

## DELIVERANCE: HOW TO KEEP YOUR DELIVERANCE

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Thank God you have received deliverance! Continue to thank God! Even if you are not sure yet of all that has happened, you can express your faith by thanking Him. This is the first step to help you keep your deliverance.

You can be sure, however, that Satan will not give up on you. He will do everything in his power to reassert his control over you. You must be prepared for his counterattacks. I (Derek Prince) have referred several times to the warning of Jesus that a demon that has gone out of a man will seek to return. You must make completely sure, therefore, that Jesus is dwelling in you and that He is absolute Lord of your life.

We have seen that human personality is like a city, and that demonic invasion can have the effect of breaking down the walls inside us that should protect us. Once our enemy has been driven out, we must begin immediately to rebuild our protective walls. Here are the basic principles to help you rebuild:

1. Live by God's Word.
2. Put on the garment of praise.
3. Come under discipline.
4. Cultivate right fellowship.
5. Be filled with the Holy Spirit.
6. Make sure you have passed through the water of baptism.
7. Put on the whole armor of God.

### **1. Live by God's Word**

In Matthew 4:4 Jesus said that mankind shall live "by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." The word live is all-inclusive, covering everything we think, say or do. All must proceed from the same source: the Word of God. We must give it unchallenged preeminence in every area of our lives.

Many other influences will compete for control over us: our own feelings, the opinions of others, accepted traditions, the culture that surrounds us. But God guarantees us victory in every area - and specifically, victory over the devil - only insofar as our lives are directed and controlled by His Word.

Take to heart the directions the Lord gave to Joshua as he was about to enter the Promised Land:

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

These directions may be summed up in three phrases: think the Word of God, speak the Word of God, act the Word of God. Then God guarantees you success.

## **2. Put on the Garment of Praise**

In Isaiah 61:3 God offers us "the garment of praise" in place of "the spirit of heaviness." You, having received deliverance, are also "just out of prison." Enjoy your liberty! Do as the Word of God says: Put on the garment of praise. When you are praising the Lord, you trouble the devil more than he can trouble you.

## **3. Come under Discipline**

Jesus' last order to His apostles was to "go...and make disciples..." (Matthew 28:19). A disciple, as the word indicates, is one who is under discipline. Jesus never instructed anyone to make "church members."

Because "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft" (I Samuel 15:23), and because rebellion against God has exposed our whole race to the deceptive and destructive power of Satan, we can come under God's protection only as we place ourselves under His discipline. An undisciplined life is vulnerable to demonic attack.

In II Timothy 1:7 Paul says God has given us "...power...love...a sound mind." This is the primary form of discipline in any life - self-discipline. Unless we learn to discipline ourselves, no other form of discipline will be effective.

The first area in which this applies is our personal communion with God in His Word and in prayer. Living by God's Word demands that we give Him regular "prime time" each day. Then, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we must bring our emotions, desires and appetites under control. A man not in control in these areas is not in control of his life.

There is one decisive area we must bring under control: the tongue - idle words open the way for demons. The control of the tongue is the mark of spiritual maturity: "For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." (James 3:2).

Obviously you will not achieve this level of self-discipline in a few simple steps. From time to time you will stumble. Just pick yourself up, dust yourself off and continue to

move forward and upward. As long as you are moving in the right direction, Satan may harass you but he cannot defeat you.

There are various other areas in which we may need to come under discipline, relating to the family, school, church and various forms of secular government. God requires us to cultivate submissiveness in any of these areas that apply in our lives: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;"

It is true that deliverance brings us freedom, but many Christians misunderstand the nature of freedom. We are not free to do our own thing; we are free that we may bring every area of our lives under God's discipline.

#### **4. Cultivate Right Fellowship**

A person whose walls have been broken down by demons needs the help of other Christians to stand with him as he builds up those walls.

We need to recognize that one of the most powerful influences in our lives is the people with whom we associate. This means we have to choose the kind of people we spend time with. We may live among unbelievers, but we cannot make ourselves one with them. There must always be a difference between our lifestyle and theirs.

If we are walking in the light, we will have fellowship with our fellow believers (I John 1:7). There is no place for self-centered individualism in the Christian life. As Christians we need each other. The writer of Hebrews gives us an urgent warning:

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." Hebrews 10:24-25

On the other hand, we are also warned, "Evil company corrupts good habits" (I Corinthians 15:33). If you sincerely desire to keep your deliverance, you must break off relationships that have a wrong influence on you, and begin to cultivate friends who will encourage you and set you a good example. It may be painful to sever ties with friends or to disassociate yourself for a time from family members whose influence is harmful. But you can trust the Holy Spirit to help you do it with grace and wisdom and to take care of the consequences. Remember, He is your Helper!"

#### **5. Be Filled with the Holy Spirit**

In Ephesians 5:18 Paul gives us two words of instruction. The first is negative, "And be not drunk with wine..." The second is a positive, "...but be filled with the Spirit;" Most Christians would acknowledge that it is wrong to be drunk. Yet how many believe it is equally wrong not to be filled with the Spirit?

The infilling of the Holy Spirit is an essential part of God's provision for victorious living. Paul speaks of this infilling in the continuing present tense: "Be continuously

filled." He is speaking not about a one-time experience but, in the next three verses, about a lifestyle:

- \* Singing praises continually to the Lord
- \* Being unceasingly thankful to God the Father
- \* Being humbly submissive to one another

As the Holy Spirit fills you continuously in this way, demons will find in you no vacant area that they can occupy!

## **6. Make Sure You Have Passed through the Water of Baptism**

Jesus told His apostles to "preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized [immersed] will be saved..." (Mark 16:15-16). Baptism in water is not an option - some ecclesiastical ceremony that follows salvation. On the contrary, it is an outward act of obedience expressing the inward work of faith in our hearts, and thus making salvation complete. In the book of Acts there is no record of anyone receiving salvation without afterward being baptized in water.

In the New Testament, baptism is compared to two events in Old Testament history: Noah and his family in the ark passing through the waters of the flood (see Genesis 7-8; I Peter 3:19-21); and Israel escaping from the dominion of Pharaoh by passing through the Red Sea (see Exodus 14:15-31; I Corinthians 10:1-2). In each case passing through the water was an act of separation. Noah and his family were saved from the ungodly world that perished under God's judgment, and Israel finally escaped Pharaoh's oppression, since the Egyptian army could not follow them through the water.

There were two phases in Israel's salvation. First, in Egypt they were saved from God's judgment by faith in the blood of the Passover lamb, which was a type of Christ. Second, they were delivered from Egypt by passing through the Red Sea.

This pattern applies to us as Christians. We are saved in the world by faith in the blood of Jesus. But we are separated from the world by passing through the water of baptism. It is the act of being baptized that cuts us off from the kingdom of Satan. His demons have no right to follow us through the water.

If you have never been baptized in water as a believer, this is an important step you need to take to cut off demonic activity. If you have already been baptized, on the other hand, you need to stand fast on that fact and be confident that Satan's demons have no further right of access to you.

## **7. Put On the Whole Armor of God**

Now that you are wearing your garment of praise, God offers you a complete set of armor to put on over it. In case you have not yet realized it, you are a soldier in a war. You need all the armor God has provided for you,

The items of your equipment are listed in Ephesians 6:13-18, as follows:

The girdle [belt] of truth

The breastplate of righteousness

The shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace

The shield of faith

The helmet of salvation

The sword of the Spirit - the word [Greek rhema] of God

All prayer

The Girdle [Belt] of Truth

In biblical times men usually wore loose clothing that hung down below their knees. Before undertaking any strenuous activity, they would gather up their loose garment above their knees and fasten it with a belt around the waist. Hence the phrase that occurs several times in the Bible: Gird up your loins.

Likewise you must gather up and fasten out of the way anything that would impede your freedom to follow Jesus. The "belt" that enables you to do this is God's Word, applied in a very plain and practical way. You must become totally sincere and open and put aside every form of dishonesty or hypocrisy. You must love the truth.

The Breastplate of Righteousness. The breastplate protects your most critical and vulnerable area: your heart. This righteousness is not mere intellectual assent to a doctrine: "With the heart" - not with the head - "one believes to righteousness (Romans 10:10). Saving faith in the heart transforms a life of sin into a life of righteousness - not a righteousness that comes from following a set of religious rules, but from Christ dwelling in our hearts and living out His life through us.

"The righteous are bold as a lion" (Proverbs 28:1). This kind of righteousness transforms timidity into boldness, doubt into confidence.

The Shoes of the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace. Your shoes make you mobile. You must be available to God at any time or place to share the gospel with those God puts in your way. In a world of strife and tension, you must be a vessel of God's peace.

The Shield of Faith. The shield alluded to in Ephesians 6 was big enough to give protection to a soldier's whole body, but it was effective only when he had learned how to use it.

You, too, must learn to use your faith as a shield to protect your whole person - spirit, soul and body - from Satan's fiery darts. Remember, the shield will not merely ward off the flaming darts; it will extinguish them!

The Helmet of Salvation. The helmet protects the head - that is, the mind. Satan will direct more attacks against your mind than against any other area of your personality. The helmet is also called "the hope of salvation" (I Thessalonians 5:8) - not mere wishful thinking, but an attitude of steady, continuing optimism based firmly on the truth of God's Word.

The Sword of the Spirit - the Word [Greek rhema] of God

Rhema means primarily a spoken word. The Bible on your bookshelf will not protect you. God's Word becomes a sword when you speak it through your mouth in faith. Remember how Jesus used that sword against Satan, answering every temptation by quoting Scripture: "It is written..." You must learn to do the same.

The sword is provided by the Holy Spirit, but it is your responsibility to take it. When you do, the Spirit provides supernatural power with which to wield it.

The Final Weapon: All Prayer

With the sword you are limited by the length of your arm. But "all prayer" is your intercontinental ballistic missile. By this kind of prayer you can reach across oceans and continents and strike the forces of Satan wherever they are at work.

You can even reach out against Satan's headquarters in the heavenlies. But it takes discipline and maturity to learn to use such a powerful weapon.

### **The Divine Paradox,**

Perhaps you feel a little overwhelmed as you consider what you must do to maintain your deliverance. You may feel inclined to say, "Can't you put it more simply, in just a few words?"

Yes, all that I (Derek Prince) have said above can be expressed in one simple instruction: To keep your deliverance, all you have to do is live the Christian life as it is depicted and demonstrated in the New Testament. That is the distillation of how to keep your deliverance - but it is radical.

In Matthew 16:24-25 Jesus lays down to two unvarying requirements for all who would follow Him:

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

Here is the divine paradox: to save (protect) our souls, we must lose them.

Before we can follow Jesus, there are two preliminary steps. First we must deny ourselves; we must say a resolute and final No! to the demanding, self-seeking ego. Second, we must each take up our own cross. We must accept the sentence of death that the cross imposes on us. Taking up the cross is a voluntary decision that each of us must make. God does not forcefully impose the cross upon us.

If we do not apply the cross personally in our own lives, we leave a door open to demonic influence. There is always the danger that the uncrucified ego will respond to the seductive flatteries of deceiving demons. Pride is the main area in our character that Satan targets, and flattery is the main lever he uses to gain entrance.

We must each apply the cross personally to ourselves. In Galatians 2:20 Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me..." We each need to ask: Is that true of me? Have I really been crucified with Christ? Or am I still motivated by my soulish ego?

Many Christians today would feel that this solution is too radical. They would question whether this is really the only way to be secure from deception. They tend to regard Paul as some kind of "super-saint" whom they could never hope to imitate.

Paul however, did not see himself this way. His ministry as an apostle was unique, but his personal relationship with Christ was a pattern for all to follow. In I Timothy 1:16 he said:

"Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."

Again in I Corinthians 11:1 he said, "Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ."

The only alternative to the cross is to put self in the place of Christ. But this is idolatry and opens the way for the evil consequences that invariably follow idolatry.

The cross is the heart and center of the Christian faith. Without the cross proclaimed and applied, Christianity is left without a foundation, and its claims are no longer valid. It has

become, in fact, a false religion. As such, like all false religions, it is inevitably exposed to demonic infiltration and deception.

I (Derek Prince) have come to see that in the Christian life there are no shortcuts and no detours. If we desire immunity from demonic oppression, it is available to us on one condition only: obedience.