

All Authority

by F.J. Huegel

F.J. Huegel's sermon emphasizes the authority of Christ and the believer's role in exercising that authority against evil.

Duration: 47:22

Scripture: Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 11:24-25, Romans 6:23, Romans 8:37, Ephesians 6:12, Revelation 12:10-11

Topics: "Spiritual Authority", "Victory In Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker recounts the story of General Wainwright, who was a dying man in a concentration camp. One day, a colonel from the Allied forces arrived in a little plane to deliver the news that the Japanese had been defeated and peace had been signed. This news revived General Wainwright, and he was able to get up on his feet again. The speaker then goes on to talk about the authority of the believer and how the victory of Jesus on the cross gives believers the power to overcome the darkness of the world. He shares an illustration of a missionary student in Costa Rica who experienced a transformation in a prison after realizing his authority in Christ. The speaker emphasizes that many Christians have yet to fully grasp this truth and encourages them to stand against the devil's schemes.

Transcript

O Lord Jesus, we're so thankful that we're Thine, that we can rest in Thee, and find in Thee our all and in all, for it is written, All things are Yours, for Ye are Christ's. We only desire that Thy name shall be greatly magnified here this evening, and hearts built up in their most holy faith. So we're looking to Thee, Lord, for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, for the praise of Thy name.

Amen. Here in the Gospel according to St. Matthew, the closing chapter, where we find the great commission of the Church, or if you prefer, the marching orders of the Church, given by the Savior just prior to His ascension. All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Or as in some versions, there may be Bibles here this evening, no doubt a great variety of versions, it reads, All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Now, to what was the Savior referring? Just what did He mean? Was not all authority His from the very beginning? Was He not with the Father from

eternity? Were not all things made by Him? Are we not told in the epistle to the Colossians that not only things visible, but things invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers? And does not Paul go on to say that all things subsist by Him? And do we not read in the epistle to the Hebrews that He upholds all things, these one hundred million universes of which astronomers speak today, that He upholds all things by the word of His power? And here we have the Savior saying, All authority is given unto me. In what sense? How are we to take this? Now, friends, this authority of which the Savior speaks as He gives the marching orders to the church, His marching orders, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

I say this authority in a sense was not His. This authority had to be wrested from the hands of the evil one, Satan. This authority had to be won.

This authority cost Him His bitter suffering and death. There on Calvary's cross. Where? Through death.

He destroyed Him who had the power of death. That is to say, the devil. Now, that leads us to go back to the very dawn of history.

We all know what took place. Our forefathers in the garden and how they were tempted, how they fell. Choosing deceived, we read, was Eve.

Choosing rather to believe Satan's lie is over against God's word of truth. Falling under the power of the evil one. In that hour there was an alliance forged, as it were, between our forefathers and Satan.

We read here in the first epistle of John, the closing chapter, the 19th verse, that all the world, it reads, No, in the Greek, in the evil one. The whole world right there. Is it possible? In the evil one's lap.

We are told in the book of Revelation that he deceiveth the nation. Now, this authority which Satan wrested through deception, even the master, when tempted in the desert, recognized. He did not deny it.

When the devil brought before him there in the mouth the nations of the world and said, All this will I give unto thee, that thou will bow down and worship me. The Savior did not say, Well, it's not yours to give. No, he didn't.

Ah, yes, he overcame, praise God. He said, It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him alone shalt thou serve. Yes, he overcame.

But he acknowledged, he recognized, I should rather say, the authority of the evil one. His right to rule. All this will I give unto thee.

The Savior would want to speak of him as the prince of this world. The prince of this world cometh. He hath nothing in me.

And you will recall how that when he entered upon the Via Dolorosa, as we say in Spanish, to go to the cross, he said, Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. Now is the judgment of this world. He shall be cast out.

But that was done on a legal basis. That was done through ethical means, in keeping with the righteousness and the holiness of our God. He could not, by a mere divine fiat, overthrow the prince of darkness.

He could not, by a mere word of authority, shatter the alliance between the children of men. It was handed down from Adam. The children of men and the prince of this world.

Now, a mere divine fiat was sufficient to bring this universe into being. But God could not, for he works always in a perfectly righteous way, God could not destroy the works of the devil. I shall put it that way.

From the throne. What he could not do from the throne, he could do from the cross. In a sense, a throne, the cross.

There he found the means by which he could righteously destroy the works of the devil. Now, only another man could do it. It was a man, it was through the sin of a man, Adam and Eve, that this alliance was formed, the federal head of the race, Adam.

And only another Adam could destroy this alliance, the last Adam. It was a man, federal head of the race, who delivered to Satan, bowing down before him and accepting his lie, his offspring. All that followed, it was a man.

Only a man could shatter that alliance. Only a man, federal head of the race, it was the last Adam, could overthrow the authority of the prince of darkness, obeying where the first Adam disobeyed, believing where the first Adam gave place to unbelief. Now, all this was in the Savior's thought when he said, authority, all authority has been given unto me now.

Things have changed. There's been a shift. I have wrested from the hands of the prince of this world authority.

And what could not have been done from the throne was wondrously wrought from the cross. Why from the cross? Well, from the cross because it was there that the Lord Jesus took away that which gave Satan authority over the children of men, their sin, their guilt, a broken law. We read in Colossians that the Redeemer took away that which was contrary to us and nailed it to his cross.

Why contrary to us? Well, we have it in a verse over here in the book of Revelation, the twelfth chapter. One of the strangest words in all Holy Writ, friends. There are those who just can't accept it.

I accept it. We read in the tenth verse, I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation and strength. Now! Ah, in the light of Calvary's consummation.

Now is come salvation and strength in the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ. For the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. Can that be possible? That that'll day and night before God? Accusing the children of men.

Well, here it is, brethren, friends. How? Pointing to a broken law. What about it? Your law, your government.

Broken! Your law which reads the soul that sinneth it shall die. What are you going to do about it? If I may paraphrase. Now, God couldn't override that in the exercise of his divine authority.

He couldn't override that. He couldn't silence Satan. See, how dare you say that? Here it is.

Let me illustrate. The principles involved, friends, are really very simple. We all recognize them in our relationships.

Let's presume. Here on the campus of the Rio Grande Bible Institute, I commit a great fault. One of the students will say, Charles, I don't know whether there's a Charles over there.

Charles goes to the president of the Rio Grande Bible Institute, my dear brother Ehlert, with an accusation. Charles saw. Charles know.

Charles knows. He goes to the president with an accusation. Can the president of the Rio Grande Bible Institute silence him by the mere exercise of his authority? No.

Who are you to accuse the preacher? To me. He can't do that. If he does, things are going to get worse.

Charles may have to leave the institution. Charles may go out on the street and tell everybody he meets. No, this matter can only be arranged on the grounds of moral, ethical procedures.

Let's presume. I don't like the illustration, but I want this thing to be pinpointed, focused, so that you can just see it. Let's presume that it's a matter of money, only that you might be able to see it.

I owe Charles \$500, and I'm not willing to pay it, not even to recognize the fact. Charles goes to the president of the Bible Institute. Now, he can't silence him by a mere exercise of his authority, but he can silence him by working justice.

How much did you say Mr. Hegel owes you \$500? Here's your \$500. Thank you. Well, now Charles is silenced.

There's nothing more Charles can say. The debt has been paid. I repeat, I don't like the illustration too well, but there it is.

Charles was silenced on moral grounds, and the devil was silenced, the accuser of the brethren, who according to this word, day and night. You'll recall the book of Job. These are strange things.

I don't understand them, but here they are, and I believe them. Job accusing, Satan accusing Job. No.

He's not the righteous man, you say. You bought him. Why, he's the richest man on earth.

Look how you blessed him. You take away these blessings, Lord, this man will curse you. But you know the story, how the Lord accepted the challenge.

And it was made manifest that Job's love was pure. The Lord had given, the Lord had taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

It's all right. Satan was silenced. And here we read that the accuser of the brethren, oh, this broken law, God's law, which gave him ground, and God couldn't override it with all his power and glory, to accuse man before God day and night.

But the Lord found a way to silence him, and it's a way that will be throughout all eternity. Reason for hallelujahs on the part of the redeemed. It was done so wonderfully.

In perfect keeping with the demands of justice, there will never be found in all the ages to come the slightest trace of a flaw in God's government. That law which demands the death of the sinner, fulfilled in a man, the last Adam, the Son of Man, the Son of God, he tasted death for every man. Now it's on that ground that God silences the devil.

Now is come salvation and strength in the kingdom of our God. Ah, yes. Now the crucified risen Lord, whose precious blood cleanseth from all, now is come salvation and strength in the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ for the accuser of our brethren is cast down.

The Savior said it, you know, when he turned his face towards the cross, now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And so it was. And in view of this fact, oh, this wondrous, nothing greater.

The Savior is in a position to say all authority has been given unto me. It's a man saying that, brethren. The last Adam, federal head of the race, it's a man that says this.

Ah, I believe in his deity, the God-man. All authority has been given unto me. Go ye therefore, friends, how we need to write deep into our entire evangelistic undertaking, this fact, else it will be superficial.

All authority has been given unto me. Go ye therefore in the light of this fact to enforce the throne rights of your King, liberating souls from the thralldom of the prince of darkness. He still stalks over the earth.

The hour of his doom has not yet come. We read that he shall be cast into the lake of fire, but he still stalks the earth with his hosts of evil spirits. But he's a defeated foe.

I'm going to say it again here tonight. The weakest Christian, why, that babe that was born last night out here in a mission station, only a day old, he has more power. I should use the word authority.

It's not a question of power. He has more authority than the prince of this world. Why, he's linked up with the risen Christ, and he shares his authority.

He has the right to take upon his lips that name which is above every name, the name of Jesus. The devils tremble and flee before that name. We are living in an age of unprecedented satanic oppression.

I need not tell you that. That's well known among Christians everywhere. Ah, yes, friends.

It would appear that the enemy, knowing that his time is short, has come with great wrath. And we are commanded, as it is in the sixth chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians, to buckle on the armor of light and to stand, to withstand the wiles of the devil. We have the right to say no.

I'm in charge here. Now, I'm just going to have to tell that story again, you dear brethren. I see it on your faces.

My good brethren, the members of the faculty here have heard this story every year that I've come. Brethren, listen, I'm getting down pretty deep into that burial. You're talking about me coming back.

Yeah, you know the story. But I'm not ashamed to repeat it. It's worth a million.

Please turn the tape over at this time. Why, it was written right up here in Texas. I've forgotten the name of the village.

By General Wainwright, before he died, he felt he must write and tell the story of his sufferings. Five years there in that Manchurian concentration camp, the abuse of the prison keepers, sickness, loneliness. Never a word reached his ears regards events in the outside world.

Hunger. Five years. And then one day, General Wainwright was just, oh, General Wainwright was a dying man.

There came from the sky a little plane and settled down there in the concentration camp, outstepped a colonel of the Allied Forces. Where's General Wainwright? I've been sent to speak to General Wainwright. You'll find him over in that corner of the camp, Colonel.

General, I have been sent by the Allied Forces to tell you that the Japanese have been defeated. In three weeks, we signed the peace. The General couldn't take it in at first.

It was too much. The Colonel flew away in his little plane, but the General was able to take it in. And the General was able to get up onto his feet.

Why, that would raise any man, dare I say it, from the dead. Well, near dead. In majestic fashion, he got to his feet.

Three hours later, he says the prison keepers came, not knowing what had happened, to deal with him as they had always dealt with him. Why, he was served under their feet. Their greatest pleasure of using the General.

But they observed a great change. The General on his feet, in a majestic fashion. I'm in charge here, sir.

Ah, yes. Oh, this man knows. This man knows.

The game was up. Yes, General. These are my orders.

Yes, General. And from that hour on, the General says he was king in the prison. You know, there are just millions of Christians that haven't taken it in yet.

See what I mean? That the devil's a defeated foe. That the game for the devil's up. They don't know it.

Why, I was preaching to a group of pastors down in the south of Mexico two or three years ago. Tobasco. And after it was all over, I usually touch on this.

One of the pastors wrote to me. He said, oh, how I thank you. Why, I never knew that it was true that the devil's a defeated foe.

Why, brother, that's the gospel. For this purpose, John says, the Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. Everything else was secondary.

And so, friends, you see in the greatest conflict of the ages, between two thrones, in the greatest conflict of the ages, who won? Ah, that lonely man. Yes, that lonely man hanging on a cross to God. Man won on the ground of the fulfillment of perfect righteousness.

Get that, please. The devil can't point to a broken law. It was nailed to the cross.

And furthermore, what is it that gives ground to the devil? Our pride. And you know the Savior put an end to pride on the cross. He forged a new humanity, the new creation.

And there's no room for pride there. And so you see, when he took the old creation to the cross, the old man was crucified together with Christ. He just cut from out, out from beneath the devil's feet, all ground.

All ground taken away. Put into an end the old creation, over which Satan does have power, because its governing principle is pride. And bringing into being the new creation, over which Satan has no authority.

Yes, we can say with Wainwright, if we stand with Jesus, united to him, united in his death and in his resurrection. Because if I'm standing on the ground of pride, I can't rise up and overcome Satan. Why, he'll laugh at me.

He said, all the ground's mine. But if I'm standing on the ground of redemption, one with the crucified. Ah.

I can do as did General Wainwright. I can say, I'm in charge here. And it works, brethren, it works.

Indeed it does. You can move mountains. That's what that verse means over there in Mark 11, 24, 5. You say to this mountain, that's what it means.

He's not talking about the kind of mountains we have around Mexico City. Mountains, ah, in the scriptures, dominions. You say to this mountain, be thou removed.

Ah, Satan flees. Satan flees. He can't stand up before the victory wrought on Calvary.

It avails. And brethren, there's nothing we so need today. Oh, brethren, nothing so tragic as for missionaries to go to the foreign field without these weapons.

I did it. Ah, I know what it cost. Brethren, the agony, the shame, the suffering.

Oh, thank God, he wrought and he brought these weapons to me in time. But I wouldn't do without them for a day, for an hour. The authority of the believer in view of the victory wrought on Calvary by a man.

The Son of Man. The Son of God. Now the victory's yours.

And we're told that we're more than conquerors. Through Him we'll love this. Victory's yours.

And you can apply it day by day in a thousand different ways as the occasion arises and you become aware of the working of the principle of the darkness of this world. I wonder if I may just give you one illustration. It's five minutes to nine.

I'm thinking cheaply as I give this of the missionary students here. Some three years ago, maybe four now, I was in Costa Rica where that language school you know is found. Some two hundred, at that time I think something like a hundred and ninety, close to two hundred missionaries preparing for the Latin field.

At the close of the service a young man came up to speak to me and he said, I want you to come and have dinner with us very well. Lovely family, the little ones, the good wife. He was an artist.

With a crayon he could, with a few dashes, there was the face of the Savior. After dinner he said, you know what's happening here? Rocks as big as your fist. He showed me one afterward.

Rain down on this house and in the garden and my children play there. What shall I do? Well, it struck me at once, this must be the work of the enemy. This isn't just some fanatical folk.

Just the work of the enemy to frighten this man, drive him from the field. David, I think it's the enemy. So I went through the scriptures with him to show him that the enemy is a defeated foe.

And it was all Greek to him, this missionary on the way to the field. He didn't understand, but he was willing. I said, will you say amen to what I'm going to do? Yes, I'll say amen.

He didn't understand, but he would say amen. And so going through the word and showing him how the true death, the Redeemer, destroyed him who had the power of death, that is to say shattered his authority. Through his death he destroyed the prince of darkness.

And so it was just a tiny prayer, but a prayer of authority against the enemy to take hands off that home in the holy name of Jesus and to leave that home in peace and to flee. Amen. He said, I feel better.

Yes, you feel better now. Your fear is gone. The wife, amen.

Praise the Lord. Two nights later I was preaching in the downtown Methodist church there in San Jose. In walked the whole family, all smiled.

And I noticed the little one wanted to get up and sit with me, get my clothes. At the close of the service the father came and spoke to me. He said, there hadn't been a rock since.

Praise God. Later on in the week, it was Sunday night, another church, the Central American Mission. The whole family all smiled.

The father came forward, there hadn't been a rock since. Praise the Lord. And the good wife said to me, can I write this home to friends in North America? Well, you do as you like.

I don't know whether they'll understand this sort of thing. A year later, a year and a half, when was it? A year ago when I was in Buenos Aires. There he was, taking part with me in a Victorious Life conference.

David, David. It works, friends. It works.

Even if you're in doubt and you don't know whether the enemy is behind it, you can say, well, now if the enemy is behind it, I hold the victory of Calvary and I bind the strong man and cast him out. You'd be amazed at the things that clear up. The mountains that move.

All authority has been given unto me in heaven and upon earth. Go ye therefore. I wonder if we've ever gotten the full import of that therefore.

Now that's the real, that's the biggest reason for your going. You know what irritates me, Saul? I wrote an article about these things years ago when a missionary leader back here in America, on some missionary board, wrote to me, oh no, he said, these things clear up when civilization comes. Although you're sitting up there in that swivel chair of yours and you're telling me a thing like this.

This is superstition. It all passed away with civilization. Listen, it gets worse with civilization.

It gets worse. And here's my verdict regarding that. Yes, all these benighted souls in the islands of the sea, millions.

It's true, they are mistaken as to their methods by which they seek to appease evil spirits. But they are not mistaken regarding the fact of satanic oppression. We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, the governors of the darkness of this world, wicked spirits in high places.

And there's only one way, there's only one method, there's only one weapon. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God for the pulling down of strongholds. It's the victory won on Calvary.

Stand on the ground of the blood. Stand on Romans 6 where we're told that the old man was crucified. Just get close to the crucified and stand by faith with him in his death.

And then give your orders. You say, I'm in charge here. Oh, you try to frighten me.

Oh, it'll be just standard, I'm in charge here and these are my orders. And he flees and mountains move. Gracious Father, how we thank thee.

Oh, it cost our Redeemer so much to come all the way from glory and then to go all the way to Calvary that as a man he might shatter this alliance with the prince of darkness and put an end utterly to his authority. How we praise thee that it's a fact, Father. We have nothing to fear.

It's been done. Praise God. And we only have one request, Father.

Teach us to lay hold of these weapons. Why, Father, it breaks our hearts to see what the devil's doing today. And where are the Christians? To rise up as soldiers and say, no, I'm in charge here.

Lord, raise up children of the cross who will buckle on the armor of light and stand before the enemy and say, I'm in charge here. These are my orders. We ask it in that worthy name, Father, that is above every name.

The blessed name of Jesus, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

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