

Study 4. Called to Rule by God's Authority

Growing Faith

The One Who is with Us Always

My first car was a Morris Mini. It was a tiny car by American standards. It had an 850 cc engine, and could only get above 65 miles an hour if it went downhill! It cost me sixty British Pounds Sterling, which equates to around one hundred dollars. The one good thing was that it would get fifty miles to each gallon of gas. I practiced driving by getting out into the country where there were few other cars on the road. It was so exciting and yet scary to get behind the wheel for the first time. When I started working as a commercial fisherman along with my father, he soon put me behind the helm of his boat, the "*Why Worry*." It wasn't as easy as it looked. There were so many unknown factors to take into account. The East coast of England can be very windy, and then there was the variable tidal flow, which could sometimes be five miles an hour. It could be difficult to judge which way the tidal flow was going. And then, of course, there were no brakes! It was a scary thing to come alongside the pier to unload our fish, for if I went too slowly, I would lose "steerageway," the ability to steer. If the wind was on my beam side (the side of the boat), it could cause me to crash into the pier. My dad was always there to teach me so that I would not wreck his boat against the dock. Sometimes he would operate the gear stick and put the boat into reverse while I turned the wheel as we came alongside. My dad was always ready to step in and take the controls when the conditions of the wind and tide made it difficult for me to bring the boat alongside the quay alone. When I was scared or nervous, all I had to do was call.

Our heavenly Father is just like that. He trains us to step out in faith by small steps at first. When we know that Abba (our Daddy) is with us, we know that we can't go seriously wrong, for we know that we can call out to Him for help. He has promised "**Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you**" (Hebrews 13:5). Twice in the Scriptures, the Lord stood alongside Paul at critical times in his life, giving him strength and encouragement (Acts 23:11 and 2 Timothy 4:17). We may not see Him with our natural eye, but He is always there with us. The Lord watches over all that love Him (Psalm 145:20). Everything the Father asks us to do is always in concert with Him; we are called God's fellow workers (2 Corinthians 6:1). We are not to act or step out in our authority or power; it is always His power flowing through us. Without Him, we can do nothing! Jesus Himself said, "**By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear...**" (John 5:30). In another place, He said: "Very truly I tell you, 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). If the Son of God could do nothing without God's leading Him, that is even more true for you and me. The more we can let this truth sink into our spirit, the more we can rest in the fact that it is God's ministry and not ours. If God is doing nothing when we pray for a sick person to be well, and it is not happening, it's okay to say to the person that you don't know what to do beyond praying. We do not have to make Him look good. We take the step of faith in obedience to the Father and believe He will work, but the results are up to Him. Our part is to listen, obey, and believe in Him. The power and the authority are His. □

In our last study, we discussed the fact that if you have sincerely given your life to Christ, you have entered into a close relationship with Him through a blood covenant. A covenant is a legal agreement or contract between two parties that is solemn and binding. We have become one with

Him in a spiritual sense (Colossians 1:27 and 1 Corinthians 6:17). When I gave my life to Christ, I didn't look much different, maybe a bigger smile on my face and fewer lines on my forehead. The difference was more internal, in the part of all of us that is unseen, the area of our soul and spirit. The Bible says that we were made "alive with Christ even when we were dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:5). Those of us who have given our lives to Christ have entered into a covenant with Christ; God manifest in the flesh. We have promised that the LORD will be our God and that we will be faithful to Him, no matter what happens in this life. We have given Him our oath, our pledge of loyalty to serve Him only. We are betrothed to Him. Paul, the apostle, wrote:□

I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him (2 Corinthians 11:2).

What do you think was on Paul's mind as he wrote those words?

The picture language speaks of Paul being the one who has introduced and taught the Corinthian church all about His beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ, and now he is pleased to walk them down the aisle as a pure virgin to be married to Him.

Bought from Satan's Dominion

We are no longer our own, we have been bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:20); the precious blood of Christ is the redemption payment that set us free from Satan's dominion to be married to the Lord Jesus.

For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves (Colossians 1:13).

What does it mean that before we came to Christ, we were under Satan's dominion? How did we get to be under Satan's control in the first place? □

When the devil tempted Jesus in the desert, Satan took Christ 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" (Matthew 4:8). How could Satan offer something to Christ that was not his to offer? The scripture is very clear that the Earth is the Lord's (Psalm 24:1). Jesus never disputed the claim by Satan that dominion over the Earth was his. In fact, in two other places, Jesus upheld Satan's legal claim by calling Satan "the prince of this world" (John 12:31 and 14:30).

Satan managed to gain legal rule and dominion over the Earth when he deceived Eve in the Garden of Eden. When Adam chose to listen to Satan's voice, even though it came through the mouth of Eve, he was not deceived; he willingly decided to go along with what the serpent (Satan according to Revelation 20:2) wanted of him. Paul, in his letter to Timothy, tells us: "And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner" (1 Timothy 2:14). Adam made a conscious choice to disobey God, choosing to listen to Satan's

voice and obey him by eating the fruit; his decision brought him into servitude to Satan. He decided to be a slave to sin. We serve whomever we listen to and obey:

Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? (Romans 6:16).

Whoever we listen to and offer ourselves to obey, we are slaves to the one we obey. We are slaves to sin and Satan or God by obedience to Him, leading to righteous living. Humanity has not always been under Satan's dominion. When our ancestor, Adam, was created he was made in the image of God and given dominion over the Earth. We have lost something since those early days of the human race for we read that Adam had the mental capacity to provide names for all the animal and bird creation (Genesis 2:19-20). He was also given responsibility to rule over all that God had made:

²⁶Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." ²⁷So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." (Genesis 1:26-28 Emphasis mine).

In what ways do you think that Adam was to “rule over all the earth”? What do you think this looked like?

The Hebrew word, *radah*, translated with our English word “rule,” means to “rule over or subdue.”¹ God gave responsibility and authority over all of creation to Adam and his descendants. I presume that even the king of the beasts, the lion, could be spoken to by man under God’s authority and the lion would obey. Such was the dominion and authority that man had before the fall in the Garden of Eden. King David, speaking by the Spirit, says something very similar:

³When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon, and the stars, which you have set in place, ⁴what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? ⁵You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. ⁶You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet (Psalm 8:3-6 Emphasis mine).

The Hebrew word *mashal*, translated with the English word “ruler” in Psalm 8, verse 6, indicates that Adam, and us as his descendants, are God’s managers, governors or stewards over the earth. *Mashal* means to “rule, reign, govern, have dominion over and manage.”² The man was different from the rest of the created beings due to being crowned with glory and honor and made the ruler over the Earth. He alone was created in the image of God and could rule with grace and justice.

¹ Key Word Study Bible, AMG Publishers, Chattanooga, TN. Page 1550.

² Ibid, Page 1530.

He was God's representative. He was created in the image of God showing forth the likeness of the One True God, representing God's heart and will for His creation. David, under the inspiration of the Spirit in the verses above, says that man, in his original creation, was made a little lower than *Elohim*, the Hebrew word for God. Many translations render this word differently, and some translate it with the English words *heavenly beings*, but Scripture says that Adam was made just a little lower than God. "*Elohim*" is the word almost always used by God. Some translations record the change by putting it into the notes at the bottom or the margins. How magnificent Adam must have been, crowned with glory and honor, fully equipped by God for his managerial role over the Earth. God put everything on Earth under Adam's feet, symbolizing rulership and dominion over all creation (Verse 6). □

If a present-day man could remember everything we ever learned, forgetting nothing, how different do you think life on earth would be?

The highest heavens belong to the LORD, but the earth he has given to man (Psalm 115:16 Emphasis mine).

The Hebrew word *Nathan*, translated as the English word "given," means to assign. The earth is the territory that man has been assigned to rule. The heavens and the earth belong to the Lord, but the Scripture is clear that He has given stewardship of earth to humanity to govern and take care. This thought of man being given responsibility is also brought out in Genesis 2:15, "**Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.**" The Hebrew word *shamar* translated with the English words, "take care of," means: "to keep, guard, protect and preserve, as a watchman cares for his cattle or sheep." To Adam and his race was assigned the task of governing and stewardship over the planet.

Adam gave away his right and dominion to rule into the hands of Satan at the fall. Satan, with impunity, could say to Christ at the temptation, "**I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to**" (Luke 4:6). Satan was not offering Jesus something that he did not have. If so, Jesus would not have been tempted by this. Satan was offering Jesus something that was in his hands to use as leverage. He sought to induce Christ to bypass the cross by bowing to him, acting outside of the Father's will.

This is the reason why the redemption of the earth had to come through a man because the planet had been given to Adam's race and only one of Adam's race could win it back. Humanity was the trustee of the earth. Satan could legally do anything he wanted to any of Adam's progeny because they had become slaves of Satan due to Adam's choice to obey Satan rather than God. All it took was one act of disobedience. A man had to be found upon whom Satan had no claim. That's why Christ had to be born of a virgin. It is no wonder that the concept of the Virgin birth is also under attack and something that the enemy wants to refute as foolish. It is an essential element in the Redemption story. The Messiah, the Christ, had to be one of Adam's race but Sin could not taint him, otherwise, He would have been owned and dominated by Satan, having Adam's nature. Christ was 100% man but 100% God as well, being conceived of the Holy Spirit. Satan, therefore, had no claim on the Innocent Christ. Divine law says that "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man" (Genesis 9:6). In other words, when Satan took it upon himself to bring Jesus to the cross, for the first time

under the divine law, he became a murderer because Jesus was completely innocent, having never sinned. Satan was stripped of the keys of death and hell at the cross (Revelation 1:18). Every man that makes Christ's death his own by believing and trusting in His death to be the payment for their sin is made righteous before God. Eternal justice was satisfied at the cross. In the courts of heaven, Satan was legally condemned as a murderer, because he had no right to kill Jesus due to His sinless life. Just before the cross, Jesus said:

Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out (John 12:31).

What would you consider to be the implications for everyone who is a Christian, especially as it relates to everyone in Christ given the right to rule and reign? □

His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms (the Greek says, "in the heavenlies." Ephesians 3:10).

Satan and his demons do not want you to understand the full implications of the verse above. If I understand it correctly, Paul is saying that it is God's intent and plan for you and me, the church, to stand in full opposition against demonic rulers and authorities that are invisible around us. We are to declare to them through our faith in God that they no longer have any legal ground to stand on, that this territory that we stand on belongs to God and that they should leave. Remember that this was the reason why Christ died! Not only to buy you out of Satan's dominion by His death on the cross but also to empower you to stand as a soldier of Christ in full opposition to every evil work around you. We can begin to take the authority that Christ has given us and rule over the evil rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms. □

...All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you (Matthew 28:18-20). What did He command them? He commanded them to heal the sick, cast out demons and to preach the gospel (Luke 9:1-2, Luke 10:9, 17).

“...anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing...You may ask me for anything in my name and I will do it (John 14:12-14).

That same authority and power given to the twelve disciples are also provided to each of us. Satan has no legal right of ownership over us. God, in Christ, has: “brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves” (Colossians 1:13). The authority that Satan once had over us is destroyed. It is only our unbelief that hinders the flow of the Spirit's power and authority in us and through us. God chooses the weak things of the world to confound the strong (1 Corinthians 1:27). Do you feel weak? Then God has chosen you to glorify Him by using you!

What am I saying? I'm saying that Christ, by virtue of His death on the cross, has nullified every claim that Satan had against any of us that are in Christ. The authority that Satan once exercised against us has passed to the Lord Jesus Christ and all those that are in covenant relationship with Him—the Body of Christ, the Church of the Living God. We are to exercise His authority under

the leadership and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. No matter how young or how old we are, we who are Christians are made ambassadors of God (2 Corinthians 5:20). In a legal and spiritual sense, we have been given power of attorney to exercise the will of heaven upon the earth. The only hindrance to the exercise of our authority is our lack of faith in God. In the same way that electricity flows through copper cable, so faith is the channel to the authority and power of God to see healings and other supernatural phenomena.

Let's look at a Bible passage from the Acts of the Apostles to see an example of men without a relationship with God trying to oppose demonic spirits:

⁸Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. ⁹But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord. ¹¹God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, ¹²so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured, and the evil spirits left them. ¹³Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, "In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out." ¹⁴Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. ¹⁵(One day) the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" ¹⁶Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding. ¹⁷When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor (Acts 19:8-17).

Reading this passage above, what things do you think were responsible for the rapid spread of the message of the Kingdom of God throughout Asia?

I notice that Paul taught the people boldly about the kingdom of God, the very things that you and I are learning together about the kingdom of God. When some of the people resisted Paul's message as he preached in the synagogue, he went to the Hall of a philosopher called Tyrannus and taught the people daily. One manuscript³ brings out the fact that Paul taught daily from the hours of 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. This was during the siesta time when most people took off work, as the heat was at its peak during those hours. Paul both paid his way through his tent making occupation as well as teaching five hours a day. It was during this time that the Word of God spread rapidly, and the seven churches spoken about in the second and third chapters of the Book of Revelation came into being. R. Kent Hughes, in his commentary on the Book of Acts, states:

Unusual miracles accompanied the advance of the gospel. The Greek says "miracles not of an ordinary kind." Some were direct, coming through the hands of Paul. Others were indirect; being somehow mediated through articles of Paul's clothing that, when applied to the ill, brought healing. Paul was not selling his handkerchiefs or socks or aprons to the local faithful. They were "borrowing" them and applying them to the sick. And God, at

³ William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible, Acts of the Apostles*, Saint Andrew Press Publishers, Page 143.

this critical juncture in the Church's history, being a God of incredible patience and grace, met these people on their level with bona fide miracles, accommodating Himself to their uninstructed faith. The full meaning of these indirect miracles ties in with God's view of Paul's costly, determined labor for Christ. The Greek word translated "handkerchiefs" in verse 12 was a Latin loan word carrying the root meaning of the word sweat. These "handkerchiefs" were the cloths Paul used to wipe away sweat while working. Moreover, the "aprons" were those he wore while making tents and working with leather. The hankies and aprons were symbols, which God chose to employ in order to underscore the character of the apostle, which made him a channel of the power of God. In the same way, Moses' rod was a symbol. Cast on the ground, the rod became a serpent; lifted over the waters, it rolled them back. There was nothing magic about the rod itself; it was the symbol of something about Moses that God honored. So these sweatbands and trade aprons were symbols of the honest, dignified humility of heart, the servant-character that manifested and released the power of God.⁴

Due to the equipping ministry of Paul, Ephesus became an evangelistic center for the gospel. Paul's teaching on the kingdom of God and equipping ministry in the Lecture Hall of Tyrannus resulted in a multiplication of church planters all over Asia Minor. Some Jews who were not Christians tried to exercise the same authority to cast out demons but with disappointing results. The demon inside the man tore the clothes off of the sons of a Jewish chief priest and beat them up severely. Spirits can see if you have a relationship with God or not. These men had done some dabbling in the area of exorcism but were jealous of the power and authority of Paul. They even tried to use his name in the casting out of the spirit. These men had no faith in the Lord Jesus and consequently no power or authority to cast out the evil spirit. It wasn't that these men were inexperienced—the problem was that they had no authority—they were not in a relationship with the One who had conquered Satan and the demons that follow him.

If God were to instruct you to exercise faith in Him by doing one extraordinary miracle, what miracle would you ask Him to do through you?

Let me share with you a story that illustrates what faith in God and Christ's death and resurrection, can do when young or old, men or women, step out in the authority of God:

In 1999, three Bushmen from the Kalahari Desert changed history. They were not movers and shakers of society, but poor illiterates who lace strips of leather to the bottoms of their feet whenever they need "shoes." However, they stood out from the crowd in three ways: □

- They knew God, and they knew how to move His hand, to convince Him to transform Africa.
- They had discovered, through conversations with readers and researchers, how Africa had come to be known as the *Dark Continent*, the home of the poorest nations on earth.

⁴ R. Kent Hughes, *Preaching the Word Series, Acts*, Crossway Publishers, Page 256.

- Thinking in sync with the Spirit of God, they determined that the continent had had enough of misery, and it was high time to take a stand and reverse the curse.

Indeed, it was curses that they found to lay at the root of the problem. Archeologists and anthropologists have lately pieced together—through ancient pottery shards, cave art, etc.—a coherent picture of how Africa was settled and encultured. Long ago, the original settlers came down very slowly from the North through the Rift Valley, a geological crack that runs from the Dead Sea down toward South Africa. Wherever they set up communities, they made pacts with the local gods—actually demons—putting themselves under the thumb of these evil powers. The results have been massive and ghastly. But the Bushmen knew what to do. They organized a prayer expedition to conduct Spiritual Warfare.

Calling together a team of experienced prayer intercessors, including some westerners, they journeyed north 5,000 miles for three months, starting in July at Cape Agulhas, the southernmost tip of Africa, and stopping at numerous old sites, mostly along the Rift Valley, to renounce and break the original deals with demons and curses.

Every prayer session at every stop was what we call a **power confrontation**. By far the biggest came in Zimbabwe. After a very long, rough ride in jeeps, the team arrived at Mount Injalele (in-ja-lay-lee) in the Motobo Hills, two thousand square kilometers of reddish granite, and home to the black eagle.

Though remote, the region was a popular destination for pilgrims, many of them were presidents, kings, or tribal chiefs. For many years they had come to Injalele to seek advice and guidance. There, an “oracle” supposedly spoke to them out of a large crack on the back side of the mountain.

You can safely assume that any advice coming from the crack was of inferior quality. Over the years, it had become such a busy shrine that the witch doctor network across Southern Africa had built four temples around the edges of the crack. So the team prayed. They worshipped God. They repented for the sins of the people in worshipping demonic gods. They vociferously decreed the downfall of the evil powers and declared the ownership of the land transferred to the kingdom of Christ. Then they went to the next stop. □

Shortly afterward, God hit and hit hard. *Lightning struck all four* of the temples and entirely incinerated them! As you can imagine, it was all over the region's newspapers and on everyone's lips. □

Within two days, the most respected witch doctor in the whole of Southern Africa arrived to assess the damage and see what could be done to restore the site. Though it was a cloudless day, *he was struck by lightning and killed on the spot*.

Then came the storm. You may have seen the damage reports on CNN World News. The most torrential rains in memory lashed a wide region, washing away whole villages and especially devastating the occult sites and witchcraft training centers, which were numerous there. But in the western areas, the same storm system made the Kalahari blossom like a garden. There, where many Christians live, the land was transformed into a greenhouse of trees, lush grass, blooming plants, flowing streams, and wild game—virtually unseen for at least a century. The locals are awestruck, and the fear of the Lord has fallen on the whole territory.⁵

⁵ Taken from the book “Megashift” written by James Rutz, Published by Empowerment Press, Pages 56-57.

I do not advocate doing this ministry of casting out of demons without some instruction and a team of people to help pray. The Scripture is clear that “these signs shall accompany those who believe. In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well” (Mark 16:17-18). What the Scriptures plainly teach that this is the inheritance of every child of God. This is the “children’s bread” (Matthew 15:26) that is part of the covenant that Christ has bought for you at the cross. You can stand up and believe God for a miracle! The Father will give us His instruction if we ask Him and listen to his guidance and voice.

In the same way I remember my Dad standing beside me to help me steer the boat, so God is ready to direct you and teach you to step out in His authority. The Lord Jesus is longing that you trust him like a child and allow His power to flow through you. Expect Him to do it! Faith is expecting what God is willing to give! God is ready to move and work through you. □

Perhaps to finish you would like to pray for one another concerning each person’s need for an extraordinary miracle.

Prayer: Father, increase our faith and lead us to step by step into all that You have prepared for each of us. Grant that your power and authority will flow through us. Teach us how to be Your representatives on earth and bring Your presence to those around us.

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