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And Jesus came and said to them, “All ***authority*** in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:18. 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. Luke 10:19.And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach 15 and have authority to cast out demons. Mark 3, :14-15. Jesus gave these 12 men authority. The Greek word used here is: exousia. Exousia means authority or the right to act. It also infers the privilege to act. Combined with the word dunamis (might) enables us to follow through with everything the Holy Spirit instructs us to do. Jesus authorized and equipped these disciples with the power needed to go to teach, preach, and bring deliverance to those they met. We have been given this same authority. The question is, do we walk in it?I pondered what would it look like if we, as believers live confident in this power and authority. Hurricane Helene raised havoc in Florida two weeks ago. I watched a video where this couple walked the perimeter of their property, declaring God's protection around their land. Trees fell all along their boundary, but none fell on their property. Two of my friends have family right in the path of Hurricane Milton. Prayers were prayed for protection for them, and even though one had a tree fall on a car--there was no damage to that car--no scratch or even a dent! Her mom said, "It was like God gently laid the tree down". I also know, some did not fare as well. Lives were lost, property damaged and that makes me sad. What happens if our own soul forgets the authority we have been given and we don't pray? We don't engage that authority? I think it is another tactic of our enemy to keep us functioning less than we have been given.My friends, I want to remind all of us: we need to not only know we have been given authority, we need to be bold and use it. Many of my friends have been getting hit hard with life's challenges, that they admitted it was even hard to pray because they didn't even know where to begin. I have been there. What a sneaky enemy we have! He wants to undermine our authority because he is afraid of what would happen if we walked daily with our God given authority. I want to remind all of us, we have been given this power, the question is are we going to walk in it?The hurricane victory stories are encouraging to hear. Every victory builds our faith. When my husband suffered his debilitating stroke, we prayed for healing. They told me he is blind, deaf and will never come out of this. We kept praying. I admit, I was tempted to listen to the doctors. But, I also kept hearing a sermon he preached: "most people want to see a miracle, but they don't want to need one, to see one". He lived his life to show forth God's glory. So, with the help of our faith-filled children and God's family, we kept trusting and believing. He eventually learned to walk again, eat again and know us. We exercised the exousia and dunamis power we received from the Lord, and saw miraculous results. I am using those stories to fight for others in their cancer journeys, today.I admit there are days when the cares of this world overwhelms and overshadows the fact I have this authority. When this happens, I definitely live beneath the privilege I have as a believer, and in reality, I think like a victim. My "feels" start trying to lead, rather than my faith. When my soul starts to complain "it's not fair", or "why, Lord?", fear grows and my faith shrinks. But, when I remember I have been given authority things begin to change. Jesus told us in Luke 10:19 Look, I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy, and you can walk among snakes and scorpions and crush them. Nothing will injure them. (We won't go into stupid foolish actions). The question is, do I believe God has really given us power over our enemy? Or am I a victim of his actions? My friends, I want to encourage all of us to walk in our authority. Do not let the bigness of the situation limit your prayers. Remind yourself of the miracles Jesus performed. Many of them came from his heart of compassion. If you find your faith small, ask Him to enlarge it. Take the time to study His Word and learn about this authority we have been given. Let His love lead you. James 4:2, reminds us "we have not because we ask not".  Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. Let's begin to ask largely in His name. Sunday, my friend who is a middle school counselor, asked me to pray a big prayer. She told me that from the month of October to the middle of January , suicide among teenagers takes a big leap in numbers, please pray. I then talked with our Youth Pastor, asking what we, as Senior Life ministry, could pray for them. I found out some of our youth group members had confided in them that they were thinking of taking their own lives. We must pray as if we believe in the prayer we are praying. I believe lives are being saved because of these on-going prayers. Our nation needs help and that must come from people who walk in God's authority. Do not let the enemy keep you smaller than you are. Stand up in God's love, in His mercy, and declare His Word over your circumstance. If you don't know His will in your situation, ask Him to show you. Take time to build your faith in that area and pray. Get together with other believers. Some things need the "two or three touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. Matthew 18:19. Father, I thank you for helping us understand how to use the authority you have entrusted us with. Forgive us for living underneath life's circumstances instead above it. Thank you for the reminder we are not victims, but victors no matter our situation. We choose to partner with you, dear heavenly Father. In Jesus' Name, amen.  |