

DELIVERANCE: 5 Roles for the Saints

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The goal of deliverance ministry is that you never come back—the same goal as in any post-operation doctor visit. If you follow the prescribed steps to remain healthy and faithfully take your medication, you will not need to return to the hospital for further surgery, except in extreme cases. The gospel is sufficient. Jesus is sufficient. The Word of God is sufficient. And submitting to God and resisting the devil, as His Word tells us to do, work.

Identity comparisons are effective analogies that compare believers to job descriptions or statuses to help them understand ways that God wants us to operate. They are found in multiple places in the New Testament epistles and the Synoptic Gospels, in the form of parables or analogies. Examples of this are when Jesus compared us to vineyard workers (Matt. 20:1–16) and to wedding guests (Matt. 22:1–14). These analogies give us greater understanding of our identity and responsibility in Christ.



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"The Secrets to Maintaining Your Deliverance," at .***

As I teach in my new book, *The Secrets to Maintaining Your Deliverance*, these are five analogies that are great in helping the saints understand their Christian responsibilities:

1. The soldier
2. The athlete
3. The shepherd
4. The farmer
5. The bride

#1 Be the Loyal Soldier

Let's start with the most obvious analogy of all, one that appears the most in the New Testament and may be the best-known among believers—that of a soldier. Believers are compared to soldiers in the book of Ephesians, which goes into detail to describe our armor and our mental state in preparing for war.

What makes someone a loyal soldier? Let's first consider what a soldier is primarily known for and why the role of the soldier exists. Being a soldier has three key aspects.

Training: Soldiers are trained to do battle, to never lose a fight, and to know everything about their enemy. What does this mean for believers? Well, we need to take on a "boot camp" mentality. God will allow us to encounter different trials and tests to fortify us and train us in the battle.

How do you train for spiritual battle? Discipline yourself through daily reading your Bible and daily spending time in worship and prayer. Faithfully attend church as often as you can. You have begun the rigorous process of training how to fight. And once you have learned how to fight, you are ready for combat.

Combat: When the Lord determines that believers are ready, He places them into small battles or combat. If you want to maintain your freedom, you're going to have to fight for it. You fight by taking control of your mind and casting down imaginations, learning to discipline the way you speak, and getting involved in different outreaches in your church. All

these things involve combat. Standing up for truth in a lukewarm, evil society can also be a form of combat. Even those assigned to less-obvious levels of warfare are called to action during times of need.

Endurance: The more you fight, the more you will be able to handle in a fight. Endurance is the ability to withstand long periods of fighting or to tolerate multiple attacks on your person. Soldiers are typically known for one thing: not quitting. They are trained to fight to the death, and they will endure just about anything that comes without flinching, because the goal of winning the battle is more important than anything else.

The apostle Paul urged us to become that kind of soldier. He wanted us to be able to endure hardship. Far too many saints are weak and give up too easily. No matter how much it hurts—no matter how hard the devil is attacking you because of your deliverance—endure, and fight back. You're not just a saint; you're a soldier in the army of the Lord, and you are required to take up arms and fight. Don't allow yourself to get caught up with the cares of this life. Learn everything you need to know about the ministry of deliverance and the demonic, and fight back. You have been mandated to fight. You are required to fight. God chose you to fight. Now fight, soldier.

#2 Disciplined as an Athlete

The comparison of the believer to an athlete is found all throughout Paul's writings. I think it speaks to us very clearly regarding discipline. So, not only are we soldiers, fighting God's battles, but we are also athletes.

Athletes are known for three things.

Competing: I believe Paul used the analogy of an athlete for one reason: competition. I know that being competitive has a negative connotation to many Christians, but truly it doesn't

always have to be a self-centered exercise. Every successful athlete must have a competitive edge or won't make the team. Likewise, something inside you must scream, "I'm not going to let the devil win." Anyone who joins a team should have that "we're going to win" spirit.

Christ chose for you to win. Don't allow religion to convince you that being competitive is a sin. It's not. When you join a team, you no longer represent yourself but the team that chose you.

Representing: I truly think that when Christians fail to fight back, they misrepresent the kingdom. You've been selected to be part of the greatest team on earth. But failure to maintain your freedom makes your team look bad. When you stand your ground like a true athlete, you represent your team well.

Winning: Winning must be the goal of all athletes. But victory can be achieved only through two things: discipline and rules. Discipline is the greatest friend of the athlete. Without it, winning will not be possible. Discipline includes the ritual of doing something over and over again until it's perfected. Maintaining your freedom involves the discipline of your mind. Discipline it repeatedly until you get to the point of needing a deliverance only in extreme cases. The second way athletes win the prize is by following the rules. You can't violate God's rules of freedom and expect to remain free. If you play with sin, you will open the door for demons to return. It's foolish for athletes to expect to win a prize if they have been violating the rules of the competition.

#3 Shepherd Your Soul

I know you may not be used to hearing this, but you are truly the one responsible to watch over your own soul; it's not up to your local pastor. Yes, pastors play an important role in guarding our souls, but they are not with us 24/7, and we shouldn't place that kind of burden on them. Ultimately each

of us must shepherd our own soul.

It's your personal responsibility to learn how your pastor shepherds your soul and then replicate that when the pastor isn't around. As shepherds, pastors do three things.

Feed: The main goal of any pastor is to feed God's people. Pastors spend countless hours in the Word preparing sermons to help their congregations grow in their Christian faith. To shepherd your soul, then, you must practice your own personal Bible studies and spend time digging in to the Scriptures. Feed yourself.

Guide: Pastors guide their sheep to green pastures and still waters. It's their responsibility to make sure the sheep are led to safe places and not endangered. The same must be said about your soul. The Holy Spirit will indicate when you need to remove yourself from places that could open the doors to the demonic or lead to temptation. But He will not do the removing for you; it's something you must do as the true pastor of your own soul.

Protect: The following verse gives the perfect contrast of the true heart of a pastor. Pastors protect the sheep from wolves. You must be ready to give your life in protecting your soul from the devil and the kingdom of darkness. Don't run away when you see the devil trying to creep in. Confront him head-on. This means your discernment must be on high alert to see the wolf coming. That requires a watchdog style of protection. I refuse to allow the wolf to gain an inch in my heart—and so must you.

#4 Cultivate Like an Industrious Farmer

Farming-related comparisons show up many times in the New Testament, and Jesus used them quite frequently in His parables. Paul also related the believer to a farmer. I think this was the most widely recognized analogy by those living in ancient times.

A farmer is different from a shepherd or a soldier. This is the vocation of agriculture, so a different set of rules applies. It requires a lifestyle of patience. Most of us who grew up in the city have no idea what it means to farm, but we do know that farmers who raise crops do at least three things.

Planting: A crop farmer's entire lifestyle and vocation depend on one thing: planting. Everything hinges on sowing seed. If this one thing is not done, even if the land gets the right amount of rain and sunlight, the farmer will go bankrupt.

You must be like a farmer and plant into your own life, whatever that may look like. Reading good Christian books; watching good, wholesome movies; listening to good, clean music; enjoying a walk; spending time with family—all of these, not just the overtly spiritual things, plant good seed in your soul. The idea of planting has to do with investment. You must invest in your soul and see yourself like a farmer. Don't be afraid to plant seeds of freedom.

Cultivating: Once farmers plant, then they begin the process of cultivating those seeds by protecting them. The same is true for you. When you get set free, you don't just walk away, trusting God to keep you that way. No. You must cultivate the ground and treat yourself—your heart and mind—like a field. Without good cultivation there will be no harvest.

Harvesting: The goal of every farmer is the harvest. The harvest means farmers will benefit from all the time and effort they spent planting, cultivating and watering. It's not wrong to express joy at your newfound freedom. Tell the whole world about how Jesus set you free—like the man with the legion of demons did in Mark 5:20. Farmers don't hide their harvests. So, don't hide your deliverance. Those who hide their deliverance are bound to lose it.

#5 Be the Pure, Virtuous Bride of Christ

This last analogy is another that the apostles and Jesus

frequently used, that of a bride. All through the Gospels, we find many parables and metaphors related to the idea of a bride or a bridegroom. The apostle Paul had this concept in mind when he oversaw the churches he'd founded. Paul's goal was to keep the church pure while it waited for the Bridegroom to return and take His bride back to His home.

Why is understanding this bride and bridegroom concept important? It has to do with the seriousness of the vows you take when you get married. Once you take the marriage vows, you are held to the standard of marriage—the highest standard of rules in a relationship. A bride is held to a higher standard, which can be summed up in the following ways.

Partnership: Your freedom can be enforced only if you partner with the Holy Spirit. He won't force you to do so. But choosing to partner with Him means you will submit whenever the Holy Spirit instructs you about something that will help you keep the door shut to the demonic. Partnering requires a contractual agreement. When you went through the ministry of deliverance, you in essence signed a contract of liberty with God. It requires you to partner with Him to continue to guard your soul.

Help: Eve was created to be Adam's "help meet" (Gen. 2:18). In other words, Eve was created to help Adam meet the requirements God had given him. You must be a willing helper to your own soul regarding your own freedom. If you won't help yourself, then you won't be able to fulfill all that God requires from you.

Service: Just as a wife serves her husband in various ways, so should the bride of Christ serve Him. We must be willing to serve Him with singleness of heart and mind. I know this might sound strange, but you must serve your own soul as well. Be willing to listen to your spirit when it's talking to you through discernment. Make it your business to focus on your soul, like a bride makes time for her groom.

Freedom will work if you properly use the user guide that God has provided as outlined in Scripture. Deliverance works. Remaining free is possible. He whom the Son sets free is free indeed. How? If you continue in His Word, you will know the truth and the truth will make you free.

Alexander Pagani is the founder of Amazing Church (formerly He Is Risen Tabernacle) in New York City. He is an apostolic Bible teacher with keen insight into the realm of the demonic, generational curses and deliverance. An internationally sought-after conference speaker, he been involved in more than 400 deliverance sessions. He has appeared on various television networks, including TBN and the Word Network. An honorary graduate of Central Pentecostal Bible Institute, he carries a spirit of wisdom and discernment to unlock secrets of the kingdom with signs and wonders following his ministry. He currently lives in New York with his wife, Ibelize, and their sons, Apollos and Xavier. His new book, *The Secrets to Maintaining Your Deliverance*, released this month and is available now at .