

WELCOME TO WORD OF FAITH LIFE GROUPS **WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER**

LIFE GROUP LESSON PLAN

Pulling Down Strongholds, Pt. 2

Thursday, April 14, 2022 – 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Teaching The Bible Through Practical Biblical Teaching

OPENING PRAYER (5 MINUTES)

WELCOME TO OUR GROUP (5 MINUTES)

If this is your first time joining us, please introduce yourself! We are glad you took the time to join us today. Our group has four purposes:

1. **L... Learning together from God's Word**
2. **I... Interceding through prayer**
3. **F... true Fellowship in the Spirit of Christ**
4. **E...Evangelizing the lost**

PRAISE & WORSHIP (5 MINUTES)

FACILITATION OF LESSON

Sermon Title: *"Pulling Down Strongholds, Pt. 2"*

POINT 1

We left off last week saying believers should follow the doctrine we see practiced in the New Testament. You can download a copy of last weeks notes from the website.

We want to begin this week's discussion by asking, "Did Jesus wage war against devils during His earthly ministry?" Now, considering Jesus' ministry, what did Jesus do to transform towns and cities? Did He have to use militant prayer to bring down strongholds as He traveled from city to city? Was it necessary for Him to discern the ruling spirit in each city and then wage war? And did Jesus and his disciples teach others how to identify the city's ruling spirit in order to demolish strongholds? No, we do not find scriptures that indicate that. If you examine scripture closely, you will discover that Jesus' ministry was centered on simply traveling from place-to-place teaching and preaching the gospel.

READ: Matthew 4:23 - *"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people."*

According to this verse in the Bible, Jesus' ministry consisted of? Preaching, teaching, and healing! Preaching, demonstrating, and teaching! Do you believe there were demons in those cities and villages? Yes! But his attention was drawn to the people!"

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Jesus put the Word first, and the Word set people free from Satan's dominion.

QUESTION:

1. What was Jesus' focus when he went from city to city and from town to town? How did he focus on the people? Could you provide another scriptural example of his ministry?

POINT 2

According to the Bible, Jesus set the captives free from Satan's shackles by teaching people what the Bible says and how to walk in the light of it. Because, as he stated **John 8:32**:

READ: John 8:32 – *“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”*

So, what should we do? We must follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Preach deliverance by preaching the word.

READ: Luke 4:18 – Says, *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach.”*

It is not stated that Jesus prayed for deliverance. According to the text, he preached deliverance. In other words, he told people what the Word said.

READ: John 8:36 – *“If the son [the word made flesh] therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”*

People were delivered as the Word set them free.

QUESTION:

1. What example did Jesus demonstrate on how to deal with strongholds in a city or town? How should we follow His example?

The next question is whether the early church attempted to war against the devil over cities? Read the book of acts for yourself and see if there is any specific scripture stating that the disciples made it a point to fight ruling demonic princes over cities, regions, or countries.

Actually, the Bible says that when the early church gathered and spoke in tongues:

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READ: Acts 2:11 – *“Cretes and arábians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of god.*

They were speaking in tongues about God's wonderful works. They weren't speaking in tongues as they battled the devil. They weren't bringing down the strongholds that surrounded Jerusalem. They were praising God. Their prayers were centered on God.

QUESTION:

1. When praying in tongues, what is the focus of our attention? Is it scriptural to attack strongholds in tongues? Explain!

POINT 3

Let's look at some biblical examples of how believers prayed when they were being persecuted by the devil. Did they fight and wage war against Satan when he came against them? They did not!

READ: Acts 16:25, *“And at midnight paul and silas **prayed, and sang praises unto God:** and the prisoners heard them.”*

When facing great opposition of the enemy, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God.

QUESTION:

1. Have you ever had to pray and sing your way through a situation where you were up against a strong opponent? Share!

In **Acts 4: 1**, Peter and John also faced an attack,

READ: Acts 4:1, *“And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, 2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. 3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide. 4 But many of them that heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand. **(They were arrested!)** 5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, 6 And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. 7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?*

The attack came through men! Then notice what they were commanded not to do:

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READ: Acts 4:18 – *“And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.”*

When Peter and John were finally let go, they went to their own company and prayed to God. According to the book of acts, these believers didn't battle in tongues against principalities and powers in the heavenlies. They didn't wage war against the devil or try to pull down religious devils over the city. What did they do?

READ Act 4:23: - *“And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. 24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:*

They didn't magnify the problem or the devil. They extolled and magnified God. Their primary concern was not on their problem or the devil. Their primary focus was on God!

QUESTION:

1. When confronted with opposition, what should we avoid doing? What should we do in this situation? Share and example with the group!

POINT 4

In acts chapter 4 when the early church was facing great opposition from the devil, these believers lifted their voices to God in faith. They stayed in faith; they didn't try to fight the devil in prayer. They talked about how big God is, and then they brought God's word back to Him in prayer:

READ: Acts 4:25

25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? 26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. 27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

Notice the believers talked about how big God is and about the great things He had done.

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Then they talked about what the Word of God said about their situation. What were they doing? They were fighting the good fight of faith with the Word. Then finally in verse 29 they talked about the problem. But notice that this entire prayer lasts from verses 25 through 30, but they only talked about the problem in **one verse**:

READ: Acts 4:29-30 - *“And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, 30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.”*

Despite the fact that the devil was the source of the problem, these believers addressed their concerns to God rather than to the devil. And the most important thing they asked God to do to help them with their problem was to give them the courage to preach the Word, with signs and wonders following as a result. They were well aware that it was the Word that would bring about change in people and situations.

READ: John 8:32 – *“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”*

This prayer of the early church shows us the biblical way to pray as a church when we face the opposition of the powers of darkness. We're to pray to God. And we're to pray for boldness to proclaim the Word so the word can set people free from Satan. And furthermore, notice they did not even ask God to do anything about the devil.

QUESTION:

1. How did the early church deal with opposition according to what we just read? What is the biblical way to pray when facing opposition?

What about when the prophets and teachers gathered together in Antioch? Did they go into spiritual warfare and spend their time in spiritual combat before they sent Paul and Barnabas for the work of the ministry? No!

READ: Acts 13:2 – *“As they **ministered to the Lord, and fasted**, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.”*

They fasted so that they could clearly hear the instructions of the Holy Ghost. They ministered to the Lord! They didn't fight devils. Too many times people know nothing about ministering to the Lord; they spend all their time fighting a defeated foe.

It's when believers begin to minister to God, that things begin to happen. They create an atmosphere where the Holy Spirit can speak: As they **ministered to the Lord, and fasted**, the **Holy Ghost said**,

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QUESTIONS:

1. How did the Prophets and Teacher spend their time? What prepared them to hear from the Holy ghost?
2. What does it mean to minister to the Lord? Share an example

POINT 5

In the book of Revelation, Jesus talked to the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos about a literal church that existed in the city of Pergamos at that time. The city of Pergamos was a stronghold of Satan, yet Jesus didn't say a thing about fighting satanic rulers over that city.

Surely if it were scriptural to do spiritual warfare in the sense of fighting the devil and pulling down strongholds over cities, Jesus would have mentioned it here.

READ: Revelation 2:12 – *“And to the angel of the **church in Pergamos** write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; 13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where **Satan's seat is**: and thou **holdest fast my name**, and **hast not denied my faith**, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where **Satan dwelleth**.”*

Although Jesus said the church at Pergamos was where Satan's seat is, notice Jesus did not tell the believers there to do warfare against Satan. No, Jesus commended the believers for holding fast to His Name and for not denying the faith. In other words, He was encouraging them to stay in faith!

READ: Acts 6:7 – *“And the **word of God increased**; and the number of the **disciples multiplied** in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.”*

It's interesting that when the Word of God increased, the number of disciples multiplied. If believers really want to do damage to Satan's kingdom, they should get out and preach the Word. It's the Word of God that has the power to set people free.

QUESTION:

1. What was Jesus' response to the stronghold of Satan in Pergamos? How do we really do damage in Satan's kingdom?

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ALTAR CALL - Time of Decision (Everyone Bow Your Heads)

1) Receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior:

- a. Some may have never received Jesus.
- b. You may be a good person, give to the poor, and serve in the community.
- c. Has there been a day where you confessed Jesus and Lord?

(Read Romans 10:9) If need to make this decision, raise your hand:

Repeat this prayer after me: *“I believe that Jesus is the son of God. I believe he died for me bearing my sins for me. I believe he rose from the dead and is alive right now. Dear Lord Jesus, come into my life now! Come into my heart now! I believe in my heart, and say with my mouth that Jesus Christ is my personal Lord as Savior. And I am, right now, born again.”*

2) Rededicate your life:

- a. Is your life a mess? Are you struggling right now?
- b. You know something is just off in life?

(Read 1 John 1:9) If you want to be restored with God, raise your hand:

Now we want to take an opportunity to pray and to repent before God for any area you have sinned: *“Father, I come before you in the Name of Jesus asking for forgiveness ... (allow the person to personally speak to God about the specific thing they are repenting for). After they are finished, close out the prayer with them, thanking God for forgiveness and restoration.”*

PRAISE REPORTS - *2-MINUTES PER PERSON

PRAYER FOCUS / INDIVIDUAL PRAYER REQUEST (10 MINUTES)

Prayer focus:

- 1) Your Circle (friends and family) - *Have members complete the form and submit to you by email or in person.*
- 2) Life Group members
- 3) Word of Faith Leadership:
 - a. Pastor Ronald D. Walker, Jr., Evangelist Sharon L. Walker, Minister Promise Walker, Brittany and Christian and the ministerial staff.
 - b. Bishop Keith A. Butler and Pastor Deborah Butler

Have you reached out to your circle today?

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ANNOUNCEMENTS (5 MINUTES)

1. Come celebrate Holy Week with us. Join us Friday, April 15th for Good Friday Service at 10:00 am, in person and online. Also join us Sunday, April 17th at 10:00 am for our Resurrection Day Services. **Midweek Bible study is canceled for April 13th. Prayer is canceled Friday, April 15th.**
2. Join the Soul Winning Attack Team (SWAT) Team for their next outing **Saturday, April 16th at Tutu Park Mall.** Prayer begins promptly at 11:00 am in the chapel. For more information see Minister Francis.
3. Join **Covenant Partner's Ministry for A Scavenger Hunt - "Come Hunt with Me."** **Friday, April 22, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.** Join them for the word, light refreshments and a scavenger hunt. Invite a couple and bring a dish. For more information, please see Minister Lavern Oysterman or email: wofcovenantpartners@gmail.com.
4. Young Adults ages 18-35, on **Saturday, April 23 @12:00PM, IBC is going to be meeting up at Lindbergh Bay Beach for some pizza and fun in the sun!** Don't forget to invite a friend! For more information, meet Min. Promise by the stage after service, call the church office at (340)774-8617, or email promisewalker7@gmail.com.

OFFERING

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CLOSING PRAYER & DISMISSAL
