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MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Sermon

Breaking Generational Curses



Breaking Generational Curses By Derek Prince

Now, what I'm going to do now is explain to you the nature of curses and blessings. These are two major themes of Scripture. I think the word bless in various forms occurs about 600 times in the Bible. And the word curse probably nearly half that number of times. But I have learned by experience that most of God's people are not really familiar with the nature of curses and blessings. I believe it's the purpose of God that through the redemption in Christ, we should be released from curses and enjoy the blessings. But wherever I travel, I find many of God's people who are enduring curses when they should be enjoying blessings. And one main reason is that they don't know how to recognize what's a curse and what's a blessing. Second reason is that even if they recognize it, they may not know how to be released from the curse and entered into the blessing.

So let me begin by offering you a simple definition of blessings and curses. Both of them are vehicles of supernatural power. It's very important to understand we're not dealing with something that's purely natural. It goes beyond the natural. They are vehicles of supernatural power for good, if they're blessings, for evil, if they're curses. And one characteristic feature of them is that very frequently they'll continue on from generation to generation. Often until somebody knows how to cut them off, if they're curses. The result of that is that many people, and some of you are here tonight, are enduring in your life consequences of things that may have taken place many generations ago. And you have to trace your problem to its source and take the appropriate action in order to be released.

Now, the vehicles of blessings and curses are usually words. They may be words that are spoken, or words that are written, or simply words that are pronounced inwardly. However, both curses and blessings can be transferred or transmitted by objects, by physical objects. So, it is not always just a question of words. Ruth and I encountered a Jewish lady who had met the Lord Jesus and acknowledged him as her Messiah and her Savior. And she told us firsthand this story, and we got it straight from her. She was a, what they call an executive secretary, very highly qualified. And she had a very well-paid job with a man who was the president of his own firm. And after a little

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while, she discovered that the president and all the executives in the firm were in a strange cult under a lady guru. And then the president asked her if he, if she would type out some blessings that this guru lady had pronounced on the executives. Well, when this lady began to type them, she realized that they were anything but blessings as far as Christians were concerned. And so she went to her boss and said, "I'm sorry, but I don't feel free to type these blessings." The boss was gracious, he said, "I'm sorry if I'd known it was against your conscience, I wouldn't have asked you to do it." That was the end of that. Now we have to supply something by inference. But I am sure that the lady guru heard about this secretary that wouldn't type her blessings. And who knows what she did. She may have prayed or she may have pronounced a curse. But from that source, it really wouldn't make much difference which it was.

Within a few weeks, this lady secretary, I'll call her Miriam, it wasn't her name, Miriam's fingers began to go stiff and curl up and set. And in a short while, they were extremely painful and she couldn't bend them. And she said, "You wouldn't believe the pain." She had to sleep in a separate bed from her husband because anytime her husband turned over and the bed shook, the pain was unendurable in her fingers. She went to a specialist who X-rayed them and said it, "rheumatoid arthritis." And she was in a sense a crippled person.

Well, another lady, a charismatic lady, had received these three cassettes of mine and felt that this lady Miriam ought to hear them. I don't think Miriam was really very excited about them. She was a rather sophisticated lady and I think thought of curses was something remote, medieval in her eyes. Anyhow, this other lady prevailed, so they sat and listened to the three cassettes. And at the end of the third cassette, I lead people in a prayer by which they release themselves from any curse over their lives. At the point where the prayer began, the cassette jammed. It wouldn't go forward, it wouldn't go back and it wouldn't eject. That is not purely natural. So Miriam said, "Well, then I can't say the prayer." But this indefatigable lady said, "Oh no, I have the prayer typed out. I'll bring that." So she persuaded Miriam, I think rather against her own judgment, to read this prayer. Now you could read the prayer, I would say in three minutes, it wouldn't take as much as that. So Miriam just dutifully read the prayer, and in between the time she began reading the prayer and the time she finished, her fingers and her hands were totally released. There was no trace of arthritis. She went back to the doctor, he confirmed medically the healing. Now what I want to emphasize is this, she was not praying for healing. It wasn't in her mind. She was simply releasing herself from a curse. But when the curse was broken, there was no more reason for sickness, you see? Another example of the invisible barrier.

All right, now, I want to deal out of Scripture with the forms that blessings and curses take. There is one particular chapter in the Old Testament which deals exclusively with blessings and curses. How many of you know which it is?

Deuteronomy chapter 28

All right. It's got 14 verses of blessings and 54 verses of curses. Now, we can't go into that because of time, but I suggest if you're concerned that at your own convenience you study that chapter carefully. I've studied it many times and I'm going to offer you my summation. But please exercise your own judgment as to whether you think this is accurate or not. Here is my summation of the main blessings and the main curses. As a matter of fact, really, they're exactly opposite to one another.

So here are seven blessings. Number one, exaltation. Means being lifted up. You're no longer living under things. Number two, a word I had to coin, reproductiveness. I couldn't find one normal English word, but a person who's in the blessing of God is, is fruitful in every area of his life or her life. Number three, health. Number four, prosperity or success. Number five, victory. Number six, Moses said, "You'll be the head and not the tail." And number seven, "You'll be above and not beneath."

Now, when I was studying that some years ago, I asked the Lord, "What's the difference between the head and the tail?" And I feel he gave me a simple answer. The head makes the decisions, the tail just gets dragged around. So which way are you living? Are you making the decisions? Are you in charge of the situation? Or are you simply being dragged around like a tail by circumstances and forces that you don't understand and you can't control? If you're a tail, it's very possible you're under a curse.

Now, I'm not saying every one of those blessings is due to this cause, but that's for you to discern. There's only one expert in this field and his name is not Derek Prince. It's the Holy Spirit. He's the one who has to show you personally. I can preach the general truth, but you have to get the specific application from the Holy Spirit. Then let's look at the curses and they're just exactly the opposite. Humiliation, failure to reproduce or barrenness. And I would say basically barrenness is nearly always in some way associated with a curse. Number three, sickness of every kind. And if you read Deuteronomy 28, I mean, there is no sickness that is left out by the time you've come to that list. Number four, poverty or failure. Number five, defeat. And

number six, you're the tail and not the head. And number seven, you're beneath, not above. You've probably heard about the two Christians who met and one of them said, "Well, how are you doing, brother?" And he replied, "Well, under the circumstances, I'm not doing badly." And the first Christian said, "Well, what are you doing under the circumstances? You should be above and not beneath."

Now, over the years, independently of this list, I made a little list of indications that to me alerted me that I was probably dealing with a curse. I only say probably. And this is, I made this independently of Deuteronomy 28, but it's amazing really how close it is. And I happen to have a list of seven. Now, I want to be very clear, I'm not saying if you have one of these, it's absolutely sure you're under a curse. You need to examine the possibility and seek God. But if you have several of them, the more you have, the greater the possibility that you're under a curse.

And here's my little list. Number one, mental and or emotional breakdown. Where people fall apart, that's a phrase that's used today. You say he or she just fell apart. That's what I'm talking about, emotionally or mentally or both. Number two, repeated or chronic sicknesses, especially if they're hereditary. Because, you see, curses pass from generation to generation. Also, in situations where doctors cannot find any normal cause. Number three, what are called female problems: barrenness, a tendency to miscarry and problems with menstruation. And Ruth and I have dealt with so many cases like this that wherever a person comes for prayer in that category, we just simply act on the basis that it's a curse. In fact, we have come to the place where we really feel often we're wasting our time to minister to the sick without first teaching them how to be delivered from the curse.

I once, we once called for a lineup of people with female problems, and in the middle of the line was a man. So when he came up, I said, "What's your problem? How can you have a female problem?" He said, "My problem is depression and that's female." I'm afraid I didn't accept his statement. The next one, a breakdown of marriage and family alienation, where families fall apart, where marriages break up, where children are alienated from their parents, brothers from sisters. Very, very probably a curse at work. The next one, financial insufficiency. And I want to be careful how I say this. I don't think that poverty for a short period, it may be a test that God is putting us through. But if you're always short, if you never have enough, if you're always scraping, I think you're very probably under a curse.

Then the next one is what they call accident prone. In other words, you're one of the people who always has an accident, you know? Now this is, this is kind of objective because insurance companies will check on you and they'll give you a higher premium if they classify you as accident prone. I mean, that's not natural to be the person who always breaks your ankle when you step off the curb or your wife always slams the door, the car door on your finger or whatever it may be. Or it's always your eye that a little bug flies into. I mean, it's, it's not natural if it's always going on. And then finally, in a family, a history of suicides or unnatural deaths. If there is a frequency of those things in a family. You could say a curse is like a long evil arm from the past, and you don't know how far back. And it's stretched out and every time you're just about to succeed or get to where you want to be, this evil arm trips you up and you have to get up and start again. And you get so far and you're tripped up again. And that really becomes the story of your life. And I, you'd be surprised how many people have told me stories like that. And so many times they've said, well, the same thing happened to my father or my grandfather. In other words, it seems to run in our family.

Or another simple picture is a dark shadow from the past over your life, shutting out the sunlight of God's blessing. And you can see other people walking in the sunlight, and you know it's there and real, but somehow the sun very seldom seems to shine fully on you.

Let's go to Deuteronomy 28 for what I would call the primary causes, both of blessings and curses. And fortunately, they're very simple. The first two verses of Deuteronomy 28 says this,

> "Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God."

Now, that's a translation which I think is followed by most modern translations, but the old King James used to say,

> "If you will listen diligently to the voice of the Lord your God."

And in Hebrew, that phrase is formed by repeating the word listen. If you will listen, listening, that's emphatic, to the

voice of the Lord your God, and do what He says. So very, very simply, the primary cause of all blessings is listening to God's voice and doing what He says. Now, the primary cause of all curses is exactly the opposite. In verse 15 of the same chapter, Deuteronomy 28:15,

> "But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you."

So what's the cause of curses? Not listening to God's voice, not doing what He says. So there, basically, you have the two root problems or the two root causes. The cause of blessing, listening to God's voice, doing what He says. The cause of curses, not listening to God's voice, not doing what He says.

So we're going to deal first of all now with curses that proceed from God Himself. And there is one supreme cause which is stated in Exodus chapter 20, verses 3 through 5. This is the first part of the Ten Commandments. And let me say before we read, the greatest and most common cause of curses in people's lives is breaking the first two commandments. In fact, I'm inclined to believe you cannot break those commandments without coming under a curse. Now, let me read those words.

> "You shall have no other gods before Me."

But the Hebrew means just as much beside me. It's not a question of having the Lord as the main God and other gods as well, because He says,

> "I am the Lord and beside Me there is no other God."

So you must not acknowledge any other God except the true God. And the second is what we would call idolatry.

> "You shall not make for yourself any carved image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me."

Notice that's a specific feature of a curse, it goes on for at least three and probably four generations. But whenever you go to a source other than the true God for things which you are free only to seek from the true God, whatever source you go to, you are actually making your God. So if you go to a fortune teller for information about the future which God has said you shall not receive through that channel, through that fortune teller, you're making the power behind that fortune teller your God. If you play with the Ouija board, if you get involved in all sorts of occult experiences or cults that deny the truth of the Bible. In all those things, you are making a God who is not the true God. So it's very important to say this, the curses pronounced for the breaking of the first two commandments cover every form of occult.

Now in Deuteronomy chapter 27 verses 15 through 26 we have 12 curses pronounced. And when Israel went into the promised land, they had to pronounce all these curses upon themselves. If they disobeyed the law, they automatically came under these curses. They couldn't get into the promised land without. And I think it's very much the same in a way when we come into a relationship with God. If we're obedient, we come under the blessings, but if we're disobedient, we're in real danger of coming under the curses. Now, I'll just give you my little summation of the things on which the curses are pronounced in Deuteronomy 27 verses 15 and following. Number one, once again, idolatry, false gods. That's always the top of the list. Number two, disrespect for parents. And this is repeated in the New Testament, Ephesians 6:

> "Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

My personal conviction is, any person who does not honor his parents never will have it well with them, never. And I can think of scores of examples of people. That doesn't mean you can't get saved and speak in tongues and go to heaven when you die. But there'll be something missing in the quality of your life until you adjust your relationship with your parents. That doesn't mean you have to agree with your parents or do everything that they say, but you have to respect them. I think of another young man I dealt with. He

had a very bad relationship with his father. His father was dead, buried in a cemetery more than a thousand miles from where we were. But when this truth really penetrated, he took a journey of a thousand miles to the cemetery where his father was buried, went to the grave, knelt at it, confessed his wrong attitudes to his father, wept his heart out, and got up a different person. And from then the course of his life changed. Now, I, I, I know that there are lots of parents, especially today, you have a lot of reasons for having something against them. I understand that. I say there are no delinquent children, there are only delinquent parents. But nevertheless, if you want to have it well with you, you better do what God says. You can't afford not to.

Then the next, and we must go quickly in this list, is treachery against the neighbor. And the book of Proverbs says,

> "Whoever rewards evil for good, evil will never depart from his house."

And then injustice to the weak or the helpless. And personally, I can't think of anything more weak or helpless than a baby in its mother's womb. And personally, my conviction is, anybody who deliberately procures an abortion comes under a curse. I would never minister to such a person without dealing with the curse. I want you to understand, I'm not saying you're cursed forever. Please understand. I'm telling you the problem because I'm going to show you the solution. And then illicit or unnatural sex, especially incest. And again, I don't know what the particular figures are here, but in the United States, it's now estimated that one out of every four girls under 10 has been sexually molested, and one out of every five boys under 10. And I cannot think myself that it will ever happen without a curse following.

Then in Genesis, now we're going on from this list. In Genesis chapter 12 we have God's call to Abraham. And we need to look at that because it has something significant in it. God calls Abraham out and promises various things. And in verse 3, this is the end of the call. He says to Abraham,

> "I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you."

So there's both a blessing and a curse. I believe that was necessary because whenever God singles out a man to be blessed, that man becomes the object of all sorts of evil satanic forces. So God incorporated a protection. He said to Abraham,

> "Anyone who curses you, I will curse."

And what is the generic name for cursing or speaking against or abusing the Jewish people? Anti-Semitism. Now, in my personal opinion, anti-Semitism almost invariably is followed by a curse, for an individual, for a nation. And if you look at the history of the last 19 centuries, you can see nation after nation after nation that came under a curse because they cursed the Jewish people.

Then there's another very important curse pronounced in the prophet Jeremiah, which is just a few short words, and I think often we pass them over without really appreciating their significance. Jeremiah 17 verses 5 and 6:

> "Thus says the Lord: 'Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord. For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land which is not inhabited.'"

Notice, please, that that's a very good description of somebody under a curse. Blessings are all around, but he lives in a salt land. Rain falls everywhere else, but it doesn't fall on him. What's the cause of that curse? Trusting in man, making flesh your arm. But the scripture says,

> "whose heart departs from the Lord."

In other words, here is a man who's known the supernatural grace and blessing of God, and then turned back to relying on his own efforts, turned his back on God's grace. And that brings a curse. In Zechariah 5 verses 1 through 4, Zechariah had a vision of a flying scroll, and there was a curse on each side of the scroll. One was on a curse on anyone who steals, and the other was on anyone who commits perjury. And in the vision, this scroll would go into a person's house, take up lodging there, and the whole house would disintegrate. See, that's the nature of a curse. It doesn't just affect the particular area, but it has a kind of corrosive effect all around it. And then in Malachi 3, I think we have to look at this. Malachi 3 verses 8 through 10:

> "'Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, "In what way have we robbed You?" In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me,

> even this whole nation. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and prove Me now in this,' says the Lord of hosts, 'If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour you out such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.'"

Now, I'm not teaching that all Christians ought to pay tithes, because as I understand the New Testament, it's not law, it's grace. But I would suggest to you that grace should make us more generous than law. We're told we have a better covenant established on better promises. Do you think on that basis we could offer less than the Israelites? But I'll say this one thing, stinginess toward God brings a curse. It is very poor economy to be stingy with God. And I tell Christians everywhere, when the offering comes round, God does not need your tips.

Another specific source of curses is men who speak on behalf of God as God's mouthpiece. And there are many examples of this in the Bible. We'll only look at just a few. The first is found in Joshua chapter 6 and verse 26. After Israel had captured and destroyed Jericho, Joshua, the leader of God's people and God's mouthpiece, pronounced a curse on anybody who would subsequently rebuild a city on that site. In Joshua 6:26:

> "Then Joshua charged them at that time, saying, 'Cursed be the man before the Lord who rises up and builds this city Jericho; he shall lay its foundation with his firstborn, and with his youngest he shall set up its gates.'"

That's a very specific curse, not a general curse, but the form that the curse would take would be that the person who rebuilt Jericho, it would cost him the lives of two of his, two of his sons. Now, I'm sure most of the Israelites forgot that curse. It just receded into history. But about 500 years later, in the reign of Ahab, king of Israel, a man did just that thing on which Joshua had pronounced a curse. And this is recorded in First Kings chapter 16, in the reign of Ahab. First Kings 16, and the last verse of the chapter, verse 34.

> "In his days Hiel of Bethel built Jericho. He laid its foundation with Abiram his firstborn, and with his youngest son Segub he set up its gates, according to the word of the Lord which He had spoken through Joshua the son of Nun."

The marginal translation says, "at the cost of the life of his son." And most modern translations follow that. So the man who went against the curse pronounced by Joshua 500 years earlier, it cost him the lives of two of his sons.

Now I want to go on to other sources of curses. And the next one is very important and very little understood by contemporary Christians. I call it persons with relational authority. That is persons who have authority because of a relationship. Now authority is a very unpopular concept in many places, places and parts of the world today, but the fact remains it's still real. Authority is not created by man, it proceeds from God. And there are many different relationships in which a person has authority. Now you may not may or may not like it, but a husband has authority over his wife in certain contexts. Parents have authority over their children, teachers have authority over their pupils, pastors have authority over their congregations, just to take a few examples. Now, because of the authority relationship, words spoken by those persons to those under their authority have special supernatural power, whether they're blessings or whether they're curses. And if you look at the Bible, you'll find that second to the blessing of God, the most important blessing that any person could ever have in his life was the blessing of his father or her father. That's still true today. I say to any of you whose fathers are alive, do everything in your can, in your power, everything you can to obtain the blessing of your father, and your mother, but primarily your father. It makes a lot of difference. When I was saved, I'm afraid I had a bad attitude toward my parents. I thought they're not saved, I'm saved, they don't understand, I do understand. I praise God, He rebuked me for it. And He showed me that I could not expect His blessing if I didn't honor my parents. And before they died, I had shown them the honor that was appropriate. I don't believe otherwise I could have ever enjoyed the blessing of God in my life and ministry.

Now let's consider a few other possible examples. And most of these are constructed out of situations that I have actually dealt with, but I've kind of changed a little so that I don't expose the identity of people. Let's take a father. This is perhaps the commonest of all. A father has three sons. The first is the firstborn, of course he's always welcome. The third, the youngest is brilliant. But the middle one is neither firstborn nor brilliant, and he has a lot of the same characteristics that his father has. Have you ever noticed when people are bad and they're bad in the way that we're bad, we like to take it out on them rather than ourselves?

Have you ever noticed that? Parents, if you pick on one of your children, it's probably the one that's most like you, if you knew it. And what you're objecting to is what's in you that you don't like. Anyhow, so the the father says to this second son, "You'll never succeed. You'll always be a failure. You'll never make it." What's that? It's a curse. And I've dealt with many men in their 40s and 50s who were still struggling against words spoken by a father before they were teenagers. Or let's say the father has a daughter, 15. Like some young ladies of 15, she has acne. And the father has to drive her to school every day. And every day she's up there in the bedroom putting things on her pimples. And so she's late. And so the father gets exasperated. And one day he says, "You'll never get rid of those pimples. You'll have pimples for the rest of your life." 15 years later, she's a married woman with children of her own, and she is still struggling with her acne. Why? Because of a curse.

Let's take about teachers. A teacher has a pupil who can't spell. Maybe he's got what they call dyslexia. You know, you put the letters the wrong way around. You're silly. You're stupid. You just don't try hard. You'll never succeed. Now, I know teachers shouldn't talk like that, but sometimes they do. And what's the result? A child, a boy or a girl, that never can make it in life. Ruth and I have a friend, a teacher said to her when she was a teenager, "You're shallow." She's now, I think, in her 60s, or at least in her late 50s. And we discovered that she, all her life, she has been struggling against that statement, "You're shallow." And the strange thing about it is, if anybody doesn't deserve that statement, it's that lady. She is far from shallow. Do you see, there's authority behind those statements, and that makes them powerful.

Usually speaking, there's a demonic element. Let me just show you one thing in James chapter 3 which is very important. James 3 verses 14 and 15:

> "But if you have bitter envying and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, soulish, demonic."

In other words, if your attitudes are wrong and your reactions are wrong and you speak, what's going to come out will have a demonic element in it. Then we come to another tremendously important area. Perhaps the most common of all, what I call self-imposed curses. People pronounce curses on themselves. In Genesis chapter 27, we have the story of how Isaac was going to bless Esau, and the mother, Rebecca, who was the first Yiddishe mama, if you know what a Yiddishe mama is, switched them and she got Jacob acting like Esau and claiming the blessing. Jacob wasn't reluctant, but he was afraid. And he said this in verse 11.

> "Jacob said to Rebecca his mother, 'Look, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth-skinned man. Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall seem to be a deceiver to him; and I shall bring a curse on myself and not a blessing.' But his mother said to him, 'Let your curse be on me, my son.'"

She took on herself the curse that would have been due to Jacob. A self-imposed curse. Now, if you go to the end of the chapter, just the last verse, you find Rebecca beginning to use very negative language about herself. Rebecca said to Isaac in verse 46,

> "I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these who are daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

I'm tired of living. What's the good of living? That's a typical statement by somebody who's under a curse, you see? Never permit yourself to say that. Don't make negative statements about yourself. Don't say, "I'll never be able to do this. I never succeed. I'm no use. I'm a failure. I just can't take it anymore." And then you go on and you say, "I wish I were dead. I'd be better off dead." Do you know what you're doing? You're inviting the spirit of death. And he doesn't take many invitations. Ruth and I dealt with countless people who needed to be delivered from the spirit of death because they'd invited it. They'd imposed a curse upon themselves. And we've learned one beautiful verse that will help, that has helped hundreds of people. And I'll share it with you. Psalm 118 verse 17:

> "I shall not die, but live, and declare or proclaim the works of the Lord."

If you have made a negative remark about yourself, if you've imposed something negative on yourself, you need to revoke it by the positive. You see, as a remarkable example, you know that Peter denied three times he knew

the Lord. Later on, after the resurrection, beside the Sea of Galilee, Jesus had a personal talk with Peter. And three times He said, "Do you love me?" He made Peter affirm three times that he loved him. Why did he do that? Because Peter had to revoke the negative statements he'd made before the crucifixion, see? So if we've said something negative and brought some dark shadow over us, we need to revoke the negative and replace it by the positive. And this verse is a perfect one.

> "I shall not die,"

doesn't mean you'll never die, but it means Satan's not going to kill you before your time.

> "I shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord."

Then, the last common cause of curses is what I call unscriptural covenants. Exodus 23 verse 32 in relationship to the people whom Israel was to dispossess from the land of Canaan. That is all of them idol worshippers, people who lived in total rebellion against the living God. Moses said, Exodus 23:32:

> "You shall make no covenant with them nor with their gods."

You understand, if people have false gods and you make a covenant with those people, you are also making a covenant with their gods. Now, I'm going to say something that I trust will not offend anybody. And I say it simply because my desire is to help people. One extremely common example of that in our contemporary culture in the Western world is Freemasonry. Because a person who becomes a Mason makes a covenant with those who are Masons. Freemasons will tell you that it's secret, but it's not. In the 1950s, a book was published in Britain by an Anglican clergyman named Hannah called "Darkness Visible," which sets out all the main rites and ceremonies of Freemasonry, and no Mason has ever challenged that book in more than 30 years. And when you become a Mason, you have to pronounce a curse on yourself if you disclose the secrets of the Masons. And it includes things like having your tongue cut out, your right arm cut off and thrown over your left shoulder, and your body being exposed in a place where the tides rise and fall twice in every 24 hours. Those are self-imposed curses. And that Freemasonry is an idol religion is clear in the 32nd degree, the Royal Arch degree, which acknowledges and offers worship to a person called Jahbulon, J A B U L O N, which is a combination of Jehovah, Baal, and Osiris. And so the true God of the Bible is joined together with two idol deities whom God has totally condemned. And when you make a covenant with that, you're making a covenant with those gods. There are other ways that this kind of curse can come in. Uh, tribal societies, very commonly a baby or a young person is initiated into the tribe by certain rites. Very often there are, um, cuts made on the skin or powder inserted under the skin, and that exposes that person to the curse that's on the idolatry that's the, the, the focus of that tribe. And then there are curses pronounced by servants of Satan. In an African Christian church, two elders fell out with one another. And this may seem strange to you, but it's quite common in Africa. The one elder went to the witch doctor to get him to put a curse on the other elder, okay? And when he did that, the witch doctor was very happy to oblige because it was a Christian, you see. And this is what he did. He went out somewhere into the bush, got some soil of a certain kind, brought it back, smeared it over a hand mirror, and then he said to the elder, "Now wipe the soil away and tell me what you see." And he looked in the mirror and saw the man, the face of the man on whom he wanted to curse, in the mirror. Now the witch doctor said, "Take a knife and cut it through the mirror." And he did. And when he did that, blood appeared on the mirror. And when the elder returned, he discovered the other elder was dead. What would you call that, see? You couldn't call it murder. Can you understand why the Bible prohibits witchcraft? Jesus said,

> "Behold, I give to you authority over all the power of the enemy."

He didn't say the enemy doesn't have power. He said,

> "I'll give you authority over that power."

That's the realistic approach. And just one interesting example because this is something that's unfamiliar to many Westerners. In the conflict between David and Goliath, when David went out with his sling and no armor, Goliath was angry and insulted. And this is what happened. First Samuel 17:43.

> "So David, so the Philistine said to David, 'Am I a dog that you come to me with sticks?' And the Philistine cursed David by his gods."

Do you understand? Before they joined in battle, he invoked his idol gods. And David replied, "I'm not coming to you in my own name, but in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel." See, it was a fight between gods. And you know

who was victorious. But I just want to point out to you that Satan's servants have power to curse. Again, I could illustrate it from examples of people that we personally have helped.

One final way in which a curse can come, stated in Deuteronomy 7 and verse 26.The previous verse says about the inhabitants of Canaan,

> "You shall burn their carved, the carved images of their gods. You shall not covet the silver or gold that is on it."

And then it says, verse 26,

> "Nor shall you bring an abomination into your house, lest you be doomed to destruction like it. But you shall utterly detest it and utterly abhor it, for it is an accursed thing."

So when you bring anything that's associated with idolatry or the occult into your house, you're opening the way for a curse to come into your home. Again, this is something we deal with frequently. I tell people, and after such a service as this, if you believe you've needed deliverance from a curse, you better go home and check what you've got in your home. Check if there's anything there that advertises any other God but the Lord Jesus Christ. My personal principle is I don't want anything in my home that dishonors Jesus Christ. Because, let me give one quick example. We often have cases where parents tell us that the children don't sleep well at night. They're restless, they cry, they're frightened. Now, one common reason for that is that somewhere in that house is something which gives Satan right of access. You need to go through your house from top to bottom, clean out anything that's associated with the occult, any kind of superstitious thing. If you have horse shoes to ward off ill luck, that's superstition. It doesn't ward off ill luck, it opens the door for Satan.

All right. Now, we come to the really important climax, which is how to be released from a curse. And I want to give you some simple instructions. When you've met the conditions, all right? But resisting is sometimes an ongoing process. It's like if there's a strong wind blowing, you have to keep the door shut, see? If you open the door, the wind will come in. Then I say, establish a clear scriptural basis for your release. The best one is Galatians 3:13 and 14:

> "Christ has redeemed us from the curse, having become a curse for us, that we might receive the blessing of Abraham."

Give you a few other scriptures. Ephesians 1:7,

> "In Him, Jesus, we have redemption through His blood."

Colossians 1:12-14,

> "The Father has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood."

So through the work of Jesus on the cross, we can be delivered from the domain of darkness, that's Satan's domain, and translated, carried over, into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. It's like there are two territories, and there's a chasm between them. This territory is the territory of Satan. This territory is the kingdom of God. But there's only one bridge across that chasm, and that's the cross of Jesus. If you take that bridge, you can get out of this kingdom and into that kingdom, which is where God wants you.

Then, 1 John 3 verse 8, the second part,

> "For this purpose the Son of God was revealed, that He might"

what?

> "Destroy the works of the devil."

To do what? Destroy the works of the devil. That's why He came. And then Luke 10:19 which I quoted earlier, Jesus says,

> "Behold, I give to you authority over all the power of the enemy."

So those are very clear scriptural bases.

Then, when you've established that basis, confess your faith in Christ, because Jesus is the high priest of our confession. It's on the basis of your confession, what you

say about Him, that He acts as your high priest. Thirdly, commit yourself to obedience. You remember, how do we qualify for the blessings? What do we have to do? Hear God's voice and do what He says. So when you've received your release, make up your mind, commit yourself, from now on I'm going to listen to what God says and do it. The next step is, confess any known sins, either by yourself or your ancestors. Because the sins of your ancestors can in some ways affect you. But there's a difference. You are not guilty for your ancestors' sins, but you're affected by them. You understand? You are responsible for your own sins. But in order to be fully cleared, if you know that your ancestors were idol worshippers or Christian scientists or Mormons or, let's not go too long into this, but something that's totally unscriptural, be released from it.

Then you need to forgive all other persons. Jesus said,

> "When you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone,"

what did He say to do? Forgive. That's right. Anything against anyone, that results nothing and no one. Unforgiveness in your heart is a barrier to the answer to your prayers. Now, forgiving, forgiving is not an emotion, it's a decision. I tell people, it's tearing up the IOU. Then you must renounce all contact with the occult, okay? By yourself or by your ancestors. Again, you're not responsible, you're not guilty for what your ancestors have done, but it affects you. Then you must get rid of all contact objects, the things I've been speaking about. If you bring them into your house, you bring a curse with them. Then when you've met those conditions, you can release yourself in the name of Jesus. Jesus said,

> "Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you release on earth will be released in heaven."

Now we're going to do that in a moment. But I want to show you where to go from there. When you've been released, then you have to confess and expect the blessing of Abraham. Because we're released from the curse that we may receive the blessing of Abraham. And so Ruth and I are going to make our one of our commonest confessions as a pattern to you.

"Through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, we have passed out from under the curse and entered into the blessing of Abraham, whom God blessed in all things."

How many things? All. Do you want that blessing? God has provided it for you. We'll, we'll probably do that again. Thank you, sweetheart. Remember that it's the blessing of the Holy Spirit. In other words, it's the Holy Spirit who administers the blessing. That's important. You've got to be friends with the Holy Spirit. You see, if you grieve the Holy Spirit, if you don't honor the Holy Spirit, He withholds the blessing. He's got the key to God's storehouse. If you want the treasures, make friends with the keeper of the storehouse. And then, as I've said already, bear in mind that it's in all things. You won't get it all in one night, but you've qualified for it, for it in one night. You understand? If I can put it like this, some of you are going the wrong direction. Tonight you can make a U-turn and start going the right direction. But that doesn't mean you've arrived. You're on the way. You have to keep that direction. You have to keep hearing and doing what God says if you want to continue in the blessing of Abraham. And you have to keep making the right confession. I think I won't make it, let you say it now, I'll wait.

Now, if there are those of you here this evening who feel that in some way there's the shadow of a curse over your life, and you want to be released, I want to lead you in a prayer of release. You remember the story that I told you of Miriam who read the prayer and was completely healed. Now, I'm not promising you healing. That's in God's hands. But if your sickness is directly due to a curse, if you're released from the curse, you qualify for healing from your sickness. So those of you that would like me to lead you, we just have a few moments left. I'd like you to stand to your feet, and then I'm going to lead you in a prayer. First of all, we've established a clear scriptural base. Okay, I gave you the scriptures. Now, you need to confess your faith in Christ, commit yourself to obedience, confess any known sins of yourself or your ancestors. And when we do that, I'll give you a few moments to confess them silently. Then forgive all other persons, and I'll give you a few moments to do a little forgiving. And then renounce all contact with the occult by yourself or your ancestors. Commit yourself to get rid of all contact objects, and then release yourself in the name of Jesus. All right? Now, I'm just going to give you the words. You're not praying to me, you're praying to the Lord Jesus Christ. And He's the one that answers, not I. I don't have the power, He does. All right. Say these words after me. Lord Jesus Christ.

"Lord Jesus Christ."

I believe that You are the Son of God.

"I believe that You are the Son of God."

And the only way to God.

“And the only way to God.”

That You died on the cross for my sins.

“That You died on the cross for my sins.”

And rose again from the dead.

“And rose again from the dead.”

That on the cross You were made a curse.

“That on the cross You were made a curse.”

With every curse that is due to me.

“With every curse that is due to me.”

That I might be redeemed from the curse.

“That I might be redeemed from the curse.”

And enter into the blessing.

“And enter into the blessing.”

Lord, I confess any sins

“Lord, I confess any sins”

committed by me

“committed by me”

or by my ancestors.

“or by my ancestors.”

I ask Your forgiveness.

“I ask Your forgiveness.”

I also forgive every other person.

“I also forgive every other person.”

Whoever harmed me or wronged me.

“Whoever harmed me or wronged me.”

I forgive them as I would have God forgive me.

“I forgive them as I would have God forgive me.”

I also forgive myself.

“I also forgive myself.”

I renounce all contact with the occult in any form.

“I renounce all contact with the occult in any form.”

And I commit myself to get rid of any contact objects.

“And I commit myself to get rid of any contact objects.”

And now, Lord, having received by faith Your forgiveness.

“And now, Lord, having received by faith Your forgiveness.”

With the authority I have as a child of God.

“With the authority I have as a child of God.”

I now release myself

“I now release myself”

and those under my authority

“and those under my authority”

from any curse over our lives.

“from any curse over our lives.”

Right now

“Right now”

in the name of Jesus

“in the name of Jesus”

I declare release.

“I declare release.”

I claim it.

“I claim it.”

And I receive it by faith.

“And I receive it by faith.”

In the name of Jesus.

“In the name of Jesus.”

Now begin to thank Him. That's the surest expression of faith. Thank You, Lord. Thank You, Lord. Thank You, Jesus. Thank You, Lord Jesus. Thank You. Thank You. Thank You.

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Sermon

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