

RIGHTEOUSNESS SERIES

THE SCEPTER AND THE OIL

We have explored many aspects of righteousness. We have emphasized repeatedly that even the Old Testament saints' lives were based on the gift of righteousness and that in the New Testament our Christian lives are also based on the gift of righteousness that is available to us through Jesus Christ.

Rom. 5:17-21 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who received abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous. Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We have also emphasized that before the gift of righteousness came through Jesus Christ there was a reign of death that began with the fall of Adam and Eve. When the reign of death came, sicknesses, sin, disharmony came into the world. All the whole planet earth was in turmoil. Perversity entered into the animals' mode of behavior so that they acted what they were not designed for. Animals were originally created herbivorous but with the fall of man, they developed a carnivorous nature and began to devour one another. The whole system of God's

creation fell apart when the reign of death started when Adam and Eve fell.

The days of our reign of life began when our Lord Jesus Christ rose from death and was seated at the right hand of God. This is a reign that some people, though not all, have come to know. This is the reign that we proclaim when we share the gospel of Jesus Christ. Many Christians have not realized in their lives that this reign of righteousness produces Christian victorious and overcoming life. And that's what we are talking about in the gift of righteousness.

In the last message, we talked about the touch of the mind and how the gift of righteousness of God, gives us a different mental attitude and perspective. It begins in our spirit but it affects our soul. And as we conclude this series, we want to look at two different areas. And those two areas are found in the book of Hebrews 1:8 *But to the Son He says: Your throne, O God is forever and ever.* Now if you examine this very carefully, He is not talking about the time before Jesus came to this earth. If you look very carefully in the book of Hebrews, the author of Hebrews was talking about the time when Jesus was raised up from the dead and He was seated on high in Hebrews 1: 5 *For to which of the angels did He ever say; "You are My Son. Today I have begotten You?" And again: "I will be to Him a Father. And He shall be to Me a Son?" But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: "Let all the angels of God worship Him."*

The phrase *when He again brings the firstborn into the world* was not speaking about the first Christmas when Jesus was born in a manger, but about Jesus who rose up as the firstborn from the dead. Any cross reference in the book Revelations chapter one and in the book of Colossians chapter one tells you that the firstborn from the dead is a title reserved to Jesus Christ when He was raised from the third day from death.

But to substantiate this scripture, we cross reference to the book of Acts chapter 13. It confirms the fact that when God talks about *You are My Son today I begotten You*, it is not referring to Jesus being born in a manger but it is used to refer to Jesus Christ being raised from the dead. Acts 13:33 and this is the

interpretation that the apostles had of this verse. We should never stray away from the way the apostles interpreted the bible. It looks like this verse refers to the first time He was born in the manger but that's not the understanding. The understanding is that the particular verse refers to Jesus being raised from the dead. Acts 13:33 *God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: "You are My Son. Today I have begotten You."*

Jesus is the firstborn from the dead. Before Jesus has been resurrected from the dead, Elijah and Elisha have raised people from the dead. Jesus Himself in His ministry has raised people from the dead. But this is the first time that anyone of the seed of Adam rose from the dead spiritually, overcoming spiritual death, annihilating forever the kingdom of hell and death and taking upon Him the keys of hell and death. Jesus is the last Adam representing the seed of mankind. He was both Son of God and Son of Man. This was the first time that spiritual death was overcome. And that particular verse refers to that resurrection from the death.

Let's look at Hebrews 1 again, understanding that the context was in reference to Jesus' resurrection from the dead. We see here that when He was raised from the dead God says verse 6-7 *Let all the angels of God worship Him. And of His angels, He says: Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire.*

Now we cross reference to Phil. 2 how every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. He commanded all to worship the name of Jesus.

When Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, He spent some time with His disciples. Of course when He was raised from the dead He went to present the blood first and then He came down and spent about forty days and forty night with His disciples before the day of Pentecost. Finally, He was lifted on high. And somewhere during the time of His resurrection, Jesus Christ was seated at the right hand of God. And God instituted a new rule and a new reign. God instituted a new realm of dimension in the spirit. And from that time onward

Jesus said, "Go ye and preach to all nations. Go and tell what has happened now, that the enemy Satan has no more power and authority." That it is now the rule of righteousness.

And it says here in Hebrews chapter one verse 8 But to the Son He says; "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness. Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.

There are many truths found in the above verse but we want to look at just two aspects in today's message. What is involved in the rule and reign of righteousness that Jesus has given? It says here the scepter of righteousness. We have touched on that before but today we are going to look at it from a different angle. The other is the oil of gladness. Today we are going to speak about these two aspects of righteousness. When a Christian receives the gift of righteousness, he or she can produce certain signs and evidences. When you received Jesus Christ into your life as personal Lord and Savior there is something that goes on in your spirit. A kind of peace, a kind of cleansing that you sensed quite tangible in your spirit. When you were baptized in water, your whole body is wet. You come out knowing that you have been immersed in the waters of baptism. When you were baptized in the Spirit, there is an evidence of speaking in tongues. Your spirit man is set free to speak in a new language to God.

When the gift of righteousness is ruling in our life there are signs and evidences in our life. And I like to give you two. One is called the scepter of righteousness and the other is called the oil of gladness. But I am going to re-phrase it to bring forth what these represent. No. 1 when the gift of righteousness comes into our heart and in our life and we are appropriating it, how do we know whether we are flowing and yielding to the gift of righteousness? How do we know that it's having free flow in our life? There are signs of that. Firstly, there is a sense of spiritual authority that comes into your life that if a devil came that you would dare to face him eyeball to eyeball. Because you know that, the righteousness is ruling in your life. There is a sense of authority that you know that you have authority and power over every sickness, every disease and every demon. That you are not afraid of the devil at all but the devil is afraid of you. A sense of

spiritual authority, that's what the scepter of righteousness produce.

Secondly, it produces a state of being of joy. There is a supernatural joy. Do you notice that human works of righteousness doesn't produce joy? In fact, they take away joy. The Pharisees had no joy. They were legalistic but they had no joy. And Jesus said, "You bind heavy burdens on people. You make their lives miserable with your legalism." Now their intention was to make people conform to the law. But when you make people conform to the law minus the gift of righteousness, it is tough work. No one can be like Jesus except by the Spirit of Jesus. And human righteousness takes away joy. We need this barometer to test from time to time whether we have moved into our own righteousness or whether it is the gift of righteousness operating in our lives. Whenever a Christian gets weary working for God or Christian life has become a burden and a struggle, the gift of righteousness has stopped operating. Human righteousness has stepped in and replaced the gift of righteousness. They are pure human works operating without the gift of God. And it doesn't produce joy; in fact, it sucks away joy like a leech sucks blood. Thus secondly, the gift of righteousness produces a state of being of joy.

Now we are going to look at the sense of spiritual authority in the scriptures first. Look at the book of Romans 5:17 *For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who received abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.*

Because of one man's sin, Adam's sin, death reign. And death includes sicknesses, diseases, demonic oppression and every affliction you could name. All these are included in the reign of death and terror when the devil took over. When righteousness came, a different rule and reign came. When righteousness comes there is power and authority over sickness and disease. In the book of Matt. 10, when Jesus commissioned His disciples to go out two by two to preach, heal and deliver, it didn't matter what type of disease they may come across in the people they were ministering to. Even when new diseases and sicknesses arise to afflict mankind, all Christians who received the gift of righteousness will have a sense of authority over them. And when sickness tries to attack you, you know

that you have the authority over that sickness and you just rebuke it and it leaves. Sometimes sicknesses and demons may be a little bit stubborn. But you allow the gift of righteousness in your life to produce the spiritual authority to cast them out in the Name of Jesus.

Matt. 10:1 And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.

Notice the word “all” includes everything, discovered and undiscovered, known and unknown. Jesus had authority and power over every sickness and every disease.

Now turn to Lk. 9:1 the same incident recorded by Luke. *Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases.* Tall ones, short ones, fat ones polka dotted ones, those from Thailand, those from Malaysia, those from India, as long as they are demons, it says *He gave them authority over all demons, over every demon that existed.*

We know in the bible although the apostles received that power and authority, it took them some time to work out the authority. Because in the very same passage after that experience on the Mount of Transfiguration in Lk. 9 they had difficulty in casting out a demon. Just because they had a difficulty doesn't mean that they don't have authority. I mean you may be a fully qualified engineer and sometimes some projects are easy but some projects are challenging. For example, the whole idea of building a tunnel under the English channel was conceived by man many decades ago but was only recently completed. It is an engineering marvel. You know how some engineering projects are more difficult than others since they depend on so many varying factors, the soil condition, the environment, the terrain, the limited space etc. Just because you have difficulty doesn't mean that you cannot do it. It just means that you have to draw on all your knowledge, resources and experience to accomplish that job. In the same way spiritually there are all kind of demons and demons have different

personality. The demon creates different types of environment, sometimes it is slightly more difficult but at all times we have power over every demon. There is not a single demon that we don't have authority over.

In Matt. 10, it says we have authority over all sicknesses and diseases. In Lk. 9, it says we have authority over all demons. Now all these authority that Jesus brings forth came from the cross. Even though He had not died on the cross, yet it came from the cross because something happened at the cross that He could impart and exchange to His disciples. To prove that look at Matt. 8:16-17 *When evening had come they brought to Him many who were demon possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken Isaiah the prophet, saying, He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sickness.* That means that all the demons casting He did and all the healing that He did was based upon the cross of Calvary. And at the cross of Calvary, the most important transaction took place.

Just as the Old Testament saints could be saved on credit based on the coming work of Christ's redemption, so likewise, sicknesses and diseases could also be healed and cast out based on the same coming work of Christ's sacrifice. Long ago, this kind of concept was very hard to teach and be accepted but nowadays it has become theologically acceptable and you could teach it without being labeled a heretic. For example, you can buy a car on credit and you sign a hire purchase agreement. Although you have the car, you are using the car, but the car is not yours yet. You are on your way to paying off the loan on your car. You got it on credit. The Old Testament saints could experience graces, mercies, blessings, answers to prayers, healing and miracles on credit, based on the coming atoning work of Jesus Christ. Even during the times of Jesus with His disciples, when Jesus had not died and risen yet, all authority and power that were exercised by Jesus and His disciples flowed from the credit of the cross. Remember when you use credit there is a payday someday.

In the book of I Pt. 2:23-24 *Who, when He was reviled did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously, who, Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we having died to sins, might live for righteousness – by whose stripes you were*

healed.

Every time we read that verse I Pt. 2:22-24, many of us think that since Jesus has died for our sins, we are to go and live properly now. But that's not what that verse means. It means that from that day forward you could live by His righteousness. And in that gift of His righteousness, it will bring healing. His righteousness brings authority. His righteousness will bring power. And because of that righteousness that was imparted at the cross of Calvary we were healed.

Just to substantiate that look very carefully what took place on the cross. Do you know that there was one force that the devil could not destroy? It is that powerful force that Jesus Himself surrendered Himself to - the force of righteousness. Jesus dying on the cross was different from any other human being. Remember there were many other criminals who had died on the cross. It was the Romans' way of killing people. In fact when Jesus died there were two other thieves who were also crucified. And many had died under that kind of horrible death. But when they took Jesus Christ, stripped Him, beat Him, spit upon Him, nailed His hands on the cross and carried that cross up, He was different from other men. He was Jesus who knew no sin. Isn't that a difference? There was not one atom of sin on His life. Not one wrong word, not one wrong thought, not one wrong deed had He done. And they put a sinless man to death. It was not just a good man. Who knows in history there were good men who had died but they cannot say that they were sinless in the sight of God. Never before had death ever touched a human body that had no sin, until Jesus offered Himself for you and I on the cross of Calvary.

It says in I Pt. 2:21 *For to this you were called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps. Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth.* Never before had a reign of terror that began from the fall of Adam which allowed Satan and his underlings to rule over mankind causing sicknesses, diseases and all manner of destruction, never before had the spirit of death contacted one such a sinless man as Jesus. Even Pontius Pilate tried to release Jesus four times. He kept telling the people that Jesus had done nothing wrong. Yet the Jews shouted, "Crucify Him, crucify Him." He tried

again and again to release Him but they still cried, "Crucify Him, crucify Him." He knew no sin.

My friend if you live righteously and suffered the force that is released in that suffering, you will have power to wipe out every cause that caused that suffering. Not only will it wipe out and conquer it will completely annihilate the forces that cause that suffering.

And Jesus Christ who knew no sin went to the cross willingly. And that day was a special day. It was twelve noon when a righteous and sinless man died a death that He didn't deserve. Do you know there is a law of God that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and the wages of sin is death? Where there is no sin there must not be any death. And Satan in his glee thought he has conquered. And all the forces of death rallied against Jesus. And at twelve in the afternoon at the time when the sun was at its peak, the skies were full of dark clouds. Even the planet earth, the weather, the clouds, the mountains, the leaves, the plants, all the kingdom of creation, knew that a righteous innocent man was put to death without one sin in His life. There was tremendous forces at work that day and for a moment when they surrounded Jesus to conquer Him, to put Him to death, in the darkness of separation from God that He took for you and I, Jesus Christ cried out "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" He was left all alone because when sin came, do you know that Jesus died because sin pressed itself upon Him - our sin not His own sin?

Remember the law of God where there is no sin there is no death. And all the forces of sin and darkness pressed upon Him. And when He became sin God our Father has to turn His tearful face away from His beloved Son. And darkness flooded the spiritual plane and the natural plane.

Let me read II Cor. 5:21 *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us.* And that day all the forces of sin were pressing upon Him and He absorbed them. All the sins of mankind from the first time that Adam fell into sin, through Noah, through Abraham, through David, through the prophets, and all the sins of

mankind that mankind was ever going to commit in future were pressed upon Him and He became sin. But remember righteousness was flowing out in His life. And righteousness and sin met. And there was a cosmic battle. And suddenly right at the very time that righteousness was released. Righteousness came forth. It began as a river from the cross. And on the third day, Jesus Christ the righteous arose and now my friends, righteousness overcame sin. Good is more powerful than evil. Righteousness is more powerful than sin. And as righteousness came forth, it cancels sin, it cancels sicknesses and it cancels diseases. It cancels the handwriting on the wall that was against us, and it cancels the right of Satan over this world. It cancels the right of Satan over human kind. And Satan was destroyed. And all the principalities and powers in Col. 2:15 were stripped off their powers because righteousness is greater than sin. And on that day the forces of righteousness were imparted and in II Cor. 5:21 it says that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Now you understand that what happened that day was an exchange of righteousness. Jesus gave us His righteousness. He gave us the righteousness that by His act we were free. And the forces of righteousness came out from Jesus and flooded all over the world. And anyone who receives Him to them He can freely make them righteous. And that's what He means when it says in I Pt. 2:24 that He having taken our sins that we might live righteously because the gift of righteousness was imparted on that day. And from that day onwards, a new sense of righteousness has been imputed and imparted on God's people. A sense of authority, authority over Satan, authority over demons, authority over sicknesses and diseases, have belonged to God's people. That is why in I Pt. 2 *Having died to sins might live for righteousness*, and when the force of righteousness rules in your life, *by His stripes you were healed*. From that day onwards no sickness, no diseases, no flu, no cancer, no new kind of affliction, has any authority over the people of God because righteousness now rules.

That same righteousness is powerful as seen in Romans 8:3-4 where it talks about what the law could not do but what the Spirit has done through the gift of righteousness. *For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin; He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled.*

Might be fulfilled - it is not shall be, not coming. But whatever healing, freedom, deliverance are required in our life might be fulfilled through the gift of righteousness through the Spirit in us.

Then the second thing to know is "in us". It is not by us. It is not something that you and I have to do. It is not something that you and I have to try to work out by our efforts. But that gift of righteousness will come into our life by the Spirit when we confess that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior and receive His righteousness on our behalf. Something came and it's fulfilled in us. What happens when the righteousness of the law become fulfilled in us? That means that automatically you have kept the law. If the just and righteous requirements of fulfilling the law are fulfilled in you, it means that it is as if you have done it. It is as if you have kept the Ten Commandments, as if you have kept every other commandment of God that God has laid down for this planet earth. It is fulfilled in you as if you have done it. Jesus done it for you and the righteousness of keeping the law has entered into you as if you have done it. It is as if all the time in your life you had never sinned, never had a wrong thought, never had a wrong word, never had a wrong action, that is fulfilled inside you. Even though outwardly it may not be fulfilled yet but it's in you. Scriptures say that it might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

And it tells you what to do now. All you have to do is to set your mind on the things of heaven, to be spiritually minded, to mind the things of the spirit. As you think about these things, the gift of righteousness comes out from you powerfully. And in Rom. 8:10 *And if Christ is in you, but the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.* Every force of sin and disease is cancelled in your body as you learn how to release that power in your life. That is why Jesus said, "In My name they shall go forth, they shall lay hand on the sick and they shall recover." In Jesus' name, you shall cast out devils because of the righteousness that flows from your inside.. The sense of God's authority comes together with the gift of righteousness.

Now if you look at Jesus' life as He walks in that righteousness, you will find that He has complete authority over demons and diseases. You never find Him crying to God for healing. You never find Him crying to God to cast out demons. All He has to do is tell the demons to get out. And the demons were begging Him to let them enter into the pigs. I don't know why Jesus did it. You can ask Him when you see Him later. Jesus said go and all the pigs went into the pigs. But the pigs didn't like the demons. They rather commit suicide than to have demons living inside them. If it were the demons that drove all the pigs into the abyss and killed all the pigs, it would have been an illogical thing to do since they were the ones who asked to go into the pigs. Possibly, they may have done that out of their anger. I imagine the scene could have been different. I mean there was a man with a legion of demons. And there were so many demons in him that although they went and tied him up he always broke loose. Then when Jesus came and landed on the shore, there comes this naked hairy man running to them. And Jesus cast out those demons. And the demons were begging Him to please let them enter into the pigs. I don't know why Jesus allowed that. Maybe pork was not His favorite food.

And Jesus said, "Go," and the demons came out from that man, six thousand of them, one legion. And sometimes animals can see demons and sometimes they can't. Maybe at that time the pigs' spiritual eyes were opened. And the six thousands demons came out and demons don't look very handsome. They can try to be handsome but actually, they were all ugly fellows. And they all came out and they all start charging against the pigs. If I remember correctly, there were about two thousand pigs. That means that there were three demons per pigs. And these demons came charging at the pigs. I could imagine the pigs' leader hearing some sort of noise. The pigs' leader looked up and said, "What is that coming against us?" And the pigs' leader gave a signal to run. Now all these are my imagination. The pig's leader says, "Run for your life." And the pigs ran, and they got no place to run. And the pigs said to one another, "Where shall we go? The demons are faster than us." The pigs said, "I rather sacrifice my life than allow dirty demons to enter into me although I am a pig and I am also dirty." And they all jumped down. Two thousand pigs died in one day.

All the pig's herdsmen didn't hear all the conversation. All they knew was there were two thousand pigs and the next moment the two thousand pigs were gone. And they also ran and told the whole town. And the whole town came out to see the story of the two thousand pigs. As they came near the place, they could smell two thousand dead pigs. Then they saw Jesus and the man possessed by demons in his right mind. The word *right mind* is the same word that we have studied in the last message, "the touch of the mind."

There was an authority in Jesus life. When He comes to healing sicknesses and diseases, He never has to beg from God. He just says, "Go and wash in the pool of Siloam, be healed." There is no begging. He knew there was an authority in His life. It was the rule of righteousness. When righteousness rules it exercises authority over sicknesses and diseases and over demons. And the new rule has already begun potentially. When Jesus Christ rose from the dead, He told His disciples all authority, power has been given onto Him. And when He sent them forth, the disciples had to learn this authority and power.

In the book of Acts 3, the apostles had been preaching the Word and they have been having signs and wonders happening in their lives. And it was an ongoing thing. In Acts 2, there was a revival flowing and people were meeting together praying in homes and in the temples. They continued steadfastly in the breaking of bread and prayers. They used to gather together in prayer. And one day in Acts 3 Peter and John went up about the ninth hour. And a certain man was lame from his mother's womb was carried whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is call Beautiful to ask alms from those who enter the temple. When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked for alms. And fixing his eyes on him Peter said, "Look at us." So he gave his attention expecting to receive something from them. Look at what Peter said in verse 6 *Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.* He knew what he has. He knew he has authority. You see we must know our authority over sicknesses and diseases. When you go to the hospital to pray for the sick, it is not whether God wants to heal them. It is whether they believe that the rule of righteousness has begun. It is whether people can believe in the message. It's a different perspective. You have authority over every sickness and disease but whether we succeed in making the authority rule in another person's life depends on whether we can convince that person that

the authority has already been given in Jesus. And the problem is getting people to believe - not getting God to act - and then the people will be healed.

Peter said, "Such as I have." What did he have? He had the authority of Jesus, the righteousness of Jesus, the sense of authority. You have to have authority to say thing like that. And flowing in his consciousness was a sense of authority. He knew who his God was. He knew his rights over Satan, over sickness and disease. Remember he was among the twelve too. They had seen it worked before this is nothing new. And in fact, everyday they had passed by that man on their way to the temple and this was not the first time. And everyday they passed by, the man could have got healed any day. But on that day, the man was in a better position to believe. Sometimes when you remain in an atmosphere of faith, your faith grows until you can receive. Just like when Paul was preaching the Word in Acts 14, he perceived that lame man could be healed. Likewise, one day as he passed by the gate Beautiful, Peter sensed that the flow of spiritual authority and exercised it to heal that lame man. And he said, "Silver and gold I don't have but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise and walk." And he took the man by his right hand and lifted him up and he immediately rose on his feet and anklebones received strength. So he entered the temple with them walking leaping and praising God. This is the result of the authority of Jesus ruling and reigning in our lives.

And everybody came around wondering how the healing took place. And Peter says in verse 12 *Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate when he was determined to let Him go. But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you. In verse 16 And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.*

Do you notice the faith that comes through Him? It was through the gift of righteousness. Righteousness gives a sense of spiritual authority, authority

over sickness and disease. Now it doesn't mean that when you walk in righteousness you go about doing everything you want to, no. It just means that you know your authority in the Lord Jesus Christ. And at any point when God commands you to use it, you will use it. And at any point when people believe in it and implore you to use it, you use it. You remember when Paul was on his way in Acts 16 while preaching the gospel in Philippians everyday, he lived in a certain house. He lived in the house of Lydia the seller of purple. And everyday he would go by the seaside and preach the gospel there. And everyday as he went to and fro there was this demon-possessed girl who followed him.

In Acts 16 we are told in verse 16-18 *Now it happened as we went to prayer, that a certain slave and possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune telling. This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation." And this she did for many days.* Now do you realize that Paul knew that he had authority? This is the apostle Paul. This is not anybody else in the church. It is someone who knew his authority as an apostle. Why didn't he cast out the demon? He had no reason to. It doesn't mean that we have authority over sickness and disease and we go out to every hospital and try to clean out the hospital. Some people may not want you to do that. Some people don't really want to be healed. Then some people don't believe in the gospel, in the good news that is brought forth that they can be healed. Remember he is not new to these things. This is his second missionary journey. He has completed his first missionary journey and had seen powerful signs and wonders.

You see we don't abuse our spiritual authority. I want to emphasize this we do not ever have the right to dominate another human spirit. Nobody has the right to dominate over another human being's free will and free spirit. All humans are given free choice. And as Paul walked to and fro everyday to prayer and to preach and when he goes back this girl would be following him, shouting, "These men are the servants of the Most High God who has come to tell us of the way of salvation." And Paul was trying to pray in the riverside. While Paul was praying, "Father we intercede for the people of Philippi," this girl would say, "These men are the servants of the Most High God," and this was very irritating.

Do you know that Paul had the authority on the first day or the second day, or the third day? But he didn't exercise his authority until it was necessary. One day she must have gone too far. I don't know what actually transpired in detail. Maybe that girl got bolder and drew nearer and nearer to Paul and his team. It says in verse 18 that she overstepped her boundary and Paul was annoyed. They didn't ask him to cast out that demon so he didn't go and disturb that demon. That slave girl belongs to somebody else. And nobody brought her for deliverance. And the people who owned her didn't want her to be delivered.

So Paul was annoyed one day when she was irritating. *But Paul, greatly annoyed turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour.* No more demon now, no more fortune telling. The question we ask is this. Did Paul have the authority on the first day? Yes. But having the authority of God doesn't mean that we go around pushing our authority. But what we do need to realize in our first point is that when the gift of righteousness comes upon our life, we know we have that authority. However, you may not use it because you are not called to use it. For example, when the devil came to Jesus and said, "Turn these stones into bread." I believe that Jesus had the power to do it. If Jesus didn't have the power to do it, it would not have constituted as a temptation. Jesus had the power and authority. But He did not want to use it. He will use it only when the Spirit of God commands it. There is when the gift of righteousness comes into our life with a sense of authority. That you will know it since it burns on your inside. And once in a while flashes of lightening comes forth. And God commands you to use it. Then you use it. Then it comes forth and you do what you know is right to do.

When we moved to our new residence, there were two idol houses in front of our new house, one big concrete and one wooden. That night I had a dream. And in the dream, I saw this spider, held it and broke its legs. I didn't know what the meaning of the dream was. That morning when we went down to take measurements, the first thing I saw was many cobwebs and spiders. Then suddenly it occurred to me that the dream was reminding me that I had spiritual authority in that place. We found out that the construction workers had not removed those idols and in fact, have not even touched it since they completed the construction of the houses there. It was left in the position where the last person worshipped it. So together, we went in the name of Jesus, threw away the

idols and overturned the wooden one because it was light enough to overturn. Then we prayed and called a tractor driver and said, "The idols have no more power. Go now and level the big cemented idol house." And it was only on that day after the tractor had crushed the idol house that the power and principality in that place were broken.

Now across the road and on the right side are two temples. We are not supposed to go there and disturb them. It is their land, their property. What they do on their side we respect their choice. But within our place and territory, we take authority plus we take authority over the air. It is important to understand that real spiritual authority exists all the time. And from time to time God tells us to do certain thing and go to certain places to tap on the authority but only as the Spirit leads. Where people had a right to worship idols on their own property, we have to respect their constitutional rights. We don't go there and enter into areas that don't belong to us. But where it is free, we can exercise that authority over the principality of that place.

I remember in my former residence, I used to take a walk to the field behind the house. Along the road, I saw somebody worshiping some tree, and somebody had built a small little red hut. I knew if nothing were done, some devotees would develop that little hut into a bigger concrete hut. And if somebody wins a lottery after praying to that idol there, he or she would come back and build a bigger house for that idol. Now I knew that it was an illegal structure. So one evening when I was taking a walk and it was kind of dark enough, making sure that I did not offend anybody, looking around I casually kicked it into the drain. I didn't want any principality and power or demon power taking root in area which we were supposed to exercise spiritual domain. In any area that you live, you have to exercise spiritual domain.

We thank God for some of you when you went on a prayer drive around areas with spiritual authority. We observed that something took place spiritually. As you drive over the place and take authority, you find that there was openness to the gospel. When we let the gift of righteousness comes forth there is a sense of authority. But we must use it in accordance to the will of God. Authority must never be used to impress a person or to rob a person of free will and free choice.

Now the second important sense is what I call a state of being. When this gift of righteousness comes into your life, sometimes you are like a mad man to some people. Because you are no more of this world, you become very strange to people in this world. Its like a river is flowing in you. Its like something bigger has taken over your life, something bigger than you. It's like God living in you and taking over your life. And to people you look crazy but your state of mind and your state of being is such that it doesn't matter. Even the most difficult task looks easy to you. Because it's a type of consciousness that comes that joy that fills you.

In the book of I Pt. 1:11 *Searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. Verse 8 Whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory.*

He says with joy unspeakable and full of glory. When the gift of righteousness takes over your life, there is a joy and the oil of gladness and it changes your state of being and state of mind such that the world doesn't look like the same place any more. You feel like you have changed into another person. And the things that would normally disturb you don't disturb you anymore. It's the gift of righteousness ruling in you.

Turn to the book of Acts 5 it says here in verse 40 *And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus and let them go.* Now these people had just received a beating because of the name of Jesus. They suffered for Jesus. And if you suffer for Jesus and if it's not your own work but the gift of righteousness is in you, you won't feel disheartened for the beating. You just feel the joy. When they were beaten in verse 41 *So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.* Look at that it is a funny situation. The joy of the Lord was on their life. They

didn't feel the sorrow of being beaten and humiliated.

The oil of gladness makes you spiritually high. We Christians need the spiritual high. We need a spiritual high in God and then you won't feel the burden, you won't feel anything. Why do people go out and drink? To forget their problems. But it won't solve their problems because after the hangover the problems are still there. But in God when you get a spiritual high it helps you solve your problem. And when you come out of it, you say, "I didn't know I overcame that."

The second thing that these apostles had is the quality called the oil of gladness. It is the sense of a state of being of joy. It is this same joy that in Acts 16 that the apostles Paul and Silas had. Remember the story of how they cast out the demon in the girl. The people were angry with them. So they arrested Paul and Silas, beat them up and tied their legs up. In all the beating and physical suffering they received, they didn't complain. They never felt discouraged. They never felt let-down because the oil of gladness was on their life. And the bible tells us in Acts 16 at mid-night where all the prisoners knew that these two new prisoners had joined them, these two new prisoners were different from all the rest. All the rest struggled and complained. I don't know what state they were in when they were in the Lord. Remember when you have the joy of the Lord you don't feel your problem. You overcome your problem. Every time someone put the whip on you because of righteousness you say, "Alleluia that's good."

You may not believe it but I am going to show you how Paul felt afterwards. When all these things came against him at mid-night when some of the prisoners were snoring it seems that all is quiet Paul and Silas were busy praising God. Maybe they couldn't sleep. Let me tell you if anyone of you find it hard to sleep tonight, worship God. And suddenly they hear this voice of Paul and Silas, "Alleluia, praise the Lord," and they sang hymn after hymn. They sang so loud that the whole prison heard them. They had a captive audience even if they don't like it since they couldn't go anywhere else. Acts 16:25, *At midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.* Two crazy fellows, now in the world they look crazy. What kind of fellows these are. You beat them up and they say, "Alleluia." You punch

them they ask, "How about the other side?" These are strange fellows. They just sing hymn after hymn. And all the prisoners were wide-awake. And as they listened, suddenly in verse 26 an earthquake came. No one had ever seen that before. And all their chains fell and there was tremendous power released. The jailor nearly killed himself but Paul stopped him. From that day, they knew Paul and Silas were no ordinary people. The oil of gladness was on their life.

Turn with me to the book of II Cor. 12 the kind of attitude that is produced by the gift of righteousness. Paul says these things he had to learn. Paul also had to learn about these types of things. Verse 7 *And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."* Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities that the power of Christ rest upon me. So Paul had to learn and there was a situation in his life when he was facing hardship and difficulty that he had to tap on the strength of God.

Now verse 10 *Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities.* The word pleasure is something you enjoy. After this Sunday morning service, all of you would go and take pleasure in your lunch. Now Paul says I take pleasure in difficulties. Why, because to the world he was like a mad man. He was filled with the Spirit and drunk with the Spirit. He was filled with the oil of gladness. Sometimes you read in the newspaper that when some people are drunk, they climb into the zoo and sleep with the tigers and lions. Only drunk people do that. You and I have been to the zoo but we never climb into the lion cage. By the time they knew it when they got a little bit sober in the morning lo and behold they found themselves sleeping in bed with the lions. And the lions mauled them. Only drunk people can do things like that.

Some of us need a greater measure of the Holy Spirit. Maybe you are facing a problem and you are working at your problem hard. Have you ever thought of tapping the gift of righteousness? When the gift of righteousness

comes, it produces wisdom, it produces power and grace to do your work, it produces favor on your behalf and it fills you with the oil of joy. When you look at your work you say, "Alleluia this is fantastic." And you could even be handling lions without realizing that the only difference is that the drunkenness in the Spirit is a different realm that solves your problem. It doesn't just make you insensitive to the problem but it helps you solve your problem.

Paul says, "I take pleasure in infirmities." Infirmities don't affect him any more because the oil of gladness was in his life. He has entered into the state of being of joy. Do you know how Jesus went through the cross? How many of you agree that it's not easy to go through the cross? You and I have crosses to bear but none of our crosses can compare to the giant one that Jesus bore for us. Do you know how Jesus bore the cross? You read Heb. 12:2 Jesus looked forward to the cross with joy. *Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross.* If you remove the joy Jesus couldn't endure the cross. But before Jesus went to the cross, He was at the Garden of Gethsemane and He prayed through. We always make the Garden of Gethsemane sound so pitiful. But when you pray through you know the result - joy. I know He agonized until the blood flowed down from Him. But the fact is He prayed through. When He prayed through the joy filled His life. When the disciples were sad and sorrowful, Jesus in the gospel of Jn. 14 said, "Let not your heart be sorrowful or be troubled." What did Jesus begin to tell them? "The joy that I have I give to you" because Jesus was infused with joy. He was ready for the cross. And because of that, He could endure the cross successfully.

If right now, you have nothing to look forward to, if you have nothing in life that makes you joyful or nothing that can make you happy, do you know life is not worth living? Even the simple joy of finding a good lunch or a good friend, or a good fellowship, or something but life is made from all these joy. If we don't have a single joy in our life or a single moment of happiness life is not worth living. Joy is an important source of life continuing in our life and doing greater and greater things with God. And when the gift of righteousness enters into you, it increases your ability to enjoy the joy of the Lord. As the oil of joy flows through your life, the capacity to rejoice is greater.

Now you know these two areas operate in your life when the gift of righteousness is in your life. Firstly, there is a sense of authority. If you have a sense of fear then the gift of righteousness is not operating. It's a sense of authority and faith. Secondly, there is the state of being of joy. And you know its no longer you who live but Christ who lives in you. And no matter what happens you just rejoice in the Lord knowing that in the end it all works out for good. All you have to do is hang in there with the joy of the Lord.