



**Acts – Can I get a Witness?
Wk. 67 “The Power of God’s Word over Evil”
By Pastor Jody May 02/18/2024**

**Acts 19:11-20 ESV
The Sons of Sceva**

¹¹And God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, ¹²so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them. ¹³Then some of the itinerant Jewish **exorcists** undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims.” ¹⁴Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. ¹⁵But the evil spirit answered them, “Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?” ¹⁶And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. ¹⁷And this became known to all the residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks. And fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled. ¹⁸Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. ¹⁹And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver. ²⁰So the **word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.**

[READ THE TEXT]

**Pastor – “People of God, this is the Word of God.”
People – “Thanks be to God.”**

[PRAY]

[ILLUSTRATION]

“God is dead”

The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche famously declares in his 1882 work, The Gay Science: “God remains dead. And we have killed him.”¹ Nietzsche was commenting on the rise of the secular world and what some believed that science afforded them, and that was to discontinue a belief in God. Science never did that though, it merely started explaining how God works, (math is the language

¹ <https://philosophybreak.com/articles/god-is-dead-nietzsche-famous-statement-explained/>



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of God per Galileo in the 1600s and still being confirmed by people like Dr. John Lennox of Oxford) but intellectual and political leaders ran with this thought and over time contributed to the eroding of morality and stability that Christianity had brought to the modern world. His theory offered people a way to explain their rebellion against God ([Romans 1:18-32 ESV](#)). Although the age of enlightenment could never answer why such learning in philosophy and the sciences eroded culture, it is God’s Word that gives the answer for that.

Romans 1:18, 24-25b ESV

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ²⁴ Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie...

With the absence of God being the main contributor to the morality of society there has been a vacuum of charitable living and ethics in westernized daily life since. Of which it should be noted Nietzsche, shortly after his famous declaration, lost his mind, went catatonic, then 9 years later died in an insane asylum.² It seems that truly **God had given Him up.**

One of the things Nietzsche did develop was the theory of “**Constructivism**”, which claims that reality is based solely on the perceptions of men, and that it would take a ‘**superman**’ to be the Savior of our reality. Later on, it has been noted, that we owe him thanks for Fascism, the Third Reich, and the rise of Adolph Hitler. Perhaps the original superman, Jesus of Nazareth was the best choice, His Words giving life, His acts of heroism defeating evil, **HIS WORD** defining our world!

Different things have tried to take the place of a moral guide since Nietzsche’s famous declaration. We see on the world stage political systems that come and go, as we watch democracies devolve into socialism, culminating in totalitarianism, eventually causing rebellions bringing things back to a democracy to start the cycle over again. Then science tries to take its’ spot and since all are reliant on the earth for life, the worship of Mother Earth takes shape and if you defile her (using plastics, burning fossil fuels, not getting vaxed, & eating meat)

² <https://historycollection.com/the-truth-about-friedrich-nietzsche-and-his-letters-of-insanity/>



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you’re a threat. Then, even when people say they believe God is dead, Satanism is on the rise. *Now wait a minute, the same government that embraces the death of God wants to allow for the acceptance of Satanism* (**seriously how do we have Satan without God**). We have had statues in federal buildings erected for Satanic worship³, we have had self-proclaimed satanists on staff in the White House⁴, and we even had Satanic entertainers (Sam Smith at the Grammys⁵) make special appearances (Ice Spice⁶) with Taylor Swift at the Super Bowl. Separate worldly powers (Politicians, Activists, and Entertainers) all fighting over the seat of control because of a self-perceived absence of spiritual leadership.

Everyone is vying for a position because under Nietzsche’s model of ‘Constructivism’ you can create your own perfect society if you have enough power. BUT I got to tell you, all of those things are really controlled by one evil power who has his hands in everything.

Luke 4:5-6 ESV

⁵And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, ⁶and said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will.

The problem we are facing today is the same problem the 1st century church faced 2,000 years ago. There are demonic forces working against men, they seek to rule and reign over us through politics, banking, philosophy, psychology, science, and even entertainment, but thanks be to God His people can and will be set free! They will be **set free by the Power of our Lord Jesus’ Word**, for by Him and His authority He casts down all strongholds!

During His time with us, Jesus brought in the Kingdom of God. Luke 10 we saw Him send out His disciples in His name, they returned astonished that they had power to cast out demons, of which He comments “*I saw Satan fall like lightning from the heavens*” ([Luke 10:17-18](#)). Jesus had already kicked the devil off his pedestal of

³ <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/us-news/former-us-navy-pilot-michael-cassidy-beheads-satanic-statue-in-iowa-capitol-101702601935717.html>

⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fm2E3UQ105w>

⁵ <https://www.foxnews.com/media/sam-smith-backup-dancer-defends-satanic-grammys-performance-using-these-symbols-positive-fabulous-way>

⁶ <https://twitter.com/Yolo304741/status/1756861740959006990?s=20>



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power and now when He sets you free you are free indeed. The demonic can no longer take, capture, and retain His people by force. If you want to live free from the demonic influence of this world, if you want to live with a strong and secure understanding of how things truly are, if you want to live without fear from the enemy then you need to take this to heart.

MAIN POINT:

**To live by the Power of His Word, to be FREE,
You MUST receive Him as LORD.**

Today you will watch God glorified by the preaching of His Word, and through the act of preaching God tears down the Occult capital of Paul’s day. We will witness His **power over the Fallen World** through the **ministry of the Word**, we will see the fallen world try to emulate God’s Power by their spoken **powerless word**, and lastly witness **persevering change** because of the Ministry of the Word as men call on Him as Lord.

1. The Lord is Glorified by the Power of His Word over a Fallen World.

This next part of the adventure in Ephesus is sandwiched between two unique phrases by Luke to heighten how the Lord Jesus does business in the world, that is still plagued by evil. It is given to us so that we understand how the Kingdom functions, how we should live, and to see how the Devil/Demons are defeated.

¹⁰ This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia **heard the word of the Lord**, both Jews and Greeks.

²⁰ So the **word of the Lord** continued to increase and prevail mightily.

The Word of the Lord Jesus continued to increase and prevail mightily **THEREFORE** all the residents of Asia (v.10) **heard of the Power in His name!** What happened in the Occult capital of Ephesus did two things, it negated the Demonic Stronghold it had over the **rest of Asia** and secondly it implanted the proper fear of the Lord in the hearts of men.



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Where did the problem with the Ephesians start?

Ephesians 2:1-2 ESV

2 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the **prince of the power of the air**, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.

You see it didn’t matter if the Ephesians were in the Occult Proper or not, as living in the town of Ephesus, since it was so overrun with the Occult, all were under its’ influence – the prince of the power of the air, that’s Satan! That’s a good thing for us all to keep in mind. Christian, why do you have to vote, why do you have to show up at school board meetings and community council meetings, why do you have to make Christ’s name known, because culture cannot escape the influence of the Devil. It’s a constant struggle and the Word of God is the only weapon that can make the difference, and a true Christian as King David says, *carries the word in their heart so that he might not sin against Him* ([Psalm 119:11](#)).

What are the dangers of living under the prince of the power of the air?⁷

He can control our understandings.

2 Corinthians 4:4 ESV

⁴In their case the god of this world has **blinded the minds** of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Scripture teaches us that the Devil’s scheme is to keep you ignorant that is why we are taught and should praise Jesus’ name, that He saves us against our will, *that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us* ([Rom 5:8-9](#)).

He can manipulate our free will.

John 8:44 ESV

⁴⁴You are of your father the devil, and **your will is to do your father’s desires**. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth,

⁷ <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/1772/exorcism-true-or-false-part-2>



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because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Jesus is pointing out to a bunch of religious men (pharisees), that what you want is prestige, what you want is to have the best seat at the table, what you want is to have your voice heard as the reverent teacher, that is your Father’s desire (the devil), for he wants people to remain blind. The Devil manipulates people’s will and he will even do it through the religious folks.

So, if we live in a truly depraved society where all things are constructed to lead you astray, to deceive, to manipulate, to rob God of worship, then what hope do we have?

Who is our only Hope?

1 John 3:8 ESV

⁸Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the **Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.**

Hebrews 2:14 ESV

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death **he might destroy the one who has the power of death**, that is, the devil,

Family, your ONLY hope is not in your will power over sin & temptation, your hope is not in your ability to process and figure out the world, your hope is not in the religious leaders of today, nor it’s politicians, its’ philosophers, nor its’ entertainers. **Your only hope in life and death is the Lord Jesus Christ!** He came not only to die for sins, He came to defeat the devil! Our culture today, even though it claims it believes God is dead, it is inundated with occult films now, have you noticed? The enemy is trying to use fear not to get you to look at them, not to go against them, because in reality they are the ones afraid. For when men call on the name of the Lord to be saved people are delivered out of this world, people are removed from the torment of a Godless life, and they are put into the Kingdom of God, underneath the protection of our Lord Jesus.



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MP:

To have the Power of His Word, to be FREE, You MUST receive Him as LORD. And when you have received Him as Lord you have access to His full arsenal to refute the powers of darkness around you.

Ephesians 6:10-17 ESV

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, **and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,**

And when the Word of God is used as it was meant to be, proclaimed and empowered by the Spirit of God, as an offensive weapon, look at the results it had!

¹¹ And God was doing **extraordinary miracles** by the hands of Paul, ¹² so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their **diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them.**

- **Power over sickness & Power over demons** (Luke 10 again)

God does some amazing things, he uses the superstitions of men, to capture their thoughts, to set them free, to usurp the power of the air. He was actually using tangible things (clothing items) in this world to relate the spiritual victories in the heavens we couldn't see.



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But none of this happens without first someone repenting and receiving the Jesus as Lord of their lives. There is no delivery from this world without proclaiming that Jesus is Lord, that He is your King, that you belong to Him, which is symbolized by Baptism. Paul started with 12 disciples last week, who did that exact same thing, and now it was spreading, not just through Ephesus, but through all of Asia! Perhaps today you are having problems with fear, with anxieties, with the weight of this world, repent, receive Jesus AS LORD, and be saved!

So, this is what it looked like when God is glorified in a Fallen World through the preaching of His Word, now let’s look at what happens when people try to steal God’s glory.

2. The Lord is glorified through the Fallen World’s attempt at their own powerful words.

¹³ Then some of the itinerant Jewish **exorcists** undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims.” ¹⁴ Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this.

• **Attempts to use Jesus’ name as a tool for gain (Sceva’s Sons)**

We have some Jews that the text describes as itinerant, or the KJV I think says it better here using “vagabonds”, they traveled around, they were not permanent residents in Ephesus, we might call them gypsies. These brothers traveled with connections to the temple using their dad’s name, so when they came to a town, they would be received by the synagogue even though their ministry might seem outlandish. This ministry was that of exorcists, and contrary to what you may think about this ministry this is the only place in scripture that this word is used. This word is never used in connection with the casting out of demons done by Jesus, or His Apostles. Exorcism, the



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word, tells of one employing magical words and incantations to expel demonic forces, it was about the act not about the authority.⁸

What these sons of Sceva were doing were employing made up magical words, chanting, and dramatic theater to make people think they were actually accomplishing something. If this was their profession does that mean it was legitimate, I mean could they be casting out demons from out of people. The straight answer is no, for they had no authority, the only one able to do this is Jesus. BUT what we are seeing are the forces of darkness using Jewish snake oil peddlers, to make people think they were doing something, so as to trick people into believing they were accomplishing something. Instead, the practice of exorcism only invites the individual deeper into a false belief that power over the spiritual world can be had if you have the right wand, practice only white magic, and of course pay enough coin. And of course, at the end of all exorcisms if the demon comes back, it is never the exorcist's fault.

There are some churches that still practice exorcisms, even though it was never a practiced sanctioned by the church. What we do see in the church over 2,000 years, is the preaching of God’s Word, the Spirit peeling back from the devil the cloud of confusion from the individual, the person seeing Christ and repenting, and people being set free from this world by receiving Jesus as Lord. NOT just an answer for life’s problems, but bending the knee to Jesus and seeing this life is all about His wishes, His desires, and His will, that’s what it means to be owned by a Lord.

¹⁵ But the evil spirit answered them, “Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?” ¹⁶ And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

⁸ Strong's #1845: exorkistes (pronounced ex-or-kis-tace') from 1844; one that binds by an oath (or spell), i.e. (by implication) an "exorcist" (conjurer):--exorcist.



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- **Attempts to intimidate in Satan’s name (Demonic)**

Well, it’s a bad day, for the sons of Sceva met a truly possessed person and this demon wasn’t having any of it. ‘Jesus, I know’, and of course He did, that was his creator. Demons are created beings for they were at one time angels, who went through the cosmos doing the will of Jesus. They know they have a reckoning, and they live in fear of Jesus. Look at Jesus’ first encounter with a demon after He kicked the devil off his pedestal in the desert.

Mark 1:23-24 ESV

And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, ²⁴“What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God.”

Or how about when He confronts a whole army of demons in a raging mad man?

Mark 5:5-7, 12-13, & 15 ESV

⁵ Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. ⁶ And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. ⁷ And crying out with a loud voice, he said, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.”... ¹² and they begged him, saying, “Send us to the pigs; let us enter them.” ¹³ So he gave them permission... ¹⁵ And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid.

Yes, the demon knows Jesus, and he has heard of Paul, because Paul is wrecking his stomping grounds. So, since this demon is powerless against Jesus, and it’s probably thinking that if Paul does come, if his host hears the gospel, it will mean trouble, he does what is natural. *Let me send a message about what I can really do.* He beats the brothers and strips them down humiliating them before the entire town! There is no loyalty when one plays with the demonic world. But I would wager the demon did not understand the chain of events his act would lead to.



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- **Failed Attempts lead to the Revealing of Truth.**

¹⁷ And this became known to all the residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks. And fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled.

Fear didn’t fall on the people when they learned that an exorcist couldn’t help them, fear didn’t fall on the people when they saw what the demon did, fear fell on the people when **they heard that it was Jesus that caused the whole incident**. The people of Ephesus extolled, or magnified, spoke of, got excited about, whispered in their homes, there was new power in Ephesus and His name was **Lord Jesus**, and He was taking on all newcomers, He was delivering people, and He was scaring demons. What’s more, the demons were glorifying God by their belief in Him and in what He can do! Our God even uses the powers of Hell to rescue His people!

MP: Jesus is our only Hope, BUT only if you take Him as your Lord and recognize His authority even as the Demons recognize it!

[CHALLENGE]

3. The Lord is glorified when people leave the Fallen World because of His Word.

¹⁸ Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. ¹⁹ And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver.

- **Fear falls and confession rises**

Fear fell among those that formerly practiced witchcraft, those that were possessed of demons, those that believed magic could help them live a better life. The fear of the Lord, the true power, it fell with the force of a Black Hole by the HS, and it drew into it those who once were under the prince of the power of the air, and it set the prisoners free. The immediate response was



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for people to confess their former lives. You see confession in the church is a practice done continually to divulge to the community at large there is a new master. It’s a public showing to bring Jesus glory, of what you use to be a part of.

Family, there may be things today that you need to confess to someone today, it might not be magic books, but it could be a worldly philosophy you have believed in. Maybe your trust has been in your skill to make or save money, or your skills to be liked, or your skills to learn, or your skills to be sneaky, or your skills to seduce, or your skills to cheat, or your skills to appear humble, or your skills to hide, or your skills to bully, or your skills to jest, it has all had the same effect in your life, you have gone to things as if they were the magic arts to help you get by in this world and get you out of living a life honoring of God. Let the fear of God fall upon you today and confess what you have been putting your trust in and be set free!

- **Confession Flows and repentance ignites**

Then as the confession flows their repentance ignites. As a display of their repentance, they begin to burn their books. These books, they have actually preserved such a book from this time, in the museum of Britain, and ancient spell book, in case you’re interested. These books were worth in modern equivalency, millions. Notice they didn’t try to sell them and give the money to the church, they were evil and had to be destroyed. There are things in your life family that you cannot make up for, there are things and relationships you need to cut lose and let go of, and there are strongholds that you need to set fire to and let it be dead to you. Confession leads to a repentance that displays you are dead to the world and to the prince of the air, God has called you to be Holy/set apart. Be Holy leave it, and display to this world who your new master is.

When you live by old worldly ways you will always accept the world’s answer for Salvation... This past Super Bowl weekend they played an add from the organization called “He gets us”. In the add it had evangelicals washing the feet of different I guess you could say, people of the world. What was in the add were supposedly Christians washing the feet of every



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recognized representation of people who would call themselves oppressed by the evil doctrine of the Social Gospel. The same demonic doctrine that claims people are not responsible for their sins, and that the church should just accept people the way they are. The projected meaning - we need to apologize for making people feel bad about their life choices because it wasn't their fault but ours based on our Christian forefathers of which we should feel eternally guilty for. It was a giant demonic spell to conjure a lie, to keep people in the dark and remain imprisoned to false ideology.

It was asked through social media by like-minded pastors like myself, if someone (Jamie Bambrick) could redo that video what would they make for that minute time slot for the Super Bowl. I don't usually play videos in church, but for the sake of the topic, I will today.

[The Christian Super Bowl Ad They SHOULD Have Made | He Saves Us](#)

Names/stories in order:

- Kat Von D - <https://www.christianpost.com/news/ka...>
- Josh Timonen - <https://cne.news/article/3337-how-daw...>
- Mohamad Faridi - [OBJ] • From a Strict Muslim F...
- Mike Burden - [OBJ] • Former KKK Member Mike...
- Jeff Durbin - <https://www.godreports.com/2021/03/ov...>
- Sebastian Stakset - [OBJ] • Sebastian Stakset on M...
- Kevin Whitt - <https://preachit teachit.org/articles/...>
- Dr John Bruchalski - [OBJ] • Ex-Abortionist Tells H...
- Laura Perry - [OBJ] • Meet Laura: A Former T...
- Brittni De La Mora - <https://www.christianpost.com/news/ex...>
- Steven Bancarz - [OBJ] • Influential New Age Gu...
- Rosaria Butterfield - [OBJ] • Rosaria Butterfield's ...

Christ as Lord, serves His sheep, and He serves His sheep by calling them to repentance. He redeems them from this world by the power of His blood through a sacrifice, that was determined before time, to save a particular people for Himself. When people receive Him through the preaching of His word, and take Him as Lord and King, He forgives ALL SIN, and raises that person to new life, from every dark and demonic stronghold conceived by



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man. If he can save a wretch like me, as I fit on that screen with those people, then I KNOW he can save a wretch like you.

Confess today in your community the sins you need to let go and turn to the Lord for Salvation.

Let anyone who needs prayer today call upon the elders for prayer and let them display their hope in Jesus.

And may the life of HCC be a light in our community, let the demons in our town fear Jesus’ name, for they are seeing a confessing and believing church that takes seriously the Word of the Lord.

[PRAYER]

[CALL TO OBEY]

Elder - In John 14, verse 15, our Lord Jesus tells the disciples “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” Church, the same is true for us. We are called to not only hear the Word of God, but to obey it.

[COMMUNION]

Pastor Jody explains The Bread and the Wine
Followed by Family prayer over the Bread and the Wine – led by heads of households.

[CONFESSION OF FAITH]

* The Congregation will stand

Elder – “Christians, what do you believe?”

Congregation - recite the London Baptist Confession of Faith chapter 1, section 10:



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"The Bible, which was delivered by the Holy Spirit, is the ultimate standard we should use to resolve all religious controversies and to examine all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, human teachings, and individual interpretations. We find the final answers for our faith in the Bible."

Matthew 22:29, 31-32; Ephesians 2:20; Acts 28:23

[OFFERING+LAST SONG]

[BENEDICTION]

Go in the name of the Father, that in His Infinite Wisdom can and will use the powers of darkness to bring glory to His Son, and He will do the same through us.

Go in the name of the Son, that has cast down Satan and rescues His people from the domain of darkness by the power and authority of His Word.

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that opens our eyes to the real world, helping us to call on Jesus, now go and share this good news with the world.