

Victory of the Lamb – July 28, 2019 – Pastor Bill Limmer

Matthew 28:18-20 - Promises, Promises – Present Authority

There is a childhood game called Simon Says. In Simon says the players are to do what Simon Says. Part of the fun of this game is when the person saying Simon Says doesn't say Simon says and tries to trick people into doing something. Let's play! Simon says, raise your right hand. Simon says, raise your left hand. Simon says raise your right foot. Simon says, smile while PBill takes a video of you. Thank you. Lower your right foot. Simon didn't say. Simon says, make yourself comfortable because we are through with the game.

Simon Says is a cool enough game as long as Simon uses his or her authority in a good way. I just asked you to do some silly things but sometimes those in authority want us to do things that are harmful to ourselves or others.

This morning we are continuing our series Promises, Promises. In this series we are looking at some of the promises that God makes to us. And we want to be very mindful that even though human beings may be very sincere about their promises we know from our personal life that we have broken promises and people have broken promises to us. These broken promises leave relationships filled with anger, mistrust or even broken. It is kind of like a relay team in track. The first runner starts off the baton in hand and is to hand it off to the next runner at the appropriate place on the track and so on. But if any other runner drop the baton, break the promise, the team is disappointed and is at a loss.

But God is faithful to all of his promises. The promise that I have for you is for you. Whether you are middle schooler or high schooler mining your way through friendships and cliques. Whether you are college or just post college trying to find your niche in life. Whether you are a parent of young children or teenagers trying to make the best decisions and lead your children to do the same. Whether you are an empty nester looking for a new challenge. Or whether you are retired and finding yourself busier than you have been in years or whether your eyes are growing dim and your strength is weakening. This promise is for you.

Jesus actually has two promises for us today that are wrapped around a command, kind of like an Oreo cookie. They just go together. Build your life on these promises. Don't just know them. Build on them. Here is Jesus first promise to us today: Matthew 28:18 **Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.**

Jesus has all authority. What does Jesus authority look like and act like and what is the motivation behind his authority? Jesus has authority over creation. John 1:3 **Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.** And God said, "Let there be, and there was." and it was so. That is authority. How many of us wouldn't like to just say something and it is done? Let the house be clean? And it was so. Let the debt be gone and the bank account full. And it was so. Let that speeding jerk get a ticket. And it was so.

Jesus has authority over the natural world. Mark 4:39 **He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!"** Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. The Sea of Galilee is roughly 19.9 billion gallons of water – that is a little bit more than Poseidon Rage at Mt. Olympus in the Dells. Jesus told this roughly 19.9 billion gallons of water to stop and it did, not over days, nor hours, nor minutes, not over seconds but in a single heartbeat.

Jesus has authority over the affairs of human history. He is the one who places all governments in their place. Romans 13:1 **Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.** The authorities that exist have been established by God. That goes for the US Gov't from President Washington to President Lincoln, to the Bush's, to President Obama and Trump. And not only our government but all the governments of the world. And no, I don't understand all of that so you can thank God that I am not the one in authority.

Jesus has authority over Satan. Satan wants you and me to think that Jesus doesn't rule over him. Satan wants you and me to think that he is not on a leash, that can do whatever he wants, like a wild hyena in Lion King. But Satan is on a leash. He is vicious but he is on a leash. Some of you are familiar with the book of Job. Satan wanted to destroy Job but God said you can only go this far, You can read about this in Job 1 and 2. Here is another example: Mark 1:27 **The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him."**

Jesus has authority over sin. God was even directing the Jewish crowd, Pilate who knew that Jesus was innocent, as he completed the plan of salvation for all people through the perfect life and innocent death of his Son. Acts 4:27,28 **Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. 28 They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.** This is key! No evil is outside of God glorious control in your life. Nothing can rob you of the confidence that God is working in all things for the good. And know I don't understand all of that either but God is all knowing not me. I am so thankful that things over my head are under his feet. Psalm 103:10-12 **He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. 11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; 12 as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.**

Jesus has authority over diseases. In Luke 17 we have the ten lepers who get healed. **Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. 12 As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy^[b] met him. They stood at a distance¹³ and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"¹⁴ When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.** That is why in our prayer requests we not only pray that the doctors and nurses do what they can do but that God would intervene and lay his hand of healing on our loved one. One of the ways God heals people is through the amazing and wonderful gift of modern medicine. But any number of us have had the experience of the highly trained and skilled medical professionals tell us there is nothing more that they can do. But our loved one is still with us.

Jesus has authority over death. In fact, the context of his saying these words about authority is several weeks after he was crucified, died, and was buried and then three days later walked out of the grave with authority even over death. Death doesn't get the last word. Jesus does. And his word works and is authoritative. Acts 10:39 **They killed him by hanging him on a cross,⁴⁰ but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. 1 Corinthians 15:55-57 Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"^[a]⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.** Death is not authoritative, Jesus is. Death is not an impenetrable locked door. Death is an open door that ushers in eternity. Death couldn't hold Jesus down. Death doesn't have the last word. Jesus does.

Jesus has all authority. And **Jesus' authority gives us confidence and humility**. Jesus' authority is the context to which he gives us this command: **Matthew 28:19,20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.** And in this command there is the comfort of God's authority over the conversion process. God has authority over his mission to bring the good news of Jesus to everyone. He cannot fail. That is what gives sharing the love of Jesus hope. Because Jesus has the authority over his mission we can bring the good news to everyone in joy. Nothing is too hard for God.

And while we are following the authoritative Jesus. He has one more promise for us. **"And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age."** God is at work in us and through us. God sends you and me out to do what only God can bless. That's fun. That's exciting. That is God at work.

As you share the good news of Jesus, recognize that God rarely works outside of relationship. DL Moody said, out of 100 people, 1 will read the Bible, the other 99 will read the Christian. What does your new story look like? What does your social feed look like to someone who is following you? Here is 3 tips for caring out God's command;

Develop friendships

discover their story

discern next steps

Brady Shearer when asked by a friend why he was a Christian said, I believe I was put on the earth to make a difference. "I believe the best way to make a difference is through love. And I believe the greatest example of love is Jesus who showed his loved by laying down his life not only for his friends but for enemies, for all people. It is actually a pretty remarkable story I'm still following." Will you follow with me?

No matter what your circumstances, where you are at, what you have done, what you are facing, who you are facing, the sovereign God has present authority. Will you live like with Present Authority and see the difference that makes in your life and in the lives of others for time and for eternity?