

**Behold, I give unto you power
To tread on serpents & scorpions,
& over all the power of the enemy:
& nothing shall by any means hurt you.
Luke 10:19**

TREADING ON SERPENTS & SCORPIONS

There is a misconception within the Christian community that all 'saved' Christians have been given authority over the princes & principalities of darkness. The truth is that this authority was biblically granted only to those who were fully committed to Christian servitude. Unfortunately, walking up to a church altar & apologizing for a life imperfectly lived does not satisfy what is necessary to receive the authority Christ promised his most dedicated disciples.

While a heart-felt commitment to change will justify one before God the Father, it is far from fulfilling the biblical definition of discipleship. In spite of the fact that ministers routinely teach that *all* believers have rightful authority over the demon world, the reality is that such power was delegated by Christ only to those who had 'lost their lives' for the sake of ministerial service.

Part of the confusion regarding this authoritative entitlement comes from the fact that the current definition of 'discipleship' does not match the biblical version. Today the word disciple is most often used to describe a student of a particular philosophical teaching. However, biblical discipleship had to do with a commitment to service that called for a far more radical life change.

Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee,
He saw Simon & Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea:
For they were fishers.
17And Jesus said unto them,
Come ye after me,
& I will make you to become fishers of men.
18And straightway they forsook their nets,
& followed him.
19And when he had gone a little further thence,
he saw James the son of Zebedee,
& John his brother,
who also were in the ship mending their nets.
20And straightway he called them:
and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants,
& went after him.
Mark 1:16-20

**Description of the Early Christians:
And the multitude of them that believed
were of one heart & of one soul:
neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed
was his own;**

but they had all things common.
34Neither was there any among them that lacked:
for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them,
& brought the prices of the things that were sold,
35And laid them down at the apostles' feet:
& distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.
Acts 4:32,34-36

An even more important factor determining why these biblical servants received their special authority was the fact that they were wholly devoted to teaching a doctrinally *accurate* gospel. Unfortunately, many Targeted believers have busily dedicated themselves to the dissemination of various flawed doctrines. For them the issue always seems to revolve around their impression of the man or woman that taught them their brand of Christianity as opposed to the soundness of the teaching. Instead of rigorously & independently studying & searching for the truth of Christ's mission they have allocated much of their time, money & service in the support of their mentor's defective doctrine. You must understand that regardless of whether such a leader is intentionally maniacal or himself deluded he/she is, in either case, destined to be extremely dangerous to the ultimate survival of those that follow.

Without choice we have each entered a scenario of strategic complexity that requires stolid respect for doctrinal exactitude. In this truth-lie testing stage there is a real for everything counterfeit & a counterfeit for everything real. The great danger in embracing an approximative doctrine is that, like Eve, one can become unwittingly contracted into spiritual marriage with an underworld master. This was Paul's grave warning:

...for I have espoused you to one husband,
that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.
3But I fear, lest by any means,
as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty,
so your minds would be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.
4For he that cometh preacheth another Jesus,
whom we have not preached,
or if ye receive another spirit,
which ye have not received,
or another gospel,
which ye have not accepted,
ye might well bear with him.
2Corinthians 11:2-4

Christ stipulated that he would send his spirit to those who kept his commandments. Are you attending a commandment-keeping, truth-speaking church? Please understand, the authentic Holy Spirit of Christ will not lead you into an institution that habitually disrespects right doctrine. It is, after all, the Spirit of Truth:

Christ's words:
If ye love me,
Keep my commandments.
16And I will pray the Father
& he shall give you another Comforter,
That he may abide with you for ever;
17Even the Spirit of truth....
John 14:15-17

Assuming you are already engaged in the arduous pursuit of choosing the good & eschewing the evil, now is the time to develop a plan of service to the cause of Christ. Granted, many Targets have difficulty leaving their homes for significant periods of time making involvement in an external ministry unrealistic. Until becoming sufficiently familiar with the biblical text this inconvenience may be for the best. Without adequate knowledge of the word, the probability of making a safe ministerial choice is not very good given the fact that our enemies are united in an effort to seduce us into accepting the wrong doctrinal key. Nevertheless, each of has the responsibility to save other lives.

....ye are a chosen generation,
a royal priesthood,
a holy nation, a peculiar people....
1Peter 2:9

The best way to begin a discipleship that can not only save, but significantly alter the quality of, many lives may be through rigorous intercessory prayer.

If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death,
He shall ask,
& he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death.
1John 5:16

Understand, intercessory prayers are not of the '*save me*' variety. They are wholly about pleading for the causes of *other* people & should begin only after your personal prayers have been completed. The Target that is willing to devote a minimum of two hours daily towards this end will start to see his/her own life begin to transform for the better as a result. God the Father always blesses the giving heart.

Please do not make the mistake
of attaching yourself to a group for this devotional.
This must be *your* discipleship.
If a group is available
& actually willing to stop the chatter to get down to business,
then by all means pray in the group.
However, you alone are responsible for your commitment to this endeavor.