

Sermon Title: Jesus' Power Over Demons (Part 3)

Speaker: Jim Harris

Scripture Text: Mark 5:1-20

Date: 8-12-18

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Please come with me one more time to Mark Chapter 5, Verses 1 through 20. I started this little three-part miniseries on this passage by jumping the gun on this year's "Provoke the Pastor" series—which, Lord willing, begins next Sunday—because one question came in just before I started Mark [Chapter 5]; one wonderful question came in right on time. The question was: "Jesus cast out demons; who casts out demons now?" And I told you, the answer is Jesus, and I promised a fuller answer to that question, which we will take a little bit of time to do today.

Now, you know, if you've been here on either of the past two Lord's Days, that there is nothing like this anywhere else in the Bible. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record this incident, which is an amazing demonstration of Mark's theme that Jesus is the Son of God. So it's Mark Chapter 5, Verses 1 through 20, and we've been working our way through one outline for two weeks and now, this the final one. In the first five verses, we meet the man from the tombs; and then in 6 through 13, we see the power of Jesus; then we see the amazing unbelief in this incident in Verses 14 to 17; and today, we're going to see the true faith that is demonstrated, and then the bonus section: What delivers people from Satan's power.

Now, we're not going to review everything, but it is necessary to get the whole passage at once, so follow along with me as we start at Mark Chapter 5, Verse 1—"They came to the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gerasenes. When He got out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met Him, and he had his dwelling among the tombs. And no one was able to bind him anymore, even with a chain; because he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been torn apart by him and the shackles broken in pieces, and no one was strong enough to subdue him. Constantly, night and day, he was screaming among the tombs and in the mountains, and gashing himself with stones"—harming himself. We're also told in the other gospels, he was constantly naked, they had tried to subdue him, and they could no longer do that; he was literally terrorizing that area. But that's just a setup for the demonstration of the power of Jesus. Verse 6 through Verse 13—"Seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran up and bowed down before Him; and shouting with a loud voice, he said, 'What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God, do not torment me!' For He had been saying to him, 'Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!' And He was asking him, 'What is your name?' And he said to Him, 'My name is Legion; for we are many.' And he began to implore Him earnestly not to send them out of the country. Now there was a large herd of swine feeding nearby on the mountain. The demons implored Him, saying, 'Send us into the swine so that we may enter them.' Jesus gave them permission. And coming out, the unclean spirits entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, about two thousand of them; and they were drowned in the sea" (NASB, and throughout, unless otherwise noted).

What a *spectacular* scene that is! And then last week, we got to this, starting in Verse 14, where we see, amazingly, the unbelief in that situation: "Their herdsmen ran away and reported it in the city and in the country"—that was probably the little seaside village of Gerasa, and probably the larger city nearby, Gadara; all over the region, they spread this as fast as they could. "And the people came to see what it was that had happened. They came to Jesus"—so obviously, He was the focal point of the story that had been spread, this man who

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did this—"They came to Jesus and observed the man who had been demon-possessed sitting down, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the 'legion'; and they became frightened"—that happens to people when they see a firsthand display of the power of God—"Those who had seen it described to them how it had happened to the demon-possessed man, and all about the swine"—imagine all these pig bodies bobbing up and down along the shore of the Sea of Galilee; that was a pretty good visual aid—"And they began to implore Him to leave their region." Wow!

Let's look at the fourth part, and we'll tie all this together. There was also true faith on the far other end of the spiritual spectrum of faith and unbelief, was the man—and remember, Matthew explains, there were actually two; one of them was clearly the spokesman, one of them was dominant, and so only one is mentioned in Mark and Luke, but that doesn't matter. But this one, or these two, who were so spectacularly delivered, are on the other end from the people who wanted Jesus to go away. Verse 18 of Mark 5—"As He was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed was imploring Him that he might accompany Him." Now, I noticed a couple of things here. Jesus didn't press on to stay and go inland and preach to all of these people. They implored Him, "Get out of here! Just go away! Leave us alone, we don't want You!" And He was getting into the boat; He left. That reminds me of what it says about Him when He went to Nazareth, His hometown, and it says He didn't do many miracles there because of the unbelief of the people (Matt. 13:58). Here were these ones that were surrounded by this evidence of one of the most spectacular miracles that Jesus ever did, and they just wanted Him to go away. Both the verbs and the verb tenses, along with Luke's statement that it came from all the people of the city and the surrounding area, it makes it clear it was a unified, repeated request: "Go away, Jesus!"

Ah, but there's a contrast to the demand that Jesus go away. The same term is used for the man who was delivered; he was imploring Jesus, over and over, to let him a company Jesus back to Galilee. He and his companion just didn't want to live another day without Jesus. That's understandable, with what they'd been delivered from. But Jesus's response might surprise you a little bit; Verse 19—"And He did not let him." You see, Jesus was totally in charge of this situation. The demons could do nothing until Jesus gave them permission, and this man asked permission, and Jesus didn't let him. "But He said to him, 'Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you.'" We don't know how long the torment went on before the glorious deliverance by Jesus. It's certainly understandable that, the one or two that were delivered wouldn't want to spend another day apart from Him; I can imagine that, when they saw the relationship between Jesus and His disciples, they saw the kind of fellowship that they knew they wanted. It's *fully* reasonable that they wanted to go with Jesus, but He didn't do what we probably would've done, didn't do what we probably expected in this story. Jesus doesn't take them home as a trophy. Surprisingly, He sent him to his own home and to his own people. Jesus commissioned this guy as a missionary. As a matter of fact, this is the first one that Jesus ever sent out to proclaim Him; He had not yet sent out the Twelve on their preaching ministry, had not yet sent out the 70 on their preaching ministry. And He told him exactly what to do: "Report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you."

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Hey, friends—don't complicate things. Don't be *afraid* of being an evangelist. You know what it takes? Tell people the great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you. Now, you might not have been a naked, raving maniac living in a cemetery, okay? That part of the testimony probably has to be modified to fit *you*; but you *were* 100 percent totally alienated from God (Eph. 2:12), absolutely incapable of saving yourself (Rom. 5:6), dead in your trespasses and sin (Eph. 2:1-3), and God, in His great mercy, reached out to you (1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 2:4-5). That's the message! "Well, how can I have that?" Well, there's one way you can have that: through Christ, through Christ alone—He is the one and only Savior (Jn. 3:18; 8:24; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5).

Can you imagine what it was like when that man—or these two guys—went home? Don't you think the parents—if they were still alive—the siblings, the former neighbors, would've been astounded after all that they had seen and heard about what it was like? What was the testimony? "Well, I was a naked maniac living in the tombs terrorizing people, until I met the man named Jesus. Pretty compelling—you want to hear about Him?" We know that this guy's faith, by the way, was genuine, unlike others that we have seen, even in the Gospel of Mark, because, what's the evidence of true faith? It's obedience (1 Jn. 2:3-5), and this guy obeyed the Lord right away (Ps. 119:50); Chapter 5, Verse 20—the end of our text: "And he went away and began to proclaim in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed." Decapolis was a loose confederation of 10 Gentile cities—that's what "Decapolis" means: "deca"—10, "polis"—city. That was a little region east of the Jordan River, south of the Sea of Galilee, and north of the of the Dead Sea, so, on the other side of the Jordan River from Israel.

Now, don't underestimate the value of one person, the significance of one person, the impact of one person. Don't underestimate what *your* testimony might mean to someone. When we get to the end of Mark 7 and the beginning of Mark 8—we're not going to go there now, but you're going to see that, later in His ministry, Jesus came into the region of Decapolis. He's on the edge of that now, outside of Gerasa and Gadara, but when He goes there later, instead of the whole city coming out and saying, "Go away! Get out of here—You scare us!" Instead, this massive crowd comes to hear Him teach. What broke the ice? It's pretty obvious; it's recorded here in the flow of the book for us to see: It was the seed that was scattered by the former demoniac, or two.

It reminds me of the impact that Daniel seems to have had in Babylon. Daniel was in Babylon a lot longer than Jesus was in the region of the Gerasenes, but when Jesus is born, the Magi come from Persia, and they want to meet Him who is "born the King of the Jews" (Matt. 2:1-2). How did they know about that? From Daniel—his impact lasted through all of those years. I've also heard that, in the era of the Apostles, as the church began to spread out beyond Jerusalem and Judea, and began to go into Gentile regions, that in the region of Decapolis, the response to the gospel was much more enthusiastic than in many areas, and it began with the testimony of this one guy, or these two guys. We don't know if they were brothers, we don't know if they were friends, we don't even know if they were from the same place or not. But God used them to explain what His mercy could do.

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Alright, so, the "Provoke the Pastor" question that we started out with was: "Jesus casts out demons; who casts out demons now?" So, here is your bonus section. You *know* I wouldn't let you out a half-hour early. What is it that delivers people from Satan's power today? Can a person be daemon-possessed today? Yes. It's *pretty rare* for it to come with all of the phenomena that you see in this situation of the superhuman strength and the raving mania and the self-destruction thing and the running around naked and being uncontrollable, but, yeah, demon-possession can happen. So let me give you a little background, and then I'll bring it in for a landing, and I think this will be worth your while; and it is meant, also, to be a corrective to some things that are taught in our generation that are very dangerous.

Let's start with: What is a demon? A demon is an angel, an angel who fell with Satan in his rebellion against God (see Is. 14:12-14; Ezek. 28:13-16). There are two primary passages that summarize some of the important background about demons. Matthew 25:41—this is a record of things after the second coming of Christ but, pick it up without paying a lot of attention to the story that leads up to it, because I want to pick out the part about what a demon is. It says that "He"—Jesus—"will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.' " Same word—*angelos*—that's used for the holy angels. Demons are an angels, spirit beings who chose to go with Satan in his rebellion against God, and they've chosen to be loyal to him in the ongoing fight against God, against God's people, and against God's plans. And that verse—Matthew 25:41—says that demons will share Satan's eternal punishment in the lake of fire forever and ever (Rev. 20:10).

The other passage is in the book of Revelation; it's in a portion of the book of Revelation that is kind of a sidebar or a flashback—gives a little historical background to some of the things going on there. And in Revelation Chapter 12, Verses 3 and 4, and then down in Verse 9, we have this explanation of some stuff that's going on in Revelation: "Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns"—wish I could go show you the significance of all of that, but it doesn't fit for today—"and on his heads were seven diadems. And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth." How do we know that, about a third of the angels that God created rebelled with Satan? That one verse, that's it; the idea of, his tail swept them away—the idea is, they were following him, it's a picture of that. And then you skip down to Verse 9 in Revelation 12—"And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him." So, demons are fallen angels.

The next thing you need to know: If that's what a demon is—a fallen angel—then, what does it mean to be demon-possessed? The men that you met in this passage—the man or men, depending on which one you're looking at—they were possessed by demons, so you need to know what that means. Now, we *all* are in a battle against Satan; all believers are targeted by an enemy. We must resist the world—First John (2:15); we must resist Satan, says First Peter—he's "like a roaring lion" moving around "seeking whom he may devour," and we're to "resist him, firm in your faith" (1 Pet. 5:8-9, NKJV)—our job is to stand upon the faith, the truth.

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We stand in the truth, and *whatever* the devil brings at us by way of false teaching, temptation, manipulation, "the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life" (1 Jn. 2:16)—whatever he brings, our job is to stand firm. And when he's done all, we're still standing firm in Christ. That's a battle we all face, all the time.

It's a very different thing—and a much more serious thing—to be possessed. Now, the main word is *daimonizomai*—it even has the root for "demon," it has a verb ending on it; so that's the word that's used in our text for today. It means, to be under the control of a demon, or, to be possessed. And that's a very important definition, and it's important that you understand it. There's no Greek lexicon that gives any hint of any meaning of *daimonizomai* other than what I just said. It means, to be under the power of a demon; that's what the word means, and it's a precise word, precise meaning.

Now, some languages and cultures don't do well with the terminology of being possessed by a demon. A more appropriate expression might be that, the person possesses a demon—that person has a demon with him. In other instances, an idiomatic phrase is employed; in some cultures, it is said, "the demon rides the person." That's pretty specific, isn't it? Think of a skilled horseman, a soldier on a horse; he rides the horse, the horse is under his control to do his bidding, and provides great strength and speed and power in doing that, compared to what the man could do. Or, they might say the demon commands the person, or even, the demon *is* the person, because the person is overshadowed by the demon. Now, this is going somewhere, as I said. Stay with me—after we submerge for a while, we will come back to the surface. I have surveyed every single use of this term in the Bible; it is consistent. The word describes the total domination of a person by a demon which inhabits the person's body. It's not always violent, or raging, or immoral—but, it can be.

Another way of describing the phenomenon of a person who has a demon, in the Bible, is to use the word "demon" and the verb "to have," to form the phrase "to have a demon." I also examined every use of that terminology, and it means exactly the same thing as *daimonizomai*. Another way of describing it is to put together words that mean, to be troubled or annoyed or disturbed or afflicted, with an unclean spirit. "An unclean spirit" is a synonym for a demon, or a fallen angel; that terminology occurs only twice, and it's the exact equivalent of that basic word *daimonizomai*.

There's another insight that comes from Luke's record of the incident that we just studied; he says, in Luke Chapter 8, Verse 30—"And Jesus asked him, 'What is your name?' And he said, 'Legion'; for many demons had entered him." The word "entered" means, "to enter into." It reinforces the idea that the person with a demonized situation—or, a demon-possessed person—is one who has the demon inside, it's under the control of the demon, or the demons. And the Greek phrase even puts greater emphasis on it, because they put the preposition "into"—they add that onto the verb "enter," so it's "enter into," and then they use the prepositional phrase "into him," so it's like, "into him entered into." So, very clear statement, that the demon is in the person—same with the phrase "with an unclean spirit"; the demon is in the person. Well, how does that work? Oh, he fits right in between the spleen the pancreas. No, no—it's not a *physical* thing, it's a spiritual entity taking over the physical body.

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There's an interesting statement in Acts Chapter 10, Verse 38; Peter, there, is preaching, and he says, "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him." Now, we're going somewhere—we're going to come back to the surface, but stay with me; this all matters. Peter used a different word, translated "oppressed," to describe the condition of all the people that Jesus dealt with who had problems caused by demons. It's a different word, and it's a pretty strong word; it's even one that's polysyllabic: *katadunasteuo*—"under the power of"—that's what the component parts of that verb mean. Now, here's my point: it's translated "oppressed"—people were oppressed by demons—and Peter says, "That's what I'm talking about, that Jesus delivered." Peter was there, Peter was an eyewitness of all of those accounts. So, what Peter means by the expression "oppressed by the devil," is a synonym for "demon-possessed"; Peter was describing those situations. There's one other phrase that's used, and it's "the demon seizes him"—same thing: when you seize something, you take control of it, you take possession of it.

Now, here's where we're going, alright? Sound the alarm, were going to un-submerge now, and with all your newfound theology of demon possession, I want you to look at this: There are people that have come along—it's mainly been in the last 25 to 30 years—who have said that, "Yeah, there's demon possession, but like Peter said, there's also demon *oppression*, and it's *not the same* as possession, but it is a demonic involvement with people." And they've made this distinction, they've added this new category. And they'll say, "Well, a Christian can't be possessed by a demon, but he can be *oppressed* by a demon, and *it is necessary*, in that case, for that person to go through a kind of cleansing; you have to be delivered from that demon oppression.

Some of my friends and I have rather snarkily called them "Christian Ghostbusters"—people go around *seeking out demons*; they blame problems, most problems, specifically on demons, *and* they prescribe ritual prayers to get rid of them, and they say *this is necessary for Christians* to be delivered from this demonic influence. One of the *worst* of these purveyors of false doctrine was actually a professor of mine for one semester back in seminary, *before* he got involved with this stuff, and he actually said, "Here are the *specific prayers* that you need. These are the steps that are *absolutely necessary* for you to take to be delivered from the demons that drag you down even as a believer," and there's steps to freedom in Christ. The book was called "The Bondage Breaker."

If that's true, it means that, for the first nineteen-and-a-half centuries of the existence of the Church, not *one single person* could possibly have known the prayers they had to pray to get rid of their demons! What do they say about theology—"If it's true it's not new, and if it's new it's not true." It all stands written in the Scripture. Not one New Testament text mentions *anywhere* that the victims of demons were believers or disciples or Christians or followers of Jesus—none of that terminology. The notion that believers can be demonized—and the purveyors of this new wrinkle like to use the word "demonized," not "demon-possessed"; "demon-oppressed," not "demon-possessed"—that just doesn't fit anything in the New Testament.

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When it comes to all of the texts of circumstances dealing with demonic possession, and you examine them in their context, the demons have control over their victims, and the victims have no control over the demons. Now, *that's* significant because, in no case in the New Testament does the demon-possessed person take action to get rid of the demons. The demon-possessed people don't come and say, "I need to be delivered." They were either encountered along the way by Jesus or the Apostles or, in a few cases, they're brought to Jesus by a desperate friend or parent or relative who wants them to be delivered; or, Jesus shows up and the demons panic—that's what we saw in the synagogue in Capernaum, and the same thing when He showed up on the shore by Gerasa. It was *the demons* in that man who recognized Jesus from far away, that guy didn't know Jesus. So, that's the point—the ones in Mark 5 did not come to be delivered; Jesus came to them.

So there are these current teachers and authors who try to redefine these terms, lump them together, and talk about Christians who need to be delivered because they are "demonized." I mentioned Neil Anderson, "The Bondage Breaker"; the other best-known author on that subject is C. Fred Dickason, but there are many others that have spun off from them. And that, my friends, gets Christians *totally sidetracked*. We are commanded to "resist the devil"—how? Peter's words: Resist the devil, "firm in the faith" (1 Pet. 5:9). We stand on the truth, and the devil flees; it's a battle for truth (see 1 Jn. 2:14b).

Now, Jesus had the ability to tell a demon, "Out of there! Go!" He gave that authority, to cast out demons, to the Twelve Apostles, temporarily for them and temporarily to a group of 70 that He sent out; that ability was limited to only those, and only in that era of the Apostles. I showed you, when we first started this, a couple of passages: Second Corinthians Chapter 12 mentions "the signs of a true apostle...signs and wonders and miracles," and I mentioned Hebrews Chapter 2, Verses 3 and 4, where it says the gospel "was confirmed to us by those who heard...by signs and wonders and by various miracles." That was an apostolic thing, *never* passed on to anybody else.

So, the answer to the question: The way a person is delivered from a demon, in this era, is by—drum roll—Jesus. Come to Jesus in repentance and faith. I hope that you never deal with a demon possessed person, I hope you never meet one. Now, you *may* have met many, because, *rarely* is the demoniac—in *this* culture, at least in *this* part of the world—rarely is the demoniac a raving maniac. There may be *some* who do some of the more heinous things; there are the Charles Mansons and the Jeffrey Dahmers and, there are people that *may very well* be under the control of demons. That *is* a possibility, but more often—they're quiet, they're out of sight, they're disguised as "angels of light" (2 Cor. 11:14-15). They hang out in churches, they write books, because they're spreading subtly false doctrines, like Satan's very first attack on Eve: "Has God *really* said?" And then he quotes Scripture almost right. That's usually how demons act. But that's not something that a Christian has to deal with; 1 John 4:4—"You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world." If you ever *do* encounter a demon-possessed person—and as I say, I really hope you don't—what do you need to do? Scream at the demons? Say a certain prayer? Break out the holy water? No—you need to point that person to Jesus. We do not have the authority to command demons (see Acts 19:13-16).

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Or something else popular in some circles of Christianity is to "bind Satan." For all of the countless times that people have declared that—you know, like they say, "We're going to be having this service here, and so, Satan we bind you from this place!" So, we're going to *bind* him, like the Bible says Jesus will. You know, *obviously* that doesn't work! For the *thousands* of times that he's been bound, he ought to have so many cords around him, he couldn't even breathe! It doesn't work—he's *still* "the roaring lion, prowling about, seeking whom he may devour" (see 1 Pet. 5:8), so *stand firm*, resist him, stand firm "*in the faith*"; stand on the truth. Only Jesus can bind Satan—He created him. Angels are created directly by God, so demons are created directly by God. Jesus *will* bind Satan, and He'll do it after He returns at His second coming; He will bind him for a thousand years—read all about it in Revelation 20:1 through 6.

But the idea of Christians "rebuking Satan," or rebuking demons by speaking directly to them, is wrong; it's *flat out wrong*. You should *never* do it. How do I know that? Because of what I read in the Bible. Just in case you don't have enough theological questions, go study the book of Jude; you'll get a lot of questions answered, and you will get a whole bunch more. Here's one that, I'll pluck something out of Jude: Verses 9 and 10—"But"—hold on! That's a conjunction, isn't it? Ah, this is connected the previous passage, or the previous couple of verses. Go read them. You'll find out why he's talking about angels and demons and all of that. I won't go there, but, pick out this much of it: "But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses"—now, where do you read about that in your Bible? Jude, Verse 9. It's not mentioned in the Old Testament. We don't know what this battle was, over the body of Moses; we wouldn't even know that it happened, if it weren't for this passing comment in Jude, Verse 9.

But remember, he's "Michael the archangel"—he's sort of like a commander-in-chief of God's holy angel fighting forces, that's how you see Michael portrayed. "Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil"—so now he's head-on with the devil—"and argued about the body of Moses," Michael "did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you!' But these men"—who? Who are "these men"? Go read Jude; "these men" are false teachers who have sneaked into the church without being noticed—"these men revile the things which they do not understand; and the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed."

It is *wrong*—wrong, wrong, *always* wrong, in *every* circumstance, for *you* to take on a demon! Call on Christ, stand on truth, invite—*beg*—the person who needs to be set free, to come to Christ (2 Tim. 2:25-26; cf. 2 Cor. 3:15-16; 4:3-4; 5:20). We don't have that authority, but we *do* have that Savior. And the false teachers do *exactly* what Michael the archangel won't do, because he knows better. Oh, and I've seen more people than I wish, that have gotten into the—I don't mean to be demeaning, but, the "Christian ghost-busting"—and they almost always wind up in theological shipwreck, some of them getting into some of the worst things you could imagine. But, you know what? Satan doesn't mind at all, people doing that, because he doesn't mind creating the illusion that people have powers they don't have! *Anything* to keep you from standing on the truth.



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Alright—I told you, last time: Please, don't leave this in the mental file-folder in your head of, "Wow, that's an interesting story from far away!" It's practical. What do we have that delivers us from the power of Satan? Even if it's *not* overt demonic activity, even if it just *is* a really bad idea; what if it *is* the world, the flesh, or the devil, putting all those things together, that's just bombarding you and trying to get your eyes off of Christ, and get you to turn to the right or turn to the left? Always, its "Stand firm in the faith." Now, if you're confused by some of that teaching, or if you know someone who is, I have a very good recommendation for you. And I do not have a commission on any of this, but there's a very good book called "Power Encounters: Reclaiming Spiritual Warfare"—it's by David Powlison. Powlison is one of the good guys in the realm of Biblical Counseling and Biblical Theology, and that is a very, very good book that will help you sort out a lot of these things.

My friends, there is true spiritual warfare—you know what it is? It's for you to proclaim Jesus as Lord, and walk through this world. You are at war, you have an enemy who has declared war on your soul, and you have a Savior that will keep you secure in the battle (see Jn. 17:15; cf. Lk. 22:31-32; 1 Jn. 5:18). So, reclaim spiritual warfare: It is walking in truth, it's preaching Christ, it's living to glorify Him. And I read the end—our side wins, because Jesus is the all-powerful Savior.

*Heavenly Father, thank You for Your amazing grace to us. Thank You for Your Word and its depth and clarity. Thank You for this Savior, and for all the demonstrations that He has power over demons, power over Satan, power over even the weather, power over everything that would oppose the kingdom of God. And so, Father, we come humbly today as Your children and ask You to do in us whatever needs to be done, that we might be all the more effective at standing firm in the faith, and at spreading this glorious gospel, for we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*