

Spiritual Authority Transitioning From Self-Reliance

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We have taken a rather expansive look at this whole matter of spiritual warfare and spiritual authority. One piece of the full picture remains to be presented and *that* piece has to do with how does God—knowing all of the ways in which humans are vulnerable, knowing that they were created as an *inferior* creation that demonstrates the love of God by the mere *fact* of its inferiority in respect to the higher orders of creation, the angels that were made before—how does God protect humans? And at the same time, how does He accomplish the fact of causing this inferior creation *to transcend* and be worthy of the service of the angels, confounding the angels who rebelled against God in the process? How does He do it?

After we've gotten through *this* discussion we will talk about some of the practical applications of this to common church doctrines: such as the role of women, the role of men and *all* of that... but you see, apart from understanding these crucial cornerstones of the truth, we're simply arguing doctrine in an environment that changes from one time to another. And what might be perceived in one *particular* time frame as being a very satisfying way of doing things will, in a contemporary setting, seem to be almost like a Neanderthal's approach to the problem. For example, if we talk about the role of women in the body of Christ, in terms of this competitive environment in which we presently live, the answers that you would give today would be *vastly* different from the answers you would have given in the nineteenth century.

Well, how is it that God is the same yesterday, today and forever (Inserted – actual verse – **“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” – Hebrews 13:8**) and what sort of uniformity and continuity might we have in such important considerations as *that*? How are we meant to even understand these things? Well, the fact *is* that *the context* of our understanding commonly *is not Biblical*, it's not the Biblical context, it's just a *contemporary* context and the contemporary changes *the next day*. So without knowing what the context is we are just being “slung around” in confusion and that's exactly how the enemy would have us. So after this last piece of the *whole picture* of spiritual authority, we will begin to *apply* it, and in the applications you'll begin to see some brilliant insights that God is giving to the Body of Christ in our day and in our time.

Absent these insights, it's easy to see why the society around us considers that we now live in the post-Christian era because so much of what we're saying, coming out of traditional Christianity, is just simply irrelevant to our time. Yet *what is true* transcends all time frames, every epoch, every era of man and is true yesterday, it's true today and it will be true tomorrow. It will always be true *without* change. That's why it's so vitally important to understand these subjects from a heavenly point of view, from the realities that are operating spiritually. I'll bet you that you've never heard a discussion of spiritual warfare prefaced by what we have talked about and yet, since this *is true* and *because* it is true, if you take this context away from it what can you have except the sensationalism that carries the day in any particular epoch? Who can rely on that? In what way is this actually true? So, as we pursue this last point stay closely focused because, in my view, these are extraordinarily important matters.

How does God manage to cause this inferior creation—which *by* its inferiority demonstrates God's love—that He could love a creation so vastly unlike Himself. In the process, how does He protect this inferior creation from the superior creation that wants to kill it, out of jealousy and also out of envy toward God, desiring to prove to God that God's decision to choose the inferior creation over the superior creation was the wrong choice? And then finally, how does God actually *transform the nature* of the inferior creation so that it becomes even like God? Pretty tall task, I would say, but here we go.

God decided that His plan was to come *in the form* of man. By coming in the form of man, Satan never anticipated how God would do what He would do. This is a plan that God hid in Himself. This plan, at one level, reveals the incredible humility of God and the humility of God is actually the test of His love. Could God come in the form of this lower creation? You see, because we *are* the lower creation it's nearly impossible for us to appreciate the *test* that this was to God, Himself.

It would be somewhat like this: let us say that we, somehow, could create “mud creatures” and the fact that we could create them—and they would be so unlike us—would be an indication of how vastly superior we would be to them. But let's say that *your intention* was to actually be identified (you the creator) as one of these “mud creatures”. That would be a very different thing. It's not something that Satan would ever have thought of doing, himself. As far as Satan was concerned, such a thing would *prove* that God was crazy... that the “Old Man” was insane. That was Satan's position, that this choice of these inferior humans as God's heirs was a mistake and that since God made a mistake, He could not be trusted as God. But then when God decided to come in the form of humans He “upped the ante”.

Earlier on in this series as we talked about this, I posed the hypothetical: if Satan had a child to be born into the world, what circumstances would attend the birth of such a child? The answer would be: the most opulent of human circumstances; the greatest sense of security would accompany the birth of that child... *all of that*. So, when God

brought *His* Son into the world and He was born in a manger... in a meal trough, in a stable, Satan wasn't looking for Him. And in that sense, God shows that He takes complete advantage of Satan's blindness. Let me give you another example along the same vein. Let us say that (again, looking at all of this from Satan's point of view) if Satan knew that the enemy of his child controlled the armies of the nation in which territory the child would be born and that the specific intent of the *king* of that human nation would be to destroy the child when it was born, what sort of security do you suppose Satan would have provided for not only *the birth* of that child, but for his early developing years? Well, again I would suggest that he would have his elite troops guard the child's every move.

Is that what God did when His Son was born in the world? Did He have the elite, angelic troops guard His Son's every move when He was a young child? No. How does God hide His Son from Herod—who was the king of the nation in which territory Jesus was born—who has a specific intent to kill Jesus, and kills *all* the male children about the age of Jesus and under? How did God actually hide His Son? Once again, God hid him by taking full advantage of Satan's blindness. God sends His Son *into Egypt*. Now, from a Jew's standpoint, what did Egypt represent? Egypt was a place known for the hard and bitter slavery of Israel for something like 430 years. So any Jew in Egypt could only be thought of as the descendent of slaves... clearly second, maybe third class.

Yes, but you see, pride wouldn't look for you where you would be considered a third class citizen. Pride would have you be *not just* a first class citizen but also *the king*, the ruler. Jesus was a King... is a King, is the King of *all* kings and the Ruler of all rulers but in His earthly time God hid His Son in Egypt, a place in which He was secure because of the blindness of pride. In the same way, when God chose to come into the ranks and the realm of humankind, as a human being, Satan wasn't looking for Him. Now, He comes into the world and He lives; he's exposed to everything that Satan's Kosmos, his world, his entrapment meant to trap you in the need for provision and protection by the methodology of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life (what needs to be done, how can it be done and can I do it); from those clawing tentacles, Jesus is kept perfectly above it; kept away from it, in that *He never*, on any occasion, *relied on any of that*.

Instead, what He relied on was exactly what Adam and Eve relied on *prior* to their fall. They fellowshiped with God and so their wisdom, their counsel, their understanding came from what God showed them. Jesus said, "I only do what I see the Father do." (Inserted – actual verse—**“Jesus gave them this answer: ‘I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.’” – John 5:19**) And their provision and their protection came from the Lord, Himself. He watched over them day and night; He provided for them.

Jesus would put it in these terms, **“Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”** (Inserted – **Matthew 8:20**) but then He would respond by saying, “But take no thought for the morrow because the morrow will take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. But seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Inserted – actual verses—**“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”** – **Matthew 6:33,34**)

He lived what He taught and what he taught was the truth that Adam and Eve had experienced prior to the Fall because in that time there was no one pulling upon their souls to draw them into a reliance on themselves. So in this way Jesus taught us that it is possible to live *in this present world* according to the standards and the norms of a Heavenly reliance, *that is* that we might *rely* upon the Spirit of God instructing and informing *our* spirits as to the Truth, as opposed to living by what our souls tell us is true. What’s interesting is that when someone becomes a believer in Jesus Christ, God takes them through a very rigorous process by which they learn that they *should not ever* trust in their own understanding or lean upon what they could do for themselves. (Inserted – actual verse—**“Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and lean not on your own understanding...”** – **Proverbs 3:5**) Instead, God teaches us to hear the voice of God and to walk in the Spirit.

Well to accomplish this, not only did God come in the form of human beings but, in addition to this, He came and He made Himself available to us through which process we now could come to God. This *process* by which we can come to God, this *means* by which we can come to God is in the Body of Christ. So when you are saved what God does is He gives you His Spirit and His Spirit comes into you and resurrects you, from the dead as it were, opens your understanding to this *other* way, other than your soul. *Moment by moment the Spirit of God teaches you; event by event He shows you; time by time God leads you until a whole different mindset is released in you... it’s called “the mind of Christ” and it is the activation of the mind that is in your spirit—your spirit has a mind and your soul has a mind. When your spirit’s mind is alert, what is real to you is what God says is real. When your soul’s mind is alert, what is real to you is what your emotions and your thought processes tell you is real and there is this real conflict.*

There is this conflict about reality that goes on in the minds of everyone. And when you are a believer in Jesus Christ you are not exempt from this conflict, because what is going on is a transition from what is the normal and the regular way of being—which is to be governed by yourself, to do what you want to do in the way that you want to do it, pursuing the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life which are your methodologies by which you get to this place of what needs to be done, what can I do about it and can I actually do it. You are transitioning from *that form of self-reliance—*

utter self-reliance, utter capabilities of the soul—and you are learning *this* truth: that you do not live on bread alone but you live by what God says. (Inserted –**“He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every work that comes from the mouth of the Lord.”** – Deuteronomy 8:3)

Why is the term “man shall not live by bread alone” such an important term? Because that *speaks* to one of the two preoccupations of the human soul and that is: “How am I going to be provided for?” Everyone knows that when you become a believer God seems to take personal interest in transitioning you from what you have been able to do, *and do so well* for yourself to the place where you seem like you are broken. You don’t have any abilities, you don’t have any capabilities and you have to rely on God, and most people *resent* God for that when they are going through it because we have this attitude, “If God would only touch *my* plans and make *my* plans work then I would be rich, I’d be famous, I’d have an abundance and I can give some of it to God and I can be a famous person. I can say things that will bless God. And we’re offended because God doesn’t want that.

Well, these are the ways *the soul* thinks of loving God, “Out of the excess of what I can accomplish, I’ll do some things for God.” That, I assure you, is *not* loving God. Loving God is when you have *nothing* and you’ve been made to be nothing *by God*, that you say, “Nevertheless, not what I will but let Thy will be done.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”** – Luke 22:42) Then you are speaking as one who loves God more than he loves himself. The other way is that you will give to God *out of the excess* of what He’s helped you to get. *No wonder* God isn’t interested in that point of view. No wonder, when we offer to God all of these wonderful schemes of ours, and these schemes are always about how we can be independent of God.

We offer to God the scheme of how we can get rich, but it’s never just so we can get rich, it’s always about, “Well, if You will make me rich, I’ll give you some, I’ll help *your cause*, I’ll help *your people*.” The interesting thing about that is that when people have that attitude *they never have enough*... there is never enough; they never give. People like that are not the givers. The givers, typically, are the people who give who don’t have a whole lot. Now occasionally you’ll meet someone who is wealthy who really does love the Lord and gives, but the norm is for the “little ones”... what we would consider “little ones” for *them* to give. So it’s a farce. *All the soul really wants is to be assured of its independence from God.*

One of the reasons that I understand this perfectly well is because these are the very battles I, myself, have gone through. I always knew that God would require me to live by faith but in my own view of the matter, if I were going to have to live by faith I wanted to have a “fully funded” walk of faith. I was willing to give to God out of the

excess of what I had because, you see, the soul of *any* man, any person, doesn't give in willingly, doesn't give up his life willingly. So, the process by which we are transformed in our thinking is a process of death and resurrection where God *takes you through and brings you through*. The reason, obviously, and I've made this point but I'll belabor the point to hammer it home, the reason that this is God's way is that as long as we remain in the soul; *as long as our soul governs our activities we are always going to operate out of the need to provide for ourselves and the need to protect ourselves*, we're always going to do that. And we will do that by total self-reliance on these three lusts: what needs to be done, how can it be done and can I do it, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, and this is the entrapment that Satan has set for us.

Now it is when we decide to listen to the Spirit of God, as He speaks to our spirits, that we begin to be free of this kind of entanglement. That is what the Scriptures refer to when they say, **“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom...”** (Inserted – **Psalm 111:10a**) It's not about being afraid of God; *it is the reliance on God as our very life* which is the beginnings of the foundation of being wise because, among other things, it's the place at which we become “unhooked” from the ability of the enemy to entrap us at will. And it's the place at which we begin to turn to God in which condition we are able to escape the enemy. *Furthermore, when God saves us, the manner of His salvation is that He first saves us by saving our spirits, then He saves the soul, progressively, and then eventually the body is renewed or transformed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye and all is resurrected from the dead; planted a natural body, raised a spiritual body; planted as terrestrial raised as celestial.* (Inserted – actual verse—**“So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.”** – **I Corinthians 15:42-44**)

Now, when He saves the spirit what He does is that He gives us the Holy Spirit- Spirit to spirit. **Romans 8:11** says, **“And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.”** That means that when you are dead His Spirit comes in, fills you and resurrects you. When you are saved in that way then the Spirit of God *assembles* you into the Body of Christ. I'll spend some time in future messages detailing this for you. When you are put into the Body of Christ, you are *assembled into* the corporate reality of Jesus Christ on the earth. So He didn't just come as a man; he now is here also as a spiritual man, and that was God's plan. First He defeated the enemy by coming on the turf as a natural man and subjecting Himself to everything the devil had to throw at Him. Yet He never once relied on any of the schemes of the devil but He left us in the place of where He used to be, physically. He has left us a spiritual reality: *one new man, a corporate man, the man Christ Jesus, Himself.*

To this spiritual man He adds everyone who receives Him and He adds him by putting His Spirit in you, resurrecting you, and the Spirit puts you in this Person. Now in *that* way, the human being, who is normally subject to Satan escapes from the control of Satan because he is *transformed* from the natural to the spiritual, from the Kingdom of Darkness to the Kingdom of God and in *that* way, God not only protects you but *He lifts you up*—way beyond the natural—transforms your nature and causes you to have a divine nature, which is the very nature of God, Himself, as He dwells in you. This transformed nature in you *is the very evidence* that when God chose humans He *knew* what He was doing. He didn't *tell* the angels what He was doing; He did it anyway, but now He is revealing to *all*, to those who stood by Him and those who fell, alike. He is revealing to all... *through us*, who are the Body of Christ, all of what God had in His mind from before the foundations of the world, *which He accomplished in Christ*. And now He shows to the principalities and powers in the heavenly realms, *through us, the manifold wisdom of God*. This is God as the *victor* in this conflict of spiritual warfare. We'll continue this discussion by looking at the specific permutations of it. I'm Sam Soleyn, God bless you.

Scripture References:

Hebrews 13:8

John 5:19

Matthew 8:20

Matthew 6:33,34

Proverbs 3:5

Deuteronomy 8:3

Luke 22:42

Psalms 111:10a

I Corinthians 15: 42-44

Romans 8:11