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Weekly Encourager – 15 November 2009

## PERSEVERE IN YOUR FIGHT OF FAITH TO BECOME FREE - AND IT WILL HAPPEN

**“He (Moses) persevered (by faith) because he saw him who is invisible.” Hebrews 11: verse 27**

If asked what is needed to defeat schizophrenia, I would say: "Firstly, a living relationship with Jesus Christ, secondly, a persevering, believing faith in Jesus and thirdly, a willingness to summon and receive prayer-help from other Christians."

Let's look at each of these essential signposts to encourage you in your fight to break free of the most powerful stranglehold Satan has on the human mind.

**1. A living relationship with Jesus Christ.** Because Jesus is the Saviour of the world and the eternal Son of God, He is the only one to have defeated the powers of spiritual darkness. He alone has the power to defeat the strong, dark stronghold of schizophrenia. He has given to every believer, whether schizophrenic or otherwise, the necessary power to become free. More schizophrenics are now seeking to live in the power of Jesus and overcome the effects of taking constant medication. Their will is being stirred and hope is springing out of a living faith.

I was never a match for the power that overtook me in 1965 and robbed me of the conscious joys of life. But, praise God, I had some nine years earlier as a boy of 14 surrendered my life to Jesus and received his indwelling Spirit into my life. So when "the demonic blow" hit me I instinctively held on to God - though in a very loose kind of way at times. I didn't realise it then, but it was God holding me and watching every moment the happenings I went through.

I've often thought what would have been my responses over the whole of 26 years suffering in a mental prison, had I not had Jesus at the helm of my life. There would have been no other power to help me face up to the onslaught in my mind, no strength to recover after the electrical shock treatment dealt me its worst, no inner fight to muster against this demonic robber seeking for an opening to weaken my will and triumph in some suicidal destruction.

You may have schizophrenia and are reading the good news about Jesus being the way out of your bondage for the very first time. Let me encourage you to believe in him as the Son of God and receive life in his name. Pray the prayer at the end of this message and decide to surrender your life to the one who surrendered his life on the Cross for you to give you eternal life. Such a confession will bring Jesus into your life through the power of His indwelling Holy Spirit.

**2. A persevering believing faith in Jesus.** It ought to go without saying that if you have a living relationship with Jesus you will possess persevering believing-faith. But the emphasis I want to make is the necessity of having the kind of faith that perseveres till you "pray through." In the case of your life as a schizophrenic that means nothing less than defeating the bondage in the name of Jesus Christ and getting your life back.

It means setting apart time with God in prayer so that you grow in confidence in the one you love and catch hold of his power to break the bondage shackling your mind. Persevering means having diligence. "The time we give to prayer by deliberately planning is the measure of our value of prayer," says a well-known intercessor. As a schizophrenic, you are in a fight to get your freedom. You'll have to pay a price to get it. It's a price that involves setting aside time to meet with God. You'll learn not to crowd God out of your life, but with a bulldog determination you will hold on to your times of meeting with God because in such times you receive power and strength to fight on and overcome.

Persevering in faith involves "standing in the faith". Read Ephesians Chapter 6 from verse 10 onwards and you will see that the Apostle Paul talks about standing in the faith. What does he mean? Nothing less than keeping your faith in Jesus intact from day to day. You're a soldier on a mission - the kind of soldier described there in the passage - to break the evil bondage of a spirit of insanity over your mind and your life has to be geared to living a soldier lifestyle to regain your freedom.

There will be days when feelings will seek to get the ascendancy over faith but a lesson Jesus teaches you is to surmount your feelings and get back into staging a war of faith. You may feel tired of fighting on many occasions - weariness can easily set in - but you know God's grace is there to strengthen you at every turn and you will finally prevail because the Saviour you love has promised that if you "ask it will be given to you, and if you seek you will find and if you knock the door will be opened."

**3. A willingness to summon and receive prayer-help from other Christians.** Never be embarrassed to ask other believers in Jesus to support you in prayer. Your day of freedom will arrive much sooner if you have a prayer force around you. Remember, little prayer = little power; more prayer = more power; much prayer = much power. Some prayers, it seems, need an amount or volume of prayer before they are answered... as if the vials in heaven have to be filled with many prayers of the saints before the job gets done. Sometimes, God works in such power that the schizophrenic stronghold is broken as quickly as it was by Jesus for Legion in Mark 5. Whichever way, God will lead you into freedom – and make no mistake that prayer unleashes a force powerful enough to cut through the strongest gates of brass and the unyielding gates of iron around the mind.

Don't be afraid to ask God to lead you to intercessors who will take you on their heart and carry a continuing burden for you. If you have the prevailing forces of a team of intercessors behind you, I believe that your freedom will be accelerated much more quickly. The day that God broke through in my life and said, "Today, you will be a free man" was the culmination of much prayer by others and myself but the deal was done hours before I reached my home and cast out with the help of Jesus the demonic stronghold that had had a home in my life for far too long.

Never minimise how much you need the prayers of others. The Bible talks about us bearing one another's burdens, as Christians. The word burdens can mean many things but it can mean carrying a prayer burden for someone like yourself with a demonic bondage of schizophrenia. Praise God for those Christians who see such a presence as a challenge to prayer until victory comes. Remember that Jesus has promised us that if we ask anything in prayer believing it will be granted (see Mark 11.24).

IF YOU WISH TO INVITE JESUS INTO YOUR LIFE, DO PRAY THE FOLLOWING PRAYER:

***"Lord Jesus Christ, I know I have sinned in my thoughts, words and actions. There are so many good things I have not done. There are so many sinful things I have done. I recognise that I am a sinner through and through and am sorry for my sins and turn from everything I know to be wrong. You gave your life upon the cross for me. Gratefully, I give my life back to you. Now I ask you to come into my life. Come in as my Saviour to cleanse me from sin. Come in as my Lord to control me. Come with the strength of your grace and the power of your Spirit to defeat the evil spirit of schizophrenia that troubles me and so come right through into your glorious freedom. Amen."***

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