

Spiritual Authority

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson's sermon emphasizes the importance of true spiritual authority rooted in a deep relationship with Christ and its necessity in today's church.

Duration: 58:33

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 7:28-29

Topics: "Spiritual Leadership", "False Prophets"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of spiritual authority and the need for a message that reaches the brokenhearted. He highlights the upcoming economic collapse and suggests that the happiest person will be the one who loses the election, as they won't have to deal with the mess. The preacher also discusses the difference between speaking with authority and actually embodying it, using Jesus as an example. Jesus confronted the corrupt religious leaders of his time, calling them out for their hypocrisy and greed. The sermon emphasizes the need for true spiritual authority and warns against false shepherds.

Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing World Challenge, P.O. Box 260, Lindale, Texas 75771, or calling 903-963-8626.

None of these messages are copyrighted, and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to friends. Spiritual authority. I'll tell you what you could do.

Just open your Bible to 1 Peter, and leave it open in the third chapter on your lap, and I'll come to it when I'm ready, if I can find it. 1 Peter, the third chapter. Just leave that open on your lap, and we'll come back to it.

Spiritual authority. Well, we've been blessed with a rich word today. The Bible says, he that's given much, much is required of him.

And we have to answer for the word that we hear. God help us. Hallelujah.

Lord, I love you. It's all I know. I love you.

And I thank you for your precious word, the light and lamp to our feet, and strength to our life. Holy Spirit, you have opened up the word to us so many times, and we've been blessed. But Lord, we want to be more than blessed.

We want our hearts changed. Lord, I want my heart changed by preaching this tonight. I don't want it to be just a sermon that I put together, because I'm obligated to.

But I pray, Lord, that as I preach it, you help me to understand it even better than when you gave it to me, and let it flow out of my heart. And God, I really want to be changed by this. I want to know what true spiritual authority is, how to obtain it, and how to use it.

To your honor and to your glory, Lord Jesus. Lord, I just pray you give us an understanding. You open our hearts and our eyes and our ears to hear what the Spirit has to say.

In Jesus' name, amen. When Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount, and when it was finished, the people said, this man doesn't teach like the scribes do. He speaks as one having authority.

And the Greek word there is, speaking with mastery, power, liberty, is one who's in control. A man who knows what he's talking about. It does not read, he spoke with authority.

He spoke as one having authority. You see, it's one thing to speak what people perceive to be authority. You know, that's loud, boisterous, powerful voice, seeming to be in full control.

But authority is not something you speak, it's something you become. It's something you are. It is birthed out of what you become in Christ.

This authority of Jesus shook hell, and boy, it sure upset the whole religious establishment of his day. He goes into a synagogue in Capernaum, and there's a man that is demon-possessed, and he interrupts Jesus as he's teaching. And, of course, these people were always asking, the Pharisees and the scribes were always asking Jesus, by what authority do you do these things, all the miracles and casting out of demons and devils? And they said, who gave you this authority? Where'd you get it? This great power, this spiritual authority you have, where did you get it? Where's it from? Who gave it to you? In fact, really, Jesus said, I'm not going to tell you.

Remember, he said, you tell me about the baptism of John, was it of God or flesh? And they said, we don't know. Jesus said, well, I'm not going to tell you either. I mean, just point blank, I'm not going to tell you where I got my authority.

The devil doesn't need to know, as long as you got it. But not only did Jesus have spiritual authority in the pulpit, he had it over all demon powers. And he walks into this synagogue, and the spirit cries out, before Jesus said anything, let us alone, have you come to destroy us? You see, Satan was contesting this spiritual authority of Jesus at this point.

He's possessed this poor man for so long. No doubt this man has attended the synagogue for months, and they learned to endure it. This man put on all kinds of demonstrations, perhaps, and upset services, but they had no power, they had no authority.

And here is the contest, and the devil says to him, just leave us alone. What do we have to do with you? In other words, master, this is not your concern. Everybody's happy here, they've learned to endure this.

And no preacher here's got the power. And nobody has got the authority. Why interrupt it? They're happy, they're contented, they live with this.

That man's been here all these years, they'd miss him if he wasn't here. Why are you coming along and spoiling? This is a very cozy setup, this is very nice. Nobody here to contest anything.

This poor man, leave him alone. You're going to upset the apple cart, you're going to upset everything. Everybody's contented here.

What do you have to do with this? What do you have to do with this situation at all? There's no pastor, no leader, there's nobody with spiritual authority. Everybody's contented. Why be outraged? Now, you see, this synagogue didn't need another sermon at this point.

It didn't need another seminar on how to go out and canvass the whole world to get one more convert, make him twice the child of hell as they were. That's what the Bible said. They didn't need at this point some new program.

They needed a man with authority to throw the devil out of people and out of the house of God. They needed spiritual authority, they needed a man having authority. Not a man talking authority, but a man having authority, the scripture says.

And one man with authority used that authority and drove the devil out. And Jesus rebuked him saying, hold your peace and come out of him. In plain English, shut up devil and get out of here.

And they said, what new thing is this? With what authority? Look, he commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him. Folks, if there's ever a time we need spiritual authority in the house of God, it's now. The devil is moving into the house of God uncontested because there is no spiritual authority in the house of God in the pulpit and rarely in the pew.

Jesus came to a church that was full of people with withered hands and demon-possessed children. A father whose son was made to jump into the waters and into the fire and mothers with daughters that were demon-possessed and all kinds of demonic activity in the house of God. He came at that very point, Jesus came at that point of time.

The Bible says their shepherds were charlatans. The Bible says they robbed widows. Jesus said they were stealing from their own elderly parents.

Eyes full of adultery, they were fornicators. He called them whited suppliants, full of dead men's bones, hypocrites. Boy, you talk about strong preaching.

Getting rich on the backs of the poor, having no pity on the widows and the fatherless. And folks, this tops it all. Jesus said, you're all snakes.

He looked at the pulpits of his day and he said, you serpents, you generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell? He said, you're going to hell. Boy, if I wrote that in my newsletter, I would have half my newsletter drop out. This is why our churches today are filled with hurting, withered people.

You have seen in our time the devil bringing his music into the house of God, even punk music and now mass music. I've been getting letters from parents that said that our church now has not only punk music, with kids with pierced tongues and pierced ears and spiked purple hair, and they're massing, pushing the

chairs back and massing. It means they're coming up right in the house of God, smashing bodies until they're hurt, throwing bodies around.

And it is happening with the blessing of the pastor and pastors. He has brought into his house false Jesus now with preachers that have come as angels of light, but they're really messengers of Satan, the Bible says. They brought in every conceivable kind of flesh and sensual entertainment, uncontested, and now they have cleverly turned the church into a feel-good comfort zone.

Call it sinner-friendly churches, where sin is never mentioned. The conscience of sinful man, the Bible is very clear. They're stroking the conscience and they're dulling the conscience of those who come.

Question, before Jesus comes on the scene, before this man of authority comes on the scene, where do these people go? Where did the man go? Where can he go, the man with the withered head? Where is he going to go? To which priest? To which church? Where is this man going to go? Where is the demon-possessed going to go? Where is the adulterous woman to go? Where is the divorced wife whose husband is about to divorce her? Where does, in this time of Jesus, the time we're talking about, this time period, where, before a man of authority comes on the scene, where do they go? I ask you to think of the situation in America and in our churches, not only here, but worldwide today. I ask you where a father and mother are going to go nowadays, when they discover that their son or daughter is on drugs or alcohol. The daughter has just given birth to an illegitimate child.

Where do these hurting parents go? What kind of church do they want? What do they want when they go to church? What does a wife want when she goes into the house of God, when she's just gotten word that her husband has just told her that morning, or the night before, I want a divorce, I found somebody else, I'm moving out, I'll take care of you and the kids, and it's suddenly, she didn't realize it, she thought everything is all right, she comes to church Sunday morning, there are tears in her eyes, she's brokenhearted. What does she want in church? Does she want a sermonette or a funny skit, as they're giving people today? Does she want a little feel-good message that I'm okay? No, she wants to hear a message of authority and power that will reach her broken heart. What's going to happen when the economy collapses? I told Pastor Carter this morning, I said, the happiest man in America, about a year or two from now, is going to be the man who loses the election.

Because the economy will be in such a mess, and it'll be so out of control, this man will say, thank God it's not me in the Oval Office. I believe that with everything in my heart, it's not a joke, I believe that. But what's going to happen when the bills pile up and the jobs are not plentiful, and people are coming in now, do people want to be a part of a mega church, where a pastor can go around boasting he has the largest church in America, the world? No, no, no, no, they're not trying to appease somebody's dream, they're not trying to just be a part of some big thing.

When they come now, they're going to ask for answers, they've got to have something more than just a feel-good message. They're going to want to have a man of authority tell them what's happening, and how, at this, even that late hour, how they're going to keep their heart and their mind and their souls and their bodies and families together. I believe God is even now raising up a holy people, that He is birthing, in whom He is birthing spiritual, true spiritual authority.

Because you see, God still has the people who grieve over the sins of the nation and the church today. But you see, Satan will always contest people who grieve, people who want to pray and change things. He's going to say the same thing he said to Jesus, what do we have to do with you? Why would you take

this as your problem? You just go back to your church, you sing in praise, you talk in tongues, you do what you want.

You have a good time, you just go praise the Lord. Leave us alone. The people are contented with this.

Don't contest it. We don't need any outrage here. And that's exactly what happens to any praying man.

The devil will come and say, why take this burden on? You have enough burdens now to pray for your children, you have enough burdens now to pray for your own problems and needs. Why take on the burden of a church that is backslidden? Because the devil will come and say, this is not your business. Look, those churches of the flesh, they're growing, they're contented, they're happy.

Leave them alone. Don't stir up the things, leave it alone. He'll contest it every time.

But could you imagine Jesus sitting in that synagogue in Capernaum, trying to out shout that man while he's teaching? I saw a tape given to me, some people in a certain church were laughing so loud and making animal noises and the preacher was trying to out shout them. I got nervous, I couldn't handle it, I turned it off. Because he's trying to out scream.

Can you imagine Jesus taking that, that a devil would rise up in his presence and try to hinder his preaching? Jesus would not stand by, he will never stand by and no praying man, no godly man or woman can stand by while the devil tries to take their children, while the devil tries to mess up their families. He cannot stand by and try to out shout the devil. I get calls from Christian parents and primarily from pastors and their wives.

I just discovered my boy is a drug addict. I just discovered my daughter is running around and she is drinking. In fact, is a drunkard.

We can't get through to her now. What should we do? And folks, we got Christian parents in America, all over America in panic. They don't know where to go.

They're looking for someone to help. They call me because, or write to me because of teen challenges and say, could you call my son? And first of all, I don't even know if he wants to talk about it. And secondly, teen challenges, there's hardly any beds left anymore.

Every place is full and packed. And more, even worse, most teenagers don't want to leave home and they're not ready to go into any program. And here are these parents, Christian praying people, acting so helpless.

I know they're heartbroken. My heart goes out to them. I'm not being hard-hearted about this.

But something's wrong with this picture. Where is the spiritual authority in that home? Why is dad and mom, why are preachers calling me? Why do they not have the spiritual authority? Why do they say, I can't say anything to my son. All right, if they shut them out.

He has power in the secret closet. He has power with God in fasting and prayer. He has power.

He has authority. He has access to authority. There's got to be somebody in that home that lays hold of this truth about God's concept of spiritual authority.

And they hold it so that you... Folks, the time is going to come you're not going to be able to depend on anybody else. You're not going to be able to call a preacher. If you're going to call a preacher who doesn't have spiritual authority, you're just wasting your time anyhow.

You say, oh, I'm not Jesus. He was God in flesh. He came on earth with such infused divine authority.

Listen, I'm going to tell you something. He was God in flesh, but he was also man. And the devil knew that he was being contested by a man infused with the Holy Ghost.

He was Jesus of Nazareth. And that's what the devil calls him here. Oh, Jesus of Nazareth, he's calling him a man.

Jesus did not fight him on any other ground or otherwise you and I could not believe for the power in our own lives. He would have not set the example of power, spiritual authority that we can obtain. The same spiritual authority that he gave to his apostles.

He fought him as a man infused and empowered with the Holy Ghost. He said Jesus of Nazareth, a man born in a particular town in Israel, in Nazareth. Man of Israel.

He didn't call him now the son of God. He said, he approached him now, even though he knew he was the son of God. He approached him now with this great power of the Holy Ghost that infused a human man just like you and just like me.

Because you say, I wish I had the power, Jesus. I wish I had that authority. Well, folks, the apostles had that authority.

Scripture makes it clear. And when he had called unto himself, his 12 disciples, he gave them power over unclean spirits to cast them out, to heal all manner of sickness, all manner of diseases. Jesus said, behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all power of the enemy and nothing by any means shall hurt you.

He even said the spirits are subject unto you, even though he said, don't rejoice in that, but that your names are written in heaven. He did make it clear. The subjects are the spirits of evil spirits are subject unto you.

Peter was a man of flesh and blood, just like you and I. He was a human. He was not God in flesh. And he sees a man laying at the gate, beautiful.

And he says to this man, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And the high priest called him and said, by what authority are you doing this? How are you doing? What power and whose name are you using? What authority? I challenge anybody anywhere to show me in this book when and where God said we don't have that power. When did God cut it off? When did he say that's enough? When did he say to a society, you're on your own? Why would God give his power to those in the wilderness when they needed? Why over all this century would he give power when it was needed by all the kings of Israel? Why would he give power to all the prophets in the time? Why would he give power on the day of Pentecost? And why would he give it to the first half of the last days? And now when we needed it more than ever because the devil has come down to us having great wrath.

Why when the devil has more power expressed, when he has more power moving on the earth, when we needed it more than ever, why would God withdraw it? We need the power of the Holy Ghost. We need spiritual authority more than we've ever needed in all of history. We need it now.

We did not lose it. It is still available to the church of Jesus Christ. It's still available.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Now a lot of Christians have a convoluted concept of spiritual authority.

Especially in charismatic circles, they run off to the conventions of men of power. To have hands laid on them so they could get an anointing. They call it a power and authority.

And I see them all over the world. They come from a convention and they got a little card in their pocket that they've been ordained with power and authority. A little piece of paper, a little card.

I've seen the cards. You see them all around trying to shout the devil out of people. I mean, I've seen people screaming at demons.

Screaming. And then when nothing happens, they wind up like this. Why couldn't we cast them out? You cannot get supernatural authority by anybody laying hands on you because it's not a gift.

I'm going to come now to the heart of the message. Listen to it closely. Well, let me take you to 1 Peter now.

Do you still have it open in your lap? Listen to this thought first. True divine authority and power is entrusted only to the hidden man of the heart. To the hidden man of the heart.

Go to 1 Peter 3 and let's start reading verse 1. Likewise, ye wise, be in subjection to your husbands, that if any obey not the word, they also may be without the word. Be one by the conversation of the wives. While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.

Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair and of wearing of gold or putting on of apparel. But let it be the hidden man of the heart. And that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

Now, let me try to open this up by the power of the Holy Spirit. Peter here is introducing the man of the hidden heart. Let it be the hidden man of the heart.

Paul speaks of the inward man. He spoke as the inner man that's being renewed day by day. Folks, look at me.

There are two of me and there are two of you. There's an inner man and there's an outer man. Now, these verses I read to you are type of the church.

He's talking about the outer man here and the inner man. The church is a type of a woman, another bride, the bride of Christ. And this is speaking clearly about the church of Jesus Christ and spiritual authority.

Now, follow me closely if you will, please. This outer man is always on display before others. The hidden man is known only to God.

The hidden man is the one God's working on. And when the hidden man has the work done, he asks you to work on the outer man. The inner man is where nobody else can see the work being done.

You have no idea what God's been doing to me all week. You don't know what he's been doing to Sister Teresa. She talked a little bit about it.

The concrete went over my head. The whole world was over my head. Because he was working on the inner man, nobody sees that.

You see, the conscience is a policeman for the outer man, but the Holy Ghost is a policeman for the inner man. Because the Holy Ghost doesn't make excuses like the conscience does for the outer man. This inner man that the Holy Ghost is working on constantly, strengthening, preparing him for spiritual authority.

The outer man is the one that's on display. And Peter uses a type of a woman, and she's all dressed up in finery. She's got gold earrings and gold hanging everywhere.

She's in the best finery. She's all dressed up in the flesh. Now, please don't go home and throw away your hairspray, ladies, and your makeup kit.

That's not what he's talking about. Ye wives, whose adorning let it not be that of plaiting the hair, wearing of gold, and putting on of apparel. He's talking about a church, a backslidden church, a church that moves and operates in flesh, that appeases to man its all outward appearance, and there is no heart to it, there is no power, there's no spiritual authority to it whatsoever.

It's just show. A lot of Christians are attracted to that. Folks, I pray that by the time you've been into this church, even two or three months and sat under the Word, you'd have enough discernment to go to any meeting and discern whether it's flesh or spirit.

You ought to know whether it's just lipstick and hair sticking up, and it's not reality. First of all, the hidden man of the heart is one who fasts and prays. It's that inner man that's shattered, hidden with God in Christ, hidden away, where he doesn't try to impress men with his prayers.

Why did Jesus say this time comes forth only... He's talking about facing demon power. This time comes forth but by prayer and fasting. Why would Jesus say that? Because he needed time to work on the inner man.

You get along with me, when you pray and you fast, so that your mind is not on food or anything else, but your whole mind and heart is given to me so that I can work on you, because I want to give you power because of what is coming, what you're going to face in the days ahead. Why do you think God's been talking to us all day and for weeks about prayer and about faith? Because of what is coming, especially to America, and especially to New York City. He is trying to build up the inner man.

He's trying to make us strong for the days ahead. Do you hear that? I said, do you hear that in the Spirit? How can we possibly believe that we can have spiritual power and authority over the devil when we hardly pray, seldom pray, and hardly ever fast? How do you expect to keep your kids out of trouble with what is about to break loose now in our schools? And what we are seeing now is nothing compared to what is about to break because all hell is going to be loose. The Scripture says very, very clearly.

You talk about spiritual authority and you're concerned about your children? Concerned about your family? What are you doing spending hours in front of the Babylonian idiot box? Spiritual authority? When you see your children in rebellion? Spiritual authority when dad and mom argue and fight and gossip in front of their children? Spiritual authority when your children see you compromising? Spiritual authority when you

drink and then get shocked and go ballistic when you find your kids smoking pot while you're drinking liquid pot? We've got Christians in this church drinking. Quite a few of you say, well, I'm Italian, all Italians drink. I don't buy it.

I know that's not Puerto Rican. Don't try to tell us that's Puerto Rican values or tradition. I had an Italian pastor get so mad at me years ago in Italy because he knew I was coming for two years and he passed through the church but he had a brewery.

And he got upset because he'd spent two years fixing this bottle of wine for me. I said, if you come to the United States, I'll honor, I won't say if you want to drink, but I tell you, please, I don't drink so honor my feelings. This is the end.

But he stomped away. We're talking about spiritual authority. Jesus had authority because he could say Satan comes and has nothing in me.

Unless you can say that, don't talk about spiritual authority. I want you to go to 1 Peter 3.1, you have it there? Likewise, ye wise, be in subjection to your husbands, that if any obey not the word, they also may be without the word, be won by the conversation. That conversation means by the lifestyle, the lifestyle or the behavior of the wife.

While they behold your chaste conversation or your holy life, couple will fear. Now look at me, please. I'm going to show you now the church with spiritual authority.

Here's a woman, a wife who submitted to her husband. She has learned. She is governed by the word of God.

She has learned husbands, ye wise, be submitted to your husbands, be in subjection to your husband. That's the scripture. She has read it, so she has submitted.

He's talking about the true church of the hidden man. This hidden man reads it and says, that's it, I'm going to obey it. And I can obey it because the Holy Ghost is going to give me power to obey it.

And so here's the wife. Try to follow me if you can. I want to try to make this as clear as possible.

Can the Holy Ghost help me on this now? See, here's a woman that doesn't have to chide her husband. She doesn't have to argue with him. She doesn't have to throw scriptures at him.

She doesn't have to threaten him. She doesn't have to say, if you don't go to church, I'm going to leave you. She doesn't have to say one religious word.

She doesn't have to do that. There's no power in that. There's no authority in that.

But you see, this woman is fasting and praying for her husband, and she's in submission to her husband. She obeys her husband, even though he may be obnoxious, even though it may be difficult on her, and even though she has to bite her tongue so many times, she's in submission because the word says so. She's in submission to her husband, and because she's in submission, she's gaining authority every day, spiritual authority.

And one day, every day, that is increasing. She has spiritual authority because she knows the scriptures. She's in submission to her husband.

She has spiritual authority because she's under submission. Her neighbor may be a Christian wife also, and she too fasts and prays for her husband, but she has no spiritual authority because she's not submitted to her husband. She's the boss in the house, and she can get awful mean about it, and she can tell him off.

And she said, if you don't come to church for me some more, not another hug or kiss. Uses her charms as some kind of coin. I don't care how long she prays.

I don't care how much she fasts. She has no power, and that man's never going to get saved under that kind of activity. She is not moving according to the word.

She's not governed by the word of God. She's not in submission. And now all that you single people are sitting here comfortably saying, give it to him, brother Dave.

Are you in subjection to those who have the rule over you? Are you honoring your pastors and your teachers? Are you under submission? When you come to this house of God, no matter who you're under, are you walking in submission? That's according you to honor those who are in authority in the scriptures. Are you honoring those authority? Are you walking according to the word of God? Are you submitting to the word of God? I read something just last night in the word of God, and I said, oh God, I've got to make a change right here at this point. And by God's grace, I'm making that change.

I read it just last night. God, I want to be subjected to the word of God. I subject myself to those around me.

I'm under authority. You can't have authority until you're under authority. You see, it's the silent eloquence and power of a godly life.

Silent eloquence of a godly wife, a godly people, a church, a bride walking in submission to the word of the Lord. And so it is with men. The Bible makes it very, very clear.

It's not just women. We use this as a type of the bride. But you see, it's so easy to dissipate what little spiritual authority we have.

I'm thinking now of a forefather of mine, a powerful preacher back in my lineage. And I've heard so much about this great man of God. He was a man of great spiritual authority.

He was some preacher. I have somebody that sat under his minister years, years ago, sent me a little book with some of his sermons. They're all scriptures.

Somebody recently wrote a note, and I read it about this great preacher forefather of mine. And he was in Virginia holding a crusade. And six men kept coming back every night and not listening and were kind of listless.

He was preaching up a fire message. And a number of nights they came. And one night they came and sat right in the front row.

And he was preaching away, and they were totally uninterested. And he jumped off the platform. And he went down in front of them, stuck a finger in the face of one of them, said, get to the altar.

You all go wake up in hell tomorrow morning. And they all ran down screaming and got saved. That's a document.

It's a true story. I've got many, many of the stories of the power this man had. But he ended up a shell of a man.

He ended up with no spiritual authority whatsoever. I was just beginning the ministry when he died. He wasn't my father.

But I grieved when I heard about that inward man that had a habit and wouldn't let go and could preach powerfully, but lost all spiritual authority until the end. He was just a walking empty shell. You see, power and authority has today so much connotation of flashiness and loudness, and that's not what it is at all.

The scripture says it's the ornament of a spirit of meekness and quietness. Let me read again. But let it be of the hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible.

And in the original Hebrew, it means the incorruptibility of a meek and quiet spirit. The incorruptibility of a meek and quiet spirit. A spirit that's immune to decay and to corruption.

It's a spirit that God calls of a great price. In fact, the word that is used here is used in another place. A very precious ointment, when the box was broken over Jesus, this precious ointment was called very precious or of great price.

In other words, this is the perfume of God. This is something that's incorruptible. And when a man has this, it's an incorruptible substance.

It'll take him to the judgment day. And if you don't have this, and this is not some kind of a character expression that you develop. It's something far beyond that, this meek and quiet spirit.

Meekness here means gentleness. Quiet here means undisturbed and assured. This is a heart of gentleness and a heart that is never disturbed and always assured in its position in Christ.

The world has this concept of authority and power. And you'll find any bookstore, you'll find it. What one now has called how to intimidate others.

Power through intimidation. And they say, assert yourself, intimidate. Stand up with pride on your race, your color and everything else.

Stand up with pride. Put yourself first. Use eye contact.

Stare down others. Use body language and on and on and on. Have you ever seen the covers on... Have you ever been in a music store and seen the faces of these young musicians now? That in your face, intimidation.

Every one of them are skinny and they're standing there intimidating the whole world. Trying to look menacing. I'll tell you something about those boys.

They go home to mamas and mama says, you get that lemon face off or I'll turn you to lemonade. They go home to mamas who say, go finish the dishes. Yes, mama.

Then they go out and as soon as they get out the door, intimidate everybody. Mama boys. They call that authority.

You cannot have spiritual authority without having this precious spirit of meekness and quietness. You can be the best known evangelist on the face of the earth. And you can have thousands of people attend your meetings and you can cast them all down.

You can slay everybody in sight and still not have one ounce or one iota of spiritual power. If you do not have in the inner man this meekness and gentleness that Christ is speaking about in the hidden man. Otherwise you're moving in the flesh and it's not authority.

It's all flesh. It's all candy cotton. It's all flesh.

It means nothing. God doesn't even consider it. Other than to grieve over it.

David said, thy right hand has held me up and thy gentleness has made me great. Now the word great here, and I wish the interpreters, King James had expanded on the true Hebrew meaning. Because it says, thy right hand has held me up and your gentleness has abundantly increased my capacity for mercy.

And the picture is, David is saying, and this is what gentleness is all about. We're talking about gentleness in the hidden man. And David is saying, oh God, I am so awed.

I am so overwhelmed by your mercy to me. I have been an adulterer. I've been a murderer.

I have lied. I have cheated. I have numbered the people and doubted your faithfulness.

And yet you have shown me mercy. You've shown me grace. You've been so gentle in your dealings with me.

And in that, my heart has been moved. I have set my heart to be a messenger of that mercy and grace in your dealings with me. So gentle, so forgiving, so merciful.

I want to go out. How do I be hard on others who are going through the same things I went through and even less sins than I've committed? How can I go out and be loud and mean? How can I put people down that are going through the same thing I did when you showed me such mercy? Folks, the gentleness we're talking about, this is not some milk toast, mousy, false piety. A person going around with a long face and saying, I'm so humble, has nothing to do with that at all.

It has to be a revelation of what God has done for you. Every person hearing me now that says that you're saved by grace, listen to me now. God has shown you mercy.

You should have been in hell by now. God's been merciful to you. He's been merciful to me.

I think sometimes God's been more merciful to me than any preacher in the face of the earth. He's been merciful to me. He should have damned me.

I had no right. I shouldn't be in this pulpit tonight because He's been merciful. He has shown me gentleness.

He's been gentle to me. He's been tender-hearted toward me. I don't have spiritual authority until I am showing that same grace and mercy.

That's where the authority is. It's not thundering against somebody's sins. Though sometimes God will come down with a hammer because there has to be a hammer at times.

He'll bring the law down on us. But it's a man or woman who said, Oh God, I'm so enamored at Your mercy. I'm so enamored at Your grace.

I so thank You for what You've done for me. How can I be but tender-hearted to those around me, to my children, to my husband, to my wife, to everybody I witness to? We speak those things only which we've seen and heard. You're walking in spiritual authority the moment you lose your fear of the devil.

Did you hear me? You're walking in spiritual authority when you lose fear of the devil. David said, I will fear no evil. You have got to resist the devil.

You've got to be able to stand up to the devil and say, Devil, I know better than to listen to you anymore because I've been educated by the Holy Ghost. I have an experience with God. I know what mercy is.

I know what grace is. Don't tell me anything about my flesh. I know what my flesh was.

You don't have to tell me anything. I don't believe anymore because I have been educated by the Holy Ghost. I have a temper.

I have an experience with God. I've experienced this mercy and grace. A quiet spirit.

Unperturbed. Undisturbed. The hidden man who's unmoved now.

Nothing shakes him because he's fully at rest now in the faithfulness of God to his almighty word. He is totally at rest. He said, let the storms come.

Let the devil lie. All right, I'll lose everything I have, even of sickness and even death. Stare me in the face.

I know what my God said. All things work together for good to them who love God and are called according to his purpose. And God has a reason for it.

God has a purpose to it. And this heart is established in the word of God. And that's what this quietness is.

This quietness is nothing more than a soul at rest because it's entrusting. It's fully trusting what God said. Fully governed by the word of God.

Fully ruled by the word. Fully walking in faith. If you've heard it all day today, hand-wringing Christians have no authority.

All they can say is, how did this happen? What are we going to do? Oh, God help the Christians. That's all you can do. They have no resources.

Everything is chaos. Everything is murmuring, complaining. I've always believed, with this I'm going to close.

I've always believed that a man having authority must be a righteous man. You can't stand before the enemy unless you are a righteous person. But let me tell you what that righteousness is.

Folks, some of you think, well, I can stand against the devil because I don't drink anymore. I'm clean of drugs. And you can give me a catalog of do's and don'ts and things that you have that you believe is the essence of holiness and righteousness.

I want you to go to Isaiah 32 before I close Isaiah 32. And with this I close. Verse 17.

And the work of righteousness shall be peace. The effect of righteousness, what? Quietness and assurance forever. If you're righteous, this is the effect of righteousness.

You see, Abraham believed and it was counted in for righteousness. He believed God. We've been hearing that all day.

God's going to say it one more time, hoping that you'll go home with it and say, I'm going to make this a part of my life. That it'll change your life. The work of righteousness shall be peace.

The effect of righteousness, quietness. That's undisturbed heart and assurance forever. That's righteousness.

Righteousness is believing what God said is truth and committing your life to it. It's that simple. But one thing you must know.

Please don't go out and try to witness to somebody as a wife or husband unless you're under submission. Because you have no power, you have no authority. And please don't try to witness to somebody else.

Don't try to be a soul winner. Don't even try to have a lighthouse, community lighthouse, your business job or anywhere else until you have forgiven yourself. You've got to understand this before I close.

When the blood has been applied, we have people go out winning souls to Jesus who have never fully forgiven themselves. They always have this concept that God's mad at them. That they're going to fall.

There's a sense that I am not truly forgiven. Folks, you cannot have assurance. You cannot have peace.

You cannot truly be righteous until you believe in the absolute cleansing and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ to your soul. I am under the blood. It's forgiven.

It's gone. God's still working on me. I haven't arrived yet.

There's still temptations. But the Lord said He's going to make a way for me to bear unto them. He's going to hold me up.

And I'm going to forgive myself. There are a lot of you who haven't forgiven yourself. You're still mad at yourself.

You're still condemning yourself. You're still living in fear and bondage. God wants you to face what is coming with freedom.

He wants you to face it with spiritual authority. And that spiritual authority says by the power of the gospel and what God has said, I am forgiven. I will not live under condemnation of my flesh.

Use that spiritual authority against every lie of the devil. And then you have that invisible, quiet authority. That authority of being submitted to the Word of God.

Authority that you may not see. It has got the impact more than any other authority on the face of the earth. Will you stand, please? Hallelujah.

Holy Spirit, I want you to help me not forget what I preached and what's been preached all day today. This morning, this afternoon. Write it in my heart.

Write it in all of our hearts. Very soon, we're going to have to bring to remembrance. Holy Spirit, you're going to bring to remembrance all we've heard.

We're going to need it. Surely, Lord, you don't move so powerfully and speak so clearly unless you're preparing us for what is about to happen. So, we give you thanks.

And now, if you're here tonight, up in the balcony, main floor, and you said, brother, when you said about forgiving yourself, that's me. And I've never truly walked in peace. I really haven't enjoyed my salvation.

Boy, I've made up my mind. I'm going to enjoy Jesus. And you can't enjoy him if you're living under that kind of a cloud.

If you're under that cloud, I want you to come up here now and ask God to just sweep it away with the sweet love of Jesus. Up in the balcony, go to the stairs. Now, even in the annex, you can come.

Just go out in the hallway and come right here and meet me here. You come and stand down here and pray with you. And we'll minister to you.

And we'll believe the Lord to break this spirit and bring you a heart of assurance and peace and bring you into true righteousness wherever you're at. Father, speak your love. Let everyone in this house know that you're not mad at them.

You're not mad at anybody in this house, Lord. You've come with your great love and mercy tonight to remind us that you're faithful and you're going to bring us through. Wherever you're at, if God's spoken to you in any way tonight, upstairs, go to the stairs and come down in the aisle.

And here in the annex, go to the hall. They'll show you the way in here. Walk down in the aisle and come and meet me here, if you will, please, while they're singing.

Coming right now. There'll never be a better night than tonight to settle with Jesus. If you've been running from the Lord, if you've grown cold toward him, open up your heart.

Why wouldn't you come when he shows you so great love and compassion and gentleness? He's been gentle with you tonight. He's been gentle with you, just like he's been gentle with us as pastors. And that's why we stand before you preaching love and gentleness of Christ.

If you feel his drawing power, don't come unless you feel that drawing of the Holy Spirit. If you do, come. We'll just sing this two more times and the invitation will be finished.

So we're not rushing you, but if the Holy Spirit speak in your heart, obey him now. Sing it again. Look this way, if you will, please.

There has to be in you a sense that while you stand right here now in your condition, no matter what it may be, no matter what you've done, there has to be a sense in your heart that the Lord truly loves you. That

he is being gentle with you, that he's long-suffering, that he's kind, he's merciful. He shows judgments only to those who have totally rejected him.

You didn't reject him, you received him by coming. You're saying, I want you, Jesus. I want to change.

He said, I'm more willing to do that than you are. I'm willing to give more than you are to receive it. And I don't know what your need is tonight.

We're not going to prolong this, but I do know the Holy Spirit's here. If we've preached the word tonight and all day, if it's been the true word of the Lord and preached unto the unction, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, it will change you. It will change you because the Spirit always honors the word that's preached to the inner man that's been surrendered to Christ.

Do you really want the fullness of Jesus? Not just the way you see a lot of people walking around you, but a real close walk with Jesus. Do you want that? Raise your hands if you do. I want to walk close to Jesus.

Pray this prayer with me. I want to walk close to you. I want to get to know you.

I want your presence in my life. Lord, forgive me for being so lazy about prayer and my Bible. Holy Spirit, draw me.

The Bible says, if I draw near to you, you'll draw near to me. And I'm drawing near to you right now. So come right now and touch me right now.

Forgive me. I'm sorry. I repent.

Lord Jesus, help me to do what he said and forgive myself as I'm forgiven by you. You've forgiven my sins. You don't hold them against me.

Don't let myself hold me against it. In Jesus' name, I am cleansed, I am forgiven, and I know I am loved. God loves me.

Thank you, Jesus. Help me to love others as you've loved me. Now, just thank him in your own words.

Just thank him. I give you thanks. I give you praise.

Lord, you're faithful. Hallelujah. You are faithful.

Give you praise. We give you honor. Hallelujah.

I'm so glad he took my sins away. You know what it says? I'm so glad. You know, you can sing that, but some of you don't look it.

I've just been scanning the congregation. I know some of you are tired. It's been a long day for many of you, and maybe you have a long way to go yet.

But before we go, could we just sing this a few times and get happy about it? I am so glad my sins... Why wouldn't you leave here happy in the Lord if you know your sins are blotted out? They're gone completely. Can you honestly leave here tonight saying, I know God's not mad at me? I know he's not mad at me, and I'm not going to invent a sin to make him mad at me. He has no charge against you.

He has no conspiracy against you. He has no controversy with you. If your sins are under the blood and you're reaching out to him, he's reaching out to you.

Rejoice in that as we close this service tonight. I'm so glad he took my sins away. He took my sins away.

This is the conclusion of the message.

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