

## When Two Or Three Gather Together

Matthew 18:15; Jesus said, "If your brother offends you, go and show him his fault between you and him privately. If he listens to you, you have won back your brother, but if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be upheld by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he pays no attention to them by refusing to listen, tell it to the assembly. If he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a non-believer. Surely I tell you, whatever you bind on earth is already bound in heaven, and whatever you free or release on earth is already free in heaven. Again I tell you, if two of you on earth agree about anything they may ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven, for wherever two or three believers are gathered together in My name, there I AM in the midst of them."

Matthew 18:21; Then Peter said, "Lord, how many times may my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"

Jesus answered him, "I tell you, not up to seven times, but seventy times seven! The Kingdom of Heaven is like a human king who wished to settle accounts with his attendants. When he began the accounting, one was brought to him who owed him 10,000 talents (about \$10,000,000 in today's currency), and because he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold with his wife and his children and everything that he possessed, and payment to be made. The attendant fell on his knees begging him, 'Have patience with me and I will pay you everything'. His master's heart was moved with compassion, and he released him and forgave him the debt. Later, that same attendant, as he went out, found one of his fellow attendants who owed him a hundred denarii (about \$20) and he caught him by the throat and said, 'Pay what you owe!' His fellow attendant fell down and begged him earnestly, 'Give me time, and I will pay you!' But he was unwilling, and he had him put in prison till he should pay the debt. When his fellow attendants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and they told their master everything that had taken place. Then his master called him and said to him, 'You wicked attendant! I forgave all that great debt of yours because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow attendant, as I had pity on you?' In wrath his master turned him over to the tormentors till he should pay all that he owed. So also My heavenly Father will do the same with every one of you, if you do not freely forgive your brother from your heart, all his offences" (Matthew 18:15 to 35).

Many Christians quote portions of these verses without looking at the context in which they were originally spoken. When we 'bind' things through prayer, it will only work if it is already bound in heaven. In other words, if we know something is against God's divine order, then it is already bound in the heavenlies so when we pray, we know we are praying in God's will and so the thing is bound. Jesus gave us an example. 'How can one enter into the house of the strong man and plunder his goods, unless he first bind the strong man? Then he will plunder his house' (Matthew 12:29; Mark 3:27). In this context, Jesus was referring to binding a strong demon by prayer before commanding it to come out of a person. By binding the demon, it is rendered helpless and unable to fight the deliverance. Binding is essentially saying the thing is forbidden, improper and unlawful on earth. We know full well that demons are already against God's divine order, so they are unlawful, they are improper and behave improperly, and they are forbidden, so we know by binding the demon in preparation of casting it out, we are praying right into the will of God. When we pray according to God's will, we know we have what we ask. 'This is the boldness which we have in Him, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us' (1 John 5:14). Jesus said in the above passage of scripture, "If two of you on earth agree about anything they may ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven." So Jesus was saying the same thing John said; "Pray according to God's will; and you will have what you ask, and if that is binding a demonic force, then God will do it for you so the victim can be free."

When we 'loose' 'release' or 'free' something on earth, we are declaring that thing free, released, permissible, proper and lawful, as it is already freed, released, permitted, proper and lawful in heaven. When an evil spirit is rejected from a victim, that person is most definitely free and released. Jesus cast out many demons so we can see that the act of casting out a demon is already permitted, proper and lawful in heaven. Before Christians 'bind' or 'release' anything, we must first seek the will of God. Remember Jesus said, "Let Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10; Luke 11:2). If it is not His will to bind or release something or someone in any given situation, then it will be neither bound nor set free.

Jesus gave us an example of that too, in the above verses. "In wrath his master turned him over to the tormentors till he should pay all that he owed. So also My heavenly Father will do the same with every one of you, if you do not freely forgive your brother from your heart, all his offences." When we refuse to forgive somebody, especially a fellow believer or a parent, then God Himself will hand a person over to the

tormentors (evil forces) until the person learns to willingly forgive. If God has turned somebody over to the devil, no amount of binding or loosing will do any good until God has finished dealing with the sin of unforgiveness in that individual. That is why it is so important to seek the will of God before we begin to pray.

Once we have established that it is God's will for us to pray for a person to be released, then He said, when two or three gather in His name, drawn together as His followers, He comes into their midst. When people pray together, it should not be a case of agreeing for the sake of looking agreeable. Jesus meant to pray in absolute and total harmony, just like an orchestra makes beautiful music when all the instruments are harmonising together to form a symphony. Only when the 'symphony' is playing, Jesus comes and stands in our midst. He does not come when there is contention or disagreement. That is what He meant by 'when two or three are gathered together in My name'. The Lord means in complete harmony and agreement on the subject they are praying for, not a mish-mash of opinions and attitudes. This is where the tri-une God comes into focus. Jesus wants us to gather in His name, in complete harmony, presenting all that He is, invoking the power of the Holy Spirit, so it will be done for them by our Father in heaven.

'Jesus of Nazareth, Whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power, Who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him' (Acts 10:38).

Amen and God bless you.

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