

## Our True Position

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

It seems that there are two ways to live this life. You can live it by your own knowledge or you can live it by faith. I think we've said that often. And indeed, probably we ourselves in this body have had our own shot at living it by knowledge too. And probably in your own life you have had experience of living it by knowledge -- you do your best -- you do try to do what is good and you try to avoid what is evil but things keep coming unstuck at different times.

Probably every one of us here faced things in our own lives that haven't quite come out and we learn to ignore them. We almost encourage each other to ignore them saying, "Oh well, there are many things that have gone right. There are some situations that admittedly aren't yielding to this kind of knowledge that I have but well I just keep on keeping on."

Of course, as your life goes on those things kind of pile up more and more either in your marriage, or in your friendships, or in your career. And I don't know how many of us have friends who have lives that have kind of sunk down to a kind of anticlimax. Either their career is just a kind of make do thing that isn't totally satisfactory, or their marriage even is a make do thing that isn't totally satisfactory, or their church, or their body is that. And of course, what we have been saying is there's a reason for that. When God told us to subdue the world at the very beginning of creation he meant that we were to subdue it to his will. That meant taking it out from under the power of Satan's will because in fact, in the ages before we were ever created Satan had been given charge of this world of ours.

As different angels had been given charge over different parts of the universe, so Satan happened to be the prince of this world. When he rebelled against Satan he really continued as prince of this world. There is a sense in which God's gifts even are given without repentance and so Satan had control of this world and we came in like little innocents of course, being told by God to subdue the world and to make sure we ate of the tree of life which was the power of his Holy Spirit through faith. And he knew that by that means we would be able to subdue the world and bring it under his control and take it out from underneath Satan's control.

We were fools of course, we were deceived by Satan. Satan said, "All you need to do this is the knowledge of good and evil so just acquire that and you'll be able to do what you need and you'll in fact fulfill God's will for you." Of course, we like fools, took that bait and began to try and do it with the knowledge of good and evil and so we do today. And so who knows, you look back but maybe we did it even with this body, how many of us came in the evenings and loved the knowledge of the good and evil of maybe the right way to live the spiritual life? And how many of us maybe majored, because we're such a university group, we majored in knowledge. In our own lives we may be doing the same thing.

Of course, what we've shared is that that brings a life filled with half done things. A life filled with partial achievements. A life filled with grey areas and many half defeats. And the reason is that the real problems in this world come from the activity of Satan. The superficial problems we can solve with knowledge. But the real problems that stay, and stay, and stay, and eventually destroy are the result of Satan's activity. And there are some clear instances of that if you'd like to just glance at a few verses in scripture where God has given us guidance on that.

Let's look at John 8:48, "The Jews answered him, 'Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?'" There's kind of nothing you can do with that one. Here's Jesus, the Son of God, "Are we not right in saying you're a Samaritan and have a demon?" And your mind just crumbles, you think, "They've listened to this dear man give the highest teaching that the world has ever heard and here they come up with this. If he can't persuade them what hope have we?" Now why on earth, why do they say such a thing it's ridiculous? It's like some of the things we face ourselves. You think, "Why would they say that it can't be possible? Where do they get such wildness from?"

Back in Verse 44 Jesus explains, "You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies." People's blindness comes from Satan. When you witness to loved ones and you think, "Well, we'll explain it all clearly to them and they'll see it and they'll respond to the truth," and then they don't and they come out with some saying like that we need to see it's Satan's activity in them. It's Satan's activity upon them and in them lying to them. Loved ones, it's just foolish for us to try and beat them into submission or try to persuade them or convince them. The work that we're facing is Satan's work whether it's in our mums and dads, whether it's our friends, whether it's in even colleagues or brothers and sisters, part of Satan's work is to bring blindness.

Another part of Satan's work is John 14:30. John 14:30, "I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming." What Jesus meant was there's soon going to come to arrest me in the Garden at Gethsemane and Pilate is going to try me and the high priest and then the Roman soldiers are going to crucify me but he said, "I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming." Those aren't the people who are doing it at all. It's Satan that is bringing those things. It's Satan that is moving people to do those things against me.

Your circumstances in your life are at this time under the control of the prince of this world. And most of the circumstances in this world except those where people exercise faith, are under the control of Satan. That's why, loved ones, we cannot sufficiently emphasize to each other that it is useless to wait for something to turn up. It's useless. And yet how many of us are like that character you remember, in David Copperfield who was always waiting for something to turn up? How many of us spend our days, and our weeks, and months waiting for something to turn up, waiting for circumstances to turn better, waiting for something to happen that might change our lives or might lift us out of the decline that we're in? Nothing will happen that way but what will destroy us more and more because the prince of this world is the one who is in control of the circumstances that affect our lives.

Do you see why so many of us are destroyed by our passivity? We're almost taught to wait to see how things open out. You know we say that, we say that to one another, "Well, I'll just wait to see how things open out. I'm going to wait and see how things open up." And it's like babes in the woods, there's only one who will open up things if we leave it like that and that is Satan. He is the prince of this world; he is in charge of the circumstances of this world. You know, when you say to me, "Ah but brother sometimes some good things have turned up." Well yes, you see he's not a fool he often acts as an angel of light. He'll allow some apparently good things to happen to us to encourage us to go on in this passivity and let things open up and open up.

Loved ones, often the doors that we walk through, they're doors into blackness that we just don't

see it at the time but we walk through this door and the room looks a little lighter, and we think, "Oh, this is a nice thing it's opening up." And it's not by faith in God that we have, you know, I'm not talking about that. When we have faith in God, as we'll see later, it changes everything. But so often it's not definite faith in God it's just a "que sera, sera" -- whatever will be, will be. "Well, I'll wait till something turns up. I'll wait for things to open up." And we get led by the nose by Satan's activity because it's Satan that controls the circumstances of this world. And that's why, you remember, we read that important verse last Sunday, Ephesians 6:12.

Ephesians 6:12, and just a great key to our lives, a key to change in our whole lives. Ephesians 6:12, "For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities," [principalities are the chief rulers of evil in the spiritual world] "Against the powers," [that is the evil powers] "Against the world rulers of this present darkness," [their representatives on earth] "World rulers of this present darkness." Not only evil, obviously evil men but many men that don't appear to be evil but they are, "World rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." That's what we're fighting against. That's what we're contending against.

We're not contending just against circumstances that have gone away, we're not contending just against bosses who don't understand us, we're not contending against people who won't employ us. We're not. We're not contending just against bankers who won't give us money. We're not contending just against difficulties we're having with our bills. We're not. We're contending against principalities and powers whose job is to choke us to death through influencing the circumstances of our lives and the way people respond to us. We're contending against not flesh and blood but against principalities and powers.

Whether it's the kind of thing one faces in a church, or it's the kind of thing one faces at home, or at school, or at one's place of work, we're not contending against flesh and blood we're contending against principalities and powers.

Now here's the glorious fact that we also looked at last day, it's Colossians 2:13-15. Colossians 2:13-15, just another statement of this great truth, "And you, who were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, having canceled the bond which stood against us with its legal demands; this he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in him." That's what Jesus did on Calvary.

He took the legal bond which stood against us; he cancelled it nailing it to his cross. What was the legal demand, the legal bond? It was Satan's ability to come before God and say, "These people have sinned against you. You said they should die. All that have sinned, the wages of sin is death, they should die. I have the right to destroy them." And God said, "No, my Son died for all of them therefore they all died in him and he bore my wrath that was due them and it burned out and destroyed the sin in them in my Son. You have no right to destroy them again. There is no such thing as double penalty for one sin. You have no right. That bond has been nailed to the cross. They are mine and they belong to me, they do not belong to you." Loved ones, that is fact and truth and Satan will lie against you and try to persuade you.

Sarah, when we hold onto our sin, you're right, we're holding onto what God has destroyed in Jesus and therefore we're holding onto the lie of Satan that we still deserve to be killed. And if we let go our sin and we accept that, we'll let go our guilt, we'll let go Satan's hold over us. And loved

ones, when you do that you have absolute authority over Satan. You have simply clear authority over Satan. That authority is ours. It is given to us and it's as really ours as forgiveness of our sins is ours and deliverance from the power of sin is ours, so we have been delivered from the authority of Satan. And do you see that Satan has no power? He has only authority and he only has authority over those who allow him to have authority.

Of course, that's one of the funny things when we talk even about human authority. What authority have I over you? Nothing that you don't give me. Nothing that you don't give me. I have no authority over you that you don't give me. And Satan has only the authority over you that you give him. And when you treat him as a person who has a right to you, and you live as if he has a right to you, and you live under his domain and under this thrall and you employ his tricks, his sin tricks, to get what God wants to give you all along out of his free generosity by his mighty power, when you employ those manipulating sin tricks, you are putting yourself under Satan's authority.

It's like the person who blackmails another, he gets you in to steal something and then he says, "Now, I'll tell someone about you if you don't do this, and this, and this." And that's the way Satan inveigles us into the thing. And all we have to do, to get free of that is to say, "No more sin. If God wants me to have that he'll give me it but I'm not indulging in any kind of your tricks. And no more sin and you have no more authority over me." And loved ones, that's the authority that Jesus himself has because he says in Ephesians 1, look at the glory of it, Ephesians 1:21, this is where Jesus was raised to after he defeated and disarmed the principalities and powers. In Verse 21 he was raised, you see Verse 20, "He raised him from the dead and made him sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion." That's all the power and dominion in the world, all the principalities and powers, all the authorities and the rulers of this present darkness, above all those, "And above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come; and he has put all things," including Satan and his authority, "Under his feet and has made him," Jesus, "The head over all things." For who? For you and me, "For the church."

Jesus is, "The head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all." And where are we? Well, it's very interesting you know, in 2:1-2, there is really a Greek word for "made alive." Actually the way the whole sentence runs is Verse 20, "Which he accomplished in Christ when he raised him from the dead and made him sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And you, when you were dead through the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience, you he raised also."

He also made you sit at his right hand and Paul, you remember, repeats that again in Verse 4, "But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages," this age, 1984, "He might show the immeasurable riches of his grace and kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." And that is where we are also. We are in that position. That position is the one where Jesus talks about in Matthew 28.

Matthew 28:18, he has been raised to that position far above all rule and authority and dominion and power and Matthew 28:18, "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has

been given to me.” Jesus can say to Satan, “Depart from me,” and Satan departs. He can say to Satan, “Come out from him,” and he comes out from the person. He can rebuke Satan in the Pharisees and they are rebuked and have to withdraw. Jesus has total authority over Satan.

But here’s the incredible truth, loved ones, Luke 10:19. “Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you.” You and I have that authority. We have that authority. We have authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions. And you remember Paul did that, a serpent bit him and they looked for him to fall down dead and he didn’t. And Jesus has given us that authority. The things that would normally kill you and me will not kill us. And he has given us authority to tread over all the power of the enemy and that’s all we have to do. We don’t have to show great strength, it isn’t our strength, it isn’t the power of our minds, or the power of our emotions, or the power of our voices. It isn’t even how mature you are.

It’s strange. It isn’t even how mature you are as a Christian. This belongs to every little child of God. Every little one of us when we were dead through our trespasses and sins and have been made alive together with Christ and raised up with him and made to sit with him in the heavenly places -- every one of us. The littlest one who was born most recently into the kingdom of God has that authority and if we exercise it, Satan has to withdraw. Why? Because, Jesus has already disarmed him you see. The disarming has already been done by Jesus. There is no power. Satan has no power over Jesus. Jesus has absolute power over him. So when you exercise that authority in the name of Jesus, Satan withdraws.

That’s why all those verses are so simple, resist the Devil and he’ll flee from you. Just resist him and that’s all we have to do. In our thought life that’s all we have to do. If you would only stop the train of thought, but he says, “This depressing, train of thought is true and vital for you to think. It’s vital. It’s very understandable. Look at your circumstances, look at your money situation, look at your job situation, look at your marital situation, look at your spiritual situation, this is very reasonable now. It’s very reasonable for you to think this way.” Except that you know it isn’t of God because God says, “Whatever things are true and lovely and of good report, think on these things.” [Philippians 4:8] You know also that it’s not reasonable to think those things only when things are good because Paul thought those things in the midst of persecution and difficulties and all kinds of disasters.

So you can be sure of one thing with depression -- that it comes straight from the pit. It comes straight from Satan and you have no need to think of that for a moment. And if you say, “Satan’s making me do it. The Devil is making me do it.” No he isn’t. He is inveigling you and deceiving you into thinking, “This is very logical, keep on thinking this through because if you get a knowledge of good and evil in this situation you’ll be able to overcome it.” Stop right there. Stop. Say, “Satan I rebuke you in the name of Jesus.” And if it comes back to you, “Satan I rebuke you again in the name of Jesus.” And you keep rebuking him until he simply sees that he can no longer deceive you. But you do that, loved ones. You don’t get into the depressing train of thought, you don’t get into the worry and the anxiety because it’ll lead you right down into the pit and right out of faith completely.

If you say to me, “Well, he’ll reason with me. He’ll say why.” Yes, he will, he’ll inveigle you; he’ll try to argue with you, he’ll try to show you how reasonable this is to do. No, whatever things are true and lovely and of good report, think on these things. “Rejoice in the Lord always and again I will say rejoice.” [Ephesians 4:4] Even as they take you into prison to kill you, even

as they take you into jail, you'll rejoice. You'll rejoice to the very end, you'll rejoice before God because your God has told you to do. The only one who tells you to worry and be anxious, the only one who tells you to be depressed is Satan himself. No, you simply resist him, loved ones, that's all.

And you have authority to do that. As the littlest child of God, you have that authority. And that actually is the authority that you have over everything in your life, over everything that you come up against. And so you remember, we talked about the mighty power we have, Matthew 18:18, the mighty power of faith. Such a difference it is to begin to subdue the world by faith in what Jesus has wrought against the enemy of our souls and the enemy of God. Matthew 18:18, "Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Let me tell you a stranger thing about that verse. The Greek actually reads, "Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth has been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth has been loosed in heaven." In other words, Jesus in his death on Calvary has already bound all of the powers of evil. He has already loosed from the powers of evil everything in your life and everything in everybody else's life. So actually, it's all been already done. Yet Jesus cannot touch those situations at all because he himself is not on earth here, he depends on you. That's why he says, "Whatever you bind on earth has been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth has been loosed in heaven."

And when you pray and ask, "Lord Jesus, will you loose this person from the power of Satan," Jesus has to say, "I cannot do that. I was able to do it when I had a physical body also. But I cannot do it, you are my appointees. I have appointed you. My authority in heaven and earth I have given to you. Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy and nothing shall hurt you. Now go forth and take that authority. You've to bind that situation." If you say to me, "How do you do it? Have you not to be a great intercessor?" No, no, Satan's trick is to accuse you, he's the accuser of the brethren. His job is to accuse you and say, "What he said tonight applies to Rees Howells, or George Muller but not to you. You are a poor insignificant child of God, you are unworthy, you are filled with sins, you have not the authority to do this." Those are lies.

You say, "You're dead right I'm pitiful, I'm poor, I'm probably filled with sin but the blood of Jesus was presented to my God on my behalf and my God looks at the blood of Jesus and he sees me crucified and destroyed with his Son and until I die I know he treats me as being in his Son and he treats me as if I am his own son. So you're dead right, Satan, about me but I am no longer what God deals with. God deals with me crucified and raised in Jesus and I have the authority to say this and I, in the name of Jesus, not in my own name because my own name is powerless, but in the name of Jesus I bind this power of evil that is holding back money, that is holding back this person from seeing Jesus clearly."

You can't bind a person's will, loved ones, you can't bind their will, even Jesus could not do that but you can bind the powers that distract them from seeing Jesus as he really is. You can bind the powers that are blinding them. You can bind the other powers that are spoiling circumstances in your life. You can loose things from the power of Satan and you simply do it, "I bind you Satan in the name of Jesus. I bind you evil spirit that is causing this deception in this person's life, I bind you in the name of Jesus." You keep on. You do not look to the circumstance to see if it's changed, you walk in faith.

I just think it's very real what Kenneth Hagin told, I think I mentioned it to you, the gentlemen in the psyche ward who could not speak, who was dumb, and the psychiatrist who believed this position of authority and he quietly, when other doctors were present he just quietly said, "I bind you in the name of Jesus and I cast you out Satan from this man. You dumb spirit I cast you out in Jesus' name." And he just kept doing it. And when he was with the man on his own, he spoke out loud to him and after two, three months that man was able to speak and was freed from the hospital. None of the psychologists or psychiatrists knew at all what happened. But he kept on.

See, where we lose it is we back off faith, we back off God's word and we don't see a change in the circumstances tomorrow or the next day and then Satan goes into his old inveigling deceiving thing again and he says, "Look, the circumstances haven't changed." And we say, "That's right they haven't. Oh, you're right, it doesn't work. It doesn't work." If it doesn't work, this word doesn't work, God doesn't work and it's all useless and we're all lost. If this word is true it works. It's just we don't work it long enough. But if we work it long enough God triumphs. Why? Because the triumph has already been wrought. All we're doing is bringing the triumph out of eternity into time. That's all we're doing. In eternity this has already been wrought but we bring it when we do the binding.

Mark 11:23, please, loved ones, you know these are verses that we have read repeatedly. You have done the same as me, you have read them you know, and we've had all kinds of explanations, "Well, it's just exaggeration, it's just hyperbole." But none of it made sense, you remember. Mark 11:23, "Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him." That's just so ridiculous, isn't it? "Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." And you see footnote A, "Other agent authorities read 'are receiving.'" "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you are receiving it, and it will be yours."

I agree with anyone here who says that the power and the authority cannot be exercised irresponsibly. But I'll tell you this, loved ones, there are more people that are exercising it irresponsibly and seeing results than there are of us who are exercising it irresponsibly. Too many of us are being deceived by Satan into saying, "Yeah, now you don't want to exercise it irresponsibly. So really you want to know that God wants this for us so let's commit ourselves to three years of prayer to find out what," what the Father wants is a humble, hungry heart. He wants a heart that isn't presumptuous or a heart that is at least always humbling itself before God and saying, "Lord, am I presumptuous in asking for this? Am I presumptuous in wanting this, Lord? If I am will you check me in my spirit? But otherwise Lord, in the name of Jesus I go forward and I exercise faith here." And that's the walk of faith.

The walk of faith is a walk of faith not of fear. The walk of faith is walking on, doing what Jesus told us to do with the evil around us, taking authority in his name in these things, ever open to listen to the footsteps of God. But the walk of faith is not that walk of fear and that walk by sight where we say, "Well, I'm not worthy to do this, I'm not George Muller." In which case, we're standing before God in our own righteousness and not in Jesus' righteousness. Or we think, "I'm not sure if God wants me to do this." Well, being not sure is doubt and doubt is certainly not of faith and so we're killing ourselves right there. Whereas God expects us to go forward and that's why he's

given you eyes to see the things that you can see. That's why he's given you ears to see the things you can hear, because you, in all kinds of situations, where authority in his name needs to be taken, where things need to be bound, things need to be loosed, where you need to begin to believe him for certain things and believe that you receive them even as you ask for them, and as you do that and continue to do that, the power of Jesus' death on Calvary and his resurrection begins to be released in your life and you begin to see things change.

I'm with everyone here who is against the light superficial teaching about prosperity. I agree with you, that's not right. We shouldn't make use of our God just to make us rich. But do you think that's in many of our hearts, you know? I don't think that's in many of our hearts. I don't think that we're overwhelmed by that. I think that we're overwhelmed by hesitation, by doubt, by failing to use the faith and the authority that Jesus has given us.

Loved ones, this is the walk by faith. At the risk of never getting to Genesis, I'd like to read to you a couple of things. It's from MacMillan and here's a dear man John MacMillan some of us have known this book for years *The Authority of the Believer*. The other book which you can bombard the bookshop so much with requests for that they'll have to just get it in, is *The Believer's Authority* by Kenneth Hagin. Hagin quotes MacMillan, MacMillan's is the first book. Hagin's '*The Believer's Authority*' and MacMillan's '*The Authority of the Believer*.'

"Some months ago after a service in one of our cities two woman came asking for an interview. The appearance of one gave an immediate understanding of the situation which was confirmed by conversation. There had been earnest seeking of deep spiritual experience which was followed by a sudden attack of intense despondency. The attacks persisted until after three years the mind was in complete bondage." That kind of reminded me of some loved ones that I've known. A hungering, see a hungering after a deeper spiritual experience but followed by sudden attack of intense despondency. Those loved ones you know, that say, "I can't, I can't get crucified. I can't, it's just wearing me down."

"The attacks persisted until after three years the mind was in complete bondage." In complete bondage, "Oh, I want to enter in but I can't." "All joy had fled and only a feeble whole of salvation was retained. Suggestions of suicide were frequent pressing with an urgency that was hard to resist. The following line of approach was taken, after definitely asserting in prayer the power of the ascended Lord and the believer's union with him, 'Sister, this trouble is clearly the oppression of evil spirits which have obtained a holdover you in some manner. These thoughts of self-destruction are directly prompted by him who is a deceiver and a murderer. You are a Christian and united with Christ. This afternoon may be for you, if you will, the last occasion of the manifestation of satanic power.' In a simple manner her place of victory and authority in Christ was shown from the word. She was urged to take it audibly before those who were witnesses: her sister, a friend, and the speaker.

After full assertions of her faith and her acceptance of what Christ had gained and the Father had bestowed, the party knelt in victorious prayer. As the group arose one of the friends remarked, 'She looks different already.' There was a life and animation most noticeably after the deadness of her previous expression. A few weeks ago a letter came, 'I feel as if I were saved all over again.' Joy and peace had returned, the Holy Spirit had come and soul saving work had been granted to her."

Now, loved ones, we can take that authority see. I feel for your dear hearts because some of you

are sitting there thinking it takes mighty prayer, or a great prayer meeting, and a great manifestation. It doesn't. If we would just believe Jesus, if we would just believe him when he says, "Behold I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy and nothing shall hurt you," and we would see that faith is treading on the serpents and scorpions. But too often we're thinking, "Well, we're afraid," or, "What if nothing happens?" Well, you'll be made a fool of, that's it. And if you're to be made a fool of, that's God's will.

Probably his will is to keep his promise to you but if you're too afraid of being made a fool of that, you won't risk finding out that he keeps his promise to you, and then you're going to miss everything. You walk out on a limb, you tread on the serpent and the scorpion and if it kills you, it kills you. You take authority over the power of the enemy and you give God a chance to prove himself because faith is action. It's action. Appropriate action and God will show you what that action is.

I'll just read one more and then I'll have to stop because next day we should get to Genesis. Authority over fear. This dear man was a missionary in China. I take it he's dead, I don't know but it was written, I think, some years ago. "In traveling among the islands off the coast of Mindanao in a native boat a considerable swell was encountered. The son of the writer began to show fear which became almost uncontrollable. This was most unusual as he was normally fond of the water and was an excellent sailor having frequently traveled up and down the entire China coast where storms are severe. He begged to be taken ashore and as the whole affair seemed to be directed against the progress of the evangelistic trip; the writer quietly took the authority of Christ over the spirits of fear and rebuked them, though saying nothing openly."

We need to see that, you see. It's not a matter of a show or a display. Some of us have got into that you know, and we think it's an audible speaking. No, the Holy Spirit will direct you whether to speak audibly or not. It's not in the show; it's in the taking of authority. "In a very few minutes the lad seemed to change completely and for the remainder of the journey, lasting several days, there was no further difficulty. The second night after, while in the center of a wide bay, and about 12 miles from shore a heavy squall was encountered and an outrigger broke. The danger was imminent, but though the lad was fully aware of it, and though the waves were washing quiet over the boat, he manifested not the slightest shrinking. Other instances of fear involving older and experienced missionaries are personally known."

So it's no sense in saying, "Oh well now, is every evil thing the result of Satan's work?" Well, you know, is it the result of God's work? Certainly not. It is certainly not the result of neutral powers. The things that oppose God's will in our lives to live rejoicingly every day are the work of Satan and the only work he can do is that of deception and we have authority over that work.

Loved ones, there's so much more to tell and I'll share it more next Sunday but let's begin. Let's have done with this evil deceiver. Let's begin to rebuke him. Will you begin to take positions of faith in your life? Begin to take positions of faith in your life for yourself, for the body here, for your mums and dads, for your sons and daughters. I've started and I've begun to see results and I encourage you to come and join the rest of us in it. We have all been raised and made to sit at the right hand of God. It's not a place that you have to feel, it's a place you have to believe you're in because God has said you're in it. And let's begin quietly to take authority in these areas and begin to believe God for definite answers to our prayers. And even if you have to write them down in your little notebook and take that position each day, take it and begin to see Jesus' power released in your own life.

Let us pray. Dear Father, we certainly want to repent first of all, Lord, for our passivity. We've often called it our neutrality but for our passivity in these matters. We see that we have let our lives go with Satan. We have fallen into fatalism so often in the circumstances of our lives. We have launched out in enterprises by the strength of our own will and by our own skill and knowledge and have failed utterly to bind in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ the powers of Satan that are out to scuttle the enterprise. Lord, we repent of that.

We repent of our independent fleshly determination. Lord, we are now going to move out in these enterprises in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and we are going to daily and moment-by-moment take authority over the evil spirits that would destroy what is your will for us.

Then, Lord, we repent over our passivity in regard to our parents, our relatives, our friends, our roommates, our colleagues, brothers and sisters in our body. Lord, we repent of our passivity and our neutrality. We have failed to protect them and failed to exercise the authority over Satan's influence on them that is ours. In your name, Lord Jesus, we commit ourselves now to begin to exercise that authority daily in the name of Jesus.

And then Lord, we want to repent for our feeble prayers where we have prayed a prayer up to you, asked if it's your will to bring it about, and then forgotten the prayer and not been able to remember it the next day. Lord, we remember in days of old when as little children we used to imagine what it would be like to have a thousand dollars, and at times we could make it so real for ourselves that we felt we had it. Lord, that is how we want to believe the authority you have given us to use by faith in prayer. Thank you, Lord for that authority from you.

Now the grace of our Lord Jesus, the love of God and the fellowship of the dear Holy Spirit be with us now and throughout this week. Amen.