

## The Principle of ‘Rule of the Victor’

The following revised application of the principle of “Rule of the Victor” (ROV) is an effective approach to one particular aspect of spiritual warfare. This application of ROV is particularly useful in environments where occult powers are being used or regional cultic powers of darkness seek to interfere with the proclamation and advance of the Kingdom of God. Settings where the application of ROV is useful include environments where cultists are suspected of employing anti-Christian, pagan religious practices, satanic rituals and/or the use of spiritual powers of darkness to disrupt Christ-centered ministry, churches, personal counseling, gatherings for worship and the proclamation of the Gospel. This includes spiritistic cultures and various expressions of cultural religion where occult practices and power are adhered to and used.

### CASE STUDY

In the course of local church, faith-based, and cross-cultural ministry we have found that cultists were utilizing various forms of pagan religious practice and/or satanic rituals to send (demonic) spirits in order to disrupt the work of the Church, affect Christian leaders, hinder the work of Christ-centered ministries, missionary efforts, and the proclamation of the Gospel. As the Holy Spirit made us aware of this activity, through His grace of discernment and through those who were being affected, we first began to bind these spirits, forbid their activity and send them to Christ for His judgment.

In time we discovered that this same process would be repeated frequently with the same cultist sending spirits each time. We’ve found that each time spirits were sent and we dealt with them authoritatively in the Name of Christ, there would be noticeable and effective change. As a result the cultists would increasingly face defeat and lose a measure of their power to send spirits. Over a period of time and after consistently utilizing the Name and power of Christ, the battle seemed to be stripping them of power. In response, however, the cultists would increase their activity by continuing to use various rituals to gain more demonic power in an attempt to replace that which they had lost. Furthermore, they would enlist the support of other cultists in their personal network. Sometimes the enlisted cultists and their network would send spirits directly to their intended target; and at other times they would transfer the power to the cultist in need.

Faced with this scenario, it became obvious to us that we were involved in a very real battle. Satan was using cultists to attack our ministry, us, and those we were ministering to with demonic spirits. Although harassed we, to a large degree, continued to be successful in our efforts to carry out the ministry God had called us to carry out. Several issues however, bothered us. They were:

1. Being strictly limited to a defensive, reactionary posture. A defensive posture like this could never really be considered a victory. And such a posture is inconsistent with the

overwhelming victory of Christ over evil through His death, resurrection and exaltation.

2. The inability to stop the cultists from continuing their spiritual attacks against us and other victims.
3. In Christ, having been given His authority and promises, we should be able to stop any effort or attempt opposing Christ and His Kingdom.

Reflecting on Biblical examples of warfare, two issues were clear. The victor dictated the terms of defeat and the future military capability of the conquered foes. For example, when the Philistines dominated Israel they removed all blacksmiths from Israel to guarantee their inability to produce weaponry (1 Sam. 13:19-23). In other cases, thumbs big toes or right eyes were threatened or removed to insure that these individuals could never fight again (Judges 1:6-7 1 Sam. 11:2). Horses and chariots were restricted or destroyed to eliminate any offensive military threat (2 Sam. 8:4, 1 Chron. 18:4).

Similarly, the spiritual warfare dynamics of our ministry were not disarming or defeating any of the cultists attacking us. The spirits that were sent against us were defeated but not the *individuals* sending them. We were dodging bullets but not defeating the foe. However, in terms of battle, according to the Scriptures, we are "more than conquerors through Him who loved us" (Rom. 8:37).

In addition, New Testament principles of warfare do not support a continuing "no win" situation such as we were facing. In any given battle between darkness and light, Christ has already secured the victory. It is our responsibility as His servants to use the authority Christ has given us to secure His victory and insure that His purpose prevails. This is the intent revealed in Jesus' prayer "thy Kingdom come, thy will be done" which read in its literal grammatical form is an assertion of God's will here on earth. It is a declaration invoking the rulership of the Almighty King and Lord over the kingdom of darkness and those in participation with it. Jesus made it very clear that the His Kingdom was directly evident in the overthrow of Satan and his works (Mt. 12:28). Jesus also pointed to Satan's defeat as His disciples utilized the authority He had given them to heal the sick and drive out demons (Lk. 10). Furthermore, the Apostle Paul understood this when he made the authoritative declaration that rendered the pagan spiritual influence of Elymas ("the sorcerer") powerless to interfere with Paul's proclamation of the Gospel to the proconsul Sergius Paulus:

*" 'Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind, and for a time you will be unable to see the light of the sun.' Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand. When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord" (Acts 13:6-12).*

John MacMillan makes a similar observation in Old Testament examples of warfare where battles are both spiritual and physical nature. He remarks on the effective use of our authority as God's representatives on earth in the conflict between Amalek and Moses in the wilderness as recorded in Exodus 17:

*All through the day "until the going down of the sun," Moses held out the rod over the valley in which Israel strove with Amalek. Was he praying? There is little doubt that his heart was lifted to God in unceasing supplication for the untrained soldiers of his people. But his holding out of the rod was a demonstration of the authority that was committed to him over the unseen forces that drove forward the Amalekites, and which operate behind every battle (Dan. 10:13,20; Deut. 32:16,17; 2 Ki. 3:21-26; Ps. 106:36-38;). Not in the visible but in the invisible lies the secret of success or failure. Over the spirit-foes of Israel, which sought to thwart the purpose of God, and to hold back His people from the land of their inheritance. Moses exercised the authority vested in him as the representative of Jehovah. By his sustained resistance to these mighty principalities and powers, their ability to aid the Amalekites was nullified. And, as the sun went down, the beaten tribesmen suddenly withdrew... Lifting up his arms and holding the rod, he took authority in the name of Jehovah over the foes of God's people. In his capacity as the representative of Jehovah he was exerting the authority of the throne when he lifted up his hand. It was a declaration of divine judgment to be executed upon Amalek and upon the demon-powers who energized those cruel warriors in their enmity against Israel (John A MacMillan, The Authority of the Believer).*

This is the concept behind the "Rule of the Victor." It is not merely a prayer, although our ministry must always continue to be rooted in prayer. The principle of ROV is not a substitute for intercessory prayer. Rather, it is a statement of a command to and against the powers of darkness based on:

1. Christ's exalted position at the right hand of the Father, having been given all authority in heaven and on earth (Mt. 28:18);
2. Our position in Christ as His children, heirs, citizens, soldiers and agents of His Kingdom who've been given authority over all the power of the enemy to the extent that nothing even be allowed to harm us (Lk. 10:19).
3. His command to go into all the world to turn people from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God (Mk. 16:15-18; Acts 26:18)
4. The principles of Biblical spiritual warfare illustrated throughout Scripture.

The principle of "Rule of the Victor may be applied against every cultist or power that in any way attempts to exercise his/her or its will against the people or purposes of God and His Kingdom

## JURISDICTIONAL AUTHORITY

The Bible clearly recognizes that God's kingdom is an organized structure of authority. Satan's kingdom is also organized in a systematic authority structure with various demonic ranks. Fred Dickason writes in *Angels, The Elect, and Evil*, "There is enough evidence to say that there are distinct and graded ranks [among angels], but not enough evidence to make a complete comparison or organizational chart." Evidence also indicates that in addition to ranks, there are regional or geographic responsibilities. For instance, the "prince of Persia" resisted the angelic messenger to Daniel (Dan. 10:13). This was high-level demonic interference from a spirit that had responsibility for the region of Persia. The text also indicates that the "prince of Greece" will come later (Dan 10:20). In Rev. 2:13 there are references to regional strongholds of Satan ("throne of" and "dwelling place of Satan"). This appears to be an influence above and beyond the work of personal spirits. These we are referring to as cultic or regional spirits.

Similarly, in dealing with cultic structure, there are regional responsibilities on a human and spirit level. Whenever a cultist sends spirits against an individual, there appears to be a jurisdictional protocol not unlike law enforcement protocol between city and county, country and state, state and federal, etc. This protocol, in an organization of strict authority, requires that outsiders who send spirits into the region that you or your ministry are located in, must receive permission from whomever has jurisdictional authority. Consequently, ROV must be applied to whoever gave permission for the spirits to enter the territory as well as the ones sending the spirits. This further depletes the cultist power structure. Specifically, ROV may be applied against any cultist or region, past or present, which has exercised or is exercising its will against you, your church, Christian leaders, Christ-centered ministries, and those you minister to. This includes those who may have been involved in and/or traumatized by the practice of rituals as well as anyone who is currently engaged in the spiritual attack.

The justification for stripping the cultist's followers and victims of being able to use their power is again based on the authority structure of the cult. The "defeat the leader, get the followers" concept of representative battle is illustrated in the David-Goliath scenario. If the general is defeated, the followers are also defeated.

## WHAT THE PRINCIPLE OF RULE OF THE VICTOR IS AND IS NOT

The principle of ROV appears to be a vital tool for the spiritual defeat of darkness. It is based upon biblical principals of warfare and authority. We have tested and use ROV over several years and hundreds of times. Prior to the application of ROV, many cultist's sent spirits repeatedly and with some noticeable affect. After discerning or suspecting cultist activity and applying ROV, there has been a remarkable and noticeable change in affect and environment with resulting fruit. We believe there has also been overwhelming victory to the extent that the same cultists are unable to send spirits repeatedly. There are indications that they have been successfully stripped of demonic/cultic power and are unable to regain it through participation in rituals or any other means.

There are also indications that spirits used by cultists to advance the kingdom of darkness are removed and rendered ineffective but that personal spirits causing or taking advantage of lust, anger, bitterness etc. remain. Although incapable of advancing the kingdom of darkness through demonic means, these defeated cultists are able and do communicate through normal physical channels with their personal contacts in the cult network. Normally they request their contacts to join the battle and attack you, your ministry, those you minister to, your church, leaders, etc. The continuing application of ROV penetrates deeper and deeper into the cultic authority network, defeating more and more sophisticated members and regions of the cult family.

ROV is simple to apply and should be considered an effective weapon in the battle against the spiritual dynamics of pagan religious practices, Satanism, and the powers of darkness. It should not, however, be taken simplistically. Cultists do not take defeat graciously. Neither does Satan. The battle is tiring and demanding. It will require alertness and perseverance. Whenever possible, it is best to work in a team. Having the agreement and covering of a team is absolutely essential.

It is important to know that the principle of ROV is not a substitute for dealing with an individual who has given ground to the enemy through sin. Confession and repentance of sin, renouncing one's participation in it and the opportunities given to Satan along with a declaration of and submission to the Truth is the only means of breaking the power of spirits gained through an individual's sin. ROV is not a substitute for the hard work of progressive sanctification.

We also strongly advocate that genuine intercession be made on behalf of the defeated cultists. No matter how heinous their conduct has been, they are also the victims (to one degree or another) of demonic blinding and deception. It would be appropriate to pray and authoritatively command that the "god of this world" would release his grip upon their understanding and cancel his blinding effects in order that they would see the Light and Glory of Christ and confess Jesus as Lord. Pray that God would raise up a servant to pursue this individual with the Truth and that they would be delivered from the kingdom of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the Son of God's love, to the praise and glory of His grace.

#### POSSIBLE APPLICATIONS (not exhaustive)

**MISSIONS:** particularly in spiritistic or other dark cultures where occult powers used, i.e. witchdoctor, shaman, Muslim Imam, etc. If there is a spiritual attack by this cultic power upon the missionary or his/her ministry, ROV may be applied. Regional cultic powers will seek to interfere with any evangelistic or church planting effort. Continued application of ROV will free the region's populace in order that they might hear and respond.

**CHURCH/PASTORAL:** If Satan and the powers of darkness are interested in hindering the advancement of God's Kingdom and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it is quite possible, in fact, there is evidence to support that cultists pray and even infiltrate churches to various degrees

Original author unknown. Adapted and revised by Keith D. Martens, M.Div., Kingdom Ministries, Inc. May 2003

of involvement specifically for the spiritual disruption and defeat of local church ministries and pastors. ROV could and at times should be regularly applied for pastors and leaders and/or prior to the start of services or outreaches sponsored by local churches.

**SPECIAL GATHERINGS/CONFERENCES:** Where the Gospel and God's Truth is presented, i.e. evangelistic outreaches, gatherings for corporate prayer and/or worship, "prayer summits", spiritual warfare conferences, pastor's/leadership conferences, mission's conferences, marriage conferences, etc.

**HIGH PROFILE MINISTRIES:** Focus on the Family, Promise Keepers, Billy Graham Crusades, etc.

**PERSONAL MINISTRY:** In settings where personal ministry (counseling, prayer ministry) is engaged in. ROV is particularly essential in ministering to those who have a history of occult involvement, ritual abuse, and/or who are breaking free from cultural religious and family influences that are antagonistic toward Christ and the Gospel.

The statement of ROV is again a declaration made from our position in Christ and the authority He gives to the Body of Christ and the individual believer. We believe it is best utilized in a team, where two or more are gathered in His Name. It is not a ritual nor is it to be used as such. It is only effective if it is done in humility with dependence on the empowerment of God's Spirit while fully aware we have Christ's authority to secure victory to fulfill God's purpose and will. In this regard we must be forthright and intentional in our declaration of ROV. Just saying the words is not only unfruitful but dangerous.

The first paragraph that follows is the original version written, we assume, by the original author who is unknown to us. The following paragraph is a recent revision based on our more recent experience, understanding and use. We believe it is in keeping with the original author's intent and have found it easier to use and understand. In either case, a declaration of this sort is effective when applied in faith and with the authority we have in Christ.

I am indebted to James Friesen, PhD, who passed this on to me in a time of great need. It has literally and absolutely transformed many situations for the glory of God and the advancement of His Kingdom. It has also been instrumental in securing Christ's victory, our protection and the protection of those we love and minister to. – Keith Martens M.Div

#### ORIGINAL STATEMENT OF ROV

I exercise "Rule of the Victor" over all the regions that have set their will against (name), and against those regions that have permitted spirits in or through their territory. I command that they be castrated from ever receiving power from darkness again. I require the immediate disbursement of all their finds from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light (spoils of war) the immediate destruction of all their books (magical arts/sorcery), and the immediate reversal of all their schemes. Penalties applied. To the pit.

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## REVISED STATEMENT OF ROV

In Jesus Name, I (we) assert the resurrected Lordship and dominion of the Lord Jesus Christ over every region, power, or gathering that is purposed against (name) and over every region that has permitted or is permitting spirits in or through their territories.

In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I (we) command that they be cut off and forbidden from every receiving power from darkness again. I (we) command the immediate transfer of all their resources from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of Light and the complete restoration of all things affected or hindered.

In Christ's Name, and with the power of God we destroy all of your magical arts, books, and sorcery along with every means you use to invoke evil. We cancel every ritual, curse, hex, or spell, and all their effects. We command the immediate reversal of all your schemes and send you along with your effects to Christ for judgment. In Jesus' Name, we say that the hand of the Lord is against you now. We disband your gatherings and render powerless your activity in order that you may know that Jesus Christ is Lord of all. We forbid any form of retaliation and now claim the complete restoration of all things according to God's will. With Jesus we claim, "thy Kingdom come and thy will be done now on earth as it is in heaven." We ask for and claim God's presence, peace, power, and protection and submit every part of my/our being to Christ alone who is our fortress and strength. In Jesus' Name.