

Chapter Four

Taking Spiritual Authority

Some of you know a friend of mine, a man named Carl Fox. Years ago he had an atrophied arm from an accident that broke his back. God healed his back wonderfully. But his arm was shriveling up. Two years went by. He was ministering healing to tons of people and they were getting miraculously healed. Yet his arm was swinging limply. It was embarrassing!

His doctor wanted to commit him to a psychiatrist. My friend told him directly, "You are the one that needs a shrink because my arm is healed, the Word of God says so. Not that He will heal it, but that it is already healed, exactly as I Peter 2:24 says." Carl was so convinced that God had already healed His arm, and would honor His written Word, the he rejected an insurance settlement that would have paid him 98 thousand dollars if only he would submit to the advice of medical authorities and have his arm amputated.

Remember, all the promises of God are given in the Spirit, and are received in the flesh through faith. Jesus couldn't do many works in his home town because of unbelief, the lack of faith, in the people of his hometown. Lack of faith is more simply a lack of trust. Trust is exactly what gets built when we fellowship with Jesus Christ. We cannot trust someone whom we don't know personally.

So two years went by. Every day Carl would look at his arm and tell it, "Arm, you are already healed in Jesus' name." People thought he was crazy when he told them to shut up if they said anything contrary.

Long story short, one day he got a twitch in one of the fingers. He flopped his arm up to his back and scratched his back with it and it felt so good! A week later, another finger moved. After a relatively short time, his entire arm was restored, and now that arm is like a bear's arm- he outwrestles me with it.

I relate this example to illustrate the principle that we have authority over sickness and infirmity when we refuse to become talked out of it simply because of our experience or our pain. But don't believe me simply because of one man's experience. Look at the following verse, and believe it because it is the Word of God on this subject:

Matthew 8:17

*That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, **Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.***

Jesus Christ bears not only our sins, but also our infirmities, and our sicknesses. If we have faith that Jesus takes away our sins, why is it so difficult to see from this verse that He also took away our infirmities and sicknesses?

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How Can I Get My Healing From God?

At this point, one might be questioning why they haven't experienced Jesus' healing consistently. The answer is simple – they haven't fortified their faith for healing consistently.

In a word, it is called unbelief. We must confess our sin of unbelief and get back on God's healing program!

Here's another example of healing which occurred to a precious brother in my church named Ron Wood. Late one winter storm a few years ago, Ron stuck his hand down his garden tractor's snow blower chute to unjam the wet snow from it. He thought he had disengaged the auger and fan blade, but because the machine's moving parts were stuck in a snow bank, he couldn't see enough to know for sure. The steel fan mangled his left index finger, his thumb, and all the bones in between. He was in fierce pain.

But Ron had heard my friend Carl's story about his atrophied arm. So, shouting out in pain, Ron turned his words and started yelling out in tongues. He stuck his broken hand up in the air, proclaimed God's healing, and drove his snow blower back to the house. His wife immediately wanted to take him to the hospital emergency room, but God had told him He would be delivered.

That night, Ron called me for prayer. When we prayed over the telephone, the pain left. It was about 9:30pm at night. After prayer, my wife got on the phone to tell him what to do while awaiting the rest of the healing that he knew from the Scriptures was already his. My wife is a nurse. She told him to elevate it and ice it. So he sat in an easy chair to spend the night, his arm lying across his opposite shoulder. At about 1 o'clock in the morning, the Lord woke him up, and he watched as God moved all the bones back into their right positions. In a moment, the supernatural work of healing that was done when we prayed in the Spirit, was received into the natural. We even arm-wrestled on the pulpit at the Sunday church service a couple of days later to show what God had done. (Ron beat me in that contest!)

Taking spiritual authority over disease and sickness may not be something one is used to doing. Our culture treats sickness as a common fact of life. But from God's perspective, it is an enemy brought on by satanic design, and man's sinful departure from God's instructions.

I recall a lady in a Baptist church a few years ago who had asked for prayer during a praise and worship night. I anointed her with oil, and was about to place my hand gently on her shoulder in laying on of hands for the revelation from God for what and how He wanted me to pray. As I did, the Lord spoke one word to me, "bondage." I knew immediately from Him that this lady had a spirit of bondage which needed to be cast out. As soon as I ordered bondage to leave, the lady slumped to the floor and began hissing and writhing like a snake. It was classic, like the stories you always hear about.

As the other church members looked on, I asked the worship leader to begin playing and singing songs about the blood of Jesus Christ to help take the attention off the woman (because devils like the ones afflicting this precious sister always love to make a big show of themselves to gain attention) and to unite the group to increase their faith.

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I knelt down by the woman and commanded every devil to be quiet and come out of her quietly. As I did, her writhing ceased and the evil spirits stopped vocalizing their hideous comments. After ministering healing words that the Lord gave me to speak over her, the lady was restored to her right mind and started rejoicing. For the next year she told everyone around her town how Jesus Christ had set her free. She kept saying, "I can't remember the person who prayed for me (Hallelujah!), but Jesus set me free! And she was free indeed. Last I heard she was still witnessing about Jesus Christ, and the following year when I returned to this church, she brought her son to our meeting for prayer and for God's mighty work to raise him up in ministry.

In yet another incident of taking spiritual authority through the revelation word of God, a precious believer and friend of mine wound up in prison. He deeply repented of his crime, and determined that he would spend his time in jail sharing the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to anyone who would listen.

One day he was assigned a new roommate, and as his manner was my friend began to witness to the new man about Jesus Christ. However, there was a problem. The man vehemently rejected every attempt to lovingly share the Word, and as my friend learned, the man fancied himself to be a powerful warlock in satan's kingdom.

What could my friend do? He decided to speak in tongues quietly. As each man lay in his bed, my friend in the bottom bunk began whispering in tongues, nearly silently, and completely unknown and unseen by the satanist in the top bunk.

About twenty minutes elapsed when, out of the silence, the man in the upper bunk barked menacingly, "Stop messing with my demons. If you don't stop messing with my demons, they are going to mess with you."

My friend is not easily intimidated. He rejoiced to realize that merely speaking in tongues in perfect *rhema*-powered prayer altered the spiritual atmosphere and seriously disturbed the devils that were afflicting this man. So, still nearly silently, he increased the fervency of his speaking in tongues. Again the man in the upper bunk threatened with words. Night after night my friend repeated the scenario.

After a week or so, my friend began to notice something curious. The man in the upper bunk began to become noticeably weaker physically. Though he continued to pray for the afflicted man and tried to share the Gospel, all my friend could do was continue to speak in tongues in perfect prayer.

The man in the upper bunk continued to grow weaker. By the fifth week, he had died. My friend was shocked and asked me what had happened. I was led to tell him that some people are so driven by evil spirits that they cannot live without them until finally those evil spirits use up their host. But when those demons are rendered powerless in the face of Godly spiritual authority such as my friend's continual operation of the Spirit of God through tongues, devils either have to leave or shrink to impotence. In this man's case, those demons were keeping the man they possessed alive, even though they had been continually tormenting him with a living death for a long time.

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I mention these incidents to illustrate what taking authority is about. It is not about high volume shouting at the devil. Neither is spiritual warfare really about dealing with the devil at all. True spiritual warfare is far more about dealing with God. Deuteronomy 23:14 tells us that the Lord walks through our camp. And if it is found to be holy, He will give up our enemies before us. A holy camp in the human heart is one that hears the revelation voice of the Lord, obeys it, and the Spirit of God performs the revelation for the one who was bold and confident enough to act upon it.¹

Second Chronicles 16:9 declares that the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are perfect toward Him. A perfect heart is one that communes with Him in frequent two-way conversations, one that chooses “that better thing” of Mary in spending intimate time with the Master in the secret place of the Spirit.

For such a one, fanfare and high volume “warfare” is rarely needed. Just speaking words of *rhema* revelation that the Lord gives us for the situation at hand enables the brooding Spirit of God to act upon the spiritual water of His words flowing into our heart and out from this abundance into the physical realm. We bring the supernatural to the earth through hearing and obeying supernatural *rhema* and/or Spirit-inspired action. This is precisely what the angel Gabriel meant when he spoke to Mary in Luke 1:37, “*For with God shall nothing [literally, “shall no rhema”] be impossible.*”

Taking authority over a healing crisis is no different than Jesus taking authority over satan’s temptations in Matthew 4 – “It is written.....” We also take authority from “It is written.” Jesus gave us that authority. But if a person has not captured Matthew 8:17, I Peter 2:24, Psalm 107:20, and 3 John 2 into their faith, then they have no spiritual authority or confidence with which to work the healing miracle that they need in the name of Jesus Christ.

We must also understand that faith and knowledge are entirely separate things. Mere knowledge does not mean that one has faith. Remember the illustration of chapter one with the pen? The knowledge that God has given you a pen will never translate into using that pen for writing unless you pick it up and use it. So it is with healing. Merely knowing that God can heal is meaningless if a person fails to implement how to pick it up by faith and use it.

Take a moment now to carefully look up these Scriptures.² Don’t be lazy. We must train our soul to seize these principles now before a health crisis arrives. Soldiers train before their battles, and they practice their skills before engaging the enemy.

¹ For further reading on this subject, see the book *Succeeding In Spiritual Warfare: Lessons From Joshua* in the bookstore information in the back of this booklet.

² *Matthew 8:17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet , saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.*

I Peter 2:24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Psalm 107:20 He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.

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3 John 2 Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

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