to contemplate it. I’m not saying it will happen but what I’m trying to point out to you is the

situation that is pictured here is that it could be very close. ***“Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme Him, His name, His tabernacle and those who dwell in heaven.”*** He is the open challenger of God. He is not a secret enemy, he shakes his fist in the face of Almighty God. And again we have a kind of attitude like that that is very close to us today. ***“And it was granted to him...”*** By whom? I presume by God. It’s a frightening thought! ***“...it was granted to him to make war with the saints.”*** I suppose that’s us, I *hope* it’s us. And yet when I say I hope it’s us, it’s kind of an ambiguous hope, isn’t it? I want to be a saint but do I want the beast to make war with me? Now, you may have to choose between two options. ***“It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them.”*** See, I want to instill into your thinking that Christianity is not all easy victory. In fact, I think, in a sense, included in our faith is the willingness to be apparently overcome. Defeated, but not really defeated.

You see, Jesus cares very little about the opinion of this world. Have you ever thought about that? What was His last public appearance? As a corpse on a cross. And He has never sought to correct that appearance, and He has never re-appeared, except to people who believed Him. How much do we care about the opinion of the world? Do we care more than that? Paul said, ***“God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified to me and I to the world.”***

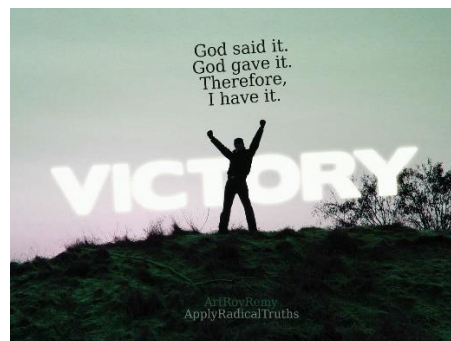
Let’s go on a little further, ***“All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the book of life and the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”*** That is a dramatic statement. The whole human race will worship Him except those whom has God chosen for Himself, whose names have been written in the Lamb’s book of life from the foundation of the world.

Then we see this other very sinister person, whom we’ll just glance at briefly here. The second beast. We are going on now in verse 11, ***“Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.”*** He appeared to be a lamb but he had really the voice of a dragon.” I believe this is a religious person. Generally speaking, he is called the false prophet. And I believe that false religion is going to align itself with the false Messiah. And I suggest to you that this is already happening. For instance, in China, where the official ‘Three Self Movement’, under Bishop Ting at the present time, has aligned itself totally with the atheistic communist government and is the main persecutor of the real Christians. I think very much the same happened in Soviet Russia, where the head of the Russian Orthodox Church totally endorsed Stalin and is now having an embarrassing time deciding what to say about it. See, I believe that the political ruler will appreciate the importance of religion and will co-opt religion in its false form to support his power. ***“And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed.”*** We have no time to go into that further, but notice the false trinity. The ancient church in the Middle Ages that used Latin, used to say ‘Diabolos Sinios Dei,’ “the devil is the ape of God.” He really never comes up with anything totally new. All he can do is to make a bad copy of what God has done.

So there is a false trinity, you see. Satan, the beast, and the false prophet. And they produce an image which in a sense is a false church.

Let's go back to 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 quickly in closing. And we go back to that key verse, verse 3, ***"Let no one deceive you by any means. For that day the coming of the Lord will not come unless the falling away comes first and the man of sin is revealed."*** Now, as I said, the word "fallen away" is a Greek word from which we get the English word "apostasy" and its primary meaning is a *deliberate rejection of revealed truth*. I suggest to you that we are surrounded by apostasy in the world today. All through the centuries there have been church men and church leaders who have been wicked, immoral, covetous, but they have not *openly denied the great basic truths of the Christian faith*. In fact those truths have been the means they used to support their power. But in this century, starting I think probably in Germany, we have today church leaders, *official representatives of the churches who have denied all the great basic truths of the Christian faith*: the deity of Jesus, His virgin birth, His atoning death, His physical resurrection and His coming again. And many of them have occupied and do occupy positions of honor and authority in the professing Christian church. In Britain, as you know, I think two-thirds of the bishops of the Anglican Church have basically aligned themselves with those statements, made originally by the Bishop of Durham. I'm not aiming at anybody, I'm simply pointing out, this is a feature of this century which I don't believe existed in any previous century. I believe that we are already confronted with the apostasy. And you see the church is the bulwark against error. So Satan has to penetrate the church before he can break through with his error.

PART FOUR - THE CHURCH'S VICTORY



In the previous two talks I have dealt with what I believe to be the two main enemies that confront the Church today. The first is *witchcraft*, the second is the *spirit* or the *power of antichrist*. Witchcraft I defined as really the universal religion of fallen humanity, the means by which men through all the ages have sought to make contact with Satan's rebellious kingdom of angels in the heavenlies, worshiping them in some way or other as gods. Antichrist is a different kind of spiritual power that only has relevance where the Gospel of Jesus has *first been proclaimed*. I pointed out that the word "anti" has two meanings: first of all, "against", secondly, "in place of." And the pressure of the spirit of antichrist is *against* Jesus, the true Messiah, to *eliminate* Him, but then the second move is to *replace* Him by a false Messiah. And I suggested to you that spiritual force is very actively at work in the church today. I also tried to give you just a little picture of what I believe the final manifestation of the spirit of antichrist, *the antichrist*, the *beast*, will be like.

Now I want to move on from the negative to the positive. This final talk I want to deal with *The Church's Victory*. I have tried to briefly define the main enemies we face with the purpose of showing how we can obey God and overcome those enemies by the means that He has provided.

The first thing I think we need to understand is this, that all the promises that close the Bible, all the promises in the book of Revelation, the final revelation of Jesus to His church, all the positive promises are only for those who overcome! There are *no* promises for the defeated. Paul said, **"Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil by good."** I believe we have *only two options*, in the last resort, we either overcome or we are overcome. There is no third ground. And there are no positive promises of God whatever for those who allow themselves to be overcome. In chapters 2 and 3 of the book of Revelation we have a word that Jesus sent to each of seven churches and every final promise to each of those seven churches is to *the one who overcomes*. There are *no promises to the ones who do not overcome*. We need to face this very seriously. God has made it *possible* for us to overcome. He *expects* us to overcome. That is really summed up in one verse near the end of Revelation in chapter 21 and verse 7, **"He who overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."** So the overcomer gets everything. And the one who does not overcome gets nothing. It is total, one way or the other. I think one of the great deceptions that the devil foists upon the Christian

Church is to somehow convince us that there is some 'middle ground'. 'Well, I'm not really an overcomer, but I don't want to accept the fact that I am overcome.' I don't think the New Testament indicates there is any such middle ground.

So we are talking now about overcomers. Every now and then some new group emerges within the church who claim to be *the* overcomers. In the course of my Christian experience, which has lasted nearly 50 years, I could name two or three different groups. I want to tell you this, if you ever encounter a group who tells you that "If you want to be right you've got to join us," you can be sure of one thing, if you join them, you are wrong! *No one* has a monopoly on overcoming. It's not a label, it's not a doctrine, it's a life.

Now we are speaking to overcomers, to those who are convinced by faith in Scripture and in Jesus that it is possible to overcome. The first thing we need to understand in dealing with these satanic forces is very important and very basic. It is that *Jesus through His death and resurrection has already administered to Satan a total, permanent, final, irreversible defeat*. If you don't understand that, you do not have any basis for victory. Let me say those words again, a *total permanent, final, irrevocable defeat*. There is *nothing* that Satan can do that can ever change that fact. When Jesus died, He said, "***It is finished.***" And it is finished. Nothing needs ever to be added to what He did and nothing can ever be taken away from what He did. This is stated one place very clearly in Colossians, chapter 2, verses 13 through 15. These are complicated statements and I could spend the rest of this session trying to explain what they mean but I don't intend to do that. I just want to pinpoint certain statements. Colossians, chapter 2 beginning at verse 13, "***And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He [God the Father] has made alive together with Him [Jesus Christ, the Son] having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us and He has taken it out of the way having nailed it to the cross, having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.***" Let's start with the closing verse. The principalities and powers referred to there are the same as we saw earlier in Ephesians 6:12. *Our wrestling match is against principalities and powers*, the various levels and orders of Satan's kingdom. That is what we are fighting against. But we need to understand that Jesus has *already ministered a total public defeat*. The word used there is "*He has 'triumphed'.*"

You need to understand what a triumph is. It is part of the culture of the Roman Empire. When a Roman general was particularly successful in war, when he returned to Rome, the senate of Rome voted him a 'triumph'. And in this triumph he was placed in a chariot drawn by a white horse and he was led through the streets of Rome and all the people of Rome lined the streets applauding him and behind him were all the evidences of his victories. The rulers and the commanders that he had defeated were led in chains behind him. Then great numbers of prisoners were led behind him and in some cases even wild animals from the conquered territories, animals maybe that Roman people had not seen. So this is a 'triumph'. It is not *winning* the victory, it is the *celebration of the victory that has already been won*. And Paul in

this language is saying that by His death and resurrection Jesus was placed in the triumphal chariot and led through the unseen world and behind Him were *all the forces of Satan led in chains*. That's the *totality* of the victory.

Now, to obtain this victory, Jesus did two things for us. I can only touch on them briefly. The first relates to the *past*. We need to bear in mind that Satan's great weapon against us is *guilt*. As long as he can keep us guilty, we are no match for him. But in this victory Jesus *dealt* with the problem of guilt. First, in regard to the past, He made it possible for us to be forgiven *all our previous sins*. It says, ***"Having forgiven you all trespasses."*** That little word "all" is very important. We have to believe that *every sin we have ever committed, has been forgiven*. If we have even one unforgiven sin, it is a lever that Satan can use against us, to frustrate us and to make us ineffective. The other thing is more complicated but let me just say it briefly, *Jesus has abolished the Law of Moses as the means to achieve righteousness with God*. He has not abolished it as part of the Word of God, or as part of the history of Israel, He has not abolished it as all the lessons that come to us from the Law of Moses, but He has abolished the law of Moses as the requirement for achieving righteousness with God. As long as the law was the requirement, every time we wanted to claim righteousness Satan could stand there and point to some commandment, some ordinance that we had not obeyed and say, "There you are, you have no right to approach!" But when Jesus died on the cross He put an end to the law in that aspect. And the Scripture says it very vividly, *"He nailed it to the cross."* So when we go beyond the cross, we are *not under the law*. Now our righteousness does not depend on keeping commandments, it depends on faith. We are *justified, made righteous, by faith*.

This is always so vivid to me in regard to the dealings of Jesus with Peter. At the Last Supper Jesus told Peter, "You will deny me three times before the night is out." Because Peter said he would not, but you know he did. Then Jesus said, "But I have prayed for you, not that you will not deny Me, but, what? *That your faith will not fail!* If you can keep believing, your faith will take you through. So *never get moved away from your faith*. Let no failure, let no accusation, nothing ever move you from your faith that Jesus died in your place, bore your sins, was made sin for you and has offered you the garment of His spotless righteousness. You know what "to be justified" means? It is a legal phrase. You have been tried by the court of heaven and the court has handed down its verdict. And the verdict is *not guilty!* Wonderful! Not guilty! Satan, you can say what you like. You can point out all my sins and all my failings and all my inadequacies and I will agree with you. I even can tell you some you don't know about! But the court of heaven has said not guilty. I am reckoned righteous, made righteous, justified, "just-as-if-I'd" never sinned. And when you stand on that ground, you are *more than a conqueror of Satan*. In the conquest that Jesus has already won. If we start from any other basis, we will never achieve victory. The only basis is the cross.

And then having deprived Satan of his weapons against us, and the one great, sovereign, supreme weapon is guilt, Jesus has equipped us with the weapons with which to defeat Satan. That's the second part of it. Second Corinthians, chapter 10, verses 3, 4 and 5, ***"For though we***

walk in the flesh, we war not after the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. Casting down imaginations, and every high thing which exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” What a victory that is, isn’t it? You see, we have weapons that are not carnal. So what are they? Spiritual. In other words, we don’t use bombs, or tanks, or rifles, because we are not fighting persons with bodies. They are useless, but we have been given in place of those physical, material weapons spiritual weapons, that we can use and this is what we can use them for, pulling down strongholds. Whose strongholds? Satan’s, that’s right. If you notice the next verse, there are various alternative translations. You can have arguments, reasoning’s, speculations. And then it speaks about the mind and the thought. So we’ve discovered the battlefield. Very important to know what the battlefield is. It is the *mind*. How many of you realize that? *Most of your problems as a Christian are in the area of the mind*. Don’t let that discourage you. That’s where the war is. But *we have been given the weapons of victory*. And we can pull down Satan’s strongholds or road blocks or fortresses. You see, Satan builds up fortresses in the minds of men and women to *prevent them being able to receive the truth of the Gospel*. And one of our functions is by the spiritual weapons God has given us. Prayer, preaching, praise and so on to *break down those strongholds and open the way* for the Word of God to enter and to save people and to change them. We dealt, for instance, with two anti-Christian forces, Judaism and Islam in our last talk. Each of them has a *specific stronghold* that you *have to break down*. The stronghold in the Jewish mind is, “If I believe in Jesus, I’ll no longer be Jewish.” You may not be aware of that but that is the *strongest barrier* that they have against receiving the truth about Jesus. The Moslem stronghold is, “God does not need a Son. There is not a Son of God.” And if *you are going to reach either Jews or Moslems effectively, you are going to have to use these spiritual weapons to break down those strongholds before you can really make an impact on them*.

So we have the weapons for victory. Notice the ultimate aim is to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. It is a *staggering assignment*. First of all, we have to release people’s minds from the false captivity of Satan and then we have to bring their minds into captivity to obedience to Jesus. That’s wonderful, isn’t it? That we have been given the weapons to do it. Now my talk tonight is not on those weapons. I have given many talks on that theme in the past. But I want to deal just with certain general basic requirements if the church is to be victorious. I’m going to deal with them briefly. I have actually listed seven, you could probably make it eight or you could make it six, but in my making of outlines, if I get to the number seven I usually stop.

Let’s turn to Matthew 12:25. Here is a statement by Jesus which is extremely important. And I think I’m afraid the church has often ignored it. Jesus said, ***“Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation and every city or house divided against itself will not stand.”*** We’ve spoken about the kingdom of God. But if the kingdom of God is divided against itself it cannot win. So Satan’s *primary attack* on the church is to divide us. Has he been successful? I’m sorry to say, he has been extremely successful. One thing we have to do is to

resist division. That does not mean that we automatically associate ourselves with everyone or everything that is called 'Christian'. But it means that wherever there are people who are true believers in Jesus according to the Scripture and committed to love Him and serve Him, we have to acknowledge them as our brothers and sisters. And we do not let unnecessary barriers come between them and us. Ruth and I in our ministry we work with I don't know how many different ministries and persons around the world. And basically I can say we don't have any problems in our relationships with them. I think the primary reason is because they and we are committed to something positive. And we are committed to Matthew 24:14, ***"This Gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world as a witness to all the nations and then the end will come."*** We believe this is our responsibility to *prepare the way for the Lord by proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom to all nations.* And wherever we meet with people who have that primary aim based on Scripture, we may never have met them before, but in 10 minutes we feel like we have known them all our lives. So let's not focus on the negative. Let's focus on the positive. You'll find where people are truly committed to prayer and intercession or to evangelism, the barriers melt. Where people are all tied up with church structure and programs there usually are problems. So the first thing we have to do *is guard against division.* It is not easy. We certainly don't have all the answers but when we give it due priority I think we will be nearer to achieving it.

Then the second thing we have to do, and this is tremendously important, is to *know and proclaim the whole of God's Word.* Now I want to turn to 2 Timothy, chapter 3. This has become a very significant chapter for me recently, because I think it is a picture of the last days. If you begin at the first verse of 2 Timothy, chapter 3, it says, ***"But know this that in the last days perilous times will come."*** And the whole of this third chapter deals with things that are particularly relevant to the last days. The first thing it does is to paint a picture of the general degeneration of human character and conduct as the age come to its close. And Paul picks out eighteen major moral or ethical blemishes which will characterize humanity at the close of this age. And really the root of them all is *selfishness.* Love of self, love of money and love of pleasure. I don't know three words that better describe our contemporary civilization than that, love of self, love of money and love of pleasure. All the others are within that context. The great enemy is selfishness. We need to bear that in mind, because the fact that we don't indulge in drugs and alcohol or immorality does not necessarily separate us from the world. The only thing that really separates us is unselfishness. And I think a lot of moral, good living churchgoers are basically extremely selfish people. It's number one first. And we need to understand that isn't the distinctive mark of the church in these days. The distinctive mark is unselfishness. A commitment to God and to humanity, to serve and be servants.

Paul goes on from there and he points out various other features at the close of the age, some we will return to perhaps later. He very clearly depicts a tremendous upsurge of the occult, which again is very conspicuous in our time, and then he comes to what I believe is *God's answer.* At the end of chapter 3, beginning in verse 16, ***"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God..."*** How much of Scripture? *All!* Are you sure? There's a lot of people not

sure about that any longer. There is a lot of preachers that believe it is their job to straighten God out, edit the Bible, to point out where it needs to be changed. That is not my attitude. ***“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. So that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*** I understand that to mean that for God’s people to be *thoroughly equipped*, the *whole* truth of the Bible has to be presented to them, not just little passages. You have to know what is in the book of Ezra. You have to know the teaching of Amos. You have to understand the epistle to Philemon. Because they are all necessary for you to be thoroughly equipped. You may have to take much less time in front of the television if you are going to be thoroughly equipped, because it is a pretty full-time job being thoroughly equipped for Christian service.

Now bear in mind the chapter divisions were not there from Paul, so Paul goes on in the next chapter, the first verse. ***“I charge you therefore...”*** What is the “therefore” for? Wherever you find a “therefore,” you want to find out what it is *there for*. It’s because of what he had said in the end of chapter 3, then he comes to this tremendously solemn charge. ***“I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ who will judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom...”*** You could not have a more solemn charge than that! As it were in the presence of God and the light of the fact that we will all have to answer to Jesus at His judgment seat when He comes. So what’s the message? Verse 2, ***“PREACH-THE-WORD!”*** Then he goes on, ***“Be ready in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and teaching.”*** Let me ask you a frank question, you don’t have to answer. How many of you go to church on Sunday morning expecting to be convinced, rebuked, and exhorted? Some of you would not go back to that church again if they treated you like that. But if the minister is doing his job that’s what will happen to you. Now how true this is of the time in which we live! ***“For the time will come [I believe the time *has* come] when they will not endure sound doctrine but according to their own desires because they have itching ears. They will heap up for themselves teachers and they will turn their ears away from the truth and be turned aside to fables.”*** I think this is conspicuous in the Western church. There are many, many Christians who have to have a new doctrine and a new revelation, something new to tickle them and excite them. But that is not our job. Our job is to ***PREACH THE WORD!***

And so Paul concludes this section, ***“But you, (that’s Timothy) be watchful in all things, endure afflictions. Do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”*** I don’t believe there has ever been a time when it is more important to hold fast to the absolute truth and authority of Scripture. It is being attacked and undermined in many quarters which we would not anticipate. Movements and churches and groups that we would consider to be sound in the faith have moved from that foundation in these last few decades.

Let me quote the words of Paul in Acts 20, verse 27, ***“I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.”*** I’m impressed by those words ***“I have not shunned”*** because it would indicate there is a lot of pressures that would cause you not to declare the whole counsel

of God. Is that true? Social pressures, financial pressures, denominational pressures. If you want to be popular, it might easily be the quickest way not to declare the whole counsel of God. But remember that we are answerable ultimately to God. Paul said, *"I'm pure from the blood of all men."* I think he was thinking in terms of God's word to Ezekiel, *"I make you a watchman to your people"*. If trouble is coming and you warn them and they don't listen, they will perish but you have saved your soul. But if trouble is coming and you don't warn them, and they perish, their blood will be upon your hands. And I think Paul said for that reason, *"I'm pure from the blood of all men. No one's blood can be laid at my door because I have not shunned to declare to you all the counsel of God."*

The third requirement, I think, is very important and it is stated in 1 Peter, chapter 5:5–6. ***"Likewise, you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders."*** Now, being over 70, of course I can say a hearty AMEN to that. But it does not end there. ***"Yes, all of you..."*** over 70 or over 50 or under 20. ***"All of you, be submissive to one another and be clothed with humility."*** There has been a lot of talk in the church recently about submission and I believe submission has a scriptural basis. I point out to most people, what really matters about submission is *submissiveness*. You can be submissive even when you don't submit. It is the *attitude* rather than the code of conduct. Peter says, ***"All of you be clothed with humility."*** That's a metaphor that does not come out in the English. The word he uses means "put on an apron of humility." And the word is used for an apron that was worn only by slaves. So when you had this apron on, everybody knew you were a slave. So he says, put on an apron, an attitude of humility, which shows you are the slave of everybody. ***"Because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time."*** I always point out to people, humility is not something God can do for us. God never says, "I will make you humble," but always says, "Make *yourself* humble." It is a decision; we have to make it.

If you are interested, there is a remarkable example in Ezra, chapter 8, verses 21 to 23, of one specific way of humbling ourselves. Ezra and a party of exiles returning from Babylon to Jerusalem were confronted with a very dangerous journey that took them, I think, four months. They had with them all the precious vessels of the temple and their wives and their children, but Ezra refused a military escort from the Persian monarch. He said, *"We are going to trust God."* He had to do that because he testified that God protected those who serve Him. See, that is one of the blessings of testifying, when you testify, you have to live up your testimony. So he did not ask for a band of soldiers and horsemen but he said, ***"We proclaimed a fast there at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek of Him the right way."*** And this is totally scriptural. I don't have time to go into it, but one of the appointed ways of humbling ourselves is by fasting. David said in Psalm 35, verse 13, ***"I humbled my soul with fasting."*** Why does your soul need to be humbled? Because it is the arrogant, self-seeking ego in you. It is the thing that says, "I want, I think, I feel. I'm important, look at me." And that has to be humbled before God can really have His way in our life. Whenever I tell this, I always think of a lawyer in Washington, D.C., some good many years ago. He heard me teach on

fasting. He is a Christian and he decided he would do it. He had a miserable day. Every time he walked past a restaurant or a delicatessen, his mouth watered and his stomach cramped and he wanted to go in. But he finished the day without breaking his fast. Then in the evening he gave his stomach a lecture and he said, "Now stomach, you have been very troublesome today and you made a lot of trouble for me. I'm going to punish you and I will fast tomorrow as well!" That's how we have to deal with the self-asserted part of us. We have to bring it into subjection to the will and mind of God. I do believe that those Christians who do not in some scriptural way learn to practice fasting will *not be able to administer the total victory of God*. After all, Jesus could not do it. He started His ministry by forty days of fasting. You think you are further along than Jesus? He did not say to His disciples *if* you fast, He said *when* you fast. He used exactly the same language about fasting in his sermon in chapter 6 of Matthew as He did about prayer. If He expects us to pray, He expects us to fast. Now you have to sort that out for yourselves and also you have to find out from the Holy Spirit what way and how to do it. But I would say, for Ruth and myself I think we could say, we would not *dare* to go ahead in the ministry that we are in if we *did not practice regular fasting*. Because we are challenging basically all the major forces of Satan in the world today by challenging them *head-on!* And we need every help that we can get from God. And one way is by fasting.

The next thing we must do is put on the whole armor of God. We need to turn to Ephesians 6 for a moment. Immediately after the 12th verse, which speaks about the kingdom of Satan in the heavenlies, Paul says (and the next word in my version is "therefore") in verse 13, ***"Therefore take up the whole armor of God..."*** And notice, *you* have to take it up. It does not grow on you. God does not fit it on you. You have to take it up! Paul was writing to people who were Christians, just as much Christians as you and I. But he placed on *them* the responsibility to take up the armor. And if you look through the armor, in verse 14, the ***girdle of truth***, the ***breastplate of righteousness***, verse 15, the ***shoes of the preparation of the Gospel***, verse 16, the ***shield of faith***, verse 17, the ***helmet of salvation***, the ***sword of the spirit***. If you analyze that, you are completely protected from the crown of your head to the soles of your feet, except one area, which is . . . the *back*, that's right. If you turn your back on Satan, there is no protection! It is important to remember. But that's not the full list. There are six items there and in the Bible usually when a thing is complete and it's good, it's seven. And the next one is perhaps as important as any of them, verse 18, ***"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit."*** I think it was Charles Wesley who taught about the weapon of 'all prayer'. And really all prayer is the weapon by which we can reach out into the heavenlies and attack Satan's kingdom at its base. The others are mainly weapons of self-protection. But all prayer is, if you like, it's our intercontinental ballistic missile. It can reach any target, anywhere, if we set the computer right.

The next thing we have to do is realize our *need of God's supernatural power*. And I want to say ***supernatural***. Christianity is a religion of the supernatural. I once read through the book of Acts, examining it to see what would happen if I removed all reference to the manifestly supernatural. That's not just inward supernatural experiences but things that are

visible, that can be perceived by the senses. The book of Acts has 28 chapters and at the end of that I just discovered not *one* chapter out of the 28 would be left intact if we eliminated the supernatural. And that is the only record we have in Scripture of how the church is intended to operate. *We cannot operate effectively and accomplish the will of God solely by our own natural ability. We have to have the supernatural enabling of the Holy Spirit.* And one main form of that enabling is the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians, chapter 12.

We won't turn there but let's look at just one statement of Paul which, I think, is important. It really summarizes what I'm saying. 1 Corinthians chapter 4 and verse 20. ***"For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power."*** It's not a matter of theology. Theology has its place. It's not a matter of argument. It's not a matter of intellectual proof. It's the *demonstration of the supernatural power of God*. I'd like to look at the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians, chapter 2, just two chapters back, the first five verses. ***"And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or wisdom declaring you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."*** You remember what we said about Galatians, chapter 3? What does witchcraft obscure in the church? *Jesus Christ crucified*. Paul said, *"That's all I'm going to be interested in. Jesus Christ crucified."* I was preaching just recently to a congregation which contained a large number of Jews in Jerusalem and I pointed out to them that really the thing which is supremely esteemed amongst the Jewish people generally is knowledge. And here is a Jew who says, *"I determined not to know anything (that's very unusual) except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."* Why? Paul said, ***"I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. [He was not an impressive speaker by any means.] My speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit (capital S, the Holy Spirit). That was power. That was Paul's secret. Why did the Holy Spirit testify to his ministry with power? Because he focused on Jesus Christ crucified. You can bring all sorts of elegant sermons and theories and quote all sorts of doctors and people, the Holy Spirit is just bored. But when you begin to lift up Jesus crucified, He says, "I will bear testimony to that." I believe that is the primary need of the church today.***

In this country today where we are surrounded by Moslems. Did you realize that? *Millions of Moslems. And there is nothing going to reach the Moslem mind than the demonstration of the supernatural.* And we have an opportunity. Instead of having to go to them, they have come to us! We could not go to their nations and proclaim the Gospel because we would be put in prison or executed. But *God* has arranged for them to come here. What's the church doing about it? It is time the church rose up and said, *"We will demonstrate to them that Jesus is alive!"*

Let's turn to 2 Timothy, chapter 3 again for a moment. I just want to point out something there. Remember, this is all about the last days. That's the whole theme of this chapter. And he says in verse 8, ***"Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses..."*** (Jannes and Jambres were the magicians of Egypt that resisted Moses) ***so do these also resist the truth:***

men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as was the folly of Jannes and Jambres.” So what Paul is saying is the contest that took place between Moses and the magicians of Egypt in the court of Pharaoh is *going to be re-enacted in these days*, between the servants of Jesus Christ and the practitioners of the occult. And it is not going to be settled by theology. *It is a contest of power!* Whose power is greater? And bear in mind the magicians of Egypt had a lot of power. The first three miracles that Moses did they could repeat. They could turn their rods into snakes. They could turn water into blood. They could call up frogs out of the river. *All of that was supernatural.* But when they got beyond that and Moses went further, they said, *“This is the finger of God. Now we’re out of our depth.”*

I don’t know what you ever thought about Moses. I particularly like Moses and Aaron. They went there with the rod and Pharaoh said, “Show me what you can do, you guys.” So Moses threw down the rod and it became a snake. Amazingly enough, Pharaoh was not much impressed. So he said to his magicians, “Can you do that?” And they said, “We can.” They threw down their rods and *they* became snakes. But there was one thing that further happened. Moses’ snake ate up the snakes of the magicians. I don’t know whether you ever thought about the scene that followed? The magicians walked out without any rods and Moses’ rod was much thicker and stronger. *That’s how it is going to be, you understand? It is going to be: whose rod wins!* People disagree with me and sometimes I say, “Well listen, don’t let’s argue. Let’s throw down our rods and see which snake wins.” Really, that’s where it’s at. It’s not argument. It’s demonstration. That’s what’s needed. And particularly in the gifts of the Spirit we need the three revelatory gifts, the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and the discerning of spirits. The word of knowledge shows us Satan’s operations, how he is working in the supernatural realm. The word of wisdom shows us how to counter his actions and defeat him. And discerning of spirits shows us when we are face to face with demonic power and activity. *We desperately need those in the church today!*

Let’s move on. The next and sixth point in my outline is, *We must apply the power of jubilant praise and bold proclamation!* And there is one Scripture has become a favorite with me, in Jeremiah, chapter 31 and verse 7. This is concerning the restoration of Israel in these last days. ***For thus says the Lord, “Sing with gladness for Jacob and shout among the chief of the nations. Proclaim, give praise and say: ‘O Lord, save your people, the remnant of Israel.’”*** There are three weapons, or three activities, spoken of there, which are crucial for us to understand. They are *praise, proclaim and pray*. Praying is this, saying, “O, Lord, save your people, the remnant of Israel.” Now the Lord has declared He’s going to save the remnant of Israel. You could say, ‘Well He could do it without our praying!’ But God says in another place, *“I will not do it until I’m enquired for to do it.”* You understand? Praying is *our contribution to the outworking of God’s purposes in the earth*. And God, somebody said, has *chosen* to need us. He *could* have done without us but He is not going to do it.

But praying is not just thinking for anything we want and asking for it. Praying is discovering God's revealed purpose in Scripture. And then praying for the outworking of that purpose. Summed up really beautifully in the words of the Virgin Mary. When the angel brought the promise she said, ***"Be it unto me according to thy word."*** That's the most powerful prayer you can ever pray. Paul said, ***"God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we could ask or think."*** How? By fulfilling His Word. What God has promised in His Word is *far above anything* that we in our natural mind could ask or think. So prayer is not going to God with a shopping list. It is *intelligently discovering God's purpose* and then *aligning ourselves with it*. And it takes *persistence*. There are some things that Ruth and I have been praying for ten years. They have not come yet. When that happens, you know, you discover whether you are praying in faith or unbelief. Because if you are praying in unbelief you say, "I'm praying for ten years and nothing has happened." But if you are praying in faith you say, "The answer is *ten years nearer than when I started praying!*" Jesus said, ***"Men ought to persist in prayer and not to faint."*** I think Ruth and I discovered that this is one of the great tests and shaping instruments of Christian character. It is persistence in prayer, discovering the will of God and asking God to do what He said He will do.

Then there is praise. In Psalm 102. This is again a prophecy of the restoration of Zion at the close of this age, it says in verse 18, ***"after the prophecy of the restoration of Zion, This will be written for the generation to come: that a people yet to be created may praise the Lord."*** I believe that refers to this time of the restoration of Zion. God is creating a people with one supreme commitment. To do what? To praise Him, that's right. It is as though God says, "Well, My people have been so slack, for so many centuries to give Me the kind of praise that I desire, that I'm going to *create* a people especially to praise Me." And I think the charismatic movement is the beginning of that. I think there are many weaknesses and failures in the charismatic movement, but there has come forth a new level of praise, at least a vision of what praise could be. And how important it is to praise God. In Psalm 8 David said, ***"Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou hast ordained strength because of thine enemies that they might still or silence the enemy and the avenger."*** And when Jesus quoted that in Matthew 21, verse 9, He changed the words Thou hath ordained strength into Thou hath *perfected praise*. So what is the ordained strength of God's people? Perfected praise. What does that do? It silences who? The *enemy and the avenger*. Why do we need to silence Satan? What is he doing all this time? Accusing us. You say, "Why does not God stop Satan from accusing us?" Because God said, "I have given *you* the means to stop Satan. If you learn to praise Me the way I want to be praised, it will silence Satan."

I was preaching in Lausanne with a French interpreter some years back. I quoted this and it was quoted in French. And I understand French and I was gripped by the phrase, which says: "Praise *imposes silence on the enemy and the avenger*." What a wonderful revelation that we can *impose silence* on Satan! We can say to him, "Shut up!" Isn't that marvelous? How do we do that? By praise. If God's people would take the time and learn to praise Him and spend *hours* in praising Him, with pure hearts and honest motives, not trying to twist God's arm, but

praising Him because He is *worthy* of praise, the *whole atmosphere around would change!* People's hearts would be opened. The dark powers that have bound men and women would be shaken and driven out. I tell you we are just on the fringe of a mighty ocean which is the power of praise.

And then, going back to Jeremiah 37, Proclamation! This is something that God has begun to quicken for Ruth and me in the last few years in a new measure. You see, proclaiming is actually the activity of a herald. In the New Testament the word that is used for a preacher is the word for a herald. Paul said, that God had made him a teacher, an apostle and a herald, a proclaimer. And since I started my radio program I have got an ever increasing vision of what can be achieved just by proclaiming the truth of the Word of God. One of the great strengths of Islam, (as we've been speaking about Islam), is that for more than thirteen centuries, five times every day, out of that mosque has gone the proclamation about Allah and Mohammed and that has created a darkness over those nations, which if you have never experienced that, you have no idea of its intensity. What is that? *That is the power of false proclamation!* We need to overcome that power with the power of *true* proclamation. *We need to proclaim the truth.* As you saw, Ruth and I have got an armory of Scriptures that we use to proclaim. And we proclaim many of them several times a week. Let's go to Deuteronomy 33, verse 25, just to give you a little example. Now when we proclaim them, we turn 'you' in the Bible into 'us', you see. ***"The bolts of our gates will be iron and brass and our strength will equal our days. There is no one like the God of Jeshurun, who rides on the heavens to help us and on the clouds in his majesty. The eternal God is our refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms. He will drive out our enemy before us, saying destroy him!"***

We'll do one more , this is just one verse. 2 Corinthians 9, verse 8 is the basis of our faith for the financial supply of our ministry, and again we change 'you' into 'us'. ***"God is able to make all grace abound toward us that we always, having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work."*** When you say that every day, how can you possibly fear any lack? And notice, it is grace. I want to tell you that. You don't have to *earn* it, you have to *believe* it.

We come to the last point in requirements for the church to be victorious. Revelation 12:11. Many of you know this Scripture. ***"They [the believers on earth] overcame him... who's him? Satan! You realize that we are in direct conflict with Satan? Its very clear, "They overcame him..." there's nothing in between. It is a person-to-person conflict! "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony. And they did not love their lives to the death."*** That's really another example of proclamation. I teach that this means that we overcome Satan when we testify personally to what the Word of God says the blood of Jesus does for us. We proclaim it. When you do that, you overcome Satan. But you have got to be a certain kind of person. It says of these people, ***"They did not love their lives to the death."*** What does that mean? It means this: that it was more important for them to do the will of God than to stay alive. What is that? That is *commitment*. Satan is not afraid of uncommitted

Christians! In the last resort he can wear them down. But those who are prepared to lay down their lives rather than deny the Lord or withdraw their testimony, they are the overcomers. Amen.

Let's pray, shall we, as we close. Let's pray for the church, ourselves included.

"O God, we thank You that your Word has made so clear to us the conditions for victory and above all the glorious possibility of victory. And we want to confess, Lord, our sins and our shortcomings, that many times we have not believed You and not obeyed You. Lord, we are sorry and we ask your forgiveness. On behalf of ourselves and the whole church of Jesus Christ. And we pray, Lord, that by the power of your Holy Spirit you will enable us to meet the conditions to be overcomers for your glory. In Jesus' name. Amen."