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## Spiritual Authority

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Praise the Lord for the power of the truth and how it sets us free (John 8:32). The only power that Satan has is the power of deception, and the worst thing about deception is that you don't know you're being deceived. Otherwise, it wouldn't be deception. Once the truth is received, deception loses all its power. Therefore, Satan loses all his power when we know the truth.

Many people don't know the truth about Satan's defeat. In fact, many Christians are the very instrument the devil is using to foster the deception that he is still a powerful foe. "Spiritual warfare" is one of the hottest topics in the church today. People are expending great amounts of energy constantly battling the devil in ways contrary to Scripture, but in reality, Satan has already been defeated. We don't need to defeat him again.

We need to believe that Satan has already been completely destroyed (Heb. 2:14) and simply enforce his defeat. The only power he has is the power to deceive. Our battle should be against the wiles (trickery) of the devil (Eph. 6:11), not the devil himself. Any other approach is actually giving the devil authority and power which he doesn't have, and he uses that to intimidate us. The only weapon Satan has is the power we give him when we believe his lies.

Warfare only takes place between two undefeated foes. Once an enemy has been conquered, the war is over. Satan is a defeated foe.

Colossians 2:15 says, "And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." The archaic meaning of the word "spoiled" here is "to plunder; despoil" (American Heritage Dictionary). This means that after Jesus defeated Satan, He stripped him of everything he had, specifically the keys of death and hell (Rev. 1:18). Satan has no power to imprison anyone.

The Greek word that was translated "shew" in this verse (Col 2:15) is "deigmatizo" which means "to exhibit" (Strong). This comes from the root word "deigma" which means "a specimen (as shown)" (ibid.). Satan is like one of those bugs we had to capture for biology class. We caught it and then impaled it on a board with a little pin to exhibit it. You need to picture the devil nailed to the cross of Jesus like a bug on display. Hallelujah! Take that, Mr. Devil!

The Greek word that was translated "triumphing over" in Colossians 2:15 is especially significant. It means "to make an acclamatory procession" (ibid.). This is specifically referring to the way the Romans had a "triumphant procession" after they had defeated their enemies.

Upon conquering an enemy, the Romans would hold a parade. They would take the conquered king, strip him naked, and drag him through the crowd behind the conquering king or commander for all their subjects to see. He would be humiliated and insulted, but that's not all. They would also cut off the thumbs of his hands and the big toes of both feet. This was to assure the subjects this enemy would never be a threat to any of them again. He could not hold a sword and he would never be able to run again. There was no need to fear him any more. Any rumor about him ever challenging Rome again would be scoffed at because the citizens had seen him in the parade.

The same thing happened to the devil. That's what this verse is referring to. Jesus not only beat the devil, but He had a triumphant procession to display the devil to the universe as a totally conquered foe. Satan should never terrify us again. Unfortunately, many Christians have missed the parade. They haven't seen God's triumphant procession that was pictured in God's Word where Satan was displayed as a totally defeated foe. They are circulating rumors that Satan is a powerful foe to be reckoned with. That's not so.

Satan is still alive, and we do have to reckon with him but only because he has so many lies circulating about his power against us. These are all lies, and therein lies Satan's power. If we believe his lies, he then uses our own authority, which our fear grants him, to work his destruction in our lives. He has no power of his own. He's using the power and authority that our misdirected faith gives him.

When I was just beginning my walk with the Lord, I came into the knowledge that demons do exist, and they are not all in Africa. We encounter demons often, and they are the workers of much of the evil we see every day. At first, this caused a fear in me that actually gave these demons in-roads into my life. On one hand, I was resisting them, but through fear I was also empowering them.

An example of this happened to me in Arlington, Texas, where I grew up. I was in love with the Lord and wanting to minister to people. I decided to open up what I called "Arlington Christian Center." It was going to be a home where people who were being controlled by things like alcohol, drugs, sex, etc. could come and stay while we broke the power of the devil over them and helped set them free. I rented a two-story house, right on the edge of the University of Texas at Arlington campus, and started fixing it up.

This house had been a fraternity house, and there had been a lot of demonic activity in the house prior to our occupancy. The people were gone, but not all the demons were. There were some strange things about that place. One night I was working up there at 1 a.m., and some demons attacked me. There was no one in that house except me, but the oppression I sensed in my spirit was overwhelming.

I ran out of that house and got in my car and backed out of the driveway. I was ready to "burn rubber" and get as far away from there as possible. Just before I got the car into drive, I heard the Lord say to me, "What are you doing?" I told Him I was getting away from that place as fast as I could. He then reminded me of the Christian's armor that was described in Ephesians 6:10-18, and He said, "There isn't any armor to cover your back."

I knew what He meant. He was saying that the armor He had given me only worked when I faced the devil, not if I turned and ran. I thought, Lord, You couldn't want me to go back into that place and face those devils. He never said anything else to me. I pulled back into the driveway and thought about that for what seemed to be an eternity. Finally, I got out of the car and walked back into that house. I spent the rest of the night fighting off fear and the tormenting assaults of the devil. When I left in the morning, the demons were gone, and there was a supernatural peace in that place.

During that time, I had a lot of demonic attacks against me. I had dreams where demons would attack me, and I would wake up bleeding from those encounters. These demonic encounters were horrifying to say the least.

Then one day as I was praying and binding every demon on every continent, it dawned on my lightning-fast mind that I was actually spending more time in my prayers talking to the devil and rebuking him than I was talking to the Lord. I knew that wasn't right. The Lord began to reveal to me that all my attention on the devil was actually giving him these in-roads into my life, which caused all these attacks.

I repented and changed my thinking and focus and guess what? It's now been at least thirty years, and I have never had another demonic manifestation in my life. I have seen demons manifest around me in other people, and I've cast them out, but those personal attacks stopped nearly instantly. There has never been another one because the only reason Satan's imps were able to manifest like that to me in the first place was because of the fear I released toward them. The fear is gone, and therefore, so is their power.

**This is an awesome revelation and one that is not the dominant theological position on Satan and demons today. This truth desperately needs to be communicated throughout the body of Christ.**