

Spirit Warfare: First Bind the Strong Man

Dr. John Carmichael

[Mat 12:22-29 NASB95] 22 Then a demon-possessed man [who was] blind and mute was brought to Jesus, and He healed him, so that the mute man spoke and saw. 23 All the crowds were amazed, and were saying, "This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?" 24 But when the Pharisees heard [this,] they said, "This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons." 25 And knowing their thoughts Jesus said to them, "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or house divided against itself will not stand. 26 "If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? 27 "If I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast [them] out? For this reason they will be your judges. 28 "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29 "Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong [man?] And then he will plunder his house.

- Jesus had just delivered a man who was demonized, blind, and unable to speak. Rather than acknowledging the power of God, the Pharisees accused Jesus of casting out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of demons.
- Jesus answered by explaining that Satan would not cast out Satan, because a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. Then He gave this illustration: "How can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house." Matthew 12:29
- In the immediate context, the strong man represents Satan, and Jesus is the Stronger Man. Luke 11:22
- Satan has power, but he does not have ultimate authority. However, Jesus said: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." Matthew 28:18
- Satan may be a strong man, but Jesus is the Stronger Man.
- The believer may also be pictured as a house.
- The central issue is not whether Jesus is strong enough to defeat Satan.
- The issue is whether every room of the house has been surrendered to the rule of the Stronger Man.
- Binding the strong man is more than repeatedly saying, "I bind Satan." Binding means restricting the enemy's ability to operate by actively establishing the superior authority, truth, and presence of Jesus Christ.

How can believers effectively bind the strong man and establish the lordship of Jesus Christ over every area of their lives?

The biblical encounters with demons in the Gospels and Acts reveal five simple actions through which believers can resist and restrain the influence of the enemy.

- I. SURRENDER TO CHRIST - [Jas 4:7 NASB95] 7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.**
 - a. The biblical order is important: Submit to God. Resist the devil. The devil flees.
 - b. We cannot effectively resist an enemy while resisting God at the same time. Binding begins with surrender. Before we attempt to command darkness, we must first bring the house under the lordship of Jesus Christ.
 - c. Give Jesus every room - Many people want Jesus to protect the house while still denying Him access to certain rooms. They surrender Sunday morning but not Monday's business decisions. Jesus must be Lord of the entire house.

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- d. Repent of known sin - Repentance is not merely feeling sorry. Repentance means changing our mind, direction, and spiritual alignment. Acts 19:18–20 - They did not merely command evil spirits to leave while continuing to participate in the practices connected to darkness.
- e. Forgive those who have hurt you - Paul warned that unforgiveness could allow Satan to take advantage of believers. [2Co 2:10-11 NASB95] 10 But one whom you forgive anything, I [forgive] also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, [I did it] for your sakes in the presence of Christ, 11 so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes.
- f. Submit before speaking - The sons of Sceva attempted to use Jesus' name without being submitted to Jesus. [Act 19:13-17 NASB95] 13 But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches." 14 Seven sons of one Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said to them, "I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" 16 And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them and subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. 17 This became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who lived in Ephesus; and fear fell upon them all and the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified. The name of Jesus is not a magical formula.
- g. Spiritual authority flows from belonging to Christ, submitting to Christ, and acting under Christ.
- h. Pray: "Jesus Christ, I surrender every room of my life to You. Be Lord over my spirit, soul, body, family, home, business, ministry, relationships, and future. I repent of every area in which I have resisted Your rule."
- i. Before we bind the strong man, we must surrender the house to the Stronger Man.

II. SHUT EVERY DOOR - [Eph 4:27 NASB95] 27 and do not give the devil an opportunity.

- a. Satan does not possess ultimate authority over the believer, but he looks for opportunities to influence the believer.
- b. A door may be opened through: Persistent sin; Unforgiveness; Deception; Occult practices; Sexual immorality; Rebellion
- c. Identify the door: Instead of simply asking, "What demon is this?" we should also ask: lie, sin, offense, pattern, practice.
- d. Confess the sin: Confession means agreeing with God. [1Jo 1:9 NASB95] 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- e. Renounce the agreement - Renunciation rejects continued participation. "Father, I confess this practice as sin. I renounce my involvement in it. I reject every lie connected to it, and I withdraw every agreement I have made with darkness."
- f. Remove what belongs to darkness - The Ephesian believers burned their occult books. [Act 19:18-20 NASB95] 18 Many also of those who had believed kept coming, confessing and disclosing their practices. 19 And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and [began] burning them in the sight of everyone; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20 So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing. They must also be closed through action. That may require: Removing occult objects; Ending an immoral relationship; Deleting destructive media; Changing an unhealthy environment; Establishing financial accountability; Ending dishonest business practices

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- g. Reject the enemy's lies - Satan is called the father of lies. John 8:44 The enemy often gains influence when a person believes statements such as: "I will always be bound." "God has abandoned me." "My family will never change." "This church cannot recover." "My business is doomed." "I am what happened to me." "God will never forgive me." "There is no hope for my future." The lie must be identified and rejected.
- h. Pray: "In the name of Jesus, I close every door I have opened through sin, deception, unforgiveness, pride, fear, rebellion, and disobedience. I reject every lie and bring every area under the lordship of Jesus Christ."
- i. We cannot continually leave the door open and then wonder why the enemy keeps entering the room.

III. SPEAK GOD'S TRUTH - Matthew 4:1-11

- a. When Jesus was tempted by Satan, He repeatedly answered: "It is written."
- b. Jesus did not defeat deception through emotion, volume, or argument. He answered Satan with truth.
- c. However, speaking the Word involves more than quoting the phrase "It is written."
- d. Scripture may be: Quoted; Declared; Prayed; Applied; Enacted; Spoken as a Kingdom result
 - i. Quote the Word - When the enemy lies, answer with Scripture.
 - ii. Declare the reality of Christ's victory – Jesus Christ is Lord. Christ is far above every principality and power.
 - iii. Pray the result of Scripture - Paul did not always directly address darkness. Sometimes he prayed for God to release the opposite Kingdom reality.
 - iv. Do not only rebuke darkness—release light The goal is not merely: "Darkness, leave." It is also: "Light, arise."
 - v. Speak the Word over every part of the house. Declare what God has said.
- e. Pray: "Father, release wisdom and revelation. Enlighten the eyes of our hearts. Expose every lie. Let truth arise in our minds, homes, families, businesses, and churches. Let every thought come into obedience to Christ."
- f. We bind the influence of lies by establishing the authority of truth.

IV. STAND IN JESUS' AUTHORITY - [Luk 10:17 NASB95] 17 The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."

- a. They did not say the demons were subject to their personality, experience, volume, or reputation. They were subject in the name of Jesus.
- b. Jesus possesses all authority.
 - i. Jesus said: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." Matthew 28:18
 - ii. Paul declared that Christ is seated: "Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion." Ephesians 1:21
 - iii. We do not attempt to make Jesus victorious. He is already victorious.
- c. The name of Jesus represents His authority.
 - i. Paul said to the spirit of divination: [Act 16:18 NASB95] 18 She continued doing this for many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" And it came out at that very moment.
 - ii. The name represents: The person of Jesus; The lordship of Jesus; The victory of Jesus; The authority of Jesus; The commission of Jesus
- d. Stand in the victory of the blood.
 - i. The Gospels and Acts do not record Jesus or the apostles using the phrase "I plead the blood" as the normal command in exorcism.

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- ii. However, the blood of Jesus is the foundation of our standing.
- iii. Through the blood, we have: Redemption; Forgiveness; Cleansing; Justification; Covenant belonging; Access to God; Victory over accusation Colossians 1:13–14; Hebrews 9:11–14; Hebrews 10:19–22; Revelation 12:10–11
- iv. We do not use the blood as a magical phrase.
- e. Give direct commands when necessary.
 - i. Jesus generally spoke clearly and concisely.
 - ii. He said: “Be quiet, and come out of him!” “Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!” “You deaf and mute spirit, I command you, come out of him and do not enter him again.”
- f. Do not negotiate with demons. Jesus usually silenced demons. He did not invite them to preach. He did not depend upon them for spiritual information. He did not conduct lengthy interviews.
- g. Remain humble:
 - i. Jesus told the disciples: [Luk 10:20 NASB95] 20 "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven."
 - ii. Authority should never produce spiritual pride.
 - iii. Deliverance ministry is not a platform for: Celebrity; Sensationalism; Competition; Exaggeration; Manipulation
 - iv. The focus must remain upon Jesus and the freedom of the person.
- h. The strong man is not bound by our strength, but by the authority of the Stronger Man.

V. STAY FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT - [Eph 5:18 NASB95] 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,

- a. Deliverance is not complete merely because darkness has departed.
- b. The house must be filled. Jesus warned about an unclean spirit that left a person and later returned.
 - i. [Mat 12:43-45 NASB95] 43 "Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find [it.] 44 "Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came'; and when it comes, it finds [it] unoccupied, swept, and put in order. 45 "Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation."
 - ii. [Luk 11:24-26 NASB95] 24 "When the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and not finding any, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' 25 "And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order. 26 "Then it goes and takes [along] seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first."
- c. The spirit found the house: Empty; Swept; Put in order
- d. The problem was not that the house had been cleaned. The problem was that it remained empty.
 - i. Do not leave the house empty. Freedom is not merely the removal of an unclean spirit. Freedom is the establishment of Christ's rule.
 - ii. Replace old patterns. Lasting freedom requires replacement.
 - iii. Pray for the opposite Kingdom reality. Do not only pray for fear to leave. Pray for faith, love, and sound judgment. Do not only pray for deception to break. Pray for

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wisdom and revelation. Do not only pray for oppression to lift. Pray for joy, strength, peace, and purpose.

iv. Continue resisting.

1. Paul said: [Eph 6:13 NASB95] 13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.
2. Some deliverances are immediate. Other battles require continued resistance.

v. Fill the house through daily practice.

- e. Pray: "Holy Spirit, fill every room of this house. Fill my mind, body, relationships, family, home, business, and ministry. Release wisdom, revelation, truth, holiness, faith, love, joy, peace, and sound judgment."
- f. Do not merely empty the house of darkness; fill the house with the presence of God.

- **We effectively bind the strong man by surrendering to Christ, shutting every door to the enemy, speaking God's truth, standing in Jesus' authority, and staying filled with the Holy Spirit.**
- Satan may be a strong man, but Jesus is the Stronger Man. Satan has power, but Jesus has all authority.
- **"Jesus Christ is the Stronger Man. He has defeated the powers of darkness, disarmed rulers and authorities, and set the captives free. We surrender every room to Him. We shut every door to the enemy. We speak the truth of God's Word. We stand in the authority of Jesus' name. We welcome the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Let every work of darkness be restrained, let every captive be released, and let Jesus Christ be Lord over this house."**