

Biblical Christianity and Freedom from Demonic Rule

Introduction

- A. Tendency toward polarization. Usually 97% will be against and 3% will be think you have given them the key.
- B. This one of a few issues involving the spiritual world in which there is constant debate. Reason is not so much supernaturalism as a doctrine but what it means personally. Many are insulted when you suggest all under attack. Many pastors are insulted and defensive when you suggest they may have parishioners under attack and they (the pastor) may not recognize it or may not know what to do about it.
- C. Survey message -- basic issue -- What place does the demonic play in Biblical Christianity?

I. Evidence in the Old Testament.

- A. The First Promise of Redemption: Genesis 3:15.
 - 1. Looking at the events which establish the pattern of history from creation to the eschatological day.
 - 2. So: God's creative work (including man), the Fall, and the redemptive promise are the three great themes carried throughout history.
 - 3. Instructive: Walter Kaiser, Toward...Theology states: "A divinely instigated hostility" between seed of serpent and woman. "Seed a collective term" that designated the representative and all he represented. "History not a contest between mortals, it was simultaneously a supernatural battle for dominion".
 - 4. Where is the battle? Your life and mine!
 - 5. Now: To see this in Genesis, to believe the Bible as authoritative, and to make practical truths of Creation, Fall, Redemptive -- but not the conflict in believer's life
- B. Additional Old Testament References.
 - 1. Isaiah 14; Ezekiel 28; Daniel 10 -- Relationship to nations.
 - 2. Job -- Relationship to believers.
 - 3. Zechariah 3 -- Relationship to believing sinner.
(See Theo. Laetsch, Minor Prophets, 422,423.)

II. Evidence Regarding the Kingdom of God and the Church

A. The O.T. presentation of God as the Warrior King.

1. Against God-of-the-Land concept He is sovereign. II Kings 17.
2. Exodus a judgment on Egyptian gods Exodus. 12:12.

"The LORD is a man of war, the LORD is his name. Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? The LORD shall reign for ever and ever." Exodus 15:3,11,18

3. Title LORD of Hosts -- commander of armies of heaven and earth. Stevenson, "most ... used."
4. Habakkuk - Mighty Warrior ... salvation of His people.
5. Daniel 7:13,14 --

B. The New Testament fulfillment in Jesus Christ the King.

1. He is the Son of Man prophesied by Daniel.
2. He is the representative of the Kingdom of God.
3. What is this Kingdom? It is the Rule and Reign of God. It is a supernatural, dynamic invasion into enemy territory. It is the reign of God in Christ destroying all that is hostile to the divine rule. It is the redemptive rule of God that has invaded the realm of Satan to deliver men from his power and bondage, and from sin and death. While the kingdom is present now, and works through the church it is greater than the church and will be revealed in its fulness when Jesus Christ, Who is the King, will return.
4. Clear presentation in Luke 11:20.

"But if I, with the finger of God, cast our devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you."

5. John presents the summary in I John 3:8

"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil."

C. Is this character of the Kingdom (a mighty force and power to defeat the Devil and set people free) a characteristic of the New Testament Church? **Yes**

1. Evidence of Matthew 16: "*I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*"

2. Evidence of Ephesians 1 & 2 -- The Church is seated in the heavenlies with ... feet!

D. Therefore: To remove the truths regarding the enemy and the redemptive victory of Jesus Christ over the enemy and his kingdom -- from the kingdom of God and the Church -- is to remove their very meaning.

If you do that -- all you have left is a religious club, an organization without power.

III. Evidence in The Commission and Ministry of the Lord Jesus, the Apostles, and Believers.

A. The Commission and Ministry of the Lord Jesus.

1. Luke 4:1,14,16-20 -- deliverance to the captives. His ministry an abundant proof of His commission. Note Vs 33-35 as a sample.

2. The importance of this passage can hardly be overemphasized. The Lord Jesus was living and serving under orders. His presence in the world was the very embodiment of the kingdom of God and the manifestation of the will of God in power to deliver men and women from Satan's grip of death.

3. His presence and grace in our lives is the key to our victory over Satan and his bondage.

B. His Instruction for the Apostles.

1. Luke 9:1,2 -- He gave them the power (dunamis) and authority (exousios) to do their work.

2. Their ministry was a demonstration of the kingdom of God. Gooding: "'powers of the age to come' (Heb 6:5) breaking in on the world."

3. This authorization and empowerment has not been revoked. It continues in the Church today. While we must evaluate these in the light of Acts and the Epistles -- we are not at zero today!

C. His instruction for believers.

1. Luke 10:1,9,16,17-20. Seemingly they shared the same authorization and power as the Apostles.

2. Their report of joy brought further clarification. Their work was not finished. They were doing the work the Lord Jesus had been sent to do (Vs 21,22)

3. While cannot draw a straight line from these early believers to ourselves, we can draw the line if we do so through the Acts and Epistles.

IV. Evidence in the Great Commission.

A. Matthew 28:18-20 -- Here we have the marching orders for the Church -- and our individual marching orders.

1. Basis: All authority given to the Lord Jesus. So: activity of the Church is His work in the world.
2. Church given authorization to speak and work in His name. The promise is that He'll work with us.
3. NOTE -- What the Apostles were to teach, and then the Church to teach -- is "All things whatsoever I have commanded you." This would include the basic instructions of their ministry: Preaching, healing, and setting people free from the enemy.

B. We face a great danger here.

1. The danger is that of superimposing our authority on the teaching of the Lord Jesus -- so that we choose what to pass on and what not to pass on.
2. To submit to the authority of the Bible means that we do not "cut and paste" (rearrange the Bible on the basis of what we think, like, or want).
3. What we find in the Acts and the Epistles give us some instruction here. What the leaders of the Church were taught -- we must accept and make a major part of our ministry.

C. Evidence in the commission and teaching of the Apostle Paul.

1. He described his call before King Agrippa as -- "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power (exousios) of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in me. Acts26:18
2. Told Timothy his ministry was a pattern for his own ministry and a model to be taught to others. II Timothy 2:4.
3. This exhortation is evidence that helping people to be free was not the unique ministry confined to the Apostles or the Apostolic period.

V. Evidence in the Description of the Christian Life.

A. Salvation is a deliverance from the kingdom of Satan. Colossians 1:13

B. Explanation regarding believer's struggles. Ephesians 6:12 and I Peter 5:8,9

C. Examples of believer's vulnerability to the enemy.

1. Individuals.
 - a. King Saul -- I Samuel 16:14, 18:10; 19:9.
 - b. Job -- Job 1,2.
 - c. Peter -- Matthew 16:22,23; Luke 22:31.
 - d. Paul -- II Corinthians 12:7; I Thessalonians 2:18.
2. Church members: Acts 5:1-11; II Timothy 2:25,26
3. Pastors: I Timothy 3:6,7
4. Church: Corinth, II Corinthians 2:6-11; Smyra, Revelation 2:10; Pergamos, Revelation 2:13; Thyatira, Revelation 2:24.

VI. Evidence in the Redeeming Work of the Lord Jesus.

- A. Provision itself: Hebrews 2:14,15; I John 3:8.
- B. Exhortation regarding the provision: Ephesians 6:10-18; I Peter 5:8,9; Revelation 12:10,11

Conclusion

- A. To accept the N.T. as our model for life and ministry forces us to accept its message regarding the enemy.
- B. Not that this message is to be central -- only the Lord Jesus, His work, and His Word has that place -- but we must obey God's Word -- resist the enemy ourselves and teach others how to do so.
- C. Far too many of us accept the N.T. truth regarding the enemy -- but without any practical consequence. We do not want to accept the view the enemy can develop an "inner control" in the life of the believer.