

Spiritual Authority The Reminder of God's Provision

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Studio Session 12
01/2003

Now this program represents a continuation of a previous program in which we were talking about *the applications* of the context of spiritual warfare and the understanding of spiritual authority. Spiritual warfare, of course, is the inherent surroundings into which every believer is born again and in which every believer continues to live. The fact that we don't understand that puts us at a great disadvantage. This is not meant to make anyone unusually worried or scared because God clearly understands what it means for us to be born in the context of war. By the way, it's not unusual that this should be true of God's people. Moses was born within the context of slavery in Egypt with an enemy that was actively hostile toward his very existence. Jesus was born in the context of this same hostility where a king—Herod—wanted him dead from the time that He was born. And there will come a point where the dragon will attempt to devour the child that is born out of the woman from the moment of his birth. We see the picture, in **Revelation**, of the dragon standing before the woman waiting to devour her and her child; **Revelation 12**.(Inserted – actual verse—**“His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and slung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born.” – Revelation 12:4**)

So the idea of Christians being born again into a context of war and an environment of war, although they are born into the Kingdom, the thing that surrounds the Kingdom—that surrounds the life of the believer—is that of warfare. We, on the other hand, typically think of this “being born again” as an end to our troubles and, essentially, just a jog from there into the end of our lives and being with God. The failure to see that we live in an environment of war and conflict as believers—we're born into it and we live in it every day—is that which hampers our understanding of Scripture. And one of the things that we've been pursuing and have spent a previous program pursuing was the *role* of women. And we see that without this context of warfare, spiritual authority cannot be properly understood. If you think of spiritual authority within the present church context it's really a matter of who gets up in the pulpit and who gets to preach, and when you consider that in this church culture, who gets to preach means who has the greatest influence, who has the greatest authority, who leads the denomination or who leads the

church and, therefore, who is important and who is beloved of God. You realize how irrational that point of view has become and how unconnected to reality it really is.

Spiritual warfare and spiritual authority are not subjects simply to be discussed in classes on Sunday morning or midweek. These are about the operative realities in which we live and breathe every day. It's not about getting up in the pulpit and preaching a message or who gets to stand on the platform to prophesy to people; it's a way of life... *it's a way of life*. Whoever wants this artificial platform experience I would suggest that there are some things fundamentally missing in their lives and they are looking for validation through some sort of public acclaim. If you are called to something public, that is one thing; but if you are not, it doesn't make your life any less valuable or any less tumultuous. The fact is that you were born into an environment of war and a woman should not pray or prophesy, *uncovered*. It does not say she should not pray; it does not say she shouldn't prophesy, but it says she should not do so, *uncovered*.

When Jesus came into the world... did He have a covering? The answer is, yes, of course. Who was His covering? His covering was the Father, right? *It says that in I Corinthians 11, "...and the head of Christ is God."* (Inserted – **I Corinthians 11:3b**) Why did Jesus, when He came into the world, *need* a covering? Because He was coming into the world... divesting Himself of His divinity and taking on humanity. God said, about this, in the book of **Hebrews** that God made Him to be a little lower than the angels. (Inserted – actual verse—**"You made him a little lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor and put everything under his feet."** –**Hebrews 2:7,8**)

The first run-in that a human had with angels went badly for the human being. Eve, in the Garden, and Adam, in the Garden, "lost", and it sent the human race on this "spin" that it's been in for 6,000 years. Now *Adam had a covering*—it was God. Eve had a covering—it was Adam. Adam did not rely on God and Eve did not rely on Adam. What was the result? Sin was introduced into the world. Now, Jesus is the last Adam. When He comes into the world, does He have a covering? The answer is yes, He had the same covering that Adam had—*God*. Unlike Adam, the first Adam, *the last Adam only did what He saw the Father doing*. Why did Jesus *choose* to be this way? The answer is very simple; it is a question of authority. "Of myself, I can do nothing." Jesus said. (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**) Why? Because, diminished as He was, He was subject to the influence of the demonic, and if He relied—in that state of diminishment—if He relied upon His own authority and His own abilities, He *would* have been defeated. Instead, He only did what He saw the Father doing.

A classic example is: in the temptation of Jesus, recorded in **Luke 3** and **Matthew 4**, every time that Jesus was tempted in that recorded set of temptations... all three of them,

what did Jesus do? How did He fight with the devil? What was the strength of His resistance to the enemy? In *every* case *He only did* what He heard the Father say; *He said what He heard the Father saying at the time and He did what the Father was doing... at the moment.* The first temptation—command these stones be made into bread—what does Jesus say? Does He say, “I rebuke you, Satan, I’m not going to do what you tell me to do.” No. He listened to what the Father said and He said *that*. He did not do anything on His own authority. And what did He do then? He said, “It is written, man shall not live on bread alone.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“The tempter came to him and said, ‘If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.’ Jesus answered, ‘It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ‘If you are the Son of God,’ he said, ‘throw yourself down. For it is written: ‘He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’ Jesus answered him, ‘It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ‘All this I will give you,’ he said, ‘if you will bow down and worship me.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’” – Matthew 4:3-10)**)

Where did he get that Scripture from, unless the Spirit brought it to His attention? The Spirit, who served the Father in relationship to preparing Christ, did what He was doing. So Jesus did not undertake, by His own authority, this warfare with the enemy. How does a man protect himself in this war with the enemy? Well he, too, has a covering. The covering of the man is Christ, so he does what Christ is doing and he should do nothing on his own. How should the woman respond when she is, *as everybody is*, in this state of warfare? She should seek and be under the covering of her husband. Now, she should not engage the enemy on her own. Man, when he encounters the enemy refers to Christ—there is an additional layer of protection given to the woman, and that layer of protection is her husband. You may ask me, “Well, what if you’re not married and you don’t have a husband?” Well, the father, for the unmarried young woman—the father who is a believer is that covering. When she is married, then she leaves father and mother, like the man does, and the husband is the covering. If she is widowed, then her oldest son who is a believer is the covering. If the father is *not* a believer (of the unmarried woman) and the son of the widowed woman is not a believer or she has no son, then one of the elders should serve in that capacity.

So every woman has protection. If she is widowed by a divorce then provision should be made for her. Either she would go back to the care of her father or one of the elders should provide care for her. And this is not so much the emphasis of this subject at the moment—who, exactly should watch over the woman—*but the fact that she should be doubly covered.* Now you might say, “Now wait a minute, wait a minute... this appears

to have some measure of inequality to it because the Scriptures say that we are neither male nor female, we are all the Sons of God. Therefore, a woman, just like a man, should be under the covering of Christ.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”** –Galatians 3:28,29) Let me set up the answer, first by explaining to you what’s going on here and then we’ll look at the Scripture, itself, from the book of **Galatians**.

Now, every human being—male, female—every human being is weaker than the enemy that opposes us. The enemy who opposes us is angelic... fallen, but still very, powerful—superior in abilities and capabilities to the human being. So this could not possibly be a discussion of whether the man is more important than the woman but rather, how is the man and how is the woman to be protected in war? Understand *this* about war: if you send everyone into war without a structure of authority, then the new, and green, recruits have very diminished opportunities to survive, compared to the veteran soldiers. Everyone who deploys an army sends a structure of authority with it, primarily for the preservation of those who are subject to the authority of the king. The king’s business is, first and foremost, to protect the well-being of his soldiers in the field of battle and the objective of all military encounters is to accomplish the military objective with the minimal loss of life—the minimum loss of life.

Now, that being so, it is not surprising to us that there is a structure of authority but it still doesn’t address the question, “Is the woman inferior to the man? Is this the reason that God has put the woman under the care of the man?” The answer is that *this* is rubbish. This is the sort of contemporary thinking that shows that we do not understand the matter of spiritual authority and therefore, the matter of spiritual warfare. What exactly is going on? Here is what is going on: male and female—man and woman—are *equally* vulnerable to the superior enemy who opposes us. The man is just as weak, in relationship to the demonic, as the woman is, and together, neither man nor woman and both man and woman, cannot, by themselves—underscore those terms—*by themselves*, oppose and resist the demonic. They depend upon God doing it through them. *Now that’s a pretty huge article of faith.*

How does God instruct us regarding this truth? How are we fully reminded of this truth?

We are meant *to live* in this truth—how does God cause us to understand *that* every day—*that He acts on our behalf and that is the only way that we are able to successfully engage the demonic, where two can put to flight ten thousand?* (Inserted – actual verse—**“How could one man chase a thousand, or two put ten thousand to flight, unless their Rock had sold them, unless the Lord had given them up?”** – Deuteronomy 32:30) Understand this: it’s foolish to think that two *unbelievers* can put to flight ten thousand, *or that two believers, on their own*, can put to flight ten thousand. This is a reference to the fact that we are operating by the power and the authority of One who is greater than our enemy; who will engage our enemy—on our behalf—because we are

obedient to the structure of authority that He has set up.

Jesus put it this way, “Of myself, I can do nothing.”(Inserted – **John 5:19**) And when He engaged the enemy, in the recorded temptations in the wilderness, recorded in both **Matthew** and **Luke**, in no occasion did He, Himself, when confronted with the enemy, with Satan, himself, did He *do anything* of Himself. Three times He said, “It is written.” *God* gave Him what to say *at the moment* and that’s how He responded. How are we meant to live in this truth? Well just as God gives us symbols for every great thing, He gives us symbols for these things as well. The man, then, becomes a representative and the woman becomes a representative. The man becomes a representative of God, who has greater authority, in respect to the demonic than we have and He acts on our behalf. The woman represents man’s condition, generally (man and woman) having *less* authority than is required to deal with the demonic; requiring the woman to depend upon the man; requiring the man to act for the woman. What is the picture presented there? *The picture is that of man picturing God’s role, having greater authority, and woman picturing man’s role of having less authority and just as God acts for us—and we can depend on it—so the man, who has greater authority—God gave him greater authority for this reason—that he might act on behalf of the woman to demonstrate the truth that God acts on behalf of all of His children, all of the time. That’s how we can lay hold of this truth in practical reality and live in it every day.*

That’s how we lay hold of the truth, for example, of communion or the Lord’s Supper—that Jesus died for us, was raised from the dead and so on. How do we lay hold of it? Regularly we eat the Lord’s Supper. What would happen if we went ten years without any sort of reminder of this kind? Well, simply put, *we would forget*. Is this an important reminder? But of course it is. It’s a reminder of our very salvation—the price that was paid. Is it important that we remember what was done on our behalf in terms of the defeat of the enemy? It’s not just important that we remember it; it is actually how we are meant to live in it. So, rather than this presenting to us a picture of the superiority of man and the inferiority of the woman, it presents a picture of Christ and the Church in which Christ is strong and mighty on behalf of the Church. And the Church *survives* because of its submission to that authority. So the woman instructs the man by her submitting to him, how he should submit to Christ; that’s the way a man learns it, and together, man and woman understand that, of themselves, they can put nothing to flight, let alone ten thousand. But, *in Christ*, they are able to. So that’s how we take up this great truth.

Therefore, the greater authority in dealing with the demonic that man has than woman, is meant *for the benefit* of the woman and not a show that man is greater than woman. In fact, it is to show both man and woman how God acts on behalf of us and we can rely on that. If a human being can be taught not to be selfish, but to lay down his life for his wife, then we can all believe that Jesus laid down His life for the Bride. And if that model of redemption is lost from the earth then we actually have nothing to believe in,

except perhaps, that we can convince ourselves in some sort of distant way that maybe this actually works. But we have no legacy. You see, this is about structuring our society upon a concept of godliness rather than the equality issues of the liberation movement of women that has made its way into the church, and weak men—weak men, meaning men who absolutely will not stand up for their wives—acquiescing, and throwing their wives, as it were, to the wolves, more properly, like Adam, putting their wives at risk. Do you know that in the Garden of Eden, Adam *had to have been present* and had to have neglected his duty to protect his wife for this to have worked out the way it did? Because the fall of man could not have been accidentally accomplished. Adam had to have acquiesced.

When I see women rising up and throwing off the authority of their husbands or of the covering that God has put in their lives, I know that something is true, and *that is* that if they have husbands, that their husbands are weak men—selfish men—who would not look out for them and would not lay down their lives for them. Or I know that their fathers have been abusive of them and neglectful of them. But where godly authority *works*, it *always* works for the benefit of the woman; it always works for the preservation of the woman. This is not about who can prophesy better... can a woman prophesy better than a man? No, it's not competition among humans; it's about who is opposed to both man and woman. And I would urge women today—godly women—to reject the teachings of such women as would teach them to overthrow this authority that God has set for the preservation of women, and rise up on their own.

This is the spirit of Jezebel... it is the spirit of Jezebel, and the result can only be disastrous, in the same way that disaster befell Eve, and the human race, so disaster inevitably befalls those women, *and their households*, who would reject this as godly authority. Now, you've heard me make abundantly clear this fact: that we are not talking about a man being superior to a woman. We, instead, are talking about the fact that God has set authority for the benefit of those subject to that authority *so that the woman can prophesy, so that the woman can pray*. Frankly, authority in the Kingdom could *never* be considered as legitimate *if it prevents* the woman from becoming all that God meant for her to be, and authority is *not* meant for that, because then it would be God setting authority to forbid the very thing that He's put a woman to be. That's nonsense, and the only reason that we can possibly come up with these conclusions is because we do not understand the *basis* of this authority—it is for the survival of people who are meant to be engaged in the conflict of war.

Now, what I want to do very quickly is touch something from the book of **Galatians** that has often been used to suggest otherwise, and it is that Scripture that says, **“You are all sons of God...”**(this is from the book of **Galatians, chapter 3, verse 26**) **“You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to**

Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." – (Galatians 3:26-29) That's interesting. Do you realize that this Scripture says that we are *neither male nor female*? It's interesting to me that when men want to abandon their places they will quote this Scripture and they will say, "Well, we are *all* the Sons of God." Well, let me point out that *that* Sonship is neither male nor female. It's a sonship that's not related to gender... it's neither. So, the women do not stop being females and now *become* males. The sonship spoken of here is neither male *nor* female, so it's neither female *nor* male, no more than it is Greek nor Jew, no more than it is free or in slavery. What is he talking about then? Is he saying that suddenly a woman is not a woman and a man is not a man? No, he's talking about a *transcendent* sonship which has with it, this: if we are Abraham's seed then we are *heirs according to the promise*.

This is the spiritual reality of sonship, making us the *heirs* of God. This doesn't, now, suddenly operate to set aside authority because *that authority is the functioning of the Kingdom of God on the earth*. But we are designed to be God's heirs and some of that inheritance we'll receive now and some we'll receive in the coming ages. I once said to a man, who insisted that his wife was no longer a female, I said, "Well okay, does that mean that any man is free to ask your wife to go to dinner with him... if they are both believers? If you say that she is not female then she is not your wife because she is not female. Only a female can be a wife." And Adamic man laughed and said, "Well, I guess that if she would consent to it, that would be okay." And I heard Adam all over again. *The failure to understand this Scripture is working a diabolical result on women, and this teaching must be rejected in the Body in favor of the liberty of women*. This teaching doesn't liberate women; it throws them to the wolves—that's exactly what Adam did—and *it is not what Christ does*. Christ protects His Bride, and a man should protect his wife by watching over her in the fear of the Lord. This is an example of Christ in the Church to teach us the truth that we are free to rely on the supreme God who overcomes our enemy on our behalf. We'll continue to look at these ramifications of spiritual authority in ensuing broadcasts. I'm Sam Soleyn and I'll see you then.

Scripture References:

Revelation 12:4

I Corinthians 11:3b

Hebrews 2:7,8

John 5:19

Matthew 4:3-10

Galatians 3:28,29

Deuteronomy 32:30

Galatians 3:26-29