

## **Controlling and the Jezebel Spirit**

### *Prayer*

This is very closely akin to the Spirit of Jezebel. Today we will briefly expand our study of the Spirit of Jezebel to look at control issues and identifying features. Much of the material on this has come from the Word of God, various researches on the subject and my favorite text on the subject “Confronting Jezebel – Discerning and Defeating the Spirit of Control.” As I stated last week the primary purpose of this sermon/lesson series is to educate, make aware and avoid Jezebel or controlling spirits gaining a foothold in our church.

There is a quote that says: “If you love something; let it go. If it comes back it is yours forever, if it doesn’t it was never yours in the first place.” The Spirit of Jezebel would add: “If it doesn’t then hunt it down and kill it.”

As a recap and minor expansion on what we discussed and before we delve into control, the primary characteristics of the Spirit of Jezebel are:

1. Refusal to admit guilt or wrong doing
2. Takes credit for everything
3. Uses people to accomplish its personal agenda
4. Is secretive and withholds information
5. Speaks without clarity and introduces confusion
6. Volunteers for projects to get control
7. Lies
8. Ignores or seeks to discredit those who disagree
9. Never gives credit or shows gratitude without an ulterior motive
10. Criticizes everyone, although not always to their face
11. Practices one-upmanship
12. Sequesters others private information to themselves for leverage
13. Talks incessantly – loves their own voice
14. Spiritualizes their problems off on God “God told me to”
15. Insubordinate of higher authority
16. Seems almost clairvoyant – shows up at meetings not authorized to attend and never advised of and seeks to control.
17. Uses surprise to catch people off guard “gotcha”
18. Sows the seeds of discord
19. Demands the center of attention
20. Is vengeful
21. Tries to make you look like you’re the one with a Jezebel Spirit
22. Insinuates disapproval – no room to express opinion for fear of disapproval
23. Know it all attitude
24. Ambitious
25. Gift or position giving to create a feeling of obligation
26. Independent of fellowship unless it forwards an agenda

## 27. Only respects authority when it is theirs

So as we can see from the character traits how closely the Spirit of Jezebel is to the issue of control. This is why we call her a controlling spirit. This is not to be confused with the worldly Jezebel; which is a woman who steals another woman's husband; although the derivative comes from the same source. She will stop at nothing and doesn't care whom she hurts to get what she wants.

### **Now on to control**

Two things have been evident in the church since its inception...

- The desire to control
- The desire to dominate

These two factors together are the base form of what we term witchcraft. Witchcraft is essentially nothing more than trying to exert illegitimate control over another person's will. It is a work of the flesh.

Galatians 5:19-20

*(CEV) People's desires make them give in to immoral ways, filthy thoughts, and shameful deeds. They worship idols, practice witchcraft, hate others, and are hard to get along with.*

*(NIV) The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions*

The desire to control is like witchcraft because it is in total contradiction to the nature of God himself. God has given us all free will. God will not violate his gift of free will to us. God never forces us, he hedges us in, is available to lead us when asked but he always gives us the choice to follow and walk with him or not.

Controllers use various tactics to get what they want

- Manipulation
- Intimidation
- Domination

Remember her tactics in our last session together on Jezebel?

“Her tactics involved the use of illegitimate, manipulative and wicked control over people.”

Control issues in a person's life may be environmentally or experientially conditioned into a person. This is often a learned behavior.

It is unfortunate but controlling tendencies, are often spurred on by insecurity and self-worth issues.

It is critical in the life of the church that these issues are dealt with. If these are not dealt with they can open up a person to oppression by a Jezebel Spirit.

God wants you to know your worth and value in him. He wants you to know who you are in him.

I do want to throw in a word of caution here. Don't judge your brother or sisters motives for why they are doing something... Look at the big picture and pray about it. It is way to easy for the enemy to rip down a relationship if you are not careful or presumptuous.

### **Manipulation**

How do you recognize this... well one easy way is quid pro quo... you do this for me and I'll do that for you. There is never a doing something for another's benefit without a self-focused motive behind it.

Various methods of approach to manipulation are used: Flattery, false promises, pouting, temper tantrums, self-pity, withholding sex in marriage, withholding finances in marriage, suicidal threats and emotional blackmail and many others.

Here is a concrete example for you...

How about the old guilt trip? Have you ever heard anything like: "Send in your financial support to this important TV ministry now or we will be going off the air. So many souls will be lost, you can prevent this today with your gift of x." or how about from the pulpit: "You must give x if you expect God to bless you."

Don't ever be taken by this controlling manipulation. People must have the freedom to be moved on by the Holy Spirit regarding where and when to give and not be manipulated into a response.

### **Intimidation**

"If you don't do this I will divorce you"

"Just keep it up and Ill take the kids"

"It's up to you, but if you want to keep your job..."

"They are looking for someone to be recommended to that role but..."

How about when you start to present an idea in a business meeting and your boss raises his eyebrow or begins tapping his pen.

Intimidation always seeks to get you to act a certain way as a result of threats. The controller uses fear to place the person under control usually by the threat of some serious loss.

## **Domination**

This is exactly as it sounds... dominating another through force. Battered wives are a good example. They are given no freedom, can't visit friends or go out by themselves. Many times they are threatened with injury or death. If they violate the rule and are beaten, they will place the blame on the individual. "You made me punish you, why did you do that?" or "Now look what you made me do..."

In less severe circumstances... I can remember a boss that I had, she was so insecure that she had to take credit for everything and nothing anyone else said could ever be right. I remember once in a meeting a colleague said Ray what time is it? I said: "It's 2 o'clock" and she jumped in and said in a snotty tone, "no it isn't its 2:03" Another time, I remember asking a question about a job situation that I was going to be in and my boss said: "why would you need to know?"

In this domination mode a controller will often try to point out tiny flaws. It is the result of their low self-esteem that seeks to gain worth by finding flaw in you.

## **Where do controllers come from?**

There are actually several sources...

One source is those who have been controlled. Those who have been a victim of a controlling person will often seek to protect themselves by becoming like the person who was exerting the control over them.

Another source is when domination or abuse come into play. This is often the case with women who have been abused. They learn to use the tools of charm, seduction, flattery, catty comments and temper tantrums and even subtle manipulations to get what they want. To compensate for the lack of physical force a woman who has suffered in this way may seek to find other ways of gaining control.

False religion. Some have used religion as a platform to gain control. Consider a false prophet giving manipulative direction. Let's say a person is in the church and has a great piece of land that this pseudo prophet has had their eye on. A false prophesy is spoken out that the person with the land will be Gods mighty hand and will save the nation of Zimbabwe. The Lord would say to sell all of your possessions and follow the will of the Lord. Then the prophet approaches the individual with an offer to purchase their land to help with "God's plan" – PS... This is what pastors are for, to protect and watch over the flock.

Yes, the enemy goes to church too. We must be ever vigilant.

How can you avoid false ministry and ministry that seeks to control rather than connect you to God?

True ministry is not about labels; it is about relationship and love. It doesn't throw labels on people but walks with you on the journey to discover who you are in Christ Jesus. If you have a genuine call of God on your life, you won't have to announce it, God will make it evident. We as the Leadership and body train to recognize it and develop it and help you to reach what God has for you.

As a Pastor, here is a free revelation from me to you... If you are upset over how people are receiving the message of Jesus that you have given, it could be an indication that the message is coming from you and not from God... If it is his message then let him worry about how it's received. You are not in charge of what God has given you. You must simply be obedient and give it.

I am sure Moses wasn't exactly thrilled with the idea of walking in to Pharaoh and saying: "Let my people Go!" Especially after a few plagues had come upon Egypt. I kinda think he knew the reaction he would get...

Here is one that surprises a lot of people...

### **Predictability.**

Now you might say: "What?" but stay with me a minute. What if we are so entrenched in the way that we are doing something that we will do anything to manipulate or coerce things to stay the same. I have seen pandemonium break out simply because a pastor chose to not use the pulpit that was in the church. He didn't want to stand on the dias behind a great big wood pulpit and separate himself from the congregation, he wanted to be on the floor face to face and co laborers for Christ on the Journey together. Yet the tradition was violated and the routine was shattered.

Other examples would be changing the color of the church, moving the sanctuary around. I can remember one Sunday I came here and did the sermon then the worship service. Incidentally, no body complained... Good for you.

Seeking predictability can lead to control. Being predictable is not a bad thing but taken to extremes it is bad. Some predictability is good and can lead to comfort. You see the danger is that when a person "Needs" predictability it is an indication of insecurity and lack of trust. Consistency and predictability are not the same thing.

Consistency - conformity in the application of something, typically that which is necessary for the sake of logic, accuracy, or fairness

Predictability – consistent repetition of a state, course of action, behavior, or like, making it possible to know in advance what to expect

In this context predictability abrogates faith... We need to trust in God.

### **How Control takes root**

Control takes root in people because of fear and insecurity.

Insecurity is the deepest root cause of the problems of fear, anger, jealousy, resentment and control.

Are you beginning to see this morning why I have placed such a heavy focus on our self-worth, our value and our identity in Christ?

The power of control is seductive. It gives people who are insecure a feeling of self-worth and importance. In many of my personal studies, I have often found there to be a significant correlation between low self-esteem and the determination to control other individuals. Insecure people don't want to feel insecure. The fastest way to have that go away is to be in control of those they come into contact with so they don't have to feel that way anymore."

Once again, can you see how controlling can open the door to the Jezebel Spirit?

### **Pride**

Let's talk about pride... Pride comes before destruction and a haughty Spirit before a fall (Prov. 16:18) When we examine the stronghold of pride, and make no mistake it is a stronghold, we see that it is closely tied to insecurity. You will not hear a prideful person say anything like: "It was my fault", "I'll own this" or "I'm sorry" they can't... the best you can expect is a non-apology such as "I'm sorry you misunderstood me..." placing the focus back on you instead of them.

Criticism is rooted in insecurity. We put others down elevating ourselves in our own minds.

Controllers are bound up by a fear of rejection. They can admit no wrong because they cannot possibly take the chance of non-acceptance.

Insecurity...

Okay... time for another clarification...

Not everyone who is insecure is a controlling person. In fact, every single one of us here, if we are honest with ourselves, have some measure of insecurity within us. Our culture promulgates this within us. We are driven to have nice houses, good cars, and dress well. All of us want to be accepted. It is all to fill an insecure void within us.

...One that we eventually discover is only filled with Jesus.

## **So what do we do about insecurity?**

We need to give it to Jesus. We need to place it at the foot of the cross. Our security should be in Jesus. When we are secure in him, he delivers us from our insecurities, we are free. True we relinquish our rights to live insecure lives and suffer. But you know what? I'm good with that!

You see, Jesus unconditional love eliminates all rejection. We are truly free in him, he validates us; he shows us our worth. We are free in him! Jesus love is unconditional; it is no longer tied to our performance. We have accepted our limitations and given them to him. His love fills us and that void is full. We know we are accepted. We must have the courage to surrender. God doesn't interfere with our choices.

Finally let's discuss what motivates controllers?

- They cannot tolerate being wrong
- They have a need to be elevated
- They award *themselves* roles and titles
- They always credit themselves
- They crave power and authority and will do anything to achieve it
- They are no-it-alls and dominate any conversation they are in
- They feel that no one can do as good a job as they can
- They take things into their own hands – and sometimes out of Gods

If we don't deal with the control issues in our lives then we create an opening for the Spirit of Jezebel to do her work in us and through us. By recognizing and being aware of these indicators we can be vigilant and protect our relationships, our friendships, our families and the church.

You are being equipped with the tools of ministry. These are not tools to go out and start a witch-hunt or condemn your brothers or sisters. If anything, this message is a message of introspection. Look inside, if there are areas of insecurity in your life, give them to Jesus. You have no reason to be insecure, you are a child of the King. He has paid for you with the blood of his Son Jesus Christ and made you worthy. Jesus didn't shed his blood for worthless people, he shed it for you. You have tremendous value and worth. You need to receive it in Jesus Name.

Galatians 5:1

*Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*

Don't let yourself be bound by insecurity be free in Jesus

*Prayer*