

Brave Enough to Follow
Part 1
The Invisible War
Pastor Brett McBride
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Good Morning, Church!

I don't know about you, but when I watch a video like that it makes me tremendously proud to be a part of a Christian community that wants all people to experience Christ and know Christ, whether it's in Niger or whatever country we reach the world through our faith promise giving and following the promptings and leadings of the Holy Spirit to do these things.

I would encourage you, if you can, to run, walk or roll in a couple Saturdays from now. I will be running 5 kilometers and if I can run 5 k, anybody can. And I will take on the challenge of Nick – I don't know if he's here – he usually comes to third service, so I'll have a little showdown with him at third service. I was surprised that he didn't say the winner had to grow hair so luckily I have the advantage there, but it will be a fun day together.

And I also said if Charles Price wants to take us up on the challenge, we welcome his participation as well. I saw him in between first and second service and unfortunately he will be in England at the time, so he can't make it.

But please join us on that day.

I just want to give an update as well about the youth ministry. As you know, we are looking for the next youth ministry director. We continue to meet with people, pray and discern that God would send us the right person with a calling for our youth. And we continue to seek that candidate out.

I just want to make you aware that Hartley Russell, who worked alongside Dave for the last two years in an associate function, will be providing leadership to the youth ministry while we seek for this new candidate.

Hartley has two years of experience working alongside Dave. He also will be leading the youth ministry with a team that has been engaged with our youth ministry for years now, so we're excited about what lies ahead. They kick off this Friday.

I tried to get them to play frozen fish head floor hockey – that's not going to happen, so rest assured your kids won't come home smelling like fish, even though that would be excellent.

But we look forward to Hartley leading that ministry as we work through this transition.

If you have your Bibles please turn to Luke Chapter 4:31. We will read from there in a minute.

We looked over the summer months at Jesus' first year and a half of His public ministry, how He took Peter and Andrew, Philip, Nathanael, John and led them through a year and a half of discipleship making.

And we finished off the summer in that series looking at Jesus coming to the disciples at Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee and uttering a call to Peter, James and John where He said, "Follow Me and I will make you into fishers of men."

Jesus, in effect, said to them, "Leave your nets, leave your income, leave your job and your occupation and follow Me and I will make you into something new."

It was their call into full time ministry. And over the next five weeks we are just going to look at a six to nine month period in the Gospels where Jesus calls them to follow Him, right up to the point where He appoints 12 of them as apostles, and look at some of the lessons that Jesus taught His disciples, preparing them to lead the church in the book of Acts, preparing them to be in full time ministry.

And I have called this series "Brave Enough to Follow" because that is exactly what it would take for the disciples to follow Jesus in this six to nine month period.

But I also wanted to entitle it "Faith Enough to Follow" because whatever God calls us to requires bravery on our part. But it also requires faith in the One who calls us to take that step into the unknown.

We just saw Peter and Hyan Choo talking about God calling them to serve with their medical expertise in Niger. It required both bravery and faith to follow Jesus into Niger.

And Jesus oftentimes leads us into situations where we are not exactly comfortable. It requires bravery but it also stretches our faith.

And that is what we are going to be studying in this six to nine month period. And there are two lessons that I will repeat over the next five Sundays. You will become bored of them. They will be monotonous, but it is what Jesus is doing in that six to nine month period. He is grounding His disciples in a proper understanding of who He is. And He is revealing to them His priorities.

And when you study Paul's epistles you notice that every letter he writes follows that pattern. In the first half of his epistles he talks about doctrine, he talks about a proper understanding of who Christ is, what He has done for us.

And then he turns the second half of his letter, his attention to, in light of the fact of who Christ is and who we are in Christ, this is how we ought to live.

So we are to be people who understand who He is and people who are marked by His ways.

And that's what you see Jesus doing in this six to nine month period.

So let's read from Luke Chapter 4:31. He has just called His disciples, "Follow Me; I will make you fishers of men."

Verse 31 we read this:

"Then he went down to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, and on the Sabbath he taught the people.

"They were amazed at his teaching, because his word had authority.

"In the synagogue there was a man possessed by a demon, an impure spirit. He cried out at the top of his voice,

"Go away! What do you want with us Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are – the Holy One of God!"

"Be quiet!" Jesus said sternly. "Come out of him!" Then the demon threw the man down before them all and came out without injuring him.

"All the people were amazed and said to each other, "What words these are. With authority and power he gives orders to impure spirits and they come out!"

"And the news about him spread throughout the surrounding area."

We'll stop reading there.

What I want to talk in our time together about is the power of His preaching, the panic of the possessed and the power of His person.

Jesus has just had these disciples drop their nets, leave their occupation. I know in Luke's Gospel it appears in Chapter 5, not Chapter 4, the calling that I am referring to, but chronological orders of the New Testament say that the call of the disciples happened earlier prior to this.

So Luke in his gospel has them interchanged. But regardless of that fact, even if it happened before they were called into full time ministry or after they were called into full time ministry, Jesus has just exposed his disciples to the invisible war that is going on all around us.

Right after He says to them, "Follow Me and I will make you into fishers of men," He gives them a wake-up call and they see kingdoms colliding.

This is the first recorded instance of spiritual warfare other than Jesus being tempted by Satan in the wilderness, but the disciples weren't there for that – this is the first recorded instance of spiritual warfare.

And it is interesting to note that it happens right after they step into full time ministry – not during the first year and a half that they had a relational relationship with Jesus – right after they stepped into ministry.

I remember when I first joined Tony Campolo in the city of Philadelphia; I heard him talk on this stage about ministry in the urban center of Philly, and felt the call to step into ministry.

And when I showed up in Philadelphia I remember being exposed to this invisible war that was taking place. I remember different instances on the streets of Philadelphia where I was seeing things that clearly couldn't be explained in the natural.

When I saw hatred or aggression or violence or drug abuse, whatever it was, it wasn't just the natural realm that was manifest around me; you could see spiritual forces of evil influencing humankind all around.

Even in Toronto you can go into different neighborhoods and you feel the presence of the kingdom of darkness, the enemy, who is trying to exercise their influence over humanity.

Even when I go down to Bay Street, although everybody is wearing a suit and looks respectable, you can sense the lust for power or the greed or the materialism that can get roots and take up a stronghold and a foothold in our lives.

So this battle is all around us. We are in an invisible war. And Jesus exposes His disciples to that reality right after He has called them into ministry.

In Ephesians Chapter 6:12 we read this:

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”

Disciple making involves struggle with the spiritual forces of evil. Every year at Urban Promise, the mission agency that I served with; at the beginning of each new ministry year we would have interns between the ages of 18 to 25 who signed up to serve in ministry and would be with us for a one-year service opportunity, fulltime, serving in the ministry.

And I love working with young leaders. Their passion is unbridled, they are energetic, they are enthusiastic. And we would talk to them about the challenges of serving in the urban context.

And I would always say to the young leaders who would come every fall to serve in our ministry, “If you are a Christian, you are in a war, whether you realize it or not. If you are a believer, there is a battle that rages around you.

If you are a believer who is growing in their faith, the enemy wants to stop you. If you are a believer who is growing in their faith and desires to reach others and have them grow in their faith, you have a huge target on your back. Be mindful of that reality.”

But the good news is Jesus, when He gave us the Great Commission, said to us, “Lo, I am with you always to the very end of the age.” So it is not as though we enter into this battle on our own. It is He who is leading us and watching over us. Isn’t that good news?

And from this passage we learn a few key lessons about this invisible war and the nature of who Jesus is and His authority.

Note first what Jesus is doing. He is teaching the people God’s Word.

In Verse 32 we read this:

“They were amazed at his teaching, because his words had authority.”

Jesus is teaching, He is explaining to them the Scriptures. And the people who hear Him notice that His message, His teaching, His expounding of the Word has authority.

That is the Greek word *exousia*. *Exousia* signifies power that is in some sense lawful. It is power by position or power by possession. It is either positional power -in the office that you hold, you have authority over someone or something. Or it is used at times in Scripture as a sense of you possess authority over others.

As Jesus is teaching the Word of God, people note that it has *exousia*; there is authority in His teaching.

Now let me explain the authority that the Bible is describing through this illustration.

When I joined the staff a year and a half ago I was reminded of the first day that Steevens Audige joined our staff about five years ago. I was working at Peoples a day a week at the time that Stevens joined the church five years ago and I was the one who was to help him get acclimatized to being on staff. I was helping the church with a few initiatives. I actually had interviewed Steevens and worked with bringing him to the church.

And so when he arrived on staff I was to help orient him to the place. And as we got to know one another, we realized that we have a mutual affection for something called roti. Now roti, for those of you who don’t know, is this beautiful wrap basically that is made out of chickpeas, flour and water. And inside it has curried goat or curried chicken, just deliciousness folded into this wrap and you eat it and it’s fantastic.

And I was telling him about a restaurant in the city that has jerk chicken, boneless jerk chicken roti. I mean the combination is just unbelievable, it’s that good. Who doesn’t love jerk chicken and then to take it and put a bit of curry in there and wrap it in a roti shell, I mean it’s just incredible. You have to try it sometime.

So we got to know one another and we both realized that we’re roti fans. And then Joy heard us talking about going to have roti, so she jumped on the bandwagon as well.

Now I had a car that was donated to me at the time. I was an urban missionary and someone had graciously given me their car. And it was a Nissan Maxima with the darkest tinted windows you have ever seen. You couldn't even see in the car in the daylight. And it had these 18 inch chrome rims or 17 inch chrome rims. It looked a bit gangster.

So this is Steeven's first day of being a pastor at the Peoples Church – welcome to the Peoples Church! Oh, you like roti? So do I. Get in my gangster car and let's go get some roti.

We're driving down the street. We're talking. We're getting to know one another. Everything is wonderful. And as I am driving down the road I notice about 800-1000 meters ahead of me, someone steps out onto the road in front of my car.

Now we are driving through an interesting part of Toronto, and so I am thinking to myself, "Why is that person stepping into the middle of the road? Do they want to get hit by my car?"

And then as I got closer to the person who had stepped out onto the road, I noticed that their clothing was very dark and I was still kind of wondering, "What is this person doing?"

And as we got even closer, I started to realize that they were wearing a uniform, and what he did was pointed at me and then pointed over to the side road that he had stepped out from. And this is the outfit that he was wearing when we got closer to him. And I realized that this police officer was pulling me over.

Again, this is Steeven's first day at church. Welcome to being a pastor at Peoples Church! By the way, the police are pulling you over.

And the police officer's first comment was, "Your windows are tinted too dark; I couldn't even see you." And then he persisted to give me a speeding ticket.

I gave him my insurance slip but it was past date; I hadn't put the new one in my car yet so he was gracious enough to give me a ticket for that as well.

That police officer, when he stepped out onto the road didn't have the power to stop my car. He was 185 pounds; my car was two tons with three of us in it. I could have driven right past him.

He didn't have the power to stop my car but he had the *exousia* because of his position. He had the authority to pull my car over and give me a ticket.

When Jesus is preaching in this synagogue, one of the first lessons that His disciples see is that Jesus handles God's Word with authority.

And it brings up the question: in God's created order, who has ultimate authority?

The only rightful power within creation is ultimately the creator's. God's authority is an aspect of His unchangeable, universal and eternal dominion over the world.

And since God has all authority, it is derived from Him.

In Old Testament times we see God exercising His authority over His people through the offices of prophet, priest and king.

The prophets were those who were to declare the words of God – “Thus saith the Lord.”

The priests were to teach the people the laws of God.

And the king’s job was to rule in accordance with those laws.

But we also note through the Old Testament that Scripture itself was acknowledged as authoritative, both as instructions so that they might know who God is and His expectations of them, and also might know how He ruled and judged them.

And Jesus affirms this in Matthew Chapter 5 in the Sermon on the Mount. In Chapter 5:17 Jesus says this:

“Do not think I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets: I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”

“For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.”

What Jesus is doing is declaring that the Bible, the Word of God, has *exousia*. His Word has authority over humanity.

Look at what He says in Verse 18:

“Not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from God’s Law.”

What He is saying is even the smallest letter that is contained in the Law, even the least stroke of a pen; even the grammar of God’s holy Law is authoritative over humankind.

Over 80 times in the Gospels you see Jesus quoting 70 different chapters of the Old Testament. Jesus was constantly preaching the Word and teaching the people the Scriptures.

He had a commanding knowledge of it and He modeled to His disciples the authority, the *exousia* of God’s Word.

So, fishing lesson number one for these future fishers of men, for His disciples to note, is that the Word has authority. Disciples, know it and rest in it. It is not just a book; it is His Word to us. It is His self-disclosure of who He is.

When the prophets proclaimed the Word of the Lord, they weren't proclaiming their own words. They were saying, "Thus saith the Lord." It is authoritative in our lives. There is *exousia* in the Word of God. The Bible is authoritative for life. This is something our generation needs to remember.

It is so easy to forget how we even got the Scriptures. We forget that the English translation of the Bible was written by William Tyndale who paid with his life to do so.

And we live in a day and age where we can get Bibles – I have about ten Bibles at home. We have them everywhere. They are readily available to us. And we are so accustomed to having them that sometimes we don't give them the proper respect or value they deserve.

We need to recognize that God's *exousia*, His authority, is in His Word. In other parts of the world where the Bible is not readily available, when people are bringing Scriptures to those nations, people begin to weep because they get to hold it in their hands for the first time.

And so Jesus is teaching His disciples through this very event the authority that is contained within Scripture. He refers to it throughout the Gospels by quoting it.

There is *exousia* in God's Word and we need to be people who devour the Word. And can I just take one moment to give you a bit of advice when it comes to studying the Scriptures? I know we live in a day and age of tablets and smart phones where you can read the Bible and have it contained in your pocket on a smart phone.

But can I just suggest that you read your physical Bible as well, not just a tablet version? And there are studies that have come out that reveal when we read physical print with pages in a book we actually read slower and comprehend more when we do so versus a screen.

When I read Scripture on my tablet the problem is I just swipe the screen and it's just a continuation. And when I move that screen it just disappears; I don't see where it goes; it's just gone, it's just kinda swipe and I don't know where it went. But I don't see it anymore.

When I am reading the physical print of the Scriptures, I can understand where I am at in the chronological revelation of who God is. I can understand if I am in the Old Testament or the New Testament. And it's important for us to know the order of things.

We are photogenic when we study so I can remember where that verse was on the page – it was up in the top right corner – I know all of us; I see heads shaking so this is actually demonstrated in studies that we are photogenic by nature. So we memorize things by where it was on the page and we can find it faster than on a tablet.

We also tend to make notes in our Bibles and what that provides you is a historical understanding of what God spoke to you over your history and in the past.

And so my question to parents, as your kids have started a new school year, do they see you studying your Bible and modeling the *exousia*, the authority of God's Word and living under it? Because we need to be people who understand what this book is and have a high esteem for it.

And I love the Peoples Church and in 2003 during our 75th anniversary, Charles and the team decided that it would be a good practice during that year, as we entered into our 75th year anniversary, that we reaffirm our dedication to being a church that is founded on the Word of God and His revelation and Scripture.

And so when we ushered in 2003 we did it by starting at 12:30 just after midnight. There was a reading of the Scriptures from the platform and the congregation signed up to read at different spots. It was going to be read 24/7 from cover to cover as a bold declaration that we are people who the foundation of our church is built on the authority of the Scriptures and who Christ revealed Himself to be.

And so it started on a Thursday night and by Saturday afternoon every word from cover to cover had been read. And the sanctuary, even in the middle of the night, was filled with about 300 people.

There was one person who claimed that they were there from start to finish. They brought food, slept in the church and just listened to the Word being read from the platform.

Why do we do a thing like that? Because His Word has *exousia*, His Word has authority.

And what Jesus is revealing to His disciples right at their entrance into ministry is that when you preach, when you teach, when you are making disciples, is your disciple making leading people to the *exousia* of God's Word? Is it leading to the authority that God has declared in His Word?

Billy Sunday said this:

"The backslider likes the preaching that wouldn't hit the side of a house, while the real disciple is delighted when the truth brings him to his knees."

Isn't that a great quote?

The real disciple is delighted when the truth brings Him to his knees.

I remember when I was driving to church sometimes as a congregant and working at Urban Promise and Charles Price would be preaching from the platform. And I remember there were times in my life where I would enter into a Sunday morning with a bit of heaviness in my heart because I knew that I would be sitting and encounter the authority of who Christ is as revealed in His Word, that Charles would unpack it and that I would feel the weight and heaviness of the truth. And am I a disciple that delights in that moment?

In Ephesians 6 we read this, that we are to take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. And if you never use the sword of the Spirit, if you never use the Word of God, then you will not penetrate into spiritual things.

We are told in Hebrew 4:12

“The Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”

Where God’s Word is being proclaimed, His *exousia* is present. And it has an impact on the kingdom of the demonic. The demonic forces feel His authority.

And so the Word is so heavy as Jesus is preaching in that synagogue that the demon possessed man can’t take it anymore. He experiences the *exousia* of God’s Word being expounded and he cries out and disrupts the whole service.

“Ha! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth?”

Because he feels the *exousia* of God’s Word.

Now as we look at spiritual warfare, there are two ditches that we can fall into. We can give it too much attention or not enough attention.

C.S. Lewis said this:

“There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils – one is to disbelieve their existence; the other is to believe and feel an unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight.”

So as we look at this passage, as we look at the whole idea of spiritual warfare and what is going on around us, it is not that we become too consumed with it, but it’s not that we disregard it completely as well.

And Jesus leads His disciples into this situation right at the outset to prepare them for the coming battles that lie throughout the rest of the Gospels and into the book of Acts.

And so if you are going to enter into disciple making, if you are going to be fishers of men, you need to understand that you are entering into a battlefield.

But let’s observe what we learn from the demon’s response to the preaching of Jesus because this event, as recorded to Scripture, teaches some things about the authority of who Christ is and how the demonic responds to who Christ is.

First we note that the demon is afraid. “Ha!” actually is better translated, “Let us alone, leave us alone”. It is an expression of wonder mixed with fear.

“What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth?”

So when Jesus is expounding the Word of God, as Jesus’ *exousia* is being felt, the demonic forces are afraid. “Leave us alone. What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth?”

The other thing we note is the demon knows who Jesus is.

“I know who you are – the Holy One of God!”

Even the demons believe in who Jesus is. They recognize who Jesus is. “You are the Holy One of God!”

The demon recognizes that it can be destroyed when it says,

“Have you come to destroy us?”

And finally, the demon recognizes Jesus’ authority and power when Jesus says, “Come out of him,”

“The demon threw the man down before them all and came out without injuring him.”

You never see Jesus afraid in Scripture when He encounters the demonic. It is always, always, always the spiritual forces of evil and darkness and demonic that are afraid of Him.

Isn’t that good news?

Hollywood movies would have us believe the opposite. But Jesus is never afraid and His disciples are exposed to that early on. They probably were a bit startled when this man cried out at the top of his voice, as we would have been. But what they see is that Jesus has authority clearly.

When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the desert, Jesus responded to every temptation with saying the same statement, “It is written.”

Again, Jesus is mindful that the Bible has *exousia*, the Bible has authority. That’s why He quoted it back to Satan when He was tempted in the desert.

But this also reveals something about the authority of Jesus Himself. Note the people say,

“With authority and power he gives orders and they come out!”

Jesus has *exousia* and the Greek word for power is *dunamis* when He gives orders. Authority is the rightful power of one whose commands must be obeyed. Jesus had authority.

But Jesus also has power, the vital force of God at work in all of creation.

Do you remember the Spirit was hovering over the surfaces of the deep? And the Spirit is referred to as Spirit of power in 2 Timothy. That is the same Greek word *dunamis*; it's where we get the word dynamite from.

Jesus has all authority and *dunamis*, the power, to exorcize the demonic. It is not just authority that He has; He also has power because of who He is.

Since He is Son of God and Son of Man, His authority is that of a divine Messiah who has delegated authority from God to rule His people. He is the Prophet, Priest and King of God, all three offices in one, as our Messiah, but He is also the divine Son, the One who co-created and shared in all of the Father's work. His authority is both delegated and real, for He is the Son of Man and Son of God.

And even the demons recognize this. "I know who You are – the Holy One of God" they say.

Jesus is bringing people face to face with the authority of God's Word. But they also recognize and encounter His authority because of who He is.

And so the disciples learn early in their ministry that He has authority over the demonic. And this is an important experience for them as they are now entering into the battlefield. And they need to have a proper understanding of who He is and His authority.

And it is essential for all of us, if we are believers in Christ, if we have faith in Christ; we need to understand that whatever battle you face, whatever struggle you find yourself in, the Word of God has authority over whatever you are facing. And Jesus Himself, because you are in Christ and He is in you – greater is the One who is in you than the one who is against you.

There is authority in His Word; there is authority in the Christ.

And I remember moments in my life where I was serving in the ministry facing intense spiritual warfare, difficult seasons – yes, where Satan sifts you as wheat – and it's not easy to go through those seasons.

And I remember reading through all kinds of spiritual warfare material, some of it very good, some of it somewhat destructive. Because if spiritual warfare material doesn't lead you to the authority of Scripture and to the authority of Christ; if it doesn't let you know who you are in Christ, it can be filled with all kinds of material but it will do nothing to solve the problems that you are facing.

Jesus teaches His disciples from the outset that when you give your attention to the Word of God and when you behold Christ, He has all authority in heaven and on earth. It is His, and because you are in Him, you can overcome whatever is facing you.

And when you look at the book of Acts, you see that the disciples didn't give their attention to the demonic forces even though they were prevalent in every city they went into.

Paul, in his ministry, didn't focus on the demonic; what Paul did was preach the *exousia* of God's Word. Paul gave his attention and his focus to the Word. And as he did that, as he proclaimed the Word, he rested in the authority of it and in the authority of Christ. And the demonic was impacted in every region because he was resting in who Christ is and in His Word.

So in light of this, our focus in our lives needs to be on His Word and on who He is. And I guarantee you, when you are in that place, when your mind is set on things above, when your heart is set on things above and you are not worrying about yourself or the circumstances or what's coming against you, you will walk in victory because of who He is, not because of who you are.

And demons cannot stand God's Word. It is an offensive weapon and our focus must be on Christ – His power, His authority, who He is.

And when it comes to the spiritual battles in our lives, we must know this because it is contained in the Scriptures: all things, everything, is subject to our Father in heaven. He has authority over everything and He will never leave you in a test or a struggle or a battle that you cannot handle if you depend on Him.

And greater is the One who is in you than that one who is in the world.

Believer, walk in the peace and comfort of this.

Look at the result of Jesus' use of His authority. He casts out the demon; the man is restored. Jesus leaves the synagogue in Capernaum and He goes to Simon Peter's house where Simon's mother in law is sick.

When Jesus sees her He casts out the fever. She starts to make them Saturday dinner, our equivalent of Sunday brunch. And she starts to cook and prepare a meal for them. And then we read in Verse 40 and 41,

“At sunset on the same day, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them.

“Moreover, demons came out of many people, shouting, ‘You are the Son of God!’ But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Messiah.”

I find that passage fascinating. The authority and *exousia* of God's Word is proclaimed. The authority of the Christ is made known. And it doesn't make the people afraid, it doesn't drive them away. If anything, they are running to Jesus so that they can deliver his family and friends as well.

God's authority is something we are drawn to because we were created in His image. And if you are here this morning and you are facing a spiritual battle, I guarantee you the authority of His Word, the authority of His Christ is greater than whatever battle you are facing.

There are going to be pastors at the front here, if after the service you are facing something, come and pray with someone. If you have a believer and a friend in your life, pray with your friends.

But we can rest in the confidence that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Christ and we are in Christ so we can face whatever challenges come against us, because when it comes to spiritual warfare, He is the Victor and we are in that victory.

Let's pray together.

Before we pray I would also ask if there is a friend or a family member, we read in this passage that people who were in that synagogue brought their sick family or friends to Jesus so that He could heal them and set them free as well.

Just pray that in this moment right now you would lift that friend or family member to Christ. Pray that His *exousia*, His authority would drive the darkness out.

So Lord we come to You recognizing that all authority in heaven and on earth is yours. We thank You for the truth of Your Word. We thank You that every promise You have made is yes in Christ.

And Lord, sometimes we acknowledge that we get caught up with circumstances, our focus gets on the wrong things – it might be on our self, on the situation, and it becomes bigger than life.

Lord, we ask Your forgiveness and pray that You would give us new vision today. Help us to see You clearly and that all things are under Your feet, under Your authority. Help us to set our minds on things above where You are seated at the right hand.