What's in a Name?

It's early Sunday morning. I'm having breakfast at a restaurant near the church where I serve on the pastoral staff. My intention is to have a quiet, leisurely breakfast while going over my lesson material, which I will be sharing with my adult class in about an hour.

My food-filled fork is halfway between my plate and my palate, when my arm freezes mid-air because of something that is going on at the table on the other side of the valanced divider. I hear the voices of three men regurgitating gutter language. To make matters worse, they are using God's and Christ's names in a profane way. But, that's not all. I sense the embodiment of evil radiating from their direction. That's just too much.

From a purely natural side, I resent having my breakfast upset and my Bible study violated. From the spiritual side, I am offended by their disrespect for my Lord and my God. Righteous indignation voluntarily mounts within me. Without giving it a further thought, I bind the cursing spirits in the name of Jesus. For good measure, I ask the Holy Spirit to bring the men under conviction. I've never done anything like this. My action is completely spontaneous. It is a surprise to me. But, at the moment, I know what I can and should do. Nor do I doubt my action will have some immediate results.

However, I am totally unprepared for what happens next.

As though on a given signal, the men stop swearing – all three of them. But their conversation becomes erratic and irrational, maybe because they don't know how to talk without swearing. Maybe the Holy Spirit is befuddling their minds. They become very agitated. One of the men even develops a strange kind of whimper in his voice. The whole situation is obviously awkward for them. They soon get up and leave.

The atmosphere becomes much more peaceful and pure. Breakfast is good and Bible study is even better. ◊◊◊