

Spiritual Authority God's Help in the Days of Our Trouble

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We've been talking about the need for someone to watch over our souls and as we've addressed this as a piece of the big picture of spiritual authority we've seen that the vulnerability of the human being to Satan's attacks and the susceptibility of the human being to being enticed and drawn into Satan's schemes, lies within the natural inclinations of the soul. The human soul is pulled by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. Quite literally, the imperative of the human soul is for provision and protection. Suffering is one of the ways that God wrests this tendency in the human being because, "He who has suffered in the flesh ceases from sin." (Inserted—actual verse—**"Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin."** – I Peter 4:1)

It's because of this truth that the believer so often goes through tumultuous times in his or her life because the one thing that God surely will do with you is this: after He saves you He's going to put you through a period of time in which you learn obedience by the things you suffer. That is His way of choking off the enemy's unrestricted access to you. Your suffering will always be on these two points: your provision and your protection. It seems like—and many people have experienced this before—that it seems as though you are doing fine before you became a believer, or you were doing fine as a believer before you asked God to change in you anything that He doesn't approve of.

Sometimes you see that there is a wide gap between where you are and where you know God wants to take you, and you volunteer and you say, "Take me there... bring me to this place." And immediately what follows is the outpouring of troubles in your life—troubles from areas you *never* could have imagined, or would not have

thought of, and *certainly would not have invited* if you were able to think about it. And the two categories in which all of your troubles fit have to do with issues of your provision and issues of your protection. Protection might include issues of health, relationships of one kind or another. Issues of your provision would almost always include matters of job security, of financial concerns and so on, and there sometimes are overlaps within these categories, depending on how you see it. But God will set about in your life to bring about this great change in these two categories of your life—your provision and your protection.

Now, once you've learned *that* then you are willing to let God have more and more control of your life. So suffering actually produces a result of curtailing the tendency to rely on what you can do and rely upon your own vision of what needs to be done—both to identify what needs to be done and to plan for the doing—and then of course, as I said, the execution of it. These are the three ways that we go about taking care of “number one” as the expression was, a few years back. In addition to *this* way of watching over your soul, of curbing the activities of the soul that make you vulnerable to the schemes of Satan, *there is another way and it's more of an ongoing one* and *that* is to have someone to watch over your soul. Now the question that often arises here is often in this context, “Well, I can see when you are young needing someone to watch over your soul but there comes a point when you are mature enough to do the job yourself.”

There is an expression in the law that says, “An attorney that represents himself has a fool for a client.” There is an adaptation of that, that is equally true in the Kingdom, “The one who is his own pastor has a deceived person as a sheep.” Because all of the ways of a man are pleasing in his own eyes; it's the Lord who weighs the spirits. (Inserted – actual verse—“**All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirits.**” – **Proverbs 16:2**) *A man who is his own pastor is someone who is incapable of objectively viewing his tendencies and opens himself to substantial... substantial deception.* One might say, “Well, I believe that you can *grow* to the place where you don't need someone to watch over your soul.” Now, this I will grant: you can grow to the place where your need for someone watching over your soul *changes* from the way it was when you were young to a different way. I'll explain by an example, a compelling example I might add, in a moment.

When you are young, your need is for advice and counsel relative to what might be called the sins of the flesh, but your temptations do not end and *Satan's draw and pull upon your soul changes* when you are more sophisticated. When you have learned to beat back the desires of the flesh, Satan will appeal to you with a whole different category of temptations; temptations that look into the way that the soul *is* in relationship to pride. Do you realize

that

pride

was able to seduce even Satan, himself—and Satan was in the presence of God, knew God face to face, as it were; served God in a most direct way. He has weapons. A man who thinks he has no sin deceives himself and the truth is not in him. (Inserted – actual verse—“**If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.**” – **I John 1:8**)

Watching over one's soul may change in terms of the content of oversight from when you're young but the need to have someone watch over your soul does not go away, and I'll show it to you. *And the older you get in the Lord, more is given to you to steward, and the greater the need for the counsel of the Holy Spirit spoken to you by the Body of Christ.* Now, can we not all just pastor each other and be just fine with that? Can we not just call upon pastoring services when we need it? Well, the first aspect of that, that is true is this: number one, when you are in trouble—this is just human nature, it is human nature as established factually over time, *it is not a reasoned position, it's reality*—you show me the human being, who, when he is in trouble goes out and finds someone who is inclined to tell him what he doesn't want to hear. No. *The relationship has to be in place before you get in trouble.*

The second thing is that if you simply rely on whoever is there at the moment, *whoever is there at the moment* may be as immature and incapable of addressing your need as you might well imagine. *So you don't have just anybody give you counsel.* In fact, I will not listen to the counsel of just anyone. I will, however, listen to the counsel of those who have faithfully walked with me, whom I know love me enough to confront me when I'm wrong. Most people, when you are wrong, unless they love you enough, *will not confront you* and you don't want to be confronted when you are wrong. These are facts relating to the human nature. God, who made the human being, and who knows that to be true, doesn't leave it to chance.

The one who is supposed to watch over your soul should have a vision from God concerning you. In other words, they should know who you are, according to what God has said that you are, *because in the day of your trouble you need two things:* number one, you need correction if that is part of the matter *but you also need vision* for without vision, men perish. (Inserted – actual verse—“**Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.**” – **Proverbs 29:18**) God will give vision to someone he has assigned to walk with you because God knows the way you are to go. After all, you see, this isn't about you being “the sheep” of someone who watches over you... that person is an undershepherd. *You are the Lord's sheep and the Lord is responsible for your well being so He will prepare the assignment in such a way that what you need is, in fact, properly addressed.* All of these concepts have nothing to do with who is under whom and who is over whom and

who is greater than whom; *it has to do with who serves whom*. Who has God assigned the responsibility to serve you when you have a need?

Now, if there were anyone who did not need someone to watch over his soul—if we could find anyone who would have a need for someone to watch over his soul—that someone would be Jesus. Now here is Jesus in the Garden, in His pivotal moment, and my point is that the ongoing need to have someone watch over your soul is as much a need that arises out of this fact: that the older you are in the Lord, the more is given to you, therefore, the greater the temptation and the greater the weight that's placed on you. The greater the weight that's placed on you *and the greater the consequences* if you fall... so for someone to say, "I am mature and I don't need someone to watch over me." is as much to say, "I don't have any great responsibility and I don't need any counsel."

But here Jesus is at the height of His moment, and this is from the **14th chapter** of the book of **Mark**, beginning at **verse 32**, "**They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I pray.'** **He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled.**" So Jesus and, by now, the eleven disciples, because, of course, Judas had left—he had gone to do what later we would see that he had gone to do: to betray Christ—so Jesus and the eleven went into the Garden of Gethsemane. He takes Peter, James and John with Him into the recesses of the Garden, so He leaves eight—eight of the eleven—at the front of the Garden. He told those eight simply this, "**Sit here while I pray.**" Now He doesn't tell these eight to watch over anything, they're not a guard waiting to alert Him to the coming of those who would arrest Him, they are just part of the entourage; they're told to sit at the front of the Garden. Jesus takes Peter, James and John with Him and He goes further into the Garden.

Verse 34, Jesus makes this declaration, and I would recommend that you would look this up, write it down and look it up in your own Bible because it's so astonishing. **Verse 34**, Jesus says, "**'My soul (that is Jesus' soul) is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death,' he said to them. 'Stay here and keep watch.'**" So what is Jesus' condition? He is profoundly burdened. *What burdens Jesus, here?* The normal answer is to say, "Well, you know tomorrow He is going to be crucified and this is a pretty tough night for him." Well that is a good try, but it is actually not what's true. Yes, He's going to die tomorrow, but He is not profoundly burdened with death on the cross because when He goes to pray, this is what He says, "**...Take this cup from me.**" (That's verse 36) He talks to the Father and He says, "**...Take this cup from me.**"

He's profoundly burdened and He asks for relief. The relief that He asks for is for the "cup" to be taken from Him. *What was in the cup?* Why would the prospects of drinking the cup, why would that so overwhelmingly

burden Him? Well, it had to do with what was in the cup. What was in the cup? *What was in the cup was all of the sins of all mankind and He was going to drink the entire cup.* That means that He would not just become a sinner—He who had never known sin—but He would become, in the eyes of God, the most vile and contemptible sinner who had ever lived. (Inserted – actual verse—**“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” – II Corinthians 5:21**) The entire expression of sin in all of its depths, widths, heights... He would embody. *He would bear it upon Himself; He would step into the place of all of it, and by that, of course, step into the place of each of us... and all of us.* I think... I think that you could understand why His soul was overwhelmed to the point of death. His soul did not want to go through with it and He was asking for relief.

All right, here, **verse 37**, **“Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping...”** (Here is the oddest thing) He addresses Peter, **“... ‘Simon,’ he said to Peter, ‘are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.’”** (Inserted – Mark 14:37,38) And by the way, here you see Jesus referring to all three parts of the human being, **“My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.”** And then, **“The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”**

Now, why does Jesus come back and ask Peter if Peter could not watch with Him? Well look at this; look at it closely. If you’ve read this passage before, the norm has been to think of this passage in this way: they’ve gone into the Garden, Jesus was about to go and pray. He set up kind of a *watch* in the Garden so that when the anticipated arrival of those who would arrest Him had begun that, perhaps, Jesus would know about it sooner than later. Well, taking the disciples with Him into the Garden had *nothing to do with that* because when the multitudes did come with staves and clubs, with which to arrest Him, He made no attempt to escape... rather the contrary. He said, “Who are you looking for?” And their response was, “We’re looking for Jesus of Nazareth.” And He didn’t say, “Well, He went out the back.” Or He didn’t say, “Has anybody seen Jesus... I think it’s one of these guys.” No, He said, **“I am he...”** (Inserted –actual verse—**“Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, ‘Who is it you want?’ ‘Jesus of Nazareth,’ they replied. ‘I am he,’ Jesus said.” – John 18:4,5a**) No attempt to escape; He never intended to escape. This was not about an early warning system.

Of what did He have need? He had need for someone to watch over His soul... that was what was in anguish. “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, unto death...” The thing in anguish was His soul, so what was the “watching” about? You notice that He didn’t ask the disciples to watch and pray. He didn’t ask the eight to watch and pray;

he just simply said, **“Sit here while I pray.”** (Inserted – **Mark 14:32b**) And then He goes into the Garden and He fell on the ground and He prayed. He didn't tell anybody else to watch and pray, but then He comes back to Peter, and finding Peter asleep with the other three, He says, “Could *you* not watch with me?” He was looking for someone to watch over His soul...someone to help His soul come through this very dark night... this terrible time of facing His destiny. *And this is Jesus, Himself... this is Jesus, Himself. So, if Jesus needed somebody to watch over His soul in His pivotal moment of trial, I would suggest that none of us ever comes to the point where we don't need someone to watch over our souls.*

If you are growing up at all in the Lord, you'll take on greater responsibilities and you will need for someone to watch over your soul. Now having someone watch over your soul when you are older is not the same as having someone watch over your soul when you are younger. When you are older, your need is different... you have the need of a peer, not, so much, as a father and a son. Now, I want to pursue a couple of things here: one is the central question, what could Peter have done—if my understanding of this is actually what is being said then here is the pivotal question—what could Peter have done that would have made a *difference* to Jesus' soul as He was going through this moment of anguish? And why was Peter uniquely qualified, among the disciples, to serve Jesus in this way? Here is the answer: the answer is that it was to Peter to whom God had specifically given the revelation of who Jesus was.

Do you remember in **Matthew**, the **16th chapter**, they had come into the coast of Caesarea Philippi and Jesus asked His disciples, “Who do men say that I the Son of man am?” And some answered and said, “You are Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” But He answered and said, “But who do you say that I am?” And it was Peter, then, that stood up and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus said, “Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah, because flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father, Who is in Heaven and I say to you, that you are Peter and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it and I will give to you the keys to the Kingdom of heaven and whatsoever you will bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatsoever you shall loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say the Son of Man is?’ They replied, ‘Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ ‘But what about you?’ he asked. ‘Who do you say I am?’ Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ Jesus replied, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Johan, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the**

kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” – Matthew 16:13-19)

What are we saying? We are saying that the specific revelation as to who Jesus was had been given to Peter by God, Himself. And Jesus had confirmed already, that this revelation of Peter’s was a revelation that God had given him. So if Peter were to say to Jesus—in the moment of His soul’s anguish—where Jesus’ soul was overwhelmed to the point of death—if Peter were to say to Him, “Lord Jesus, I remind You that the Father has already said to You, through me, that You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I bear testimony that this is who You are... that You have to go through this, but it will be well with You for God will not allow your soul to remain in hell, nor suffer His Holy One to see corruption.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.” – Acts 2:26,27)**)

Do you suppose that that would have helped Jesus in His moment of anguish? Absolutely... it would have made every difference in the world. Oddly enough, I quoted the Scripture from **Acts 2** (Inserted – **Acts 2:27**), to say what Peter said about Jesus to the people on the day of Pentecost, when Peter, himself, quoted from the **Psalms** (Inserted – **Psalm 16:10**) in which David said that God would not allow His soul (the soul of Jesus) to remain in Hell and to allow the Holy One, Who is the Lord Jesus to see corruption. Had Peter been open to it, God would have spoken those very words that He later spoke through the same Peter—God would have spoken those words to Jesus, Himself, *through Peter* and it would have helped Jesus’ soul in the moment of His anguish. But because Peter could find no place to do this (he would fall asleep) Jesus endured, perhaps, one of the greatest of all tragedies—and that is that you have to live in this world *alone*—live and die, alone.

Now I want to tell you this: Jesus went through this so that you don’t have to. The Word says that He is touched with the feelings of our infirmities. (Inserted—actual verse—**“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” – Hebrews 4:15**) He knows what it is like to face this defining moment of anguish and trial—the extreme—and to do so without anybody to watch over His soul and *He will not allow you to go through that because He has provided for you someone who will watch over your soul so you don’t have to go through your moment with such extreme anguish*. He knows what it’s like to go through it and He won’t let you go through it in that way. So someone who says, “I don’t need anybody to watch over my soul...” is someone who understands *better* than the Lord, Himself that *this* need does exist. “Watching over your soul” then is that which God has provided for you as a way of keeping you out of the clutches of your enemy in your moment of anguish... in your moment of trial. I

would submit to you, if Jesus had a need—in this time—the likelihood is that you probably do too. Seek the Lord. Ask Him. Who has a vision for your life? Who has He assigned with a vision for your life to help you in the day of your trouble... because surely days of trouble are coming and you will need someone to watch over your soul. I hope that you will take the counsel of the Spirit as you've heard it spoken in this message. I'm Sam Soleyn. I'll see you again.

Scripture References:

I Peter 4:1

Proverbs 16:2

John 1:8

Proverbs 29:18

Mark 14:32-34; 36-38

II Corinthians 5:21

John 18:4,5a

Matthew 16:13-19

Acts 2:26,27

Psalm 16:9,10

Hebrews 4:15