

Spirit of Slander Is Raging Against Believers in This Season

The spirit of slander attacks at strategic times—and we're in one right now. I've witnessed in past weeks men and women of God take hits from people operating in a false murderous spirit, and it both grieves and thrills me at the same time. More on that in a minute.

Slander is to make a false spoken statement that causes people to have a bad opinion of someone, according to Merriam-Webster. It means to defame, malign, vilify and asperse, which is a fancy word for a continued attack on one's reputation. Back in 2013, I addressed the slanderous accuser of the brethren, and it has returned at a more opportune time.

Over the last week, I've been accused of having a Jezebel spirit, spitting churches, cussing out pastors, being a lesbian, breaking and entering and stealing from churches, refusing to cooperate with pastors in my city for revival and a few other choice things. Time to rejoice! It looks like I'm doing something right since Jesus said we'd be lied about for His sake just as He was lied about. And the more people spread ridiculous lies and rumors, the more I'll lift up Jesus.

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I take heart in this passage from the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are you when men revile you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be very glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in this manner they persecuted the prophets who were before you" (Matt. 5:11-12).

Responding to Slandering Spirits the Right Way

How you respond to mistreatment is one of the most important aspects of your spiritual life. When we respond the right way, we climb higher—or go deeper—in the Spirit. In fact, a season of slander is a sure sign that you are up for a promotion.

By contrast, when we respond the wrong way, we get bitter. Over time, that bitterness will defile our spirits and dull our ability to sense the presence of God or hear His voice. Bitterness is deadly—and it's easy for the people around you to discern. Where true humility lives, though, bitterness can't take up residence. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

As I said, I've endured plenty of mistreatment during my life, and I can honestly say that I count it a blessing. By God's grace, I've always managed to ultimately respond in meekness rather than retaliating against the poor soul manifesting the character of slanderous Satan. And I pray that God's grace will continue to pour over me as the slander from religious spirits, atheists, radical gay activists and, occasionally, even those who I let get close to me who have believed the enemy's lie continues.

No one likes to be slandered. I don't enjoy it. It makes me sorrow for the one who's committing the sin. The Bible says, "Whoever privately slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy" (Ps. 101:5). And Romans 1:30-32 suggests backbiters are worthy of death. Paul told us not to keep company with a believer who has "a foul tongue [railing, abusing, reviling, slandering]" (1 Cor. 5:11, AMP)—Scripture actually lists the slanderer among the sexually immoral, the covetous, idolaters, drunkards and extortioners. The point is, God hates slander.

Understanding how seriously God takes slander has had a twofold impact on my heart. First, I don't want any part of slander. I don't want to engage in it, and I won't listen to anyone else engaging in it. If someone comes to me with

slander on their lips, I put out the fire and bring gentle correction to help them avoid Satan's snare. Second, when I see the damage the slanderer is doing to himself by attacking me, I take pity on him. While they think their words are digging a pit for me, they are actually the ones who are bound to fall headlong into the hole.

Dying to Your Own Reputation

I've learned over the years to transfer my personal rights to God, knowing He will vindicate me amid the slander—or any other mistreatment. And He has confirmed me time and time again in the presence of my enemies when I give Him the reins. As Paul wrote, "You were bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:20, MEV). I've committed my spirit into the Lord's hands, and, in return, He takes responsibility for my protection, provision and vindication when necessary.

I don't want to be like the accuser of the brethren. And I don't want to swap insult for insult (1 Pet. 3:9). I want to be like Jesus, who, "when He was reviled, He did not revile back; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but He entrusted Himself to Him who judges righteously" (1 Pet. 2:23).

God is the judge. He will make the wrong things right in His way and in His timing. Vengeance is His. He will repay (Rom. 12:19). I won't be overcome with evil, but I will overcome evil with good (v. 21). I will rejoice when I am persecuted because I know that when I respond the right way, I am blessed. My first response is to pray for those who persecute me. And pray. And pray. And pray some more. It keeps my heart clean. I encourage you to do the same.

I've found it true, looking back over the many instances when I've been mistreated, abandoned, robbed, persecuted, falsely accused and otherwise slandered that the initial sting of the mistreatment fades more quickly when you walk in love, speak

the truth in love without being defensive and refuse to retaliate. I've also found it true that God repays, vindicates and takes vengeance on my behalf. If you respond with meekness in the face of mistreatment, you can have the same testimony.