WITCHCRAFT IN DISGUISE

The title is *Witchcraft In Disguise.* I'm going to turn to 1 Samuel chapter 15, verses 22 and 23. These words were spoken by the prophet Samuel to King Saul. King Saul had been told by God to go on a military expedition and wipe out the Amalekites and leave nothing. He returned having defeated the Amalekites but not having wiped them out, having spared their King Agag, and having also kept the best of the livestock. And he greeted Samuel and said, "Blessed be the Lord your God. I have performed His word." And Samuel said, "If you have, why do I hear the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the cattle?" because dead sheep don't bleat and dead cattle don't low. And Saul came up with a very weak answer. "Well," he said, "I spared the best to offer as a sacrifice to the Lord, your God." He didn't say, "My God," he said "Your God." And Samuel replied with these words, verse 22 and 23:

> Then Samuel said:
> "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
> As in obeying the voice of the LORD?
> Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
> And to heed than the fat of rams.
> For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft,
> And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.
> Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,
> He also has rejected you from being king."

What Samuel said in effect was, "God is not interested in any sacrifices you offer that are the outcome of disobedience. God is more interested in obedience than He is in sacrifice."

And then he made this statement, which I've pondered for years which I believe contains understanding that we all need. He said,

> Rebellion is as the sin or witchcraft…

Now, some translations say *divination*. There are three words, *witchcraft, divination,* and *sorcery*, which essentially are different aspects of one single phenomenon. So whether we say *witchcraft, or sorcery, or divination*, we're talking about the same basic thing. He said:

Rebellion [refusal to obey] is as the sin of witchcraft,
And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.

And where this translation says *stubbornness,* other translations say *arrogance or insubordination.* But basically, again, what we're dealing with is the stubborn refusal to obey God. But the comparison that Samuel uses is interesting. We would never think of it normally. He said:

Rebellion against God is just the same as witchcraft,
And stubbornness is just the same as idolatry.

Now I want to tell you—you probably don't need to be told—there are a lot of rebellious people in the congregation of God, but they would object to being called witches. And there are a lot of stubborn people who would object to being called idolaters, but God says, "That's what you are practicing—witchcraft and idolatry."

Let me give you just one example of how stubbornness is the same as idolatry. You know what a stubborn person idolizes? His own opinion. And anybody who makes an idol of his own opinion, whether it's religious or secular, in God's sight is an idolater. He's set up his idol which is his opinion.

Now I don't want to deal so much with that as with the issue of witchcraft. First and foremost, and this may surprise some of you, witchcraft is a work of the flesh. It's listed that way in Galatians 5 verses 19 and following. The works of the flesh are the things that proceed out of man's fallen nature. And, remember, by nature man is a rebel, and there is a rebel dwelling in every descendant of Adam. And God has only got one remedy for the rebel. He doesn't send him to church or teach him Scripture, or memorize the Golden Rule. God's solution is very simple. It's execution. God does not temporize with rebellion. It's sentenced to death. But the marvelous grace of God is this, that the execution took place in Jesus when He died on the cross. The Bible says:

Our old man was crucified with Him…

This is a historical fact. Whether you know it or believe it makes no difference to the fact, but your

knowing it and believing it will make a lot of difference to you. That's God's provision to escape from our rebellious, fallen nature—which is called the *old man* or *the flesh.*

However, here in Galatians 5 Paul gives a list of the things that proceed out of our fleshly nature. You can look in vain—not one good thing is in the list. Paul said of himself:

I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwells nothing good.

The difference between some of you and Paul is that Paul knew it and you don't. But that's the only difference. Not any good thing dwells in the carnal, fallen nature of any descendant of Adam. And God's remedy, as I've said, is execution. And Paul says in Galatians 5:

Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

In Romans 6 it says:

Our old man *was* crucified…

That's God's part. But in Galatians 5 is our part. We have to crucify the flesh. We have to apply the cross to our own fleshly nature. And let me tell you that crucifixion is always painful. There's no painless crucifixion, and there's no painless way to deal with the flesh. Peter said:

He who has suffered in his flesh has ceased from sin.

That's a remarkable statement isn't it? And I don't believe there's any provision of God for ceasing from sin that bypasses suffering. When you put the nails through your own hands and feet and crucify your fleshly nature, it will be painful, but the result will be glorious.

Now let's go back to the list of the works of the flesh in Galatians 5 beginning at verse 19.

Now the works of the flesh are evident…

That's a remarkable statement isn't it? They can be seen.

> …which are: fornication or sexual immorality, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts or wrath, selfish ambitions, dissentions, heresies, envy, drunkenness, revelries, and the like…

They fall into four categories. The first is sexual immoralities. The second is the occult, and there are two that are listed: idolatry and sorcery. And you remember, sorcery can be equated with divination or with witchcraft. And then the longest section of the list is every form of strife and division. And there is division in the church only for one reason—because we have not crucified our flesh. And there is no way to unity in the church that bypasses the crucifixion of the flesh. Listen to this list again here:

> …jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy…

Really every kind of disagreement and disharmony is included in that list. And they are all products of the fallen carnal nature. And then the last is what I would call sensual living.

> …drunkenness, revelries, and the like…

So you can say there are four categories—there's sexual immorality, there's occult involvement, there's every kind of division and strife, and then there is sensuality.

Now, I want to deal with the issue of witchcraft. First of all, I would like to give you a little explanation of witchcraft. And witchcraft is not something strange that's confined to a few primitive tribes in some place. Witchcraft is the natural religion of fallen man, because fallen man is a rebel, and so it expresses itself in the religion that he follows. And you go anywhere in the world and trace its religion back to its source and invariably it's some form of witchcraft. And the aim of witchcraft can be summed up really in one word which is *control.* The primitive peoples, as we call them, sought to control the weather, the crops, the flow of water, their physical well being, the birth of children. For all of those there were certain rites or ceremonies or practices designed to bring them under the control of the people who practiced them. And then there were other ceremonies that were designed to give victory in war. You'll find that in almost all primitive tribes, there were certain things they did before they went to battle with

another tribe. But the source of witchcraft is fear—fear of the unknown and fear of that which we cannot control.

I'm reminded of something that happened that had a rather big impact on both Ruth and me. About three years ago Ruth was in hospital for surgery and she was very weak at the time. She was lying in bed, she had her Bible beside her, she didn't have enough strength to pick it up and read it. And this was the Holy Cross Hospital in Fort Lauderdale, and the senior nun, who was well up in her seventies, was going round visiting the patients, and she said, "Can I do anything to help you?" And Ruth said, "Yes. I would like to read my Bible. Could you read the Bible to me?" So the nun said, "Yes. What shall I read?" And Ruth said, "Philippians chapter 2." And the nun said, "That was the passage that was read the day that I was consecrated as a nun." So there was an immediate relationship between the two.

And then in the course of conversation, this nun described how she'd been to a seminar conducted by a Trappist monk. And you know the Trappists are not allowed to speak inside their monastery, but when they get out they're allowed to share what they've learned when they weren't speaking inside. This monk gave the following suggestion, which the nun quoted to Ruth. She said, "Pray to desire not to be in control, not to be secure, and not to be esteemed." You know, I've been pondering on that ever since. "Pray to desire not to be esteemed, not to be secure, and not to be in control." And the thing that really set me thinking was desiring not to be in control.

You see, every one of us wants to be in control. Not only do we want to control our own lives, but, generally speaking, we want to control the lives of other people, especially those who are closest to us—our wife, our husband, our children, the people we work with, who knows. And, you see, that's where witchcraft comes in, because its purpose is to control.

Now the primitive type of witchcraft is expressed in all sorts of magical rites, potions, spells, curses, etc.—which are very real. Believe me, they have a power. The Indians in Florida still today have a great deal of supernatural power which is generated by their witchcraft. Don't underestimate it. God shows us how to deal with it; we need to know how to deal with it.

But I want to deal with a different kind of witchcraft of which the aim is control. But it's not any

satanic rituals. It's practiced regularly by churchgoers and people who claim to be and are Christians. And it operates in the soulish realm by psychological tricks and pressures, knowing how to manipulate people, to get them to do what you want them to do. There are three key words—manipulate, intimidate, and dominate. The aim is dominate. There are two alternative routes. One is to manipulate, the other is to intimidate. And it depends on who you are and what kind of personality you have whether you will take the route of manipulation or whether you will take the route of domination.

Now I want to give you some examples. First of all, I want to turn to Psalm 58. Psalm 58 and verse 3. This is a very interesting verse:

> The wicked are estranged from the womb;
> They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.

That's man's fallen nature. It emerges the moment a child is born. Let me give you an example that was given to me by another preacher. There's this cute little baby, just a few weeks old, and it's in the crib and it's wet, so it cries. And Mama comes along, finds out what the problem is, picks it up, changes its nappy and cuddles it, which the baby enjoys. So the next time the baby wants to be cuddled he cries—not because he's wet, but because he wants to be cuddled. And along comes mother and falls into the trap. What's that? Manipulation. You see how early it starts? That's man's fallen nature. It's there in infancy.

Now I'm going to deal with a series of different techniques or methods all expressing witchcraft and all designed to control, and they are all wrong. But the truth of the matter is, many people habitually practice this. They're not even aware that it's evil. The first wrong way to manipulate people is by guilt. You see, you can say, "If you love Mummy you'll run to the store and fetch this." That's wicked, because you're putting a guilt trip on your child. "I don't do it, I don't love Mummy." That's illegitimate. You're not allowed to use that kind of technique with a child, and sooner or later it may well happen the child will say, "Well I don't love Mummy enough." And you'll end up with a rebel, but you're the one that produced the rebel because you used illegitimate means to get your way with that child.

I have here a very interesting book called *How to Be a Jewish Mother.* It was published in the 1960s

and it was a bestseller in those days. Its subtitle could be *Manual of Manipulation*. Almost everything in the book is an example of very skillful, adept manipulation of husband, children and others. And every now and then it has an assignment, a problem you have to solve. And this one is just a beautiful example of manipulating through guilt. It says:

> *Test problem: How do you get your son to play the violin for company solely through the application of guilt?*
> *Answer: In front of your guests tell him you only spent all the money on lessons so he could make himself and others happy through beautiful music.*

The key is. If he doesn't do it, he's guilty. You've spent the money and he isn't producing the results. So he has to do it, but it's illegitimate. It's not permissible.

Let me say this: my conclusion—and you may not accept it—is the Holy Spirit never makes us feel guilty. The Holy Spirit convicts of sin. He says, "Specifically you did this, you need to repent, you need to confess, and maybe you need to make restitution." But it's specific. It's clear-cut, and once you've met the conditions, the problem is over. But guilt comes, "I wonder if I did enough. Maybe I ought to have said more." One of the things that makes people guilty is a religious system of rules. Do you know whether you've kept all the rules?

Some congregations—they're the most difficult to deal with—have unwritten rules, not just the written rules but the unwritten rules. I was part of a group like that for some time. But I came to realize you never really know whether you've met all the unwritten rules, so maybe you're guilty. And guilt makes people miserable. That's not permissible. Don't use guilt to manipulate your husband, your children, your wife. It's wrong, and it will ultimately produce the wrong results.

Then another way to manipulate—and usually this is for males—is by strong emotion like rage or jealously. So a husband wants to get his way with his wife, with his family, and he flies into a rage, and he makes everybody so miserable that they say, "Let's not let that happen again." So next time he threatens to go into a rage everybody says, "Do what he asks." What is that? Manipulation.

Or a husband may show jealousy, and control his wife through that. I know a couple; I've known

them well for years. But the husband is so jealous that his wife is virtually a slave. She cannot do certain things. She cannot enjoy certain company because it will provoke her husband's jealousy. So he controls her by his jealousy.

Now that's, you might call, the strong reaction. But just as deadly and sometimes more subtle is what I call the weak reaction. You can have a couple and each of them is using manipulation on the other. The husband flies into a rage, but the wife resorts to injured innocence, hurt feelings, tears, emotions—and that's just as hard to deal with as rage, and it usually leaves people feeling guilty. "What have I done to make my wife cry, to make my mother cry?" And I have just recently been in a situation where there was a remarkable demonstration. The husband went into a rage and the wife became weak, collapsed, trembling—and of the two, I think, the harder one to deal with was the wife.

I have to say that in contemporary America and many other cultures, people normally resort to manipulation. Many children have grown up in this culture not knowing any other way to get what they want but to manipulate because their parents have demonstrated it to them.

Sickness can be another way. How many of you know, and I don't want to be unkind, but invalids sometimes use their conditions to manipulate people. I knew a family, really a beautiful family, all Christians, but whenever the mother didn't get her way she got migraines, and then the word went round, "Mama's got migraines. Don't make a noise. Tiptoe around, be quiet. Don't upset her." I don't think she realized that migraine was her way of getting control. Some people who suffer things like that need to ask themselves, "What was the original motive?"

Then bribes. Bribery is another from of manipulation. Very prevalent. Of course, we see it in politics, we see it in the law courts, but let's come down a little lower. Again I'm thinking of a couple that I knew, committed Christians, serving the Lord. Then they ran into personal problems, financial problems, they'd been serving the Lord outside of the States, they came back. Now the father wanted to control his married daughter, and he didn't care to preserve their marriage, which he didn't approve of. So he offered his married daughter a certain financial allowance if she would live in their town, and that broke the marriage up. That's wicked, but it's accepted wickedness. Very few people actually realize what they're doing.

Another form of manipulation, which is exercised every day, is advertising, and I mean the people who know how to plan good advertising make large salaries. But basically, in many cases, not all, the aim of advertising is to make people want what they don't need and buy what they can't afford. And you study the advertisements on television or elsewhere, they're all designed to make you feel "If you get this, it'll be special; you'll be a little bit ahead of other people." Basically it appeals to pride and greed. Now I'm not saying all advertising is in that category, but I think most contemporary advertisements are very clever demonstrations of manipulation. In fact, you could say in a sense, to get ahead in modern society you need to use manipulation. For my part, I'd rather not get ahead if that's the way.

And then another way that we are with very frequently in the Charismatic Movement is the exercise of spiritual gifts, and I put "gifts" in quotes—prophecy and interpretation. I mean, when I am present where people are laying hands on others and prophesying, I have about five danger signals going off inside me at one time. Now I believe in prophecy. I believe in laying on the hands. But it's such an easy way to manipulate people that, unless your motives are pure and you're spiritually disciplined, you can easily misuse it. "God would say you're going to have a tremendous ministry. You're going to go to India." Somebody prophesied me to India once. I'd never been there but… "Thousands are going to turn to the Lord," or "God says you have a gift of healing." I asked a question once of a woman I was counseling and it bounced back on me. I said, "How do you differentiate between faith and wishful thinking?" How do you? A lot of what people call *faith* today is not faith, it's wishful thinking. And when it doesn't come true, they're shattered. There are a lot of disillusioned Christians walking around today who have been harmed by prophecies or other ways of communicating that suggest something that they would love, and because it's so desirable they respond to it with all their hearts.

I get young women that come to me and say, "Pray that I may get married." I say, "If that's God's plan for your life, I'll pray, but I'm not going to pray just because you want it." That's not a guarantee that it's the will of God.

I have to say that I think the present outbreak of prophecy in the body of Christ is terribly dangerous. People have come to the place that they feel if they're not a prophet, they're not important.

Well, I was in the discipleship movement, the shepherding movement, of which I've repented, and there, if you weren't a shepherd, if you weren't a pastor, you didn't amount to anything. So everybody was lining up to become a pastor. Do you know what I've discovered? If a man is a God-called pastor, the flock will prosper. If he isn't, it will never prosper. He may be very sincere, very talented, but if he hasn't the ministerial gift of shepherding the people, the shepherds will suffer. A man may be much less gifted, and even less talented, and maybe less consecrated, but if he's called to be a shepherd the sheep will prosper.

You see, when we try to make people something we're taking the initiative out of the hands of God. Jesus said to His apostles:

You have not chosen Me, I have chosen you.

My personal conclusion, and I wrote that in that little book that I held up about *Prophetic Destinies*, I wrote a sentence and after I'd written I thought, "Do I mean that?" And it frightened me. What I said, more or less, I can't remember it exactly, *God only endorses and blesses that which He Himself has initiated. All the rest is a wa*ste *of time and effort.* And I don't see many congregations that spend much time trying to find out what God has initiated. Generally speaking, the pattern is, "Here's our agenda, Lord. This is what we plan to do. Please put the rubber stamp of your approval on it." God doesn't have a rubber stamp. He doesn't do that. It's worth taking time to find out what God wants done and do it, but it takes time. Most Christians, they don't have the time, they're not prepared to wait on God.

With regard to this kind of prophecy or revelation that you feel so excited about, I want to give you two Scriptures. The first is in Proverbs 29 and verse 5:

A man who flatters his neighbor
Spreads a net for his feet.

Flattery is a very subtle means of manipulating. Sometime back, and I'll have to trust that it will not get to the place that…, Ruth and I took into our home in Jerusalem a young Jewish Russian immigrant,

and he lived with us for awhile and he worked for us. And we really loved him, but I realized later that he'd been manipulating me, because he was telling me all the time all the books of mine that he'd read, all the videos that he'd watched, and you know any preacher if he's at all human thinks, "Well, this is a fine young man! He really appreciates good teaching." And he *was* in many ways a fine young man, but there were areas in his character which were totally deficient.

What— We have encountered a number of Jews that have immigrated from Russia. And this is not a blanket statement, but we have observed that communism has produced certain kinds of character which are deficient. They don't know what it is to be punctual. They don't know what it is to be honest. This may sound terrible, but, you see, under communism to get ahead you had to lie, and it's become an accepted way of thinking and acting. They don't know what it is to do a job for the sake of a job. There are exceptions—there are wonderful exceptions. But we have seen a little bit of what communism has done to human character. But, anyhow, this young man—I mean, I felt special about him, but we had to let him go because of the defect in his character.

And then, thinking back, I thought he was street-wise. He knew how to manipulate me. I mean, I loved him. I pray for him. But I learned a lesson. Be careful when people flatter you. The Bible warns us again and again—be careful.

> The one who flatters his neighbor
> Spreads a net for his feet.

You see, so much of prophecy is flattery. I've had wonderful prophecies given about me and some of them came and painted a glorious future. But I'll tell you, I take time to digest that. I begin with a critical attitude. Perhaps this isn't from God. In fact, I'll have to say, whenever prophecy is given I switch on my critical faculty. I check it with the Word of God. I check it by the impact that it has.

One thing that Ruth and I have learned, I think, is that the real way to hear from God is to worship, and we spend a good deal of time worshiping. Ruth is our worship leader. She does a wonderful job. She's a born worshiper. For me, that's not so natural. But we have discovered that through worship we

come into a place of quietness where the presence of the Lord is just… that's all you need. And often God will give us prophecy or a tongue and interpretation at that time. And I'm still critical, but basically I say, "That's probably from God," because the atmosphere was such that only God could have produced it.

So I warn you. You need to be very careful about how you respond to prophecy, especially if it's personal prophecy. Now it's not necessarily wrong. We had a prophecy here this morning which I believe was from God and a tongue and interpretation. I felt they were both from God but I didn't just say, "Praise God," because somebody said something. I lifted my heart to the Lord and said, "Lord, can we accept that?"

There's another, even more serious Scripture in Ezekiel chapter 12 and verse 24. God is dealing with the things in Israel that He was going to terminate because they offended Him. And one thing He said in verse 24:

No more shall there be any false vision of flattering divination within the house of *Israel.*

Divination, you know, is fortune telling. I don't want to ask you how many of you have been to a fortuneteller. I don't want to embarrass you. But generally speaking they tend to give you a fairly rosy picture of your future. They're master psychologists. You're much more likely to believe that. They make so there's something dark in the future as well.

I didn't intend to say this, but I think God wants me to. Ruth and I have been reading through Jeremiah and Ezekiel lately, and you know what I've observed? Right near the final destruction of Jerusalem in Israel there were far more false prophets than there were true prophets. In fact, at a certain time Jeremiah was the only true prophet. And I think as we come to the close of the age and society in a way is disintegrating and the forces of evil are getting stronger, I could easily believe there would be more false prophets than true. I want to warn you. Be careful. Don't be manipulated. Don't be enticed. Bear in mind the most important thing is the will of God. It's not what you want. It's what God wants for you, and God may want something for you very different from what you want for yourself.

Let me just recapitulate. There are many, many more ways of manipulating than I've listed here, but

once I've alerted you, you can begin to observe them for yourself. I'll tell you one thing about people who use this; very often they give you the impression that their opinion is very important. "If you do what I want, I'll approve." You know what I've learned by experience? Very often their opinion is not very important, but they're trying to make you think it's important because they want to influence you. I've learned to step back and say, "Well, that person thinks that he or she is important, but I don't see it." And when I encounter that I say, "Somebody's trying to manipulate me."

So let me give you the little list that I have.

Starting with the infant that wanted to be cuddled and used deception.

Then the use of guilt, which has endless ramifications. The one we took was the mother who wanted to make her son play the violin in public.

Strong emotions, especially in men—rage, anger, jealousy. There are countless homes where, in a certain sense, everything revolves around a man because if he explodes we're all going to be miserable, so let's keep him from exploding.

But then equally there are what I call the emotions of weakness. "Nobody understands me. Nobody really loves me. I'm not being treated fair. I've got such a pain." I think that's more dangerous myself. If I had to choose I'd rather have the man explode than the woman who melts.

And I mean, I have to say, Ruth and I've been through this very recently. We had a classic case. I mean absolutely classic. And when I used the word *witchcraft* everything exploded, and a lot of people wanted me to back down from using it, but I saw it as a confrontation between God and Satan.

Then there are bribes, and there's all sorts of bribes that people use. Don't bribe your children to do things. Don't offer them a candy if they're good. That's not the right motive for being good, and you're raising somebody who'll have problems later because they won't understand authority, and they won't realize the reason for obedience.

Then I just took the example of modern advertising, and I mean much advertising is good and is very skillful. But you analyze what they are appealing to in you, and usually it's not something good. Keep up with the Joneses. To be a little bit ahead of the others.

And then, finally, spiritual "gifts." "Gifts" in quotes. This is something that all of us are probably going to face in one form or another. Just because somebody says, "Thus says the Lord," it doesn't mean the Lord said it. Do you agree to that? Good. We've made a lot of progress when we see that. You see, a lot of people get intimidated when they hear, "Thus says the Lord." "Well, if I don't do that I'm disobeying God."

I think of a couple I dealt with years ago. I was teaching on deliverance and the woman got so angry that she and her husband got up, went out of the church and started to drive away. But the Lord dealt with her and she turned around and came back. So at the end of the service she came up to me and she said, "Pray for me. I need deliverance."

God gave me a little wisdom. I said, "Where's your husband?" "He's at the back." I said, "Call him. I want to talk to him." And then she went into this spiel, "The Lord showed me, the Lord told me, so on and so on." And I said, "It must be awful to live with you. Disagreeing with you is the same as disagreeing with God." And for the first time that man looked happy. Somebody had understood his problems. Eventually when she asked for prayer I said, "Your husband will pray for you." That's divine order. The man is the head of the woman.

So now let's come to an application. Well, all right. I find there's another side to my outline—let's go there too. It's good I turned it over. This is the remedy. You're in such a situation; what should you do? It's very simple. It doesn't take long.

Number one, most important, recognize what's going on—whether you're the one who's doing it or whether it's being done to you. Identify it. I call it by that ugly name *witchcraft*, because it makes people begin to see how evil it is. Actually, I believe God gave me that name. People have tried to make me change it. I said, "No, I won't, because God gave it to me I believe, and because it works."

Years ago, I put out this cassette called "Witchcraft: Public Enemy Number One." And just the other day, I mean a month ago, I got a letter from a man in Jerusalem whom I'd never met and he said, "I just want to thank you for your cassette 'Witchcraft: Public Enemy Number One,' because, he said, "it actually saved my life." And he wasn't using metaphors. He would have been dead if he hadn't heard that

message. See, it's a deadly power. You know what Jesus said about the enemy? He only comes to do three things—to steal, to kill and destroy. He never comes into our lives to do good. He may come in in a very appealing and fascinating way, but his motives are bad.

So Number One, recognize your problem. When you've recognized your problem you are more than half way to the solution. That's why I've taken so much time to try to portray the problem.

Then there are two possible responses. If you are using witchcraft you have to repent. But if somebody else is using it against you, you have to refuse it and reject it. You do not have to submit to it. I dealt with a couple once who were Mennonites. You know what Mennonites are? The women wear those nice little white things on top of their heads. And the wife had been manipulated by her mother all her life, and then she got married and a breach had come between the mother and the wife because the husband's authority was, in a sense, displacing the mother. Then she was invited by the mother to go and visit, together with her husband. She said, "I'm afraid to go near my mother because the moment I come near her I come under her control." And I said, "Well, you've got that nice little white thing on your head. Go with that and keep it on, because as long as you have that on it's a sign that you're under your husband's authority, and he is your protection. If you take it off, you'll be overcome." I don't know what the outcome was, but it was a vivid illustration to me. You see, one of the needs you have is to be under the right authority. If you're not under some kind of God-given authority, you're a target for the enemy. It's authority that protects. That's why Paul said it's a covering that protects you. I could go further with that verse but I won't.

I think I will. I believe—don't get angry with me—I believe that a woman praying or prophesying should have her head covered. The Bible says this very, very clearly, because it's her acknowledgment that she's under authority. And your only protection in spiritual things is to be under the right authority.

Let me ask you and don't answer me, whose authority are you under right at this moment? God's is not sufficient. That's easy to say, I'm under God's authority, but God uses human authority. Yes? You're not very happy with that, but it's true. It's a cop-out to say, "I'm under God's authority." God has put authority in the church. You're a member of this church, you're under the authority of the pastor and the

elders, in certain matters, in other matters not. You're a married woman, you're under whose authority? Yes.

I talked with a woman once who was very spiritual, I mean really spiritual, and her husband wasn't. But she said one day she was praying in bed and her husband was not saved, so she said to herself, "He's not saved. I don't have to be under his authority." And God showed her so powerfully that he was still her authority, saved or unsaved, that she fell out of the bed. You'll not find that Paul says, "Your husband is your head if he's saved." You can't find that. What he's talking about is not being saved or unsaved, he's talking about the relationship between husband and wife.

I believe, personally, this issue is going to come to the fore—I mean the issue of authority. But I don't believe people are going to survive in the last days if they don't know whose authority they are under.

I want to say, concerning Ruth and myself, we are members of Good News Church in Fort Lauderdale. When we're there we are under the authority of the pastors and elders. And in Jerusalem we attend an Anglican church and we're under that authority. Also our ministry has a Board of very qualified men—I forget how many, seven. We're under their authority. We are not Lone Rangers. We don't do our own thing.

All right. Okay, now if you're the one that's doing it—manipulating, dominating, intimidating—it may be just your fleshly nature because that's the nature of the flesh. But if it's something compulsive, if it's something that you do without even thinking about it and you really wouldn't know how to get along without it, it's probably an evil spirit, and you need deliverance. If you want to be delivered you have to lay down rebellion, because, you see, rebellion is the root by which witchcraft comes in. You have to submit to God and the authority that God has placed in your life, whatever that may be. I said the two in one. Let me say one other thing about God. God is never manipulative. No one ever manipulates God. You can try as hard as you like but He doesn't fall for it.

So now, where are we? Another thing that's important is to humble yourself. You know that? When I teach on deliverance from evil spirits I give certain steps, and people can be delivered without going through my steps—I want to say that. But nevertheless I found this, and the first thing I say is be humble.

The next thing I say is be honest. But if you're not humble, you won't be honest. Call your problem by the right name. If it's witchcraft, call it witchcraft. Don't find some fancy psychological title for it. You know what they say. Call a spade a spade and not an agricultural implement.

So, here we are. We're past twelve o'clock, and really I don't know what to do next. But I want to help you. I sincerely say that. I want to help you because that problem I've described is going to destroy you if you don't deal with it, and it will destroy a lot of others too. It may destroy your whole family. It's not hard to acknowledge that people manipulate you, but it's much less easy to acknowledge that you manipulate people.