



Reality:

and good decisions

Dave Winecoff
Lt Colonel, USMC-ret.

Title: Reality and good decisions

Copyright @ July, 2012 by Lt. Colonel Dave Winecoff

Published by Empty Vessels Ministries

P.O. Box 846, Ellensburg, Wa 98926

EMAIL: dwinecoff@fairpoint.net

Cover and art by Karen Winecoff

Any part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any way by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Printed in America

ISBN: None

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture references are intended to be from the King James Version.

Author's Preface

Today Americans have a wide range of opinions regarding what is real and true, and what is not. How can that be? More shocking still is the divergent points of view held by Christians where the Bible, the primary source of truth for believers, weighs in on a matter in question. To throw out just one issue that causes division: homosexuality.

The radical change in America over my lifetime is astounding to see. America is certainly a heathen nation today. Though there is a significant Judeo-Christian minority; believers are no longer influencing the nation's direction effectively. The institutional church is way too cozy with the world. What happened? Why is truth no longer an absolute for so many? Is Jesus Christ the source of all truth or not? Growing numbers forsake truth for a lie.

In short, one answer to what is happening is that we have a supernatural adversary who is directing things behind the scene, and time grows short for him before Christ returns. But most Christians don't really believe this.

Proverbs 14:12 warns us, "*There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*" This important biblical truth is reiterated two chapters later verbatim. God has much to say in the Bible about ways, and paths, i.e. the situation. God clearly tells us his ways are not our ways.

At seventy one I have had a Christian perspective much of my life. This biblical perspective has matured as I have grown in the spirit. Yet I see that most, even in the church, do not look at life through the same camera lenses I do. What are people drawing from to get their understanding of reality? Many sources; but less and less from the Bible I read, it seems.

There are many statistical indicators showing our society is in rapid decline morally. A majority of the nation's leadership no longer holds to a Christian world view. If the church really believed the reality of the Bible and promoted it fearlessly, we wouldn't be in the national predicament we are now in. Why have we failed to equip the next generation biblically?

Answering this question is critical. We are to impact society, not be changed by it. It is clear to me that America needs deliverance. Our forefathers overcame severe national crisis: two major wars on our continent: the American Revolutionary War and the American Civil War. This was later followed by two world wars. Now we are in a religious war to the death with Islamic terrorists, and the church's head is in the sand.

If the God of the Bible is indeed the source of all blessing; we clearly as a nation have walked out from under his protection. Will enough of us awaken to the dangers that surround us to turn this nation around one more time?

Wikipedia defines: **“Reality as the state of things as they actually exist, rather than as they may appear or may be thought to be. In its widest definition, reality includes everything that is and has being whether or not it is observable or comprehensible.”**

Look closely at the mess our leadership has made of this country and the economy. What the world has to say about the way things are is quite different from what the Bible tells us is true. Public School children are now brought up thinking in ways that are popular but unbiblical. Few parents raise children the Bible way. Secularism is now impacting children more than church doctrine.

The Bible clearly tells us that popular ways lead to death. We no longer hear publicly of wholesome family values. Children now graduate from public school, spread their wings, leave the nest, and go in directions quite different from their grandparents. As I look back I can see things I did wrong as a parent. I certainly lacked the spiritual knowledge I needed at critical times. (**Hosea 4:6**) I was certainly not aware of how damaging world thinking is to one’s soul.

Back then I did not look at the world as the enemy to my soul it clearly is.

In life and death situations combat leaders brief their men before giving them the order to move out. All leaders start the brief or combat order by telling them of the present realities (what is known about the enemy, friendly forces, weather and terrain). Understanding the situation (present reality or truth) is critical to success. Leaders carefully set the stage before the mission is given then provide other essentials like important communication and logistical factors before commanding” “MOVE OUT.”.

What does the Bible have to say about our common situation or reality? Interestingly enough the word ‘situation’ is found only twice in the King James Bible. The word ‘reality’ is not found at all. Are there other similar English words? Yes! The word ‘way’ is used 795 times. Meriam-Webster defines ‘way’ as *“a course leading in a direction or toward an objective.”* The Bible has a lot to say through this word about how to proceed in life. A similar word ‘path’ is used 65 times. These words are quite instructive spiritually giving vital insight into God’s ways as opposed to man’s.

Our basic life assumptions are critical in evaluating fundamental facts: what we see and hear. Assumptions critically influence all decisions. If one’s life assumptions concerning God are wrong or distorted that person will make quite different decisions based on what he thinks is real and what he thinks is not real.

Reality is what this book is all about. The content will open the eyes of anyone who has just been getting by in life, or has lost his grip.

Stick with this study and prosper,

Dave Winecoff

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	the natural reality	p 9
2.	what is reinforced in your life?	P 13
3.	change that matters	p 17
4.	the new reality	p 21
5.	our real need.	P 25
6.	our supernatural enemy	p 29
7.	learning to walk again	p 33
8.	required: a lifestyle change	p 37
9.	the old reality needs replacing	p 41
10.	The church needs deliverance	p 44
11.	decision making in a fallen world	p 49

1

the natural reality

For most people the thoughts they think on a daily basis becomes their reality. Eventually people become locked in to their reality. One's thoughts like a strait jacket can keep one from real truth. Thoughts determine how we interpret what we see and hear. Our opinions govern our daily decisions becoming life patterns. If we don't consciously decide on what our reality will be, someone else actually determines our way, course and life. Even, if we think we are in charge of our destiny; we are not.

We all see so differently. Look at the quite different life patterns all around us. There are a large number of quite different realities in operation here in America. If unity is a good thing the growing division among us can't be healthy politically.

Political correctness is running wild. It is crazy. Based on the stark change in direction our country is now headed morally it has to be a deliberate plan of the enemy of our souls. What is political correctness anyway, but someone else's idea of how the masses should think and act, and what truth should be.

Political correctness ignores biblical truth. In fact much of it is a bold faced lie. A good example of insanity is outlawing the use of "profiling" to root out terror suspects. Islam is the underlying belief system of most of the world's terrorism. It is so obvious. Islam is at the root of every war on the planet. It is the flame behind the large majority of terrorist acts. Yet the lie is fostered that Islam is a peaceful religion.

Look at how a growing number of citizens live and act. It is quite clear that fewer and fewer people believe in a personal God. Few look to God in any concrete way as they go about their daily activities.

So, what is their real reality? If you truly believe God's Word (the Bible), it is what God says about a matter that is important. Not what the elite want you to think! Not what the majority's perception of how things are or ought to be.

It should be increasingly clear to those who care, that our society is skidding down a hill towards a cliff that will end life as we know it. It is a real shame that most citizens don't believe God's Word. It clearly is why this nation achieved more than any other nation in history. If our nation governed our national affairs according to the prophetic scriptures

there would be a far different outcome than the one we are now experiencing. The people would be blessed, not cursed.

It is the invisible according to God's Word that is more real than the visible and determines all outcomes. One's view of the invisible has everything to do with what happens in one's personal life and in the collective life of a family, community and nation, whether a majority of citizens believe this or not.

natural accomplishments

A noble, visible and well respected American woman just died (Dec, 2010). According to everything I have read about her, she never acknowledged Jesus Christ publicly or privately that I am aware of. She seemed to be a very nice lady from my research. She had an ethical code and lived her life in a moral way considering others kindly. Yet, bad things happened to her in the latter stages of her quite public life. She lost a teenage son to a terrible accident. Her husband, a real scoundrel, cheated on her in an extra marital affair resulting in a child out of wedlock. Because he was a noteworthy politician the scandal became very public ruining his political career. They divorced. She had a fight with cancer that finally ended her life.

She never acknowledged or looked to God in any of these struggles as far as I can tell. Her reality excluded God from all her life decisions. She was an author, speaker, mother and wife and quite accomplished. If God is real, which she apparently did not believe, where is she now?

Jesus Christ offers us not just eternal salvation, but for those who really master His Word and understand the power behind His Name, supernatural power to prevail in this present life is ours for the asking. Jesus Christ must be acknowledged as Savior and Lord in this life to overcome Satan who is the god of this world according to Jesus. A study of God's Word tells us how to become an overcomer in this life in trials such as this well respected, noble woman I mentioned endured. If she had Jesus in her corner there would have been some different outcomes.

Why is this story important? She lived her life in the natural realm. If she explored thoughtfully the invisible realm and what was going on there that couldn't be seen or known about she didn't reach the right conclusions. A very sad outcome she had! She was in the headlines a lot in the past decade of her life. Yet what good did fame do her in light of eternity?

assumptions are critical in life

One's assumptions are critical in how we react to various situations that come at us all. In my view the critical assumption is whether or not God exists. What is his nature? How has he revealed himself in nature? What do we do about the reality of His Existence?

If you don't get the right answers about these vital questions, nothing else really matters no matter what one accomplishes in life.

For those who pay any real attention to the "headlines" at all, we are living in dangerous times. Strange happenings are becoming more frequent and precarious on every front, no matter the stability one is presently experiencing in his or her life. Most of us live very distracted lives. We are wrapped up in our own life circumstances that keep us oblivious to the fast approaching apocalypse that will soon engulf all who are unprepared.

Our natural leaders talk about mundane things like global warming with no scientific explanation for what is really happening and hardly any use of reason or logic. The global warming crisis and others are fast approaching. Global warming is not caused by man. But politicians are placing the blame for the strange weather, increase in earthquake and volcanic activity squarely on mankind who is not the natural culprit though we certainly are responsible in a spiritual sense for what is happening in the natural realm.

They must place the blame somewhere, not believing God really exists. They don't know how to stop what they see coming naturally. They are keeping the masses calm and unconcerned until the point where they will no longer be able to explain things away. Once we enter into the Great Tribulation the Bible foretells, then it will be too late for most to react for they were not really warned to prepare. These are our leaders. They are preparing in the natural realm for what is coming to help themselves; but are making little or no provision for us.

God says to trust no man. He means it. But his advice goes largely unheeded. As we look to our leaders we see them dealing with problems through political correctness and nice sounding slogans not knowing what else to do. They talk to keep us distracted but make little real sense much of the time. The cry of the day is: "Peace...peace... when we can see, if we are paying any attention at all, that there is no peace in the middle east, on the Korean peninsula, or in other hot spots, and never will be with the approach they are taking. .because the Bible predicts there will be no such peace.

The masses as well as the elite who control things pay no attention to the prophetic scriptures which tell us precisely what is coming. So, they all will be ambushed in spite of their fleshly plans, when the world implodes. Most will perish.

God doesn't want this to happen. He has warned his people of what is coming through the prophetic scriptures. But most believers are asleep spiritually and seemingly won't be awakened no matter who sounds the alarm.

Human nature has forever been the same. Way back in the days of Job, God said through this man of God in **Job 6:18**, "*The paths of their way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish.*"

By the time most reach adulthood they scarcely think of God anymore. Why? Because they know not their enemy or their God. **Job 8:13** has this to say about such people:

“So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrites hope shall perish.”
 God sees those who forget him and live their lives as if he doesn't exist as “rebels”. In **Job 24:13** he says:

“They are of those that rebel against the light; they know not the ways thereof; nor abide in the paths thereof.”

Apparently God has paths and ways that the world knows not of; nor regards to their detriment.

We all know what the world admires and appreciates: Natural strength, beauty, and wit. The Bible speaks of such natural power. Look at **I Samuel 9:1-2**. *“Now there was a man of Benjamin...a mighty man of power...”* Further on in the passage it says that “Saul” was this mighty man's son. We all know the story of how Saul became King of Israel. We know that Saul trusted not in God, but in his natural strength and power. He looked to himself at the critical moments not to God and met his demise. Saul never learned how to look and think through spiritual eyes though God himself blessed him and anointed him King over all Israel.

In our day nothing has changed as far as human nature is concerned. People still look to their leaders instead of to God. Because of science we are technologically advanced. Morally it is as the days of Sodom and Gomorah or Lott. Morally we have not only not grown, but seem to be regressing back in the direction of the age before Noah.

Our leaders live like kings and queens promising us things they can't possibly deliver on. Yet we believe them as it is what we want to hear. **II Peter 2: 19-20** has this insight into our present leadership. *“While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage...”* Clearly if we can learn anything from the prophetic scriptures we learn that the masses are headed back into bondage of the most severe kind, from the bondage the pilgrims fled Europe from 400 years ago during what was called the “dark ages.”

Jude 1:11 has this to say: *“Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.”* I don't like this clearly end times prophesy at all, but this is exactly where I see America in our generation.

The Bible has a lot to say through the important words: “**way**” and “**path**”, but I doubt a believer will have opportunity in most churches to learn God's ways as opposed to man's ways through a careful study of these particular words. I can tell you this: if you read this book and have ears to hear, it will change your life. God is light and in him is no darkness at all. He will direct our paths if we trust in him and him alone. Our God is a deliverer and we are all in need of deliverance as I will prove to you if you stick with me..

2

what is reinforced in your life?

The Bible says there is a god of this world. Gods rule men. When Jesus Christ comes again he will displace this god (the devil), but until he does come, Satan has actual power in our lives unless we are consciously on a daily basis resisting him. How can this be? How do we know?

Look what Jesus reports in **Luke 4:6**:

“And the devil said unto him; all this power I will give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.”

Jesus reported what happened to him in the wilderness when he was tested for forty days after being baptized in the Holy Ghost in the Jordon River. During his very public ministry at His first Coming he talks quite a bit about the devil or Satan.

We know from this testing that Satan has direct or indirect control over much of the human systems of this world, over most influential people and leaders, and certainly over our lives as well. Satan has control over much of the communications of this world.

So if you are looking to secular news sources you will be indoctrinated by the evil one. The only source that he has not been able to corrupt yet is the inspired word of God (the Holy Bible). But with the increasing number of perverted versions coming forth in our generation he is working hard to pervert this source too.

systematically excluded

Today you find less and less about true Christianity in the secular media. This vital source of absolute truth is being routinely excluded more and more from politics, education, news, entertainment, social, economic and family environments through government edict. Behind these attacks is the emphasis on political correctness, the outlawing of true religion from public life, and other such nonsense.

Ephesians 2:2 tells us who is behind such world thinking: *“Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: “*

No matter our family of origin or the church we grow up in, until we are born again, (**John 3:3**) we are in darkness and in darkness we will stay spiritually as we grow

up, no matter how much religion we experience.. Much of what we learn in a worldly sense is to our benefit in the natural realm. But until we are born again it has no spiritual profit as far as our soul is concerned.

There are so many passages in the Bible that are instructive showing our programming. Look at **Ecclesiastes 11:9**, *“Rejoice, O Young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.”*

I thought I knew everything that mattered

This certainly captures how I felt as a young man. I thought I knew everything I really needed to know, but until my nature became brand new by an experience spoken of in the Bible I really knew nothing though I was raised up in the church by two moral parents in the world's eyes.

To me **Isaiah 3:12** nails the present leadership of our nation. *“As for my people, children are their oppressors and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee, cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.”*

Look at the influence Hillary Clinton has had on women in America. She thinks it takes a village to raise our children. She and others of her ilk have done great harm to the thinking of so many of our citizens. And she manages our relations with other nations? God help us all.

Look at our present economic situation in light of **Haggi 1:5-6**: *“Now therefore, thus saith the LORD of hosts; consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little, ye eat, but ye have not enough, Ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.”*

Our nation has turned away from the Living God. So just as in Haggi's day God is turning away from us. I saw a short vision of him three years ago turning from right to left. As I meditated on what I had seen, the thought came to me. We are at the end of the gentile age. Jesus is turning to refocus on the chosen people, the Jews. We are at the end of an age.

Another important prophet, **Zechariah** said in **1:4**: *“Be ye not as your Fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, Saying, thus saith the LORD of hosts; turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor harken unto me, saith the LORD.”*

what is our first priority?

Our fathers and grandfathers not attending to the Lord's ways as a first priority have put us into the present jeopardy. Too many who attained to places of leadership: heads of family, business and community leaders turned away from the living God or never lived for him fully. We can't go on ignoring God. Yet because of the power of evil propaganda many unknowingly serve the devil; no matter the civic good being done.

Jesus Christ through his **Apostle Luke** reported this saying of the devil: *"And the devil said unto him; all this power I will give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me; and to whom soever I will, I give it."*

do you really know?

So, even though we know that at the cross Jesus Christ took back this power, until He returns, as he says he will, and soon, to lock Satan up for a thousand years we have to learn individually to prevail supernaturally to inhibit Satan and his fallen angels who are all thieves.

According to **Ephesians 2:2**, *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."*

So there is a battle to be won once the light turns on and we truly can see and hear spiritually before we can walk in this light. After salvation, there is a second necessary experience, sanctification.

I Corinthians 4:20 says, *"For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power."*

If we are not seeing the power of God in our lives, we are not seeing the Kingdom of God.

For such a long time even as a Christian I walked in common sense and in the understanding of a worldly man. But **I Corinthians 2:5-6** says this, *"That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God..."*

I knew next to nothing

As much as I knew from my studies, at some point I realized in a spiritual, really practical sense I knew next to nothing and wasn't going to learn it except by personally studying God's Word in the power of the Holy Spirit for myself. I had to make the decision that many of my ways though good in a worldly sense, were probably not his ways and that I needed to learn his ways.

Hebrews 3:10 says this,

“Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, they do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.”

I had to come to the conclusion that I did not know spiritually what I thought I knew as I wasn't performing what a basic Christian is supposed to do in **Mark 16:17, a critical verse of what a true Christian is should be memorized by all.**

I had to come to the conclusion I was a double minded man: natural and spiritual and make a change in my life.

James 1:8 says: *“A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”* That in so many areas I was deceived though I did not know it as a successful young man of the world!

In many ways I operated in fear though it was not apparent to family and coworkers.

II Timothy 1:7 says: *For God hath not given us a spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”*

It has taken me years of growth to where I feel I am becoming a mature son of God. Satan has less and less power in my life. Praise God!

3

change that matters

Escape is an interesting word that is used 116 times in the Bible. **II Peter 1:4** says:

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

This verse says we must escape the corruption before we can be partakers of the divine nature. We know from scripture we can’t escape on our own. We need supernatural help because of our supernatural enemy.

was the cross really necessary?

That is why the cross was absolutely necessary to salvation. God sent his only son to save us by dying in our place. There was no other way. **John 3:3** says:

“We must be born again.”

The first time we are born we are born into darkness. *We must be translated supernaturally out of this darkness through a supernatural rescue operation.*
(Colossians 1:3-4)

“Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.”

I John 3:1

To reach the point where we realize we need rescuing is often a matter of time, fortune and circumstance. We need to come to the end of ourself. **Leviticus 26:19** says:

“And I will break the pride of your power and I will make your heaven as iron and your earth as brass:”

do we all need deliverance?

God is a deliverer. He needs to deliver us out of the bondage most of us don't even realize we are in.

"But the LORD, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and a stretched out arm, him shall you fear, and him shall you worship, and to him shall ye do sacrifice."

II Kings 17:36

In this scripture we see one of the LORD's more dramatic rescue operations. We see how he had to break the hold of Pharaoh, who was an earthly servant of the devil. Our own rescue may not seem as noteworthy but it too can only be accomplished by God but we are the main one standing in the way. We think we are OK. We are as much slaves as were the Hebrew slaves in Egypt.

we are all being resisted

Ecclesiastes 4:12 tells us how strong the world's hold is on us.

"And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him, and a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

Salvation begins at the cross, but though it starts with our surrender, it is a process that takes time to let go of all the things we want to keep holding on to. It takes time to renew one's programmed mind and to let go of worldly relationships. In the beginning we are fighting God himself, because no one can save himself. We begin by thinking we can. God has ordained that salvation comes only through Jesus Christ.

"He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass, and he hath set darkness in my paths."

Job 19:8

Repentance is key to our breakout.

"But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn everyone from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands."

Jonah 3:8

Up until the cross, Satan had power over us as the god of this world, but at the cross Jesus Cross through his submission to death took back that power from Satan.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and on earth."

Matthew 28:18

we are delegated power

We learn through Bible study that we have been delegated that power to chase Satan out of our lives through the power of God's Word and the authority of the Name in which we pray.

"And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power."

Luke 4:32

"And they were all amazed and spake among themselves, saying what a word is this. For with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out."

Luke 4:36

We see from various scriptures that we can't save ourselves.

"No man can come to me except the Father which has sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:44

With the salvation of God comes joy. We are not talking about a religious experience here; a form or ceremony. No! Salvation is a supernatural act.

"Thou hast made known to me the ways of life. Thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance."

Acts 2:28

a dramatic conversion

We all have heard of the dramatic conversion experience of Saul, on the road to Damascus. It was dramatic, but though we may not be knocked off a horse and blinded, a true conversion experience though less dramatic causes a 180 degree turning away from sin. Look at what Jesus Christ told Saul after that experience. He related it later.

"Now I send thee: to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

Acts 26:18

When we talk to most Christians in the present day church a true believer might wonder how many are really saved as we see so little if any change in behavior in so many.

"Having a form of godliness but denying the power of thereof: from such turn away."

II Timothy 3:5

One exciting thing about this change is the change in our status with God.

“Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God: Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.”

I John 3:1

So, one sign of really having changed is being rejected. No rejection? Than question have you really been born again.

4

the new reality

In the book of Revelation Jesus Christ mentions to the Apostle John seven promises to him who overcomes. (**Rev. 2:7,11,17,26; and 3:5,12, and 21**) We are not going to overcome if we don't have spiritual eyes and ears. It takes spiritual eyes and ears to change our focus in life. Before being born again our focus was on the world because of the natural eyes and ears through which we viewed things. We were on the broad path; not the narrow path. To stay on the narrow path we need to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in the renewing of the mind.

a path of life

There is a path of life. **Psalm 16:11** says: *“Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”*

God goes on to say in **Psalm 23:3** that *“He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.”*

Further on God speaks through David to say:

“Show me thy ways O LORD; Teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.”

Is this your heart cry? If not, it should be.

God goes on to say more about paths:

“All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.”

Psalm 25:10

baptized in the Holy Ghost

This following verse became very real to me when I received the baptism of the Holy Spirit in 1978.

“To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in thy sanctuary.”

Psalm 63:2

I saw my LORD in a open eyed vision, and spent time with Him on a holy night on Okinawa years ago. From that point on in my life I wanted to do his will and walk in his power. He said in **EXODUS 9:16** *“...for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.”*

If we are in the “latter days” and in the final generation that will see His Return then we know that we are in an age where we will see signs and wonders to equal and surpass those in the time of Moses. He said this in Deuteronomy 4:37-38, *“and because he loved thy Fathers, therefore he choose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt; to drive out nations from before thee greater and mightier than thou art, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as it is this day.”*

If we think like the crowd is thinking we can't be on the right path.

“Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadth to life, and few there be that find it.”

Matthew 7:14

If you are born again and on the right path Luke says this:

“From henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three....”

Luke 12: 52-53

Why the division?

“Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

John 3:3

further insight

Further on in John we get more insight into the division:

“Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, thou couldest

have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above: Therefor he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin...

John 19:10-11

Who has a walk like Jesus in this day?

“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.”

Acts 10:38

do you lack boldness?

Before I received the baptism of the Holy Spirit I wanted to do good and knew right from wrong, but had a fear of man. The Apostle said this.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believeth to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

Romans 1:16

Does God have power over your life? Are you a vessel of honor or dishonor?

“Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel of honor and another unto dishonor.”

Romans 9:21

God has a plan and he is patient in its execution.

“What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared for his glory.”

Romans 9:22

Can we abound in hope?

“Now the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.”

Romans 15:13

can we lose our salvation?

Can we lose our salvation? While no one can rip us out of God's hand, we can climb down and walk away. We have free will even after the new birth.

“For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.”

II Peter 2:21

what is your reality?

So what is the new reality? That in Him we are overcomers in this world. At the start of the chapter I mentioned seven promises Jesus makes to we who over come: It would be good to list them now as you might not hear them from the pulpit.

To him that overcometh: I will...

- “give to eat of the tree of life...”
- “shall not be hurt of the second death.
- “Give to eat of the hidden manna...”
- “Give power over the nations...”
- “The same shall be clothed in white raiment...”
- “Make a pillar in the temple of God...”
- “Will I grant to sit with me in my throne,”

What wonderful promises we have been given if we overcome....

5

our real need

Our real need is Jesus Christ and the supernatural power that comes with a spiritual understanding of the way things really are meant to be in the Holy Spirit. We really have no clue of this reality before being born again. Through sanctification our understanding increases. With the breakthrough power that comes from the Holy Spirit our understanding of the new reality in Christ grows strong.

All throughout scripture are holy declarations (see **Job 22:28**).

For instance, **II Samuel 22:33** declares:

“God is my strength and power and he maketh my way perfect.”

In the holy writ we learn great truths such as in **Psalms 106:8**

“Nevertheless he saved them for his name’s sake, that he might make his mighty power to be known.”

Most Christians have learned the following declaration:

“And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory for ever and ever, amen.”

Matthew 6:13

Many believers even after they are saved and forgiven continue to beat up on themselves for past sins. But Jesus Christ gives us this knowledge in **Matthew 9:6-8** to comfort us:

“But that you may know that the son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, then saith he to the sick of palsy, arise and take up thy bed and go into thy house...”

are you using your power

If he has forgiven us, should we continue to berate ourselves for past sins? If the accuser of the brethren is hanging around you cast him out.

“And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to caste them out and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.”

Matthew 10:1

Jesus cautions us in **Matthew 22: 29** with these words:

are you in err?

“Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.” We need to know personally the power of God and learn to walk in this power for he has delegated it to us.

“And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach. And to have power to heal sicknesses ,and to caste out devils:”

Mark 3: 14-15

“And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two, and gave them power over unclean spirits.”

Mark 6:7

We see further on in the New Testament something that should excite us.

“And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, LORD, even the devils are subject to us through thy name.”

Luke 10:17

And then two verses later we see.

“Behold I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and overall the power of the enemy, and nothing by any means shall harm you.”

Luke 10:19

Are you beginning to see why you err when you can't recall such teachings of the master when you or a loved one is under attack?

Again Jesus speaks to us in **John 16:33** an important truth.

“These things I have spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

The book of Acts takes these powerful teachings and personalizes them for us. Look what **Acts 1:8 and on** tells us:

“But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem...”

But when you use this divine power that is available to us all expect to get into a wrestling match. Satan and his demons don't like to let go:

can you wrestle?

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the forces of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

Ephesians 6:12

When we come in our own name we are limited to our own natural power, wit and charm. But when we come in His Name we have access to supernatural strength. He promises us.

“And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.”

Colossians 2:10

So, do you want to live your life limited to the tools available in the natural realm (pocket knives and other such stuff), or do you want to go forward in Christ?

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing as under of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Hebrews 4:12

Most believers that are successful in a natural sense go through life continually being short changed by the devil who is keeping them distracted and out of the Bible. So they never grow to their full potential in Christ supernaturally.

after the rapture

After the rapture and the world is thrust into sudden destruction; even then God will have his witnesses: the 144,000, angels, and the two witnesses to display his power and glory.

“And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a 1260 days, clothed in sackcloth.”

Revelation 11:3

6

our supernatural enemy

One of the important truths we learn from scripture and the direct teachings of Jesus is that we have a supernatural enemy. Though this fact is intellectually known by all church going believers, from what I see and hear, I don't think most believers ever get this truth planted in their "knower" in a way it does them good on a daily basis.

We have an enemy who wants to take us out. No matter how well life may be working for one at the moment, or whether or not one is popular with family, friends and coworkers in the secular world, such a man must be on guard.. If you are a believer you are hated by dark forces in the spiritual realm and need to be working spiritually on your self defense.

the book of Job is instructive

There are wonderful things we can learn from the book of Job remembering that he lived his life and didn't have the supernatural tools a believer has access to today.

"And the LORD said unto Satan, behold all that he hath is in thy power only upon himself put not forth thy hand..."

Job 1:12 – 2:6

Read this whole story and see the power of the enemy before the first coming of Jesus Christ.

the latter times

We are now in the latter times.

"And in the latter time of their kingdom when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up, And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people."

Daniel 8:23-24

We have supernatural enemies and need to walk in supernatural power; no matter how much favor we enjoy right now in the natural realm. Just like Job life can come crashing

down without supernatural protection. We need to be declaring things in the supernatural realm and standing firm until they manifest naturally. (**Job 22:28**)

“Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.”

Psalm 27:11

At his first coming Jesus lived the life of a human putting aside his personal divinity to demonstrate to us how to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit who we all have access to once we are born again.

“When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.”

Luke 22:53

the power of darkness

Jesus speaks about the power of darkness at his first coming and we see from the book of Revelation that Satan will have such power for a time once more.

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come, that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

John 10:10

We who are born again have access to God’s supernatural power. He has not left us to be cannon fodder at the mercy of Satan and his army. We see from various verses such as below that Satan’s army also has power.

“And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them; and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.”

Acts 19:16

These people in the above scripture who were overcome were not born again or Spirit filled believers and so were overcome to their shame. We need such power because Satan still has power to give those who serve him which we need to counter.

With Jesus’ ascension into Heaven 2000 years ago we were not left orphaned.

“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear son:”

Colossians 1:13

terrible times coming

After the rapture we know there is a period of time that will be terrible because Satan will be given power to overcome the saints alive at that time.

“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.”

II Thessalonians 2:9

The book of Revelation talks about the woes that are coming and the four horse men who will be released to bring judgment on the earth.

“And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat there on to take peace from the earth.” ...

“And I looked and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was death, and hell followed with him. And power was given unto them, over the fourth part of the earth.”

Revelation 6:4-8

Terrible judgments are coming and we don't want to be here on earth at that time.

“And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power as the scorpions of the earth have power.”

Revelation 9:3

“And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power and his seat and great authority.”

Revelation 13:2

“And it was given unto him, to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds and tongues and nations.”

Revelation 13:7

Why would God give such terrible power to Satan? The next time the world sees Jesus he will be coming as judge of all the earth. Any power given to Satan is given by God and it is righteous that he give it to test a Christ rejecting world before He returns to set up his Kingdom.

7

learning to walk again

One of Satan's most powerful methods of attacking God's people is with spirits of distraction. Although we are emphatically told that for God's blessings to flow unheeded we need to renew our minds after being born again. (Romans 12:2) Because of the strongholds Satan has constructed in our minds before the new birth (sports, hobbies, movies, not necessarily bad; but they were filling our thoughts, and room needs to be made for the mind of Christ to enter) these strongholds have to be torn down because some have become idols.

Because so many of God's people are very distracted it is quite difficult for them to learn to walk spiritually. God has provided tools of warfare for us to use to walk as overcomers. But Satan works hard to keep believers distracted so they won't pick up and become proficient in the use of these spiritual warfare tools.

helping someone else

Even after we learn to walk in a way that Satan has difficulty hindering us we have family and friends who are being hindered that we must learn how to effectively help.

"Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths."

Hosea 2:6

If you know the story of the prophet Hosea and Gomer you know it was his holy declaration that brought his wayward wife to the end of her natural ways to where she could be saved. He had to do spiritual warfare.

So what kind of power can we walk in "in Christ"?

"And having spoiled principalities and powers he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

Colossians 2:15

We serve a mighty King and must use what he has appropriated for us. Most sadly don't use what he has gained for us to use.

Ephesians 6:s10 exhorts us to,

“Finally my brethren, be strong in the LORD and in the power of his might.”

Most believers I know fail to understand what has been gained for them in this world and walk out their lives in the natural realm falling far short of God’s plan for their lives.

independence is not necessarily good

We are so independent. We can go through a day, week or month rarely thinking of our need for God’s help because we have learned to walk well in our own natural strength, will, intellect and well placed relationships; to the point where God can’t really bless us in new ways because we so seldom look to him.

“In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths.”

Proverbs 3:6

In army learns how to do necessary things like assemble and disassemble a weapon blind folded and attempts to do it quickly as weapons can become jammed in combat. One has less time to practice essential skills in combat; so they drill, drill, drill during times of peace so when they get into combat they are well practiced.

It is often the best prepared troops that overcome; not the best supplied.

Our primary weapon spiritually is the word of God. When the enemy attacks we need to back him off with God’s Word.

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”

Psalms 119:105

drill increases proficiency

How well do we know God’s Word? Does the right word pop automatically into our mind when we need help?

“For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.”

II Corinthians 13:4

“And he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me...”

II Corinthians 12:9-10

Why are so many believers so weak spiritually? Why is the church such a joke to many who live heathen lives? Because so many pastors, elders, teachers, and evangelists are in error.

“What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.”

I Corinthians 9:18

If a believer does not understand or cherish the word of God I wonder if such a person is really even saved.

“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”

I Corinthians 1:18

As this present world grows darker and darker and government becomes more corrupt we who believe need not walk in fear.

“For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou not then be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shall have praise of the same.”

Romans 13:3

God promises to make even our enemies to be at peace with us when we walk in his ways.

Many are aware of the power of God and think well of themselves and so such power becomes dangerous in their hands.

“Saying give me also this power that on whomsoever I lay hands he may receive the Holy Ghost.”

Acts 8:19

Though Jesus Christ was truly God in flesh, he put aside his own, personal divinity and walked like a man with the same limitations we have. But he did learn to accept and walk in the divine power available to us all (The Word, The Holy Ghost).

“And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.”

Luke 4:14

“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith.”

I John 5:4

“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

I John 4:4

8

required: a lifestyle change

Change is difficult. It requires adopting a new attitude and changing opinions and habits. Individuals who want to change find it difficult because often those who love you or like you will often resist the change you are trying to make because it makes them uncomfortable.

When you are born again. You are glad, but often members of the family don't like the change. Certainly the familiar spirits that work the family don't like it.

sharing your excitement

One of the things you begin to do when you get excited about God is to share your excitement. Some are excited for you, but most are not. Your excitement feels like you are preaching to them and comes across as criticism of them.

“When I say unto the wicked, thou shall surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.”

Ezekiel 3:18

Since the cross, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ 2,000 years ago God has put everything under the feet of Jesus. He has all power.

“Far above all principality, and power and might and dominion and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and has put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church...”

Ephesians 1:21-22

So, what are you doing with your relationship with God?

“Whosoever therefore resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.”

Romans 13:2

we must change

We must change. To stay where we are in the natural realm once we accept God is an insult to God and what He has provided for you. His ways are far above our ways and we are to seek after spiritual perfection.

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers for there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.”

Romans 13:1

Some things can be changed by decision, self will and discipline. But God sent His Holy Spirit to be our help and comforter. We need his assistance. But He can be grieved. Though we may think most of our problems are caused by others and that they need changing; the first thing that happens is that He helps us in areas where we need changing. We can resist such personal change and thereby resist the Holy Ghost to our shame.

“But as many as receive him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”

John 1:12

What role in this life can measure up to the role of becoming “a son of God”?

What is God’s way to conqueror?

“...not by might nor by power but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.”

Zechariah 4:6

We learn from James, the brother of Jesus, that it is the battle with our own tongue which is that last stronghold we must conqueror. Most of the curses that come on us are through our own tongue. Sad!

“Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.”

Proverbs 6:2

under attack

When we are attacked verbally what is our first instinct? To lash back.

“Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good.”

Romans 12:21

Before we are born again and before the Holy Ghost becomes real in our life we have an understanding of faith which is limited by our confinement in the natural realm. We don't understand the God kind of faith. We need to learn God's ways.

“Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”

I John 5:5

“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.”

Revelation 12:11

9

the old reality needs replacing

We all learn things in the natural realm that need replacing as we grow in maturity. The horse and buggy form of transportation is something you may see at rodeos or in Amish country, but it doesn't work for those living in these modern times.

The kerosene lantern and other essential tools are still good for camping and power outages, but have been replaced by electric lights, and other more efficient implements to support a faster pace of living.

It is the same with many thoughts and opinions. They may need changing as we grow and go through various life experiences. Some opinions and habits must change or we will become irrelevant and be passed by in life.

world views I have rotated through

When I was a child I don't think I had a world view. It was much more parochial than that. I looked through the eyes of a dependent child. At some point sports dominated my thinking. I found myself looking through the eyes of a competitive athlete. In high school I worked hard for grades as I wanted to go on to college. But sports continued to be important (football, basketball, track, swimming) because of the friendships. I attended three different high schools in three different states as my dad was transferred through different positions. Sports helped me make friends quickly.

When I started college I obligated myself through ROTC to become a Marine Second Lieutenant upon graduation. I was a varsity athlete in college. But, because of my goal upon graduation, scholarship became more important. At that time I began looking more through the eyes of a scholar than an athlete. But my world view was still very narrow.

Upon graduation I was commissioned and went off to Quantico, Virginia to begin my Marine Corps training. I served as an officer of the United States on active duty for twenty one years. So though I was a member of the Institutional Christian faith and was faithful in weekly attendance; my world view was not a spiritual one, but dominated by natural concerns. I was married within a year of my commissioning and a year later became a father of the first of our four children.

At that time I started looking at the world through the lense of married life as a husband and father.

But my world view was through the eyes of someone interested in history as I studied past wars and prepared for future ones. I experienced three tours in Vietnam as an infantry officer.

Sixteen years into my military career I had a transforming spiritual experience that opened my eyes into the spiritual realm. I was baptized in the Holy Spirit. At this point in my life my eyes were opened in a way that was so transforming that my past eventually seemed to have been almost a dream based on my new focus. It was like I was alive and awake for the first time in my life.

The Bible which had been more like a college textbook came alive as words leaped off the page into my spirit.

Now I look at life through the eyes of a disciple of Jesus Christ. But this transformation was some what gradual as it is difficult to let go of one's political perspective. I was a Republican and a Conservative and have been on a city council for eight years and have run for elected office at the state level.

I have achieved some success in the eyes of the world. It is easy to become proud of past accomplishments and rest in a reputation you have earned. But at this point in my life I see how little I have done in light of my now eternal perspective. Winning souls for Christ is all important.

too comfortable with who you were?

Most of us at some point stop thinking in child like ways and become adults and step into responsibilities, careers and lifestyles. But many who grow up in the church rarely replace their childhood understanding of Christianity with something more real. Lots of Christians as adults don't really replace their religious understanding with a relationship that really works for them as adults. God has so much more for us in this life than most every realize. The Word of God says he daily downloads benefits. (**Psalm 68:19**)

"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation."

Psalm 103:2-5 shows us the benefits package for joining the army of God. But few of us walk in most of these wonderful benefits.

"Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's."

Why is this? Because even after coming to Christ, most believers never really renew their minds in Christ Jesus. (**Romans 12:1-2**)

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

What is your major identity in the secular world? What gives you the most satisfaction? Are you a good athlete? A good provider? A good husband or wife? A good father or mother? These are all good, but based on our secular relationships in the natural realm.

making room for new relationships

When we become born again, we begin a brand new relationship with God. But how many grow up in this relationship?

When we are born again for the first time we have the ability to see the Kingdom of God. Is our last supernatural experience one that happened fifteen years ago? Or are we witness to a supernatural event that happened yesterday?

We need to be contending for such experiences every day. The word of God says that daily he downloads blessings into our lives.

How many have we missed out on since our conversion? I have missed out I am sure on too many.

Are we grateful for the blessings we have received? Those with grateful hearts are precious.

In order to walk in the power of God we need to learn to think like God. That means studying his word and seeking relationships with other saints; and also drawing close to the Holy Spirit. It means spending quality time with God. Unfortunately good things might have to be given up to make room for the better things.

Life in the Spirit is worth the sacrifice.

10

the church needs deliverance

There is so much wisdom in the Bible that can't be procured any other way. For instance: God's word says this about a nation:

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD: and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance."

Psalm 33:12

So, as a nation turns its back on the one true God like this nation is doing judgment is sure. So those people that know their Bible have a measuring rod to judge when bad things are about to happen and can step aside in an intelligent way.

deliberately dumbed down

America has deliberately been dumbed down through the public school system by those who are working against God. This dumbing down has now spread from the universities into every aspect of our society. No matter how much money we dump into public education the kids become more and more unruly and uneducated biblically. As prayer and the Bible are systematically excluded by the God haters it goes from bad to worse for our nation. Increasing numbers of well placed individuals are under the control of Satan and work for him, whether they know it or not.

If you don't see that the world and its systems are increasingly under the control of the evil one as the Bible predicts will happen than you are deceived. The only way you can see this truth is by understanding the prophetic scriptures from the inspired Word of God under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

I John 5: 19 has this bit of wisdom: *"And we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."* The Bible goes on to say that *"if you are the friend of the world you are an enemy of God."* (James 4:4)

Because the God of the Bible has been excluded from America's public school system and universities; and because believers who are in this system are bullied into silence for the most part, the masses are being brain washed, and in deception, we also see growing apostasy and wrong-headed thinking in the church system.

They who are deceived and in apostasy look at those who have a biblical understanding of what's coming and are attempting to warn their loved ones as the odd ones. They think believers are deceived; but in fact it is the other way around.

being doubled minded

So many who are in the institutional church are double minded now because of the systems of this world which are under the control or sway of the "evil one." Many churches are now being run like "corporations."

The educational system which at our foundation was under the control of the church and parents is now being used to prepare children to work and exist in the world that Satan increasingly controls.

Jesus had this to say about the world:

"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world..."

Galatians 1:4

living in a hostile world

When an army invades a hostile country, that army has to be prepared to survive and exist in a hostile environment until the people are liberated and true morality is turned around.

That is the way it is for believers in this present evil world. Once we are born again we know we are not of this world. Until we are born again, even if we are raised up in the Christian world, we are just religious, and are coexisting in an evil world. Maybe we see much activity in the world as evil in a religious sense, but we are comfortable with much of what we see and hear in a natural sense.

Once we are born again this is what the Bible says happens to an individual:

"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:"

Colossians 1:13-14

This passage goes on and on and may be the longest sentence in the Bible with its use of colons. There is much divine truth expressed here which gives believers an understanding of reality which the world can not know of for it lives in spiritual darkness.

When believers indeed come into the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ it is usually only after the world has done its best while we lived in darkness to bring us into bondage in our habits, opinions, relationships and hobbies: i.e., through our mind, will, emotions and

flesh. We need to be redeemed and sanctified from much of what we learned while dead spiritually.

From my experience we all need supernatural deliverance from the influence of darkness in our lives in one way or another; no matter how we conformed to conventional wisdom in our old life.

Demons are real. Many of them are so familiar in our lives that we are in deception concerning their hold on us, and on members of our family.

It is sad; but many believers can't grow in Christ or break free from certain strongholds and habits in their lives that are holding them back because they won't believe that demons are real, and that they or loved ones actually need deliverance.

So they spend years in frustration attempting to change troubling habits and patterns using natural remedies often to little or no avail. One can't reason with demons. Many believers end up going through life medicated experiencing only tolerable recovery with little or no real joy in their life.

If believers can't break free and become overcomers than how are they to influence others and society in real ways that can transform a situation?

Society needs help. Those who understand the reality of Christ are the only ones who can help in ways that have eternal consequences. Yet we see many who can help that have a pick and choose understanding of the Bible. How can you ignore large passages of the Bible and say you live in reality?

Deliverance from demonic influence is the real problem in America today. Satan and his fallen angels have increasing control globally. Yet most in the church are so distracted they don't see it..

When we look at the Old Testament we see that Israel had no deliverance power before the First Coming of Christ. Therefore when demons invaded a household, a community or nation and came against Israel they had to be completely wiped out because of the demonic hold over the men, women, children and animals.

In this present dispensation we, the church, have deliverance power. (Mark 16:17, Luke 10:19, etc.) But for the most part believers are failing to use this divine authority, and so the church and our nation are being overcome supernaturally. Increasingly we are aligning with what is being called the "new world order."

Do you believe this? Than you need to rise up and walk in the power of a true believer in your sphere of influence doing what you can to resist the anti-christ spirit in a careful and appropriate manner

Only then can we make a lasting difference until Jesus comes to remove his church through the rapture.

Prophetically we understand that most will not believe this view of reality. Scripture tells us this is so and has always been so through the ages. Prophecies of the Bible tell us what is coming, and that Jesus Christ will soon have to return to save this world from complete destruction. We are in the last generation before the Return of Christ to start the Millinium.

Look up for your redemption draws nigh.

11

decision making in a fallen world

From all I have written for our consideration thus far can you see how handicapped are those who have no spiritual eyes to see or spiritual ears to hear the truth as God sees truth because they have not been born again and baptized in the Holy Ghost?

Most people are guided only by the wisdom of this world. But we who love God are to be guided by a higher wisdom.

“That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God...”
I Corinthians 2:5-6

Jeremiah the prophet had this to say in the Old Testament days to the people of God:

“Thus saith the LORD, stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, we will not walk therein.”

Jeremiah 6:16

I started this book with a scripture: Proverbs 14:12. It tells us that the way most people think is probably not right and needs changing because it is taking them to death. Can you now see the wisdom of trusting that this saying is the truth?

examine yourselves

We are challenged by God to:

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves, Know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in yu, except ye be reprobates?”

II Corinthians 13:5

Few heed such warnings. Most, I am afraid, are on the broad path heading toward destruction as scripture tells us is true.

“Enter ye in at the strait gate for wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go thereat: Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

Matthew 7:13-14

This is such a critical word from God that it is repeated again in Luke 13:22-24. Yet when you watch the institutional church closely you see that few really understand this world and live their lives much as do civil, easy to get along with unbelievers.

So what does this have to say about the decision making of today's church?

decision making is critical

The assumptions that underlie our decision making are critical. They must be based on absolute truth. This kind of truth is only found in the word of God.

Unless you have an exceptional pastor you are probably getting a mixture of truth and error in his teachings. That is why it is so critical to do personal studies and rely on the Holy Ghost as your primary teacher.

“Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. “

John 14:5-7

Since making this statement, Jesus died, was buried, was resurrected and has ascended back to His Father in Heaven. So who do we look to now in making good decisions? A man? This is what God says.

“If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you.

Matthew 14:15-18

In conclusion most are not making good supernatural decisions. It matters not what your natural eyes and ears are telling you. You are walking in absolute truth only if your heart is lined up with the will of God and you are attempting to walk in his ways. That is why it is so vital to get a hold of his ways and forsake the world's ways.

In the Preface I mentioned that the word “way” is used 795 times. It is critical that you do your own study to see where your ways are lining up with the world rather than with God

So, what about trying to change the world? Most who have diligently tried end up quite frustrated. Why? Because we don’t have the duty to change the world. Jesus used the term “*blind guides*.” It is important that you understand that many if not most of those we look to for guidance are blind spiritually though they think they can see. So who do we look to for guidance? Who are we responsible for spiritually? These are important questions.

I will leave you with this statement of Jesus if you think your duty is to save the world:

“Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind; And if the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the ditch.”

Matthew 15:14

“I pray for them: I pray not for the world but for them which thou hast given me for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.”

Matthew 17:9-10

I close this book with one last question: Is Jesus being glorified in our actions and words?