

## Believer's Authority

Is there someone in your life who just rubs you the wrong way? If there is, it may surprise you to learn that it's not really that person who is creating the rub. There is someone else at work—your real Enemy—and he may be using them in an attempt to gain an inroad to your life. **There is a spiritual war going on, and as a believer, you must be aware of it.**

Many Christians have adopted a humanistic view of things. They do not realize the spiritual implication behind what is going on in their lives. What I mean by humanistic is that they only look at things on a surface level. They think most everything they encounter on a daily basis is either physical or natural.

The truth is, there is a battle raging every single day in the spiritual realm. **That battle is for your heart and the hearts of every other person on earth.** God is trying to influence people and draw them toward righteousness and toward Himself, to live consistent with Him so that His blessings can manifest in their lives.

Satan, on the other hand, is waging all-out war trying to steal the hearts of people away from God. He wants to fill their hearts with his trash and corruption. And honestly, although most Christians recognize this to a degree, I don't think they realize how intense the warfare really is and how much their actions are contributing to it.

If I could sit and talk with each of you reading this, I would find that many of you aren't aware of the spiritual significance behind what's going on in your lives. You attribute much of what is happening to circumstances and therefore passively accept what comes your way. When you do that, you're ignoring the intense battle that is being waged for your heart every single day.

The choices you make, the things you say, the actions you take, and what you believe about what is happening around you determines whether God or Satan dominates in your life. **Satan cannot control you outside of your will. He cannot do anything without your cooperation and consent.** But you need to recognize that you're in a battle.

Many people choose not to believe that, but whether they do or not, the fact is that it's taking place. **Your unwillingness to engage in battle doesn't mean that the battle isn't raging; it just means you're going to lose.** But once you realize the battle is real, you can then learn to recognize what's going on and take the proper action to improve your situation. You can resist the devil.

James 4:7 says, *"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."*

Ephesians 6:10-12 reads,

*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

This is referring to demonic powers. There's a chain of command, an authority structure in the demonic realm, and this is listing these different levels. But notice that it says you are not wrestling against flesh and blood. Much that goes on in your life is not just human.

I'm not going to get into this thing about, "Are people possessed, oppressed, or depressed?" I believe it's useless to debate that. **In the Greek, where the Bible says a person was demon possessed, the word literally means "demonized." It just means they were under the control of the devil.** Christianity has tried to make something out of possessed, oppressed, or depressed. But it's not in Scripture.

The fact is that people are being influenced and controlled and used by the devil—they really are. This needs to be said because there are a lot of people who honestly believe that all the demons are in Africa.

**It's not the person sitting next to you at work, it's not your neighbor, and it's certainly not your husband or your wife that's the problem.** Anyone who is not paying attention can be influenced and inspired and used of Satan to come against you. If you were to recognize that, it would make a huge difference in the way you respond to them.

For instance, I get a lot of hate mail. There was a time when I took what was said personally. But I've come to realize that Satan uses these in an attempt to get my attention off of what God has told me to do. Now I look beyond the person, recognizing that Satan is just using them. That allows me to keep it in the right perspective.

I've had good friends come against me and do some pretty mean things. And you know what? I was able to look right past what they did and forgive them. I could see that Satan was taking advantage of them to hurt me through some weak area in their lives. **When you finally see that, you don't get angry or bitter with the person, and you are able to walk in forgiveness.** Then, when they do turn around, the relationship can be reestablished.

**There are also times when you have to engage the Enemy directly, even if the Enemy is using a friend.** That's exactly what Jesus did when He rebuked Peter, saying, "Get behind me, Satan." That was the same day Jesus asked Peter, "Who do you say I am?" And Peter, inspired by the Holy Spirit, said, "You are the CHRIST, the Son of the living God."

In Matthew 16:15-17, it says,

*He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.*

After this, Jesus began to talk about what was going to happen to Him: "They're going to take Me, they're going to kill Me, and I will rise again on the third day." And this same Peter, who had been inspired and controlled by the Holy Spirit just moments before, began to rebuke Jesus, saying, "Be it far from You, Lord. This will never happen to You. I'm going to stand here, and the rest of us will defend You. But we are not going to allow this to happen to You."

Then Jesus turned and spoke these words to Peter: "Get behind me, Satan." **I'm sure Peter was shocked, but Jesus wasn't really talking to him;** He was talking about Satan to Satan, the one who was controlling Peter. Peter's words were not coming from God; they were inconsistent with the will of God. Peter was being inspired and controlled by the devil in the things he said.

Now, that's a pretty strong statement, and a lot of people honestly think this is a little over the top. They think they don't need to respond to people this way. **But I can guarantee you that there are times when Satan is speaking directly to you through people.** He is using people to get at you. Whether you recognize it or not, this goes on much more than you know. You are in a spiritual war.

I tell you there is a supernatural war waging today for your heart and mind. In fact, for some of you right now, the devil is trying to oppose the words you are reading in this letter. He wants to discredit them and cause you to ignore or reject them. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, is bearing witness in your heart and trying to get you to open up and receive these words. It's spiritual warfare.

**To win in this war, you must know who you are and the authority you have as a believer.** To help, I have a teaching series called *The Believer's Authority*. Don't go another day without understanding how to defeat the real Enemy. You have the power and authority to do it, and now it's time to use it.