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Weekly Encourager – 10 January 2010

(from James Stacey: scriptural advice and insight on how to be set free from schizophrenia)

**YOUR QUEST FOR FREEDOM INCREASES EACH DAY AS YOU  
ADVANCE IN THE STRONGHOLD OF GOD'S LOVE**

**He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits  
and to heal every disease and sickness Matthew 10 verse 1**

The pathway to freedom out of schizophrenia usually involves a long and persevering fight as its evil demonic presence is loosened and unseated through the power of faith and prayer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Evil spirits do not, generally speaking, move out of your life at the first command (though, praise God, it does happen) ... you have to let the intruders know you mean business and plan to succeed in driving them out for good at any cost.

Once you have made a determined choice to get God's intended freedom back into your life and "turn on the heat" of all-conquering powerful prayer, the evil spirit of schizophrenia will fight to retain its presence in your life. Expect such a resistance as you sally forth in all the confidence God imparts and begin "the driving out operation" of every evil presence restricting your freedom.

Notice, from the accounts in the gospels, the strong words and action used by Jesus to free people of evil spirits. One incident records: "While they were going out, a man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus. And when the demon was driven out, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel." (Matthew 9 verse 32-33). We observe strong, powerful authority coming from Jesus to exorcise demonic intruders.

But a few verses later, Matthew Chapter 10 begins with these words: "He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness." You may suffer at present with schizophrenia but if you know Jesus you have the same power in you that raised up Jesus from the dead and YOU CAN defeat the evil presence in your life. Your life-stance, attitude, warfare has got to be nothing less than that ... a resolution to perform a forceful marching-out of evil trespassers from your life that you oppose with every ounce of your being.

At some point, your will has got to spring into action and become mightily activated with a resolution of determination that says no matter what it costs I am going to be free of demonic intruders through taking complete control of my life in every way.

Many schizophrenics – even some who profess to know Jesus – do not have the correct attitude to the voices of evil spirits behind the condition of schizophrenia and regard them as harmless and not to be opposed. "These voices are my friends", they say, though deception is behind such a statement. No resistance can be found in their lives to evict these intruders; **such a passive state has got to change or no progress will ever be made.**

For many years, I struggled to survive life and knew the help of God's Holy Spirit while keeping down a full-time job, facing the illness and later the death of my first wife, taking medication year after year, and in an out of psychiatric hospitals. During that time my desire to be free of what seemed to be a "permanent" mental bondage was longed for but it was not something I was really determined to break and set free of.

Forces of evil and passivity had weakened my resistance time and time again – as they may have done and still do in your life today – as Satan and his cohorts planned an unrelenting strategy to destroy me. Their well-worn routine is always to follow the line of deception, passivity, entrenchment (deeper passivity) and finally, destruction. (Passivity is a cessation of the active exercise of the will in control over spirit, soul and body, or either, as may be the case).

Like a boxer who was being pummelled on the ropes by his opponent, I fought back in the only way I could through trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit and the memorised, active word of God for this was a spiritual fight taking place. I was once on the ropes, figuratively speaking, when the devil's knock-out punch was heading my way for the final kill.... when suddenly, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, roared from within my indwelling spirit and I surfaced with a desperate retaliation. The bout that ensued was so sapping for my entire life, emotional and physical as well as spiritual, that it drained me of every ounce of energy in what was a life and death battle for survival.

But something registered in my spirit that day to seek complete victory and fortified my future determination to become free. I went from being on the defensive to being on the attack. I remember walking into the toilets at work and saying to God: "I am going to come here in my tea breaks and dinner breaks to seek you until you break the power of this bondage in my life."

So armed with a desire to be free, I stole away three times a day into the toilets on the four floors of the Post Office in Sheffield, for a trysting time with my stronghold, the Lord Jesus Christ. Food didn't matter. I found all the spiritual food I wanted in my Personal Workers New Testament. God saw the discipline behind those regular meetings and often "came down" with his precious Presence to encourage and comfort me. I am not saying that what I did has got to be duplicated by you in order to get your freedom but what I am trying to recommend is that if ever you are going to be free in Jesus, you have got to want HIS freedom and seek it AT ANY PRICE.

Let us pray together to that end:

Dear Heavenly Father, I come to you in and through the Name of your Son my Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank you for the help and comfort I receive from the your living Presence in my heart through the power of the Holy Spirit. Each day help me to grow in the knowledge of yourself through reading your word and trusting in the power of your grace. Come to me with your strength to resist, and defeat, any intruding evil spirit affecting my mind. Through hearing your voice may I evict every other presence and voice and so enter into more and more the freedom which I have already received from you. I ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

James Stacey  
Pray Until Schizophrenia Heals



"I will proclaim your mighty acts,  
O sovereign Lord" Psalm 71: 16