

The Kingdom of God Power and Authority

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Jesus made the promise to us that upon the truth that He is the Son of God, He would establish those whom He had called out. **Matthew 16** is where He said, “Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.” – Matthew 16:18**) That’s a pretty tall order. He’s promising that hell will not prevail against those who are founded upon the truth that He is the Son of God—the Christ, the Son of God.

Now let’s clarify one thing here, very quickly. There is the norm, in which people think that the gates of hell are coming against us, and the purpose of the church is to “hold out until Jesus comes or until we go to heaven.” That’s rubbish. Do you know why? Because “gates” do not go after anybody, gates are stationary; gates are meant to protect that which lies behind the gates. Jesus clearly had in mind, here, the concept of an ancient city that had its battlements, its fortifications and its gates. The gates of an ancient city were the weakest part of the city—the place where the city was vulnerable.

I visited Solomon’s chariot city in Megiddo—it sits aside a hill along the path that invaders came from the north into Israel... the plains of Megiddo, famous for any number of battles and famous for one of the last great battles. Now the walls of this ruined city are still evident today. They are case-made walls over four feet thick and probably in those days twenty feet high or higher. It was nearly impossible for an attacking army to simply scale the walls and take the city. The gates of the city were its vulnerable points because, of course, the inhabitants of the city needed to get in and out as well and the gates had to be such as would allow ingress and egress. Well in this particular city there was a six-chambered gate—you would go in, turn, go in, turn and go in and turn... three different turns—it was like a maze outside of the gate. Now the reason that this was so is that an attacking army had to come in, in single file and the archers on the walls of the city were compelling the advancing army to come in, in single file and they would pick them off as they would come in.

So the gates of a city, in ancient times, were ways that the residents of the city—the

defenders of the city—would entrap the attackers and make it a killing ground. Jesus was telling us that He has sufficient authority against the domain of hell, so that whoever comes against hell in the name of Jesus Christ—by His authority—would overcome the entrapment of hell and would rescue those who were in and behind the walls of hell in the domain of that city, because they had come in the sufficiency of the authority and of power of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is how it works. I mean, every person who is listening to this broadcast, who is saved, was at one time a citizen of the dark domain... a citizen of hell. You were rescued out of hell.

It's not so much that people, when they die, they are *going* to hell; it's that they are already lost and if you're not saved, your position never changes. How did you—if you are saved—how were you saved? The likelihood is that somebody who had the message of Jesus Christ came to you, when you were lost, rescued you, brought you out of that condition through these chambers of the gates of hell and, according to Paul in his letter to the **Colossians**, “God translated you from the powers of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of God.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” – Colossians 1:13,14**) And there was not a thing that hell could do about it.

You were rescued by someone who had the sufficient authority and power of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ—sent by the Lord Jesus to rescue you and the rescue was successful. And it has been successful for uncounted numbers of cases. Why? Because we have the authority of Jesus Christ. You see, this Scripture from **Matthew 16** that says, “And upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”—that's true. That is true, it's factually true, and everyone who is saved, in their lives that Scripture is true. Upon the truth that Jesus *is* the Lord and Christ, anyone who is captured by hell may be rescued—upon that truth. Now some have perverted this truth to say that Peter is the foundation of the church. That simply is not true because this is an issue of authority. What was it that Peter had confessed? Peter said, **“You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”** (Inserted – **Matthew 16:16b**)

The same Peter—understanding that—in **Acts 2**, makes the statement that God raised Jesus from the dead and made him to be **“both Lord and Christ”**. Now what does it mean for Jesus to be **“both Lord and Christ”**? What's the difference between being “Lord” and being “Christ”? Here, he says it this way, “God has raised Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of this fact and He set Him at the right hand of the Father and He has received from the Father the promise of the Spirit, which He has poured out.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.” – Acts 2: 32,33**) And so he was explaining to the audience on the day of Pentecost this: **“Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus,”** (this is verse

36, of Acts 2) “God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

Now what’s the distinction between “Lord” and “Christ”? Well the word “Christ” is the word “mashiyach” in the Hebrew, “Messiah” in English, and it means “the anointed one”. God has made him “Lord” and “the anointed one”. “Lord” is the title; “Christ”—the anointed one—is the power by which the title has authority. There is power and then there is authority. “Power” is the ability to do a thing and “authority” is the right to do the thing. It’s sort of the “gun” and the “badge”. The policeman has power because he carries around a gun strapped to his side—or some weapon—but if he uses that power or that weapon outside of the scope of his authority to use it, he may be charged with criminal activity. But if he discharges that weapon or uses that force or power within the scope of the authority that he has been given by the state—and by extension, by the people—then because he has the requisite authority, he may properly use the power.

Jesus has the authority of Lordship; He is Lord of Lords, He is Ruler. But He has the power that comes from being the Christ. God gave Him the title of Lordship—therefore the authority—and God gave Him the power with which to act. So against His enemy, Jesus has all power and Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth. Now why would the Scriptures say that He has authority in heaven? Because Paul identifies the seat of that which opposes Him, as being in heaven. Here he says, in **Ephesians 6:10**, “**Finally, be strong in the Lord**” (that is within the scope of the Lordship of Christ) “**and in his mighty power.**” There you have it: power and authority. “**Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.**” (Inserted – **Ephesians 6: 10-12**)

There it is, **verse 12**. The seat of that which opposes *us*—who are “the called out”, who are the body of Christ, who are the presence of Christ in the earth, endowed and clothed by the Spirit of God—*that which opposes us* is the “**spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.**” It is clearly the demonic; the demonic opposes us. That’s who our enemy is. That’s why our enemy is not flesh and blood. Our enemy is not one political party or another. Our enemy is not one political candidate or another. Our enemy is not one particular human being or another. It’s when we get crossed up on these things we lose our focus and we lose our way. So we take up battles against humans. We get into the battles against homosexuals; we get into the battle against abortionists. We get into the battle against this and the battle against that. The struggle is not against humans or against what humans are thinking. The struggle is against the demons that put these ideas in humans. If we are going to win the battle, we cannot focus our effort upon the humans who are the unwitting pawns—even if they are willing—in what is a spiritual struggle. This is a struggle against the enemy of God and man, *and us*, who are the people of God, and therefore the struggle is spiritual.

What is the underlying root of the sin of abortion? It is spiritual. What is the underlying root of the sin of homosexuality? It is spiritual. What is the underlying root under every sin? It is how the enemy of God and man uses humans to wage war against God: that's the battle. If you miss that, how could we possibly hope to understand spiritual warfare? How could we possibly hope to exercise sufficient power in the realms of mankind against these things? This is where we've been misguided. People don't know what to do because they don't know what we're doing. They don't know what the theatre of our conflict is, they don't know what the definitions of the conflict are; they don't understand what the war is about. The war is not against flesh and blood. *The power that you have from Jesus Christ is meant to be sufficient for your warfare in rescuing people out of the domain of hell and bringing them into the kingdom of God.* That's what Jesus said He would do. He said, "Upon this truth that I am Lord and Christ, I will establish those whom I have called out because the gates of hell have people behind them and I'm sending you into hell itself—into the authority and the domain of these principalities, these powers, these spiritual forces of evil, to rescue the people whom they have been entrapped by their various devious schemes."

One of the series that I will be speaking in the ensuing time is on the devil's schemes. It cannot be plainer than this. The church has lost its way because it simply does not understand even the most basic things about its existence. Why do you need power? You need power because you have a mission to go and rescue people who have been entrapped by the various lies and schemes of Satan since the days of Adam. Jesus came to undo the works of Satan, which is to bring light and hope to those who are in darkness. Is the enemy going to simply allow you to do this? No, he is going to oppose you every step of the way. If you try to do this either in the power of your own doing or the power in all of the people who are gathered together with you to try to do this... if you try to do this in the power and support of a government—the Crown, the empire, the goodwill of a nation—what use is this power against the enemy?

It is the power of the risen Christ, who is Lord and Christ—power over the realms of the earth and power over the realms of the heavens—that's the power that has to be operating in you if you have any chance at all of fulfilling this destiny. That's what it is about. When I say that the church has lost its way I'm not talking about the fact that it [the church] is thinking only in terms of building buildings and stacking up people. It's lost its understanding of its very purpose for being. And to come up with some new entertainment format to draw people into the meetings is about as pointless as anything else we're doing. So what if you did get a number of people more, coming and observing the entertainment and getting all excited about that.

Is that our purpose for "being" in the world? Is that the purpose for which Jesus has given authority? No! It is to rescue people out of the domain of hell. Not just to save them from it, but to allow them to fulfill the destiny of Christ, himself, living in them and

Christ, himself, living through them. That's what the power of God is about; it's what the authority of Christ is meant to be. Absent that, everything else we are doing is a meaningless charade. What are the people looking for when they leave the churches? What are they looking for? Why are they leaving the churches?

They are leaving the churches because there is nothing in the church that has to do with their destiny and they are leaving, looking for "why God put them here." I'm telling you why God put you here and by what authority and power you can go forward. That's what this is about. Jesus did not give us power to make us "look good to our fellows".

Whoever has that notion—whether they'll admit to it or it's just what they practice—has lost connection to the Head and has no credible understanding of what the kingdom of God is about. *The kingdom of God is about the power of Jesus Christ equipping those whom He has called out, to function in not only resisting an enemy, but rescuing those who are trapped by the enemy.* And the whole world lies in that darkness, and it lies in that darkness until you come, by the authority and power of the one who sent you. But when you come in that way—by the authority and power of the one who sent you... when you come as the person of Jesus Christ, in the flesh—because you are the body of Christ (that's the only biblical definition of the church: **"the church, which is His body"**, the "ekklesia", the "called out") who are called to Christ and established on His authority—established in His power—to go against the enemy who has entrapped the interest of God, which interest is: human beings. (Inserted – actual verse—**"And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way."** – **Ephesians 1:22,23**)

That's the simple story. Now how much power does Jesus have to do this? All power. What authority does Jesus have to utilize that power? The authority of being made Lord and Christ. God, himself, recognized Him as Lord. **"The Lord says to my Lord:"** David said, **"Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."** (Inserted – **Psalms 110:1**) The Lord God Almighty made Jesus, Lord of lords, which means that whatever He does is "right". That's the foundation of His authority. He is Lord of lords. That means He is enthroned in that authority. He sits upon the throne as the symbol of possessing that authority. The power by which He operates is the power of being the Christ, the anointed one, God with man, God recognizing Jesus as being God, the anointed one.

Jesus is not—as some have said—one who possesses attributes of God. No, it's far more than that. Jesus *is* God; Jesus is the Living God. In nature and in kind, He is the child of the Holy Spirit. His nature is holy, as God is holy and the divine godhead lived in Him fully in bodily form. And whoever denies that God has come "in the flesh" in the person of Jesus Christ; that person is teaching under the inspiration of the spirit of anti-Christ because that doctrine opposes the nature of who Christ is. When, as has been said even on television, that Jesus is possessing of the attributes of God, but is not God, himself, in

the flesh—that's the spirit of anti-Christ. It's a doctrine of demons.

Jesus is the Christ and because of that He has power and He has authority and He has all power, in heaven and on earth, where the seat of the demonic is and where men are. The seat of the demonic is in heaven but it operates in the earth—there are three heavens, the highest is the heavens of God, the second is the seat of the demonic and the third, the earth where men are. (Inserted – actual verse—**“I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows.” – II Corinthians 12:2**) The seat of the demonic is in the second heavens and the seat of the power of man is the earth.

Jesus has complete sovereignty, meaning power and authority, in heaven and on earth. Now we know that He is enthroned in heaven. How does His power come to the earth where men are? And how is His power operating in the earth, effective against the demonic in the heavenly realms? We need to discuss that but it will take more than a few minutes in which to do that. Therefore I will devote the next program in this sequence to the discussion of the delegation of Jesus' power and authority. But to summarize: Jesus possesses the entirety of power and authority, which is the “right” to do the thing and the “ability” to do the thing. God made Him Lord, which conferred on Him the right to do all that might be done. And God recognized Him as Christ, which conferred on Him the sovereignty of power to do it.

Power is the ability to do it; authority is the right to do it. And so Jesus has power and authority over the realms of man and over the realms of the demonic. Therefore His body in the earth is full of the power and the authority that He has been given. Now we need to look at how His power and how His authority are meant to function to rescue those who are in the control... in the clutches of hell. The promise to them is that God will translate them from the powers of darkness into the kingdom of His Son, just like He did you, if you are a believer, because the gates of hell cannot maintain their integrity against the coming of those who come by the power and the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ to rescue those who have been caught in the deadly schemes of Satan. The Son of God was revealed for this reason—John tells us in **I John**—for this reason, “To destroy the works of the devil.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.” – I John 3:8**) And He intends to do it through you, but we need to understand how. I'm Sam Soleyn; I hope you will join me as we continue this discussion. God bless you and I'll see you then.

Scripture References:

Matthew 16:18

Colossians 1:13,14

Matthew 16:16b

Acts 2:32,33

Acts 2:36

Ephesians 6:10-12

Ephesians 1:22,23

Psalms 110:1

II Corinthians 12:2

I John 3:8