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Weekly Encourager – 31 January 2010

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

DEFEAT THE DEMON OF SCHIZOPHRENIA BY BECOMING POWERFUL IN PREVAILING PRAYER

THIS WEEK'S SELECTED BIBLE READING IS ST. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL CHAPTER SEVEN

Key verses 7-11: Jesus said: "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"

A well-known Ugandan pastor commenting on verse seven above, said: "Many Christians only know how to ask – they have not graduated into the realm of seeking and knocking." It is of great profit to every Christian schizophrenic to consider the three important aspects of this command given by Jesus as tremendous steps in obtaining the power of the Holy Spirit in becoming free. Here we have the Saviour, who is the only One able to set you free, giving key instructions on just how to obtain your freedom.

The defeat of the demon of schizophrenia normally involves a good amount of prayer from yourself or from another Christian with whom you are co-operating. You will need to ask, and you will need to seek, and you will need to keep on knocking with the same request for the presence of the Holy Spirit in power in your life ...until in the Name of Jesus you are able to evict demonic forces holding your mind in bondage. Prayer will need to be maintained after deliverance and healing have taken place as you begin reorientation back into your restored life.

As St Paul advocates you will need to **"pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests" (Ephesians 6 verse 18)**. While prayer itself is the simplest form of speech - to mount such a prayer battle that it wins the day in defeating the biggest mental bondage of all, your heart will have to be continually fired up to ask, to seek, and to knock. All this you will be willing to do because you believe in a God who is faithful to his promises and will respond to every cry you make to his throne of Grace "for power to win the day."

Because you have faith to believe every day that God cannot deny you what you are praying – and remember what He has promised He is able to perform – there is a constant resolve in your heart that no matter what it takes in the realm of asking, seeking and knocking you will experience the answer to your prayers. That answer is assured, believe it is already on the way to you as you begin praying. Don't let it be said that you gave up mid-way when the God who promised His answer was fully expecting you to continue storming heaven with faith requests.

Have you ever considered that because schizophrenia normally starts in late teens or early adulthood, many have only been Christians for a short time before facing the onslaught of the bondage, and have not had time to develop a growing intimacy with Jesus, and a strong prayer-life. There is a real advantage if you are already a born-again Christian who knows how to pray by the time schizophrenia "appears". To face it as an unbeliever is to be pitched into a mental maze of confusion and helplessness. It's no picnic to survive for a born-again Christian hit by schizophrenia, but for someone who is a stranger to God and his workings, he/she will find it much harder to cope. That's why we commend receiving Jesus as Saviour and Lord and his living presence into your life (see John's Gospel 14. verses 15-21).

ASKING: Intercession and prevailing prayer begin with asking. Every prayer you utter God always hears. It can be a loud cry coming from the depths of your heart or it can be a soft whisper, but He always hears. Jesus commanded us to ask and assured us our asking would be answered. **"If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."** **Matthew 21:22** As you are engaged in praying for your freedom from Jesus, why not hold this promise before him and quote it. To speak like this is permissible: **"Lord Jesus, you have promised to both hear and answer when I pray. I believe in your power to set me free from schizophrenia. I ask for your power to enable me to drive out the demonic force troubling my life. I have faith to believe that I can take authority in your name over any evil powers in my life that are holding me in bondage, and as I command them to leave they will be driven out by your power in me."** Keep faith paramount and never lose sight of it. **GOD WILL GRANT IT. Hallelujah!!**

SEEKING: Seeking is a more concentrated form of prayer than asking and implies greater seriousness, continued perseverance, and often deeper hunger and desire. It is prayer that is in for the long haul, willing to

hold on in intercession until the answer comes. Seeking always involves a sacrifice in going to God but believes the kind of promise found in **Jeremiah 29:13**: "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." Are you a stranger to this kind of prayer? If you are ever to learn how to prevail with God, realise it will cost the kind of prevailing prayer that involves earnest seeking. In relation to schizophrenia, the demons behind the bondage will begin to be stirred and will take your fight more seriously the moment they get the message that you have begun to seek God to become free. You will pay whatever it costs to defeat the intruders in your life through being strong in his power!! Remember this promise as you seek God: "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will." Romans 8 verse 26-27.

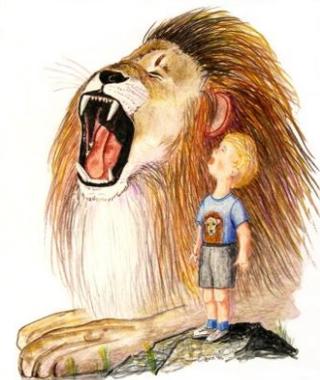
KNOCKING: You are desperate to be free of schizophrenia and although you know Christ and have his spirit in you, you do not possess sufficient power from him to defeat the demonic within you. Your spiritual power has to increase!! This is the time when your seeking becomes so urgent, your soul so desperate, that you actually begin to knock at heaven's door. A. B. Simpson wrote: "This is more than seeking... It is not so much the prayer that knocks at the gates of heaven and extorts an answer from an unwilling God, as the prayer which, having received the answer and promise, carries it forth against the gates of the enemy and beats them down, as the walls of Jericho fell before the trump and shout of Israel's believing hosts." Your need to be free of schizophrenia is crying out for God's answer but the answer is still not forthcoming – NOW IS THE TIME TO CRY OUT TO GOD IN HOLY DESPERATION AND KNOCK AT THE ENTRANCE OF HEAVEN'S DOOR FOR HIS INDWELLING POWER IN YOU TO ENABLE YOU TO SET YOURSELF FREE!!

You too can know the help and strength that comes from knowing Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour. If you have already received him, then keep in touch with him every day through regular prayer and bible study. By so doing, you will begin to discern his voice a lot clearer, and as sharing your life with Christ grows there will come inner and silent strength to overcome every other voice that may trouble you.

If you have never received Jesus Christ into your life, then why not do it RIGHT NOW, as we guide you in a prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ I approach you knowing I am separated from you by sin. I know I have also sinned in my thoughts, words and actions. There are so many good things I have not done and there are so many sinful things I have done. I believe that you died on the Cross in my place that I might be brought back to God the Father and know forgiveness and the gift of eternal life. I now ask you to come into my life and cancel out the sin that separates from you. Come in and cleanse me through the power of you blood. Come in as my Lord to control me. Come with the strength of your grace and the power of your Holy Spirit to defeat the evil of schizophrenia which troubles me and bring me right through into the glorious freedom of your kingdom. I ask this, giving you thanks, in your Name. Amen

You may be reading the Weekly Encourager for the very first time; perhaps you've stumbled across our website in a desperate search to break free of schizophrenia which has just dawned on your life; or maybe you've been looking at W.E. every week for encouragement to help you deal with this "monster" of mental illnesses and have already gained HOPE that the Lord Jesus Christ is the One to open the prison door of your life once and for all.

We encourage you to keep logging into the site as often as you can for scriptural advice and help as we continue to point to the One who is well-tried and tested in the area of setting captives free from a bondage that no one else can conquer. www.schizophreniadefeated.com seeks to magnify the dear Son of God who left the courts of heaven to come to our world to die for you and me on the Cross at a place called Calvary just outside Jerusalem 2,000 years. In that great sacrifice, He paid the punishment and penalty of your sin and mine by dying for us and on the third day rose from the dead as "The Resurrection and the Life". He released the power of the Holy Spirit into the life of every believer accepting his sacrifice. A life-transforming experience that you too can know!!



James Stacey (celebrating this month 22 years off all medication)

Pray Until Schizophrenia Heals

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