

Join us for a

A meeting
with
Reverend
Billy Miller

May 19th @
10am

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FORTRESS OF
JOY CHURCH

The Snare

We should all know by now that the devil, as a roaring lion is walking among us seeking someone to swallow up. The Lord gave us ample warnings to be on guard but not to yield to fear. Yes, the devil hates us and yes he would kill us if he could, but greater is He within us than he who walks among us.

Ephesians 6:11 Put on all of God's armor, that you may be able to stand against the wiles (methods, tricks) of the devil.

The devil operates in a spirit realm apart from our own, he is a spirit being. God's armor is spiritual and it must be worn by faith. The devil is no match for a born-again, Spirit-filled believer. He cannot go head to head with a son of God. So, he resorts to methods and tricks, you could call the devil a methodist. People everywhere are taken captive by the devil because they have neglected the gift of God's armor. Do you know why the devil could not take out Jesus? Because He was wearing His Father's armor.

2 Timothy 2:25-26 With humility instruct those that oppose themselves, try to get them to accept the truth, that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil.

The devil set up a snare for these folks and

caught a bunch of them. The servant of the Lord must approach these folks in meekness. Why? Because these people are offended, the devil used offense as bait for his snare. People who live under the demonic influence do not want to acknowledge their plight, they do not want to admit they were taken. Offense is the devil's most successful bait, it works very well on people who think too highly of themselves. Pride is what caused the devil to be evicted from heaven and he knows how to sow it into the hearts of men. Men are constantly being taken advantage of by the devil and they have no clue. Far too many Christians are ignorant of the devil's activities in their life. He takes advantage of them and they are totally clueless, they get caught in his snare.

The devil uses deceptive baits to lure men away

from the Lord. The only way out and the only way back to the Lord is to acknowledge the truth. If a believer commits to living in the truth the devil cannot get past his armor. So, a captive must accept the truth, they must put on the armor of God to rid the devil from their life.

2 Corinthians 2:11 We are not ignorant of the devil's devices.

Perhaps Paul should have said it this way: **we should not be ignorant of his tricks.** Folks who become the prey of the devil have neglected God's Word, now they must go back and reclaim what they missed. As long as a man remains unteachable, he will remain in the devil's power. A captive cannot do what the Lord tells him because the Lord speaks the truth only. You will know the truth and the truth will make you free.



The Bait of Satan

If we are to lead and live the blessed life we must be willing to yield our life to Jesus.

The devil has had thousands of years to study man and discover his weaknesses. In most cases he knows us better than we know ourselves. We are creatures of habit and our habits can be anticipated and plotted against. All humans have a sense of self-preservation, we have a guarded kind of life. We tend to become independent, trusting in very few people and reluctant to reach out. We become our own watch dog, thus we become militant when others appear to encroach our space.

Mathew 11:6 Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me.

If we are to lead and live the blessed life we must be willing to yield our life to Jesus. When a believer "feels" like they are called to surrender too much they are easily offend-

own people He began to testify of the works He saw His Father do.

Mark 6:3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary along with his brothers and sisters? And they were offended at Him.

These people did not accept Jesus as Messiah or even a minister because they didn't believe He came from the right family. They were offended at Him and so He could not minister to them as the Son of God. The bait of satan is offense and it manifests commonly in ignorant people. When folks do not understand what God wants to do in their life, they snub Him and rely on themselves. That spirit is still among us today, some Christians won't receive an anointed man unless they are of the same denomination. We get offended at the power of oth-

2 Corinthians 5:17 If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away: all things are become new.

When you were born-again you became a new person, your old self was forgiven and forgotten, now it's time for a new attitude. In the spirit you got a new lease on life but in the natural nothing changed. We do not become this new creature until we begin to renew our mind and this does not happen over night. Some born-again Christians never change, they remain the same old man. They do not feed their spirit with the food it needs to become more Godlike. Consequently, the devil still has a voice in their life and the fruit of Christ is very obscure.

I talked to a dying friend one day, I wanted to be sure he was saved. Here



ed at what Jesus calls them to do. We spend our entire lives "raising ourselves" and now the Lord is asking for that responsibility. We really don't realize it but we take offense at the way the Lord wants to bless us. When Jesus came to His

ers when all the while God sends His ministers to everyone. We are so foolish, we just stand there and let the devil rob us of our blessings. As I previously stated, people who think too highly of themselves are easily offended.

is what he told me, "Jerry, I always believed, I just didn't act like it". My friend never renewed his mind, I had no clue he was a believer. I am not ashamed of the Gospel, I want the world to know Jesus is my Lord and satan is defeated.

Avoiding the Traps

The devil is a trapper, he sets traps for his prey, which are people. I know a lot of people who as children grew up in church, but they have been **kidnapped** by the devil. The devil caught them and used the bait of the world to entice them away from their Father. So, some folks live freely in this world and some are taken cap-

Word, so there can be no doubt of its authenticity.

The law was a book of rules, a lot of do's and don'ts, it made no provision for the Spirit. So, when you **choose** to be led of the Spirit you transition from flesh to Spirit. You are no longer bound to the limits of the

being led by God's Holy Spirit. We cannot see where God sees but He can clearly see what the devil is plotting against us. Sometimes God will lead us right into the valley of death and He will empower us to come out unscathed. Other times He will lead us around an impending storm and we won't ever know how blessed we were!



tive of the devil. How does one maintain their freedom?

Galatians 5:16, 18 This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. If you be led of the Spirit, you are not under the law.

So, how does one walk in the Spirit? How are we led of the Spirit? Jesus said, "My Words are Spirit". So, be led of the Spirit, we must be willing to do what He says to do. We begin by doing the written Word recorded in our Bibles. As we grow and advance, the Lord will speak to us a personal Word, custom made to fit our situation. Whatever He speaks to us can be substantiated in His recorded

natural man, you become a **supernatural** being. When a person is led by the Holy Spirit of God they drive the devil crazy because he cannot figure out their next move. The devil can easily snare a creature of habit, but a man who receives instructions from the Lord is totally unpredictable.

2 Kings 6:9 Elisha sent word to the king of Israel, warning him not to go near a certain place, because the Syrians were waiting in ambush there.

The devil is always plotting an ambush against God's people, but the Holy Spirit always has an alternative plan. We must constantly choose between making our own way or

Acts 19:2 And Paul said, have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed? And they said, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

The devil knows that once a Christian receives and is led of the Holy Spirit, he will have a difficult time trying to ensnare him. So, the devil does his best to keep the Holy Ghost out of the churches. Without the Spirit of God the people will grope around in the dark and stumble into the traps of the devil. A wise man is not a self made man, he knows he cannot be successful in this life without the Spirit of God.

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**Restoring the
supernatural power
of God back
to the local church**

Offenses are Stupid

Jesus said that we could prosper in His promises if we could avoid being offended. The word offense comes from the Greek word *skandalon* which means trap stick or stumbling block. Hunters in this particular region use a technique to catch primates. I don't know what they do with these monkeys and it's not the issue, the point is they are captured. The hunters will hollow out an oblong

hole in a large stone. Then they will put a stick, a *skandalon*, in the hole. A monkey is a curious creature and they will reach in and grab the stick but they can't remove it. They have too much pride to let go of the *trap stick* and so they are taken into captivity.

Jesus gave us this illustration so we could be wiser than

the primates. The devil is the hunter and he puts out sticks, worthless sticks all the time and our curiosity leads us to take hold of them. We can be too prideful to drop the *stupid stick* and he takes us captive. The Lord says an offense has the same value as a stick and we won't let go of it. So how do we get ourselves free?

John 8:32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Often times we struggle with the truth because we must admit we were wrong. Taking responsibility for our lives is like letting go of a *stupid stick*, something you really don't need.

