

Prayer Ministry

Small Group Study Guide

Lesson 9. Legal Ground

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. - 1 Corinthians 15:56

Every time a person sins, it transfers authority to the devil. Every time a sin is forgiven, it transfers authority away from him.

Jesus has the authority to override your free will, but He never will because it would be a violation of unconditional love. To override another's free will is abuse.

Satan does not have the authority to override your free will, but he will do anything he can to deceive you into giving him authority. Once you have transferred authority, he will abuse you with it.

Your true freedom comes from being free from any legal claims of the enemy of God, and able to choose to act in obedience to God's will and purpose.

Instruction

For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. - Romans 7:19-20

The Apostle Paul expresses frustration at slavery to sin, and the seemingly helpless feeling it causes. Who has not felt the same while wondering why "I do what I do not want?" This article is geared toward the intercessor, with information on how to help another person overcome a legal claim that binds him. However, the concepts are just as applicable for personal prayer strategies.

Demonic influence is a sure sign of the devil claiming legal ground. Demon possession is the result of a demon, or evil spirit, gaining access to a person's soul (mind, will and emotions). Demonic oppression is a descriptor of an evil assignment on a person through some legal ground. A common example of this oppression is a persistent temptation, generally one to which the subject is particularly vulnerable.

The demons operate in the spiritual realm and may or may not manifest in the physical realm. They make their presence known by compromising the will of the person that is being tormented.

Persistent sin issues can also be a symptom of legal ground exploitation. This may be expressed as a general failure to thrive, an inability to control a bad habit, or struggling with an addiction. The bad behavior or emotional response is not wanted, but the person cannot free himself.

For instance, a man who struggled with sexual addiction professed a deep desire to be free from slavery to that sin. I had every reason to believe that he was honestly choosing life, but something kept drawing him back into the very things he did not want to do. There was a legal claim against him that impinged his free will choice. He was living a life of sin against his wishes.

Prayer Ministry

Small Group Study Guide

A similar symptom is recidivism. When a person experiences some healing and new found freedom, yet is unable to hold the territory, it is appropriate to check for legal claims against him.

Any resistance to healing is a potential sign of legal ground. For example, resistance to prayer, an inability to hear from the Lord, barriers to faith, and a lack of breakthrough would all be reasons to check for a claim against the person.

Causes and Cures

If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. - Psalms 66:18

Every time a person sins it transfers authority to the devil, which he uses to control that person. It should be no surprise that unforgiven sin is a primary reason people are enslaved to the evil one. It may be sin they committed, a wrong they have done intentionally or otherwise. It may be a sin of omission, a good they failed to do.

The antidote is to receive forgiveness. Through prayer ask the Holy Spirit to convict the person of the offense. Ask him to confess that offense as sin and ask the Lord to forgive. Claim the promise that God is ready to forgive and cleanse from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). Act as witness to this spiritual transaction, and encourage the person to release all guilt and shame associated with that sin as he accepts forgiveness. This transaction takes back authority from the devil.

When a person sins against another it causes a transfer of unrighteousness. The victim can become subject to legal claims because of that sin. It may be a sin of commission, such as a form of abuse. It may also be a sin of omission, such as a failure to perform a duty for which the sinner was responsible. It may not seem fair, but the consequence is based on the principle of the clean being defiled by the unclean.

The remedy is to extend forgiveness, thereby transferring authority away from Satan. Jesus instructed that we must forgive others just as God has forgiven us. Identify the offense committed against the person, and invite him or her to forgive and release it. Act as witness to this spiritual transaction, and then you can declare that the legal claim binding that person has been broken.

Rash agreements and promises are another cause of the devil claiming legal ground. An oath is a binding agreement you make to someone suffer the consequences. It has power in the spiritual realm because it implies that you will fulfill your promise or else. Satan fills in the blank in the worst possible way. A vow is a binding promise you make to yourself, and Satan uses the conditions as binding against you. Covenants or contracts are agreements you make with another, and if you are unequally yoked it provides legal leverage for the devil.

We overcome these rash agreements and promises by asking for forgiveness and then appealing to a Higher Authority. God is the highest authority and has the right to overturn the agreement by absorbing the penalty for the sin. We treat this as a spiritual transaction to take the power away from the devil.

Curses provide an opening for Satan to make a legal claim against someone. Our words have authority because we have been created in God's image. A form of His authority has been passed along to us. When we speak harm or evil, Satan uses that as permission to

Prayer Ministry Small Group Study Guide

fulfill the curse. Some curses are intentional, such as hexes, spells and incantations. Others are unintentional, such as self-curses or other careless words.

Generational curses are a result of the commutability of the consequences of sin. The sin of the fathers and mothers is visited on the children to the third and fourth generation. For example, sexual sin in the parents predisposes the children and grandchildren to entrapment in sexual sins. Alcohol abuse by the parents becomes temptation and oppression to the children and grandchildren.

We take back the legal ground lost to curses by forgiving those who invoked the curse. Then we can appeal to God as the highest authority, asking Him to revoke the curse and replace it with His blessing.

Another place where legal ground is given to the devil is through witchcraft. Anyone that engages with the occult or participates in relationship with the forces of evil opens the door to that power. This is why the Lord commands that you have nothing to do with soothsayers, necromancers, witches or mediums (Leviticus 19:31). Use of horoscopes, Ouija boards, tarot cards, and other forms of fortunetelling are dangerous. Some drugs have similar side effects, as well as certain video games and fantasy pursuits. Dabbling with the occult leads to spiritual warfare.

The cure is to be cleansed from exposure to witchcraft. Confess your participation as sin and ask God to forgive you. All the tools and promised power of the occult must be devoted to destruction, so cleanse your life from any association with it. Renounce its authority in the name of Jesus, and ask Him to cleanse you in the physical, emotional and spiritual realms.

Strongholds are any beliefs that stand in opposition to the truth of God. They open the door to the devil through your mind. A common stronghold presents itself as unbelief. Jesus was amazed at the unbelief in His hometown, and was not able to do many miracles there. That is an example of Satan using legal ground to thwart His work. Another stronghold is deception, particularly when people believe a lie about themselves.

The antidote to strongholds is to take these thoughts captive and make them obedient to Christ. We do so by identifying and then interrogating the belief. Then we can confess that belief and ask the Lord to reveal truth in its place. This is the truth that sets a person free.

Finally, soul ties are a common source of legal claims against a person. God gave the gift of sexual intimacy to forge a husband and wife into one flesh. Sexual unions outside of this context create ties between the wrong people. Each participant loses part of his or her personhood to the other, and their identity becomes fractured. The devil uses this tie as legal ground to destroy godly unions and connect evil forces. Soul ties happen on the emotional and spiritual levels, as well as the physical.

The solution to soul ties is to confess the sexual sin and ask God for forgiveness. Then you must choose to forgive and release the sexual partner. After forgiveness, ask God to separate the persons in all three realms by returning what was taken by the other. He can override the consequences of that sin through the blood of Jesus.

Prayer Ministry

Small Group Study Guide

Solution

*He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. -
Colossians 1:13-14*

We are born in sin and have our origins in the domain of darkness. Each one has become a slave to sin and subject to all the legal claims of the enemy. But God has delivered us, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son. All of this happens through redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

When you feel like your free will is compromised and your best intentions are hijacked it is a symptom of your authority being usurped by the devil. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you into truth. Confess your sins and receive redemption. Take a stand against the enemy in the power of the Highest Authority which is God. Take back the legal ground that had been traded away, and walk in the light of the Kingdom.

Love one another. Lead your friends through this process in prayer and watch the Lord set them free as well.

Prayer Ministry Small Group Study Guide

Lesson 9: Legal Ground Exercise

Take a few minutes to complete a legal ground inventory and assessment. This will not lead to a diagnosis of strongholds or vulnerabilities, but provides a framework through which you can pray and investigate. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your thinking.

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is no exposure and 5 is high involvement, what has been your exposure or involvement in each of the following:

Resistance to healing	1	2	3	4	5
Persistent sin issues	1	2	3	4	5
Demonic influence	1	2	3	4	5
Rash vows, oaths, contracts	1	2	3	4	5
Abuse (physical, emotional, spiritual)	1	2	3	4	5
Generational curse	1	2	3	4	5
Witchcraft, magic, spells	1	2	3	4	5
Horoscopes, seers, necromancers	1	2	3	4	5
Occult, Spiritism, séances	1	2	3	4	5
Games: Ouija, video, fantasy	1	2	3	4	5
Addiction	1	2	3	4	5
Sexual sin	1	2	3	4	5
Soul ties	1	2	3	4	5
Cherished sin (unconfessed)	1	2	3	4	5
Cherished sin (unforgiven)	1	2	3	4	5
Rebellion against authority	1	2	3	4	5
Anger or bitterness	1	2	3	4	5
Fear, anxiety, worry	1	2	3	4	5
Depression, suicidal thoughts	1	2	3	4	5
Spiritual oppression	1	2	3	4	5
Failure to thrive	1	2	3	4	5
Stronghold (false belief)	1	2	3	4	5
Other	1	2	3	4	5

Sharing: Legal Ground

Get into groups of four or five and take some time to minister to one another. Ask the Lord to reveal the breach that led to the enemy's claim of legal ground, and ask for the prayer strategy to reclaim that territory. This may include confession, forgiveness, and an act of repentance such as revoking a vow or proclaiming a freedom in the name of Jesus.

Prayer Ministry
Small Group Study Guide

Caring: Legal Ground

Discuss in your small group the ways you will be sensitive to holding and reclaiming legal ground in the future. Then share ideas of how you can intercede for others that have lost their will to the enemy's use of legalism.