

[AUTHORITY: A FEELING OR A FACT?]

[excerpt from **JESUS TODAY** by **MARC ESTES**]

If I were to ask if you felt that you had all authority over the Evil One, what would your response be? If you are like most of us, you would immediately respond with a resounding, “You bet I do!” Now let me probe one step further. How did you feel the last time you heard the Holy Spirit tell you to witness to someone? How did you respond? Did your heart begin to race? Did your palms begin to sweat? Did you feel a loss of words? Again, if you are like most Christians, you would reply this time a little more sheepishly, “Yes, in fact, I did feel nervous!”

As I have talked with many Christians about their spiritual authority, I have found them to be the first to admit they possess this all-powerful, eternal gift from the Father. But they are also the first to come running to the pastor for help when they are involved in a situation in which they are confronted by demonic forces. I believe their intentions are pure and they intellectually understand authority, but they fail to walk it out practically because of a lack of revelation of their true identity in Christ.

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For the most part, many base their spiritual authority upon what they feel or what they do, not on who they are in Christ. But the foundation of our authority is not our personality or feelings. It is not a by-product of relentless study or consistent religious practice. It is not even determined by our maturity or the duration of our Christian walk. It comes solely from our position in Christ as an heir in the kingdom of God.

As **Dean Sherman** put it:

Our spiritual authority is a legal issue. It is a legal reality that does not waver because of our unbelief, and is as real as any transaction. In fact, it’s a legal arrangement much like marriage. When I ask people if they are married I never hear, “Well, I’m not sure. Sometimes I feel married, and sometimes I just don’t know.” They will always say, “Yes” or “No.” If we are married, we are totally convinced of it at all times, and have a legal document to prove it. Feelings, thoughts, and personalities do not change the reality of that legal arrangement.¹

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We need a fresh revelation of our identity in Christ to transition from the mindset of “who I am is determined by what I do” to a more biblical perspective of “what I do is determined by who I am.” Our understanding of who we are in Christ is the most critical in exercising authority over the Enemy.

¹ Dean Sherman, **Spiritual Warfare for Every Christian** (Seattle, Wash.: YWAM Publishing, 1990), 110.