



Dave Winecoff

PREFACE

Most of us who grew up in the public schools of America received programming on the merits of “not fighting.” As adults there is a strong tendency in many not to confront evil in any form. We have been schooled from an early age that confronting evil is someone else’s job.

As with all armies, we who have enlisted in the army of Jesus Christ also need training on how to fight. We have a manual of arms, the Bible, and an instructor, the Holy Ghost, to teach us how to live victoriously.

I love God. Yet for years after enlisting I lived below the level of God’s promises for me in his written word after surrendering my life to God. I lacked supernatural power to achieve what God clearly promises in His written word for those who believe. What held me back?

I didn’t know, but dutifully attended church services week after week hoping to learn that missing something in my life that was lacking. Most weeks I heard a good message, but never one that radically changed my life.

When I read the Bible myself there were occasional verses I had no understanding of their meaning. What was God saying in such verses? One that jumps to mind is: “from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force” Matthew 11:12. Does this tell us that violence is sometimes called for?

Isaiah said something in chapter 42, verse 19 that struck me as profound: “Who is blind, but my servant? Or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? Who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the LORD’s servant?” Was Jesus amplifying these words of Isaiah in Matthew 15:14 when he said: “Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.” Were Isaiah and Jesus talking about believers in these verses? Why are the life outcomes of so many who confess

Christ often so little different from those who don't profess such faith in the area of sicknesses, bondages and relationships? If many believers really are blind much of the time, why is this so?

Could it be we need supernatural help much more often than we think, and simply don't call for it? Verses like these were right there for me to learn from for years after accepting Christ. But I remained blind to what a study and earnest seeking might have revealed. This booklet attempts to help those who find themselves in the ditch Jesus talked about to climb out.

We are accountable for what God plainly spells out in his written word. We will be without excuse when we stand before the judgment seat of God. We won't be able to justify our lack of knowledge mentioned by God in Hosea 4:6. We won't be able to blame our ignorance on others. We must accept full responsibility for the great task of pleasing God. The Bible says we must look to no man for the answers we need in this life.

Fresh understanding, determination and strength are available to those who are open to break forth to new levels of victory in life through a fresh understanding of the written word of God with the help of the Holy Ghost.

Human nature is so strong that we tend to think and act only in the natural realm. The power to overcome in this present life is available in the scriptures but in a supernatural not natural form of power. Join with me in drilling these supernatural lessons learned into your heart and mind so when the next attack comes you will be ready to fight in a supernatural manner. Combat skills are only truly useful only when they become second nature. "In him we must move, and live and have our being." Only then can we be victorious in Christ.

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1

develop an overpowering faith

I was very confused about the word “faith” as a Christian for many years. This confusion kept me relatively powerless. Even those who don’t know God understand faith in a natural sense. We all have faith or lack of faith in things and people and most understand the world’s use of this word very well. The problem is that the Bible when it uses this important word is not talking about faith the way the world uses this term and therein was my confusion.

So what does the Bible mean when it uses this word faith? The Bible has much to say about faith. When I researched this word I found 339 places it is used in the Bible. Thirty seven times it is used in the Old Testament, and 280 times in the New Testament. Some of these words are related to the word “faith” such as faithful, etc.

A good starting point in understanding how important our faith is to God is in Hebrews 11:6:

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

I had never devoted an hour or two of my life to focus on this matter of faith in a personal study until I just took the time to do it. The above verse really shook me up. “Impossible to please him!” “Impossible!” “Without faith!”

I decided it was important for me since I called myself a believer to spend some quality time to see if my definition of faith lined up

with his. I discovered it didn't. No wonder at times my prayers weren't answered. He is quite specific about the requirement for faith.

A good starting point in my getting a handle on a good working definition was found in Hebrews 11:1:

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

What should I be hoping for since hope is key in this verse? What does God promise to believers in the Bible? Some one who studied God's promises counted up the number of times God made promises in the Bible and came up with a list of 30,000 promises. Why is this important? What do promises have to do with faith?

No matter the quality of one's personal relationships or circumstance in life I am sure many of us have areas of our lives where things are not like we would want them. We all would like to see change take place in some areas. You can probably find a scripture verse that is the total opposite of something going on in your life at the moment you don't like that doesn't seem to be of God because it involves sin.

The Bible tells us we need faith before we will ever see lasting change in an area of personal concern. So we all needed a better definition of this important word faith, a biblical definition. I found one I liked very much that was coined by a Bible teacher I respect.

‘Faith is doing what you think God wants you to do, and believing that God will do for you what he says in his Bible he will do.’ This matter of faith seems to have a lot to do with expectations. God has one condition or expectation he expects of us. We are to trust him. The other expectation is ours: Will we trust God to keep a written promise we have chosen to stand on.

The Apostle James tells us that those who doubt can expect nothing.

When I pray a prayer of faith (pray a promise God has made in his word concerning a circumstance or relationship) I am

concerned about, how long do I wait for God to deliver on his written promise after doing whatever I need to do in the area of personal cleansing, forgiveness and repentance? How often have we run short on patience?

We can certainly expect a test when faith is needed. God certainly wants to see whether we will really believe him concerning what he has said in his word about a matter? Whether in the area of salvation, healing, deliverance, provision or reconciliation we need to expect that our faith will be tested in the beginning.

Will we believe him? That is the crucial matter at hand.

Many of us have little patience after praying a prayer of faith. Waiting patiently for God to perform his word as promised is not a strong attribute in most of us. Most of us fail during the time our faith is being tested, and so never receive.

It took me years to get to the point of understanding what faith was really all about. No one that I heard ever told me I had to put aside what my five physical senses were telling me in this important area of faith. Seeing is not believing in the matter of biblical faith. The exact opposite is true. Believing is seeing. Considering faith as the world promotes faith has no tie to biblical promises. What God has promised has nothing to do with the faith of natural men.

With biblical faith believing one of God's promises is the first thing required. Seeing in the natural realm has nothing to do with such faith. Believe God no matter what the circumstances is the requirement. No matter who is standing against you or what you are seeing or hearing; after prayer, wait on God. It is up to him then to change the circumstances if you don't waiver or doubt.

For many years the circumstances were more real to me than what God promised to do for me in his written word if I only believed and had faith. I was not really aware of what God promised because I hadn't studied the word for myself. I seldom saw God show himself strong on my behalf in answer to prayer. Satan can influence circumstances for a season with the permission

of God to test our faith. Too often I failed the test after prayer out of ignorance. When I saw something negative that's what I believed.

Satan could be God's chief tester if we look at the book of Job 2:1-7. No circumstance goes on in our lives that God doesn't have absolute control over for he is sovereign.

“But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, the just shall live by faith, and the law is not of faith: but, the man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”

Galatians 11:14

Now when a personal prayer of faith fails me I check to see if somehow I have given the enemy an open door for God's promises never fall short. I am the one who falls short. Now I choose to never question where God is in a situation! I only question what I might have missed in the area of the supernatural if something disturbing is happening. What goes on supernaturally determines the outcome in the natural realm every time.

We have been given the supernatural power to change things in the natural realm that don't line up with what God says. It isn't the fact that we haven't been given the power. The only thing in question is, will we grab a hold of the power he has given us and use it? That is the question.

Will I believe the circumstance I am seeing in the natural realm that I don't agree with, or will I stand with God and what he says in his written word and agree with Him for change that glorifies God? Of course we can't be naïve. God does have a plan clearly spelled out in biblical prophecy and is bringing all things to a

definite conclusion. He won't change his basic plan for any of us, but he certainly can and does rearrange minor details to accomplish that plan.

Bottom line: Will I believe God's written word or not. His will concerning a matter that concerns me is clearly laid out in his word. I shouldn't need a direct word from God. His will for you and me has clearly been expressed. If I will only believe what God has recorded in his word, is the major variable. Will I believe the snake in my garden like Eve did, or trust another person as Adam did, or will I believe God's word? My faith is key to change that lasts.

Satan no longer has power to overcome us. God has clearly demonstrated how we are to overpower the enemy. He has given us the authority in Christ through the Holy Ghost to bring change about in our lives and the lives of others that effect our eternity. We need to say: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." "All" means all and "me" means me and you.

2

so I am enlisted

I twice enlisted into the army life. Once with the Marine Corps, and once in the army of the LORD, Jesus Christ. When I enlisted with the Marines I soon found they took my vow of enlistment very seriously. Immediately I went off to training I found out that much of it was not very pleasant. On the other end of that training, however, I found that I was well prepared to fight.

God takes our pledge very seriously, and gives us a training manual loaded with his promises and promises to be there with us in the fight. Can a lot of what you are going through be part of his training program? Could he be testing you to see if you believe his word or not? Whether you fight or sleep is your choice. Lets be sure all of us are spiritually equipped for the enemy we must defeat for this battle effects our eternity and the eternity of those we love.

Until the Holy Spirit entered into my life, which was many years after my conversion, I didn't experience much victory. Until I memorized Mark 16: 17-18 I really didn't know much about what a believer really was. My definition of what a believer was had more to do with religious activities than supernatural power.

While on active duty as a Marine I wasn't bold spiritually even though I had accepted Christ. Looking back I was more religious than spiritual. Without the help of the Holy Spirit our prayer life doesn't have any impact. Why is this? Because we can't see the depth of a matter! We need supernatural help. Jesus sends the Holy Spirit to enlighten us. Without his help our prayers are just flesh.

His words through us have a piercing, eternal impact. He alone sees the depth of a matter.

Now I am not only enlisted in the army of God, but I am seeing the fruit of a changed life. The list of this fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23 is real to me. It is a great checklist for knowing when I fall short in honoring Christ.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law.”

For a season after a genuine conversion experience of having accepted Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord others should see a difference in us, but it really matters not what others see if it was real to us. I certainly was excited about my new revelation. But keeping my new love and growing in Christ was a problem. In many ways I slipped back into my old ways because I didn't understand my need for the Holy Spirit in my life and so lacked the power for lasting change.

“Retaining only a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.”

2 Timothy 4:5.

For the fruit to shine forth in our life in an ever increasing way we need the direct help of the Holy Spirit. The changed life is not a work that can be accomplished in the flesh through self-determination.

We all have things we don't like in our life if we will be honest. We are motivated to see change in those areas. But we need others to be honest about the things they see in our lives they don't like that we can't see. In both these cases we need supernatural help.

One of the best-kept secrets in the church seems to me to be our need for the Holy Spirit. Why is that so? One of the works of the Holy Spirit is to bring personal change in our life. Most of us in

spite of what we say, are quite happy with the way we are. As I look back, it was certainly true of me. If we are not willing to become like Christ, of course we won't want much to do with the Holy Spirit. I found that saying I want to be like Christ and the willingness to listen to the Holy Spirit are two quite different things.

Proverbs 14:12 says:

“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”

We need supernatural help in the area of change, which is what boot camp is all about. We have a supernatural enemy who is determined to take us to hell. He is relentless in his efforts to discourage us striving to defeat us. Until we develop a daily relationship with the Holy Ghost nothing much will happen in our life in the area of change or real power. This requires continuous surrender. We need to study the Word of God for ourselves if we want to learn the deep things of God. The meat of the Word is there for us as we seek in obedience to the Holy Spirit's leadings. We will never grow to maturity in Christ until we stop depending on others and begin seeking him for ourselves.

In military terms, the Holy Ghost can in some ways be compared with an army drill instructor with better manners. He will never force you to do something against your will. He is gentle. The Word of God has a lot to say about our personal helper. Many seem little acquainted with the 3rd person of the trinity. At least this was true for me.

3

benefiting from boot camp

A Christian could spend his entire life in boot camp, never graduating to become a soldier, by avoiding a daily cooperative relationship with the Holy Ghost. Such a person would blindly retain his civilian perspective. Until the day he died because of personal resistance to the influence of his supernatural drill instructor, he would never learn how to be a threat to our supernatural enemy.

After I enlisted in the Marines I soon found myself in very intense training to prepare me to fight. There was a lot in me that had to change to become useful to the Marine Corps and my country in future combat. My behavior during training was closely monitored and controlled. The experience was similar to being in a prison system. All Marines, even its future leaders, are put through a boot camp experience to be changed. The men responsible for changing me were called “drill instructors.”

Changing people is not an easy thing. Our drill instructors went about the process of transforming us into Marines in a very methodical and deliberate manner over a period of months. Some were adverse to this process of change and failed to adapt, and were declared unfit for military service. Some so hated the difficulties they encountered that they attempted escape and were labeled as deserters. Such men were treated harshly.

Those who enlist in the Lord’s army must also expect to be changed. There is also a boot camp process in this supernatural army before we are fit for service.

As I have thought about this I see that when we come to the Lord we are not very useful to him until we have gone through training. We are very carnal in the beginning, and unfit to bear his name. To ever become useful to the Lord we must go through change. Much of what needs changing is not easy to accomplish.

To help us, Jesus has assigned help. In the LORD's army that helper is called the Holy Ghost. I have noticed over time that my cooperation with this personality is voluntary, not mandatory, as was the case in the Marines.

If I abandon Christ in a situation He will let me go my own way. But this drill instructor is always with me, but never demanding, or controlling, as is the case in every natural army I know about.

One of the most heartrending verses of scripture for me personally are the words found in John 6:66 which say:

“From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.”

To become a successful member of the army of God I have had to overcome a great desire to depend on my natural talents rather than to look to help from God. The Bible refers to another baptism than the baptism in water. It is called the promise of the Father.

Jesus told me in His Word as I read His Bible that I needed a supernatural friend, guide and counselor that He would send in His place if I was to overcome the supernatural adversaries who would come against me. I have learned over time that I fail Him when I rely only on natural talent and common sense.

In any fight it is relatively easy to know when the directives of the senior officer are being violated. But it is not so easy in the army of God. God speaks very softly. He never attempts to over power, which would violate free will. We must choose to cooperate with him against our flesh and self will. We need to listen to that still small voice if we are to please God. Only radical obedience to this voice will keep us from “walking with him no

more. “ As soon as we start rationalizing or justifying we are in the enemy’s territory.

In this age filled with constant distractions it is so easy to ignore the quiet warnings in the clamor of TV, sports, shopping malls, hobbies and such that are skillfully designed by the enemy to pull us off course. These things in themselves may seem benign but as I’ve said before:

“There is a way that seemeth right to a man but the end there of leads to death.”

Proverbs 14:12

“Choice ye this day whom you will serve.”

Joshua 24:15

While boot camp and advanced military training are for definite durations of time, it is not so with spiritual training continues over our entire lives.

We never will reach the place where we can sit back and say, we have arrived. My wife once said that this life is a job interview for what we will be doing in eternity. In a natural army it is easy to become prideful, in fact,, expected as one advances in rank and achievement. But pride is “hateful” to God, and not valued at all and even detrimental in this supernatural army in which we now serve.

There is much to overcome supernaturally when we come to God and pride is chief among these things. Much that seemed right to me when I was in the world is not of any use to Him in the army in which we now serve. All that we have and are needs to be surrendered to him before we begin to become useful. It is also like that in the physical realm in a natural army. Old habits and attitudes that were acceptable in civilian life are of little or no value in army life.

I have discovered over many years we never reach the point in our growth in Christ where we no longer need the Holy Ghost in

our life. We need to cultivate the attitude of a life long learner. The Bible says the Holy Ghost and the word of God are the only teachers we need. Daily we must come to his word and to the Holy Ghost for “fresh manna.” Matthew 4:4 must become real to those who want to serve their King with distinction.

“But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

What we read from the Bible may not seem useful at the time we are studying it, but later on it can mean the difference between life and death, strength and weakness, health and sickness, freedom and bondage, provision or lack, etc.

The Holy Ghost will bring what we need to our remembrance at the time of need if we will be diligent to submit daily to discipline ourselves by the reading of His Word and by spending time in prayer.

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

John 14:26

4

Wake up

Having enlisted and graduated from boot camp a soldier can choose to continue thinking like a civilian or put his faith in the cause he enlisted for and was trained to do, which in an army has to do with fighting.

All throughout the written word we are admonished to wake up. The Bible warns us that many of us who think we are awake are really asleep spiritually. Could this admonition be as simple as choosing to think like a soldier rather than as a civilian because we are in a fight and are yet asleep to the spiritual battle that rages all around us?

The war in the supernatural realm affects everything that goes on in our physical world. Every one in an army is called to fight not just its leaders, yet in the army of God most of us are sitting in the pews listening to others tells us about their perspective on this fight called life.

To ignore the fact that we are in a war is folly. Could such ignorance be the basis of the “blindness” the Bible talks about? Human nature is very strong. The power of the flesh is the primary ally of Satan to keep us distracted, bogged down or going off in wrong directions.

Overcoming spiritual blindness requires supernatural help. We must be determined to believe what scripture says in spite of what the natural circumstance might seem to dictate.

Search out verses with two words, “watch” and “pray.” Matthew 26:41; Mark 13:33; 14:38; Luke 21:36; Ephesians 6:18; Colossians 4:2; and 1 Peter 4:7 are such verses. There is much in the scriptures

that is impossible to understand without the Holy Spirits help. For instance:

“In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. “

2 Corinthians 4:4

Why does God allow blindness in God’s people? This verse speaks about my early life as a Christian. Even though I was a believer in Jesus Christ I see now I was not walking in understanding of His ways as we are required to have. I wasn’t taking what was written in his word at face value concerning certain scriptures. God’s ways are higher than our ways. I choose now to believe before I understand, just because God said it. He makes profound statements in his word such as:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.”

Isaiah 55:8

I take God’s warnings to the church in the book of Revelation very seriously. I want to receive that blessing promised in Rev. 1:3 for those who read this book. God speaks a clear warning to the seven different types of modern day churches in chapters two and three of the book of Revelation. The warning was not just for the apostles day. Jesus Christ tells us of seven things He sees in His church that He personally hates looking across the entire expanse of the church age.

When we hear Jesus talking to us about what He hates we need to sit up and take notice. I take these personally to evaluate my walk and so should all. I won’t go into these personal and corporate behaviors here except to say they need study. Jesus gives wonderful promises to those who overcome. Overcoming is a life long battle. Those who do will:

- (1) “will eat from the tree of life.” Rev. 2:7
- (2) “will not be hurt by the second death.” Rev. 2:11
- (3) “will be given hidden manna and a new name.” Rev. 2:17
- (4) “will be given authority to rule over nations with a rod of iron.” Rev. 2:26
- (5) “shall be clothed in white garments and not have their name erased from the book of life and have their name confessed by Jesus to His Father.” Rev. 3:5
- (6) “will be made a pillar in the Temple of God and have the Name of God written on them.” Rev. 3:12
- (7) “will sit with Jesus on his throne as He sits with the Father on His Throne.” Rev. 3:21

In my everyday travels and observations of life, I daily must ask myself the question, “Do I have a spiritual handle on what life in Jesus Christ is all about? Most seem to me to be bogged down in various distractions having little to do with storing treasures in heaven. Many seem far off course to me, if the Bible is truly the compass we are to use to navigate through the cares and struggles of this present life.

As I have looked over my past life I see that many of my own disappointments were because I didn’t have spiritual eyes. Look what Jesus says about the people of his day:

“For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”

Matthew 13:15

This is a very frightening verse for me for God said it about the believers of his day.

Oh, LORD, don't let me be dull of hearing. Let me hear your voice and understand your written word. Amen.

God goes on to say to his disciples, in the next verse: (16)

“But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear,”

Look at Mark 8:18. (also, Acts 28:27, Romans 11:8, and 1 Corinthians 2:9) They record the same warning to God's people. Jesus isn't just talking about His people of two thousand years ago, but about us today.

He uses similar speech in the book of Revelation, in chapters two and three, when He gives highly specific warnings about seven things He hates and He is speaking these warnings directly to His church today in this book.

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

Revelation 2:7,11,17,29 and 3:6,13 and 22

Romans 13:11 warns us:

“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed,” This statement is directed at believers. Many who believe they have a relationship with Jesus...and who also think they have a relationship with the Holy Spirit. But, how many are really asleep spiritually? Romans 13: 12 says:

“The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.”

These verses imply that we have work to do that we can't do while we are spiritually asleep, distracted, deceived, or in apostasy.

We need to be sure we are awake and have cast off the garments of darkness that Satan has attempted to wrap all of us in. Are there strongholds in our minds that need to be cast down? For instance, acceptance of an illness in our life, or infirmity of any kind! Either our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, or it isn't. The first thing God told us to do was to cast out demons and heal the sick. If we accept these things in our life we will never be effective for Christ.

It is past time to wake up. Reveille, the bugle, has sounded.

5

will I fight or not

Your answer to this question will determine what you hear from the Lord when you face him at the judgment seat of God. Will it be:

“Depart from me, I never knew you.”

Mathew 7:23

Or,

“Enter in my good and faithful servant.”

Mathew 25:21

Our decisions have severe consequences for eternity and also on those we “touch” or don’t touch on this earth for God. The word of God says this:

“And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.”

Matthew 11:12

We simply don’t have the choice of not entering into the battle. Our eternity and those we love depend on it.

“The seed of the righteous will be delivered.”

Proverbs 11:21

The righteous will enter in to the battle. How much of what our families have already gone through could have been avoided had we taken up the weapons given to us by the word of God?

“For the weapons of our warfare, are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.”

2 Corinthians 10:4-6

We need to quit asking and begging God for answers. Put down the distractions and armor up (Ephesians six), and begin to shout at the enemy, “It is written...it is written...it is written.” This was the very manner in which Jesus took authority over Satan, and we can do no less.

Cast away the distractions the enemy has sent our way and armor up.

6

have faith in the general

He is in that position because he knows more than you do. In a natural army no combat soldier would think to question the authority of a respected senior. We need to wait to hear the “still small voice of God” before taking any major steps.

We have learned that an army that doesn't have a high level of trust built into its structure is not much of an army, and won't stand up well in battle. The higher up the chain of command one goes in a fighting unit the more respect is given to leaders because of their combat experience. At the very top of the command structure stands the Commanding General. Wise soldiers stand in awe of their general.

While many combat forces have a valiant history in past wars because of demonstrated valor, in the army we serve, over the past two thousands years, men of great faith have risen up to set the example. Built into good soldiers is a determination that never quits and never gives up. When graduated from their training there is a certain feeling of immortality because of what they have learned.

Such a feeling of immortality should be characteristic of those who want to serve with valor in the Lord's army. Should the Lord's servant fear death? We have more reason to stand in awe of the general we serve in this supernatural army than in any other army here on earth.

Who is mightier than He? He laid down his life for us. He is our King of kings and our Lord of lords. He is the Alpha and the Omega; the beginning and the end of all things. He is the creator of

the universe. Truly He is the Son of the Most High God. Who better to trust?

Questioning any part of scripture is folly because that doubt is directed at the very Word of God himself. If God said it we his creation dare not questioned it.

Fulfilled prophecies stand in unquestionable authenticity because they have been fulfilled. They absolutely prove the integrity of his word. His word is accurate from the beginning of time. It has never failed.

We should not be amazed however when we meet people who don't believe his word. Human nature is very strong. It takes all down who don't receive God's supernatural help.

Our needing help is the reason God sent his only son the first time, proving his love for us by laying it down to purchase us back from Satan.

As we see things waxing worse and worse we can trust the remaining prophesies that indicate he is coming to rescue once again. This time he will judge evil-doers. We can trust him to do what he says. He has never lied.

His Name is the name above all names. If every knee must bow before that name in heaven, on earth and below the earth we need not be discouraged by the evil we are seeing for he is coming soon, and will be faithful to fulfill his remaining promises.

God is not a liar. He is full of integrity. What he says can be trusted. Everything the Bible says is true. Multitudes of believers live below what God has for them because of unbelief, fear and doubt. Will we go the way of the majority or will we be courageous and stand a part from the crowd?

We need wisdom and knowledge and it is given to us in scripture if we will only believe and act upon what God says to do.

The more we come to believe what God says is true and act upon it, the more signs and wonders we see.

7

on waging war

What really happened in the Garden of Eden? Clearly it was a case of trusting the wrong personality. Eve was talked into doubting or questioning what God had said. Adam was influenced by who beguiled him and overlooked the truth of the matter.

For too long a time my reaction to that passage of Genesis was how stupid to believe such a distortion of the truth. In retrospect I see the times I myself have been taken in by something smoothly said that later proved false. The garden story is applicable to us all. In very fact, it is a demonstration of how Satan wages war.

Every army has manuals used to train their soldiers. Few think to question guidance in these manuals for they are tried and true having stood the test of time. Instructors drill these manuals into their students so that their response will be automatic in combat. These important army manuals are authored by men who were not writing under the unction of the Holy Ghost, but just using their natural common sense.

The Bible is the inspired word of God himself. Many Christians never open The Book from God to read it for themselves. Many treat it like just another book rather than a supernatural word from God Himself. Scripture says we perish for lack of knowledge, something a good soldier tries not to do.

What goes on in Christendom today? Most of us periodically attend services, hear a few select passages of the Bible read to us, listen to smooth preaching and leave living the remainder of the week pretty much as we please. We need to come a part from such lukewarmness.

We need to go to the source ourselves to discover the truth. We should not let the state of the church or the world depress us. There are thousands of different teachers with countless different messages preaching and teaching various ways to live in a manner pleasing to God while God is saying to rely on what he has said. Much of what the world teaches appears to be ineffective since the world waxes worse and worse.

I was thirty-nine years old before I began to read the Bible for myself so am making up for lost time. What I discovered since then has kept me from wandering far off the path to Jesus Christ as our experiences tell each of us do many. How different my life might have been had I started reading the Bible myself much earlier in life. I encourage others to do what I was not encouraged to do.

In 1978 I started studying the Bible for myself. Since then I have seen signs and wonders where the true word has been preached (Mark 16:17-18). God confirms his word with signs following such as real salvations, healings, deliverances and reconciliation's and provisions.

God is now more real to me then ever before. I have grown by leaps and bounds in my knowledge of things supernatural since I started studying for myself. Life has taken on an excitement I never knew before.

Because of my studies my understanding of the nature of warfare is radically different from most I encounter in Christendom. If we want to see our life and the lives of others radically transformed we need to know how God tells us to fight.

Today I don't look at this topic of war in the same way I used to in spite of professional military training since most of what I learned while good applied only in the natural realm of warfare. That training however has added to my understanding of supernatural warfare because many of the principles are the same.

For those who served in combat it was a rare occasion for most to encounter the commanding general in their everyday life. Most generals are not as interested in the routine as much as in the

exception for that is where the enemy might be able to breach the lines.

In the supernatural army in which believers serve, we have direct access to our commanding officer no matter how seemingly insignificant or routine the matter needing clarification. The intimacy we can have with our general is our choice not his; as he is always available to us. Those who really trust him have found him to be absolutely faithful to perform his word.

There are many written promises in His Word to “whosoever will.” What a marvelous revelation to discover that means you and me. I am overwhelmed at how personal the written Word truly is. The number of times I find the word “you” in the written word and especially in His promises and to know this means you and me is awesome. The revelation that God is speaking directly to us is incredible. As the revelation of the power available to us in these many promises unfolds to me I am overwhelmed at how much He desires to trust us.

As I read through this book of lessons learned through reading the Word for myself and experiencing God’s presence I hope to hear back from others who see how much power is available by believing His Word to change a situation and ultimately the lives of others. I want to never forget that studying his Written Word has everything to do with waging war against the enemy of our souls.

8

a very different kind of fight

Many have served multiple combat tours with the infantry in combat, some experiencing intense battle. War is difficult at best. On the heels of such an experience some see life from a very different perspective than do their civilian family and friends.

Some complain, others do not. Most were well trained, shared in a real sense of duty that was very fulfilling for some. Some find it quite hard to find a civilian job upon their return from overseas. Transitioning back into civilian life beyond their military experience can be very rough for some. Being with a band of brothers in combat can be an intensely bonding and unique experience. It can be a great privilege to be a part of such an experience. Many find it difficult to share the nature of that experience and how much they miss the comradeship and sense of mission.

We all get busy with living. The telling of some things quite private takes more time than many have to share. Few can really identify with the feelings that come from experiences they can't really identify with. There is an intense bonding that can happen when you meet others of like mind.

Following release from active duty many veterans experience real regrets and find it rough readjusting to civilian life. It is not uncommon to go through periods of depression. Many don't know how to express their appreciation for others and what they have done, no matter the importance of the work they did.

Some reach a point in life where they never expect to enjoy the intensity of relationship that existed while they served in something where the stakes were really high; life or death.

Those who press hard into Christ will discover as I did a brotherhood that I never knew existed within Christendom after many years of involvement. I found it even better than my first martial experience with the Marines. The bonding with other committed believers is more than natural. Because of its supernatural nature and because it is a shared bonding in Christ and his Holy Spirit, it is intensely fulfilling.

With maturity in Christ one begins to come in to contact with others who are also pressing deeper into Christ. It is a very unique brotherhood and sisterhood not explained by any association with religious organizational loyalties. It goes deeper than these traditions in Christendom. This bonding brings real joy to one's spirit, a joy I never expected to experience again beyond my natural active duty experience. I never knew such a bonding was possible even though I was raised up in a Christian religious experience that I once cherished.

One experience that bonds fighters together is warfare against a common enemy. As we face the potential of going to war to defend family and nation against a common foe, that experience draws you together with others willing to sacrifice their lives for a greater purpose. Out of this shared experience come stories in the aftermath of fights that can be shared with others to encourage their faith and create a stronger sense of purpose.

To be truthful I never really understood the Christian life in its context of a battle against a common supernatural enemy. I never really saw church as a gathering to acknowledge the General of a vast army, to get ready for, or restored after a fight for subsequent warfare, to receive new marching orders and to go back out and involved in the supernatural war that rages on this planet earth day in and day out, week after week, and year after year for a life time.

Only when you begin to enter into the battle yourself as a soldier of Jesus Christ will you taste the sweetness of victory for yourself.

Spiritual warfare is as much a battle as any physical war experience I have ever had. It is very real even though it is rare for someone spiritual to see or hear the supernatural sights and sounds

of the battle in progress. We do see manifestations from this fight materialize in the natural realm, but don't often associate it with spiritual warfare.

Physical warfare is spiritual warfare touched down to earth. I can only imagine Hell being worse than the terrible sufferings of many unnecessarily wounded, hurt or killed where we believers fall short in this call to battle in our own local. In combat Satan roams the battlefield seeking whom he may destroy. We give him permission to kill, capture and destroy when we ignore the call and promises of God and what he did on our behalf. Our fears, doubts and unbelief in the power of God's Word to protect us, and others we pray for, empower the enemy of our souls.

Only those who allow the Holy Ghost to develop a supernatural perspective in them will understand the nature of this very different kind of fight we are all involved in whether we know it or not.

Few that I know seem to have a supernatural perspective as they go about their daily routines and activities. It is too easy just to go on seeing everything that goes on in the physical realm only through the perspective of our five natural senses never allowing the Holy Ghost to develop in us a supernatural perspective through the renewing of our mind. (Hebrews 12:2)

The clearest definition of who is really involved in the good fight of faith that I know is found in the words of Mark 16:17-18. Yes, many do religious activities but this verse talks about power for real change:

“And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents (self deliverance to cast out personal devils); and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

My daily thought is will the Lord use me today in his great commission so that what he does through me can be confirmed

with signs like these following? Will he give me a chance today to show others that I believe in his word?

9

fighting skills

In army infantry manuals fighting skills are divided into two basic types: offensive skills and defensive skills. No matter the rank or military job service members learn individual defensive skills. There are a few offensive skills that every soldier learns because when things really get rough the cooks, bakers, and candlestick makers might have to be committed to the fight as basic infantrymen. That is the philosophy of many armies with regards to the ability to fight.

As I analyze what goes on in Christianity I don't see that some pastors and teachers see us in the pews as needing any real ability to fight the enemy based on what is being taught to us in most church bodies. My wife and I are associated with a healing ministry that involves individuals from fifteen or so different churches. Weekly we get to pray with individual Christians and non-Christians who come in with a variety of problems. Over the four years we have been involved with this ministry I have come to the conclusion based on this healing and deliverance ministry experience that many who come in for prayer have not been prepared in the spiritual combat skills they need to withstand the spiritual attacks and counter-attacks that every Christian must expect.

We on the healing team have the faith in the written words of God clearly laid out in various scriptures to stand with any individual for healing, deliverance or a miracle they need in their life or family. Our faith alone can facilitate their healing where we encounter no unbelief and a teachable spirit. We often see the signs

and wonders promised in Mark 16:17-18 manifest following repentance, forgiveness and the prayer of faith. However the person who receives from God needs to be able to hang on to what they receive with spiritual defensive fighting skills of their own and this takes knowledge and drill. Surely the devil will come and try to steal back what he lost as the result of the finished work of Christ. Many are not able to hang on to their victories in Christ. The primary energy of some churches seems to go toward the unsaved. Disciple-training programs often don't go very deep in some churches. One can naively trust what is received through the church staff as being enough, when it clearly isn't for many. Each of us as individuals must cooperate with what scriptural promises and the Holy Ghost want to do for us to conquer in this life not just in the next.

Numerous books have been written on faith and the promises of God. This is not another book filled with "how to do it" information. I am trying to change basic attitudes and patterns in this effort.

The major key as I see it to achieve and maintain victory, is a proper attitude. Are we willing to accept personal responsibility to fight the devil and overcome our flesh and the influence of the world, or are we not willing? Christians are clearly divided into two groups along these lines. Those whose behavior indicates an unwillingness to fight the devil, and the few who are willing to fight, but just don't know how. Those who won't fight will be overcome at some point in their life in spite of other's prayers to the contrary. First and foremost to obtain victory and hang on to it a Christian must be willing to take on the enemy himself.

In my view a clear sign of this willingness to fight is the effort one makes to pick up and read the fighting scripture for himself instead of expecting others to teach him what he needs to know. The Bible is a clear expression of the will of God for you and I as individuals. He is not a respecter of persons. What He gives or does for one he will give or do for all.

We clearly have a supernatural enemy. Nothing we do in the natural realm will overpower such a foe. Only supernatural warfighting skills will do the job that needs to be done. It is not enough to have head knowledge of these supernatural skills. They must be drilled into us to the point where they become so much a part of us that our reaction to a satanic attack is automatic. No matter whether we are preoccupied, tired, distracted or whatever, our spirits must be so trained that we automatically without a natural thought start to resist the supernatural attack when it comes. Such a high development of a spiritual warrior as I am speaking about does not come about by occasional involvement in the things of God. It must become your highest daily priority. God must be first in our lives with no close seconds.

Each day I have a list of things I need to do and so does God. The question is whose list will get accomplished. Am I available for God to use today? One of my favorite scripture verses is Romans 1:16 which says this:

“I am not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God unto salvation.”

For me the meaning of the gospel is simple, the good news. I find any promise of God to be very good news. When I put my faith (action) into believing this good news (promise of God whether it be in the area of healing or deliverance or whatever else), rather than becoming preoccupied by circumstances that I am seeing or feeling (symptom in my body or lack of cash in my bank account or whatever), and begin to stand on the word of God resisting the devil, then I can expect to see favorable change come about. I choose to trust God’s word more than what I am seeing and hearing in the natural realm when it doesn’t favor me or mine.

“But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Matthew 6:33

10

drill, drill, drill

In a well trained army we find that the plan of the day in peace time is to drill, drill, and do more drill. A well drilled soldier or military unit often overcomes better leadership in the opposing army. Drill is a great key to success when the enemy attacks. The Bible doesn't have a Hebrew or Greek word for the English word memorize or drill. But the idea is certainly in this following passage in Deuteronomy 6: 6-9.

“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.”

Certainly our English word “memorize” captures the essence of this passage.

The best illustration I know about the power of memorizing and praying scripture is a story of a WWI British army infantry captain who commanded every man in his unit to memorize Psalm 91 and get together each morning with at least one other soldier and pray Psalm 91 as a prayer of faith.

The division that infantry unit was a part of sustained over 50 percent dead. Though that infantry company was in the thick of the fight they sustained miraculously very few casualties.

Coincidence? Or was this the demonstrated power of God on behalf of one man who got a hold of the power resident in one scriptural passage having to do with faith and demonstrated his faith by requiring his men to memorize and practice their faith?

Psalm 91

“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon day. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour

him. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation.”

God honors spiritual fathers. Certainly that army captain was a God fearing man. I believe God answered his prayers for his soldiers. He demonstrated his faith in God’s promises by putting it into action by requiring his men to memorize scripture and daily pray Psalm 91 as a prayer of faith. He obviously thought of his men as sons. So does our heavenly father who looks upon you and me as his children.

When we acknowledge him in the powerful name of Jesus and believe a promise for deliverance or healing he will perform his word.

Many Christians go through their entire lives hardly ever getting to know scripture as well as did these WWI soldiers get to know Psalm 91. It was an Old Testament passage but retains all of its power when believed. Think what understanding also the New Testament can bring to those in our generation who choose to walk in their belief.

11

the will to win

Do I believe what God says about me and my circumstance or do I believe more in what my natural eyes and ears are telling me is true? That is the question. To walk in victory I must believe what the word of God that I am believing for says is true in spite of the natural reality that swirls before my eyes and ears. Even though some among my own family and friends might think I am a fool for believing all of God's word as literally true.

This are some of the things God says about me and you:

about me and you

"I am more than a conqueror in Christ Jesus."
Romans 8:37

"He who is in me is greater than he who is in the world."
1 John 4:4

"I overcome by the blood of the lamb and the word of my testimonies."

Revelations 12:11

"I have all that I need according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:19

If I don't measure up to his expectations for me so clearly expressed in his written word, then whose fault is it? Certainly not God's!

about our circumstances

“...Through faith and patience I inherit the promises.”

Hebrews 6:12

“And so, after I have patiently endured, I obtain the promises.”

Matthew 6:15

“All the promises of God in Christ are yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by me.”

2 Corinthians 1:20

“God has granted to me his precious and exceeding great promises...”

1 Peter 1:4

“I have not because I ask not.”

James 4:2

“For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.”

1 Timothy 4:8

“Because I have kept the word of my patience, He also will keep me from the hour of temptation which shall come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”

Revelation 3:10

“If I have faith, Jesus said nothing shall be impossible to me.”
Matthew 17:20

“He said, if I live in him, and his words live in me, I shall ask for whatsoever I desire and it shall be done to me.”
John 15:7

“He says: if I ask anything in his name, he will do it.”
John 14:14

“Whatever I desire, when I pray, believe that I receive it, and I shall have it.”
Mark 11:24

“If I can believe, all things are possible to them that believe.”
Mark 9:23

“Have faith in God is the command of Jesus.”
Mark 11:22

“Truly, truly he says to me. Whatever I shall ask the Father in his name, he will give it to me. Until now I ask nothing in his name. Ask and I will receive. So that my joy may be full.”
John 16:2-4

“The Lord loves those who hate evil; he guards the lives of his faithful ones, from the hands of the wicked he delivers them.”
Psalm 97:10

I need to remember this

Faith is believing that God is not a liar and standing on what he promises to do for me in his Bible in spite of what my present circumstances tell me is the reality. When I make this unpopular stand I see circumstances line up with what God believes.

Concerning my attitude: Is seeing believing? Do I have the faith to believe these above verses until I see them manifest in something I am believing for?

THAT IS THE QUESTION OF MY LIFE