

Deliver the City

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Ezekiel 22:30 And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

Luke 11:20-22

20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

21 When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:

22 But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

2021 Field Focus

I. Introduction

1. While I will be talking about the city of Brazil being our primary focus field this morning, it is certainly the case that God has people in other places that are to be our focus.
2. But since the Lord has planted the BUPC in this city, our primary reach is to our neighbors.
3. And as a church in this city, our role is to proclaim our city for Jesus and for His kingdom.
4. I want to preach to you this morning on **Deliver the City**.

II. Who is in authority here?

A. Jesus in Authority

1. A certain truth is that Jesus is the final authority in heaven and in earth. Among the final words of Jesus before He ascended into heaven, was this statement of fact:
Matt 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

2. That was spoken at the conclusion of Jesus' earthly ministry, after His crucifixion for our sins, and His resurrection through which He triumphed over death, hell, and the grave.

3. Yet as Jesus' earthly ministry was just beginning, we read of this interaction between satan and Jesus:

Luke 4:5-8

*5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the **kingdoms of the world** in a moment of time.*

*6 And the devil said unto him, All **this power will I give thee**, and the glory of them: for **that is delivered unto me**; and to whomsoever I will I give it.*

7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

- B. Authority surrendered
1. Satan told Jesus that all the power of the kingdoms of the world were “delivered” unto him and Jesus did not dispute that fact. How could that have been the case that any territory on earth could be delivered unto satan? What does that mean?
 2. **Definition:** The word “delivered” in verse 6 comes from the Greek word, paradidomi, which means surrender, yield up, hand over.
 3. To help you understand this passage, it is important to notice that this verse does not say that God surrendered these lands over to the devil.
 4. In the beginning, God delivered unto man the dominion over the earth, yet because of the sins of the kings of this earth, and the people of those kingdoms, they surrendered their kingdoms to the devil.
 5. Paul identified spoke of that surrendered authority:
Eph 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:
 6. The children of disobedience surrendered to that “prince.”
 7. But as Jesus was facing the cross, He identified that this “prince’s” time was about up:
John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.
 8. Jesus said that “prince” was even going to attempt to come after Him:
John 14:30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.
 9. In other words, the devil has no authority over Jesus.
 10. We need to recognize a spiritual reality of the battle before us.
 11. We have been placed into a “field” by God and have been tasked with taking it for the kingdom.
 12. Jesus reminded us of the need to “take it by force.”
Matt 11:12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.
 13. And just a few verses later, Jesus revealed a truth that blows the devil’s deception about who is rightfully has the final authority:
Matt 11:27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.
 14. The devil told Jesus the power and glory of the kingdoms was delivered unto him, and that is partly true.
 15. When a people of a land, a region, a territory, a principality, yield to walking according to the course of this world, they are surrendering their God-given right of authority to the prince of the power of the air.
 16. The sin of a land will lead that land into captivity and bondage under the influence of the devil.

17. And any place the devil has authority over becomes a wilderness.
 18. Even Jesus said unclean spirits walk through these dry wilderness places seeking rest. (Matt 12:43)
- C. Example of Jerusalem
1. As an example from the Old Testament, the city of Jerusalem was God's city. It was the city where Solomon built the temple of the Lord. God's presence was in that temple and in the city and among Israel.
 2. And God kept them secure while they were walking in obedience to the Lord.
 3. However, we read that one king after another turned away from God, and piece by piece, they surrendered their kingdoms to the authority of ungodly kingdoms.
 4. The fall of Jerusalem and Judah was described like this:
2 Kings 24:2-4
2 And the LORD sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servants the prophets.
3 Surely at the commandment of the LORD came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did;
4 And also for the innocent blood that he shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; which the LORD would not pardon.
- III. Delivering our city
- A. Pardon for a city
1. But there is an interesting passage found in Deuteronomy 21 that deals with the shedding of innocent blood.
 2. It says that if the elders of the city will offer a sacrifice and repent of the shedding of innocent blood,
Deut 21:7-9
7 And they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it.
8 Be merciful, O LORD, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them.
9 So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the LORD.
 3. The city was then absolved of the guilt of the crime and the curse of sin was removed.
 4. The land needed to be healed of the dominion that sin had placed over the land, and that healing was brought about through repentance.
 5. We know well this verse:
2 Chron 7:14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.
 6. Our land needs a healing in order to be delivered from the adversary's dominion.

B. Standing in the gap

1. I believe the Brazil UPC must be an godly influence in this city.
2. The saints of this church can and must be an exporter of the grace of God into our city by taking seriously the cause of our people and their bondage on our hearts.
3. And we need to be clear in our understanding. The ultimate deliverance of Brazil from the strong influence of the prince of the power of the air, will not come about by programs. We can have a children's program, a youth program, the CIP program, and whatever other ideas of programs we can come up with, like a food pantry or clothing give-aways, but programs will not deliver a city from the dominion of evil.
4. Humility, prayer, seeking God's face, turning from wickedness, which is repentance, will bring about the healing of the land as God hears our cries.
5. Our city must not be a cursed place but a redeemed place.
6. Look at this warning from Ezekiel concerning the evil of their land:
Ezek 22:29-31
29 The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully.
30 And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.
31 Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord GOD.
7. I believe God has found a people who are willing to stand in the gap for the land so Brazil can meet redemption rather than wrath; mercy rather than mayhem; grace rather than grief.
8. I believe God has restoration in store for our city in far greater measure than we have seen up to this point.
9. Who knows how things would have been in Brazil in the past if it had not been for the influence of the BUPC, and other churches preaching the truth here.
10. But since we cannot look back, only forward for our works, what is it that we can do for our city's future?

C. Fasting and repenting for deliverance

1. Since we are on the outset of a period of three weeks of fasting, let us look to the example of Daniel.
2. If you remember, Daniel was one of the people from Jerusalem who had been taken away from Jerusalem after the city fell to Babylon.
3. And from his captivity in Babylon, Daniel took the prophecy of Jeremiah in hand as his guidebook and started a fast:
Dan 9:2-3
2 In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

3 And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplication, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

4. God had said that the desolation of the land was going to continue for 70 years because of its rebellion against Him.
5. So armed with that, Daniel saw the passage of time had been fulfilled and was ready to fast and pray for his land to find forgiveness.
6. Notice closely the prayer that Daniel prayed in *Dan 9:4-15*
7. As we launch into this prayer and fasting emphasis, among the many requests we will pray for during this period, we must take seriously a **2021 Field Focus**.
8. And that focus begins by taking back more of this land for the Lord.
9. As we take a greater **Field Focus** our effort begins now with repentance for our city.
10. Daniel perhaps needed to begin with repenting of his own sins, but this passage shows how he repented for the sins of the people of the land.
11. What areas of Brazil are dominated by the evil influence of sin?
 - D. Taking our city
 1. Should we just give that up to the devil as being too evil or too in-grained in the culture of Brazil?
 2. Jerusalem was in a far greater state of destitution than Brazil at the time Daniel prayed, so there is no city that is hopeless as long as there is a church working to take the city by force for the kingdom of God.
 3. Building on the labors others in the past have started, we seek to expand the kingdom influence even greater.
 4. What if our neighborhoods were not centers for drug dealers and drunken parties?
 5. What if instead of our children being abused and neglected, that our neighborhoods were safe places where children were loved and well taken care of?
 6. What if instead of walking past homes and hearing screams of anger or violence, that we heard songs of praise to the Lord or prayers being lifted to the Lord?
 7. What if instead of many unemployed with families struggling, that there were family after family, home after home, who were blessed by diligent workers working to improve their city and families?
 8. The influence of the kingdom of God in a city brings about these kinds of blessings to a city.
 9. Yes, there has been a strong influence of evil binding many in our city. But can a church be an influence that will bind that strong influence with a stronger influence and bring about deliverance?
 10. Jesus talked about how in war, a warrior would first bind a strong man, and then take his goods from him:
Matt 12:29 Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.
 11. Jesus used that example of warfare as a parallel to how the church would take down the "strong man," a reference to the devil, which we will see in the next passage.

12. And “spoil[ing] his goods” means taking the things that strong man had in captivity—the people who had been trapped by the devil and his evil dominion.
13. Notice how the parallel passage in Luke’s gospel reveals clearly what Jesus was talking about:
Luke 11:20-22
20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.
21 When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:
22 But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.
14. Jesus was the “stronger than he” who came and stole the devil’s armor from him and then divided his spoils.
15. Jesus was the finger of God who came as the “new sheriff in town” and cast out the prince of this world every where He ministered.
16. And he delivered the “spoils” or those things the devil treasured as his own.
17. But God sees those as treasures in His field that He has called us to focus on in 2021 and overcome the strong man and set those treasures free!

IV. Conclusion

1. How many of our family members and neighbors have been in bondage to the strong man?
2. But as we take seriously this 3-week period of fasting, we will have our field focus refined, we will repent of and cast off the sins that have resulted in this land being dominated by evil.
3. We will find and bind the strong man.
4. We will liberate the treasure in the field.
5. We will proclaim liberty for the captives.
6. The 2021 Field Focus will help us find and fight for the fruitful fields in 2021.
7. In January 2021 fasting three weeks, Monday night unguided prayer meetings 7-8pm, Wednesday 7-8pm prayer exhortation and prayer.
8. Great sacrifice was followed by open door opportunity. 2 Chron 1:6
9. 1000 burnt offerings on the altar followed by: “Ask what I shall give thee.”
10. *2 Chron 1:6-7*
6 And Solomon went up thither to the brasen altar before the LORD, which was at the tabernacle of the congregation, and offered a thousand burnt offerings upon it.
7 In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee.
11. Deliver the City