

Hidden Wars:

Silent, relentless attack of
familiar spirits and our
response

By
Dave Winecoff

Dedication

A special thanks to Karen. She has been an inspiration and example to me. When Holy Spirit reveals things in her life needing change she ruthlessly goes after them to please her LORD. She did the prophetic drawing for the cover.

Also, I so appreciate Paul and Beth Stadler of the Yakima Healing Rooms and the healing team. We have had the privilege to minister there the past four years helping to bring healing and deliverance to those who risk confessing their needs.

HIDDEN WAR: Silent, relentless attack of familiar spirits and our response

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Warning: For clarity the masculine is used: examples he, him, his. I recognize that *there is no male or female in the army of Christ and that we are all one in Christ Jesus* and also that *he made man both male and female* While recognizing the giftings of both men and women to lead and minister in healing and deliverance I have simplified for the sake of clarity and brevity. I don't wish to offend anyone.

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“When principles that run against your deepest convictions begin to win the day, then battle is your calling, and peace has become sin; you must, at the price of dearest peace, lay your convictions bare before friends and enemy, with all the fire of your faith.”

Abraham Kuuper

Author's Remarks

This book is about hidden wars going on whose outcomes shape our destinies; how we can take charge, and why most aren't. I am hard on those who are in billets of leadership in this work. You who have taken on the tough task of pastoring should read the last chapter first. The opening quote by Abraham Kuuper captures the motivation for this book. If you feel as I do that we here in America are not at peace, but at war, then this book will provide a world view to fight more effectively and prevail until His coming.

In 1978 I had a day time vision that made me spiritually hungry, resulting in my devouring the Bible. I happened on obscure scriptures, like Isaiah 25:7 and 2 Corinthians 3:14 which speak of the veil over our human understanding. I see little evidence that most believers have any real understanding of how this veil applies to them.

Five years after that vision I retired early from the United States Marine Corps. It wasn't because I was tired of warfare preparation or the potential for involvement in future combat. It was because I saw clearly for the first time in my life the necessity to become more involved in another aspect of natural combat, its spiritual dimension.

I became aware in a whole new way of the terrible toll lack of spiritual understanding had for me both in and beyond Marine Corps life. Most I knew were firing on the wrong personalities as was I. Before this vision I was truly ignorant of the hidden wars raging beyond the veil of my five natural senses and its effect on my life and those I loved. This vision shook me awake from my spiritual slumber.

Before my vision I lived my life according to Christian principles as best as I naturally could as do other sincere Christians. In spite of my best efforts in the natural I was not able to systematically achieve the victorious living I strived towards, but took comfort in knowing I was doing my best. After this vision for the first time I knew how desperately I needed a closer walk with Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

If leaders I knew were aware of the hidden influences manifesting from the unseen world, and that we had authority in that realm that we can't see into with our natural senses, I was not aware of it. While revelation knowledge about this realm is the experience of some, I confess it rarely impacted my conscious thinking and actions. I knew of no one personally who ever discussed the impact of dark forces on their life or how to counteract their destructive influences.

Following my vision I was dramatically aware of Jesus Christ in a whole new way. This new understanding of the reality of Jesus Christ brought immediate awareness of the hidden personalities that influence evil. This new awareness of my need for God's supernatural protection and influence in every aspect of my life and affairs eventually brought needed change. **1 John 4:4** assures us that *“greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world.”*

My confidence in Jesus Christ developed into more than mere head knowledge. But a new challenge arose. I had friendship patterns, attitudes, habits and opinions that needed changing to be able to walk in this new understanding of reality. Most I knew were quite comfortable with my old reality. Even with dramatic, new revelation change is hard work when your new reality is not that of close family and friends.

Jesus Christ spent a lot of time teaching and demonstrating to his disciples the reality of the Father's love, of our hidden enemy, his capabilities and limitations, heaven and

hell, and the spiritual warfare tools that make all the difference to a victorious walk. Only after His death, burial, resurrection and ascension did the disciples really begin to understand what he had said before his death. Much critical understanding has been lost to the church in the following dark ages we are still attempting to recover from. His disciples recorded for us the teachings and demonstrations of Jesus Christ and that we can walk in this knowledge in real power.

But for much of my adult, Christian life I can say I have been in the dark ages supernaturally. Due to attacks from fear and unbelief my own ability to counter the influences of hidden forces aligned against me and my family was quite limited for years after my life changing vision. Verses like Mark 16:17 and Luke 10:19 tell us of supernatural power available to us, but I was timid to believe and use this power in my Christian walk. Something blinded me from grabbed a hold of this miracle life in all of its fullness

I slowly came to realize I needed to go deeper than my own comfortable religious routines caused me to go. My only consistent source of help in this difficult journey of discovery has been scripture and the Holy Ghost. My journey into the secret place is one we all have to take alone. This book shares some of the new revelation gained that has allowed me to take control of my personal life in a whole new way.

Psalm 11:3 says that *“if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?”* Across America we see spiritual turmoil in the lives of individuals, families, schools, businesses, neighborhoods, government and nature. This seems clear evidence of behind-the-scenes influence of forces of darkness that know their time is short. They know God is beginning to bring all things to a close. How do we who believe maintain until He comes in this growing chaos?

Deliverance is one of the supernatural power tools needed to stop the forward creep of satanic control at the believer’s level that I had not been using before my transforming experience that set me on this discovery. Scripture clearly warns that our culture and all man made organizations are doomed. There is no way to save them. But we do have the power to save ourselves and those we love.

We have been wonderfully equipped by God to prevail in the hidden wars we are involved in. With the right tools we can make a critical difference in the lives of those we love in a whole new way. Begin to use all the spiritual tools we have been given for battle. Join with me. Learn how to fight the real enemy in the hidden wars going on all around us.

in Christ,

Brother Dave

1

command presence

Every one can remember a moment in his life when it radically changes for the better. This is my testimony of such a new beginning. At thirty-eight years of age, on the outside I was a confident, successful Marine officer with a strong combat record and no bad marks against me. On the inside I knew something was missing. I didn't know what it was, but had been searching for sometime. Marines are administratively judged twice a year. One of the attributes seniors look for is command presence. Do you exude a leadership presence that attracts others?

a God sized vacuum

God had created in me a God-sized vacuum that could only be satisfied by a supernatural filling. He was about to correct this spiritual shortcoming in my life that I knew nothing about. Spiritual boldness was missing in my life that Holy Spirit was about to activate within me.

1977-78 was a year of change for me. There had been a military transfer to an unaccompanied overseas duty station away from family and friends.

One of the personal goals I had set for myself that year was to read through the Bible. I had grown up in the church. Faith, discipline and a sense of purpose had kept me mostly on the straight and narrow. However, the Bible was not my daily companion, nor was the Holy Ghost. I led a full life as a husband, father, and athletically active, Marine officer, but inside me was a spiritual emptiness that my faith in Jesus Christ had not been able to fill. There had to be more to the life of a committed Christian than I was experiencing.

At this point my understanding of the world around me was still influenced more by my five physical senses than any revelatory or prophetic understanding. My spiritual eyes and ears were not yet opened though I would have argued otherwise. Others considered me a good Christian.

I made progress on my five written personal goals for that year except for one. Until the end of my first half of this twelve month long overseas tour

away from my family, I procrastinated, not getting started on my spiritual goal, the daily reading of the Bible. After six months I pulled my Bible out of my duffle bag and put it on my night stand beside my bed with the mental determination to read from it *'ten minutes a night!'* Beginning with the New Testament I started reading that first night. Through the first of the four gospels it was more an exercise in discipline. But in the book of Mark my spirit did leapt at the words: ***"...but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."*** This "quickenin'g" in the word was a new experience for me. My reading time increased. The nightly routine became enjoyable, often exciting.

In the book of Luke my spirit leapt again with another verse about the same comment by John the Baptist. What was this quickening I felt with the reading of this particular verse? In the book of John my spirit jumped again at the phrase ***"You must be born again."*** I had grown up hearing Jesus preached on Sundays. I had some experiences as a child. I had a prayer life. I believed I knew Him. But this quickening was a new experience. I grew in excitement that something was about to happen. When I reached the book of Acts I read: ***"and you shalt be baptized by the Holy Spirit."*** As I came to verse thirty-nine of chapter two I stood in great anticipation instinctively raising my arms above my head (a highly unusual posture for a Marine, or for a pew sitter in the church of my growing up years.) Spontaneously out loud came a confession from deep within my spirit. 'Jesus, I want what you are promising in this verse.'

incredible

INCREDIBLY, the far corner of my BOQ room (bachelor officer quarters) scrolled back. I found myself looking into Heaven at a most miraculous sight. Up close I was seeing Jesus Christ, as real as you or I. He was standing in a posture of intercession just beyond my room, but somewhere out in the 3rd Heaven. Over the next fifty minutes I watched in awe as He silently turned very slowly from one side to the other three times while constantly praying. His back was never toward me as he seemed to be in deep intercession for those of His in this world. He was outlined in a robe of white light. Various colored streams of glory flowed out from His Presence in every direction of the Universe. I soon noticed that one river of glory was flowing in my direction. At this point I went down to the floor in the spirit. Something like supernatural cleaning fluid washed through me. I could feel it washing me clean. I was in such rapture. All I could do was to be in awe at

this Heavenly scene. Three times He was fully turned in my direction. With a very slight nod he showed that He was fully aware of my seeing Him. Eventually a religious thought came to my mind. In the natural realm I had been more a religious person than spiritual. *“I am seeing Jesus and am lying on my back on the floor.”* When I attempted to shift to what I had been trained was a more spiritual posture (on my knees), the vision suddenly ended. The veil instantly scrolled closed. I looked at my watch. It was ten o’clock in the evening. The vision began at 9:10pm. I went out into the cooling night. The stars were ablaze like I’d never seen before. I felt a thousand feet tall. I reached up to see if I could pull down a star with my hand, so intensely real had been this experience with my Lord. The veil that night was rent for me providing a whole new perspective for me to ponder concerning our access to God.

I felt alive as never before. A warm after-glow stayed with me the remainder of that night and well into the next day.

two confirmations

Have you noticed how God will confirm that such an experience is real? Two surprising things happened the next day. An unexpected call came from home. The house in Virginia had sold which had sat vacant nine months after we had bought a new home. It would close in three weeks. It was a full price offer that recouped all the lost finances we had been concerned about. A second call came from Headquarters, Marine Corps an hour later. Was I interested in becoming the Marine Officer Instructor at the University of Washington? That billet had been a dream that had motivated me to earn a Master’s Degree. Later a change in seniority requirements had put it beyond my reach. Headquarters was waiving the new rules to give me this job. Both of these welcome, unexpected phone calls confirmed in my mind the reality of the vision I had had the previous night while reading the Bible; what a huge blessing from God.

Later that day as I was pondering all these happenings, I was drawn to Psalms 104:2-3 *“Who cover yourself with light as with a garment, who stretch out the heavens like a curtain. He lays the beams of his upper chambers in the waters...”* This wonderfully described for me my vision. While pondering these words I was prompted to turn to John 14:22 *“Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world? Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with*

him.” This further explained the privilege that had been given to me. From an early age I wanted to please God, but my faith was forged more from religious form than a deep, personal relationship. I only knew what I had been taught.

After many years once I committed to soaking in his word for the very first time in a determined way I entered a new level of understanding of the power available to a believer who gets a hold of the revelation available in the living word of God. I was shown clearly on that night what I had lacked before, the infilling of his Spirit. Since this wonderful experience while in his word I have walked in a new level of understanding and joy. The supernatural life has opened up to me as never before. With this new understanding have come new challenges and some broken key relationships. Looking back over my life I now see more clearly past events where God’s protective hand was on me even in my limited understanding of his ways and heart, my heart was pure in his sight because it was to the best of my ability always towards Him.

taking personal responsibility

A new level of spiritual understanding came to me when I stopped looking to others for the unfolding of God’s word. This new relationship has enabled me to endure trials that would have broken me before this strengthening experience. I have learned about spiritual tools for impacting my life and others in ways I had not understood before this wonderful revelation of God’s love. The spirit-filled life is a wonderful adventure. I knew God loved me before, but, until this dramatic spiritual encounter opened up my understanding, I had no idea how thin was the veil separating Jesus from us here on earth. I hope this sharing of this miracle encounter is an encouragement to you to pursue a closer relationship with our Lord through scripture and the pursuit of a daily relationship with Holy Ghost.

2

behind every bush

“Don’t tell me you’re one of those people who sees a demon behind every bush!” Such faith squashing statements seemingly come out of listener’s mouths without a thought behind it and shut down promising opportunities to witness before they go anywhere. Hidden forces are adept at throwing buckets of water on anything spiritual that might provide a fresh revelation to someone inside their conquered domain. Has any of your spiritual fire been quenched lately by another? Could it be that the speaker was as amazed at what they said as were you?

Who has not been victimized by a seemingly thoughtless comment of another? Even more amazing is when it is our thoughtless response that shuts down or changes the nature of a promising conversation. Have you ever wondered, ‘Now why did I say that?’ It is more than interesting to me how often promising conversations go off track.

We need to know the enemy is in the business of planting ‘shut down’ comments in the minds of not just the simple and unsuspecting, but also serious believers. Blind spots in our thinking give our foe openings he will use against us. Whether unthinking or not, thoughtless replies and comments turn many conversations away from the direction in they were intended to go. This is one reason scripture says God will hold everyone accountable for every idle thought that comes out of their mouth.

all start out the same

We all start out the same, in the dark at birth. A sin nature is fact for every human. Regardless of one’s family of birth we are all traced back to Adam and Eve who fell. It’s in our genes. Those who seriously come to the Lord, the new birth, enter into a new blood line. Romans 12:2 tells us that personal change is then necessary. A personal renewal process is then needed to complete our salvation in Christ. Though we have a new beginning we must understand we were conditioned and programmed by the world system and

that our old nature (habits, attitudes and opinions) is still under the influence of Satan's concealed forces. Our flesh and mind is still programmed to act and react based on what our five senses tell us even after the new birth.

Yes, we now can have the mind of Christ if we ask and choose to cooperate with the Holy Spirit. But we soon find out our flesh is not interested in doing this and must be subdued. Before the new birth the revelation knowledge available in the Bible did not dominate our thought life. Our sense knowledge is still the dominate force in our life at the start of this new beginning. We must take up the task of disciplining ourselves intellectually and emotionally based on new understanding that comes from the Word of God in cooperation with Holy Spirit. (Romans 12:2) The washing with the Word, repentance, forgiveness and discipline is much needed to overcome our prior programming and tendencies.

To discover the full truth we must relentlessly pursue the renewing of our minds. Turning in the direction of the truth will be strenuously resisted by our enemy. He will use our flesh and mind and every other means possible such as some of our family and friends to distract us through fear and unbelief. We are given a measure of faith to turn and stay turned. God wills that none should perish. (Romans 2:15; 12:3; Job 29:12-13)

Following our conversion we need to know we are still being conditioned everyday through established habit patterns and by the world system under the control of the god of this world. (Secular radio, music, television, literature, friends, family, sports are all distractions that can bump us off and keep us off track) The enemy works harder to keep believers in the dark than most work to come fully into the light. False loyalties also can hold us back. Certainly pride can keep us from making spiritual progress. Old doctrines, traditions, procedures, routines, and friendships that may be just a little off and need adjusting can set in like concrete. The list is endless.

It takes discipline and cooperation with Holy Ghost to get on and stay on the new course we need to walk. If nothing much has really changed since our conversion could it be because of our routine? Maybe we are stuck in a rut because of our bondage to the rote (automatic responses we have learned for most situations to simplify our daily lives). What needs changing in our thinking, in our mannerisms, in our attitudes, in our practices, in our relationships? Is routine causing me to continue reading the same newspaper from cover to cover sucking up any time for Bible study? Do I religiously watching the six o'clock news every night? Could there be a better use of some of my time? Do prayer habits need updating? (Acts 26:18) Are my habits safe and politically correct? Do they prevent me from doing anything really meaningful for Christ?

What seemed reasonable before my conversion may not be reasonable now. My ears and eyes certainly must have been more carnal than spiritual in my former state. So, if I am really new in Christ now how should I be seeing things differently? Am I listening to Holy Spirit and acting on his prompting? Is my focus changed? If not, why not?

If I was on the broad path before my conversion which is a reasonable assumption, how do I get off and on to the narrow path? A battle against self is required. I need to develop new spiritual bearings. Otherwise I won't be much use to Christ. Change is always resisted, especially spiritual change. It is easy to find ourselves rolling back down hill with friends in the opposite direction we intended to go if not carefully persistent.

why is it so?

Many are the worthwhile distractions! Jesus says in Matthew 7:14:

“...few there be that find it.”

It is now over 2,000 years (two days) since the great miracle of Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead. There is evidence all around us that a multitude of church goers are falling into the devil's trap to prevent the discovery of the truth that the Lord's prophesied return is very near. (Matthew 24:11, 24) Will most believers once again be unprepared at the second coming? How many do you know that order their lives in expectation of a soon coming rapture of the Bride of Christ? (Hebrews 9:28)

How many do you know who really seem to be expecting him to return anytime soon? Most conversations turn quickly toward secular matters and away from anything having to do with unfulfilled prophecies even in Christian gatherings. Why so? Because Satan attempts to influence how all conversations flow. Our enemy's masterful use of lie-based thinking is a logical explanation of what dominates people's lives and words. Lies are his most basic tool in accomplishing his plan to keep the world from discovering and walking in the truth of Jesus Christ.

I am startled at how easy it is for me, a serious student of the word, to slip into deceptive thinking. It is a constant battle to stay spiritually focused in a balanced way. I see in scripture that Satan used the lie in his very first encounter with man. It worked like a charm on Eve and then on Adam. He is even more astute with centuries of practice with people like you and me. If

we are relying on any other source than the Bible as our source of truth we are likely in some level of deception.

Satan corrupted Eve's thinking in God's own personal garden where He came often to walk in the cool of the day. Satan came in uninvited to mess with the mind of the gardener's wife. His conversation with Eve not only caused her thinking to be deceived, but Adam's also. Adam took Eve's side against the clear wisdom of standing in God's truth irrespective of Eve's having been taken in, and now having another point of view than her husband. That story is a clear warning to me of how easy it is for our enemy to interfere with relationships no matter how solid. The major lesson I learn from this story is to expect the enemy to attempt to intrude into my life by using distraction, deception, unbelief, fear and lies. How am I told to counter his attacks? Jesus demonstrated how in his wilderness example. (Mark 1:13)

correcting our assessments

To rapidly learn what we need to know we must be motivated to study the Bible on our own. We will never have a correct assessment of the enemy situation if we aren't daily into The Word for that is the principle way God communicates with us day to day. The enemy looks for ways to attack us and our family. If you need motivation to study then accept the premise in Hosea 4:6 that "*my people perish for lack of knowledge.*"

Many never learn the situation they are stressing over is a calculated enemy attack using deception. Our eyes naturally gravitate to the human circumstance, and we don't often think about the possibility of a supernatural behind-the-scenes personality at work.

Our entire predisposition is to fight the battle in the wrong dimension, the natural realm. Though well intended we have no spiritual "***eyes to see or ears to hear.***" The supernatural realm is closed to us. (Matthew 13:15; 13:16; Mark 8:18; Acts 28:27; Romans 11:8; 1 Corinthians 2:9)

God introduces us in the opening book of the Bible (Genesis 3:1) to Satan's evil, lying ways, but how many ever study the book of Genesis. The enemy uses liberals to attack this book probably more than any other. It is not a fairy tale or myth. There is not one scientific fact that disproves anything in Genesis. The garden story is a strong warning from God to take care; that we have an ancient, practiced enemy.

It was important to God to warn us of the lying ways of our adversary, the devil. The Son of God told us a lot about our enemy during His ministry

here on earth. In the second chapter of Matthew (verse 8) we see King Herod using the lie certainly influenced by the evil one. He wanted to use what the wise men might discover to his benefit. Four verses later God warns Joseph to flee with the child from Herod who would kill him. (Has God ever prompted you to flee a situation?)

Fast-forward thirty years to the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. We see Jesus summarize all that is found in the Word of God about our enemy: ***“the thief comes to kill, to steal and destroy.”*** (John 10:10)

Be wise! Stay alert! The devil is up to his same tricks in our generation. Deception is an effective device he will use against us where possible.

evil watchers

A vast army of fallen angels is deployed to watch for opportunities to influence people in a deceptive manner to increase the population of hell. They all saw how effectively deception worked when Satan employed it in the garden. We can be sure when Satan intervenes directly in human affairs that his principle underlings are being instructed to watch and learn. God shared this scene with us for our enlightenment and instruction.

Never forget who opposes us. Never underestimate his cunning. Doing so is gross pride. We who are born again were bought with a heavy price. Satan wants to trip us up because of God's love for us. If he is unsuccessful in killing us (Ps. 90:10; Hosea 4:6: etc.) before our time, the next best thing is to take us captive through our passions or through addiction. Our primary interest might be as innocent and harmless as a sport. Golf, tennis or jogging will do. If he can't distract us off course he'll try to steal the souls of our children or spouse, or destroy our job or health. God considered revealing his identity so important he was the third personality introduced to us in Genesis after Adam and Eve.

choose words carefully

Words must be chosen carefully. They can reverberate for decades causing destruction or great blessing. They can never be taken back once they leave your mouth. My heart is warmed by words my father now deceased spoke 45 years ago that were encouraging and uplifting to show his love.

A careful choice of words is not what we see in the everyday life of most people. It is safe to say that many of us are deceived and careless with words on many occasions. Distortion is a very powerful tool. We see its effect every day in degrees of distortion of the truth. Today it seems to be an accepted way of life for many. It wasn't so obvious forty years ago in my earlier life.

fortunate for us

Fortunately for us God loves His body or we would be toast in our confrontations with evil. God alone is omni-present. The Holy Spirit is the constant companion of those who accept Christ's free gift of salvation. Those who have surrendered to the Holy Spirit are capable of operating in the gifts of the Spirit listed in the Bible. If you are not bold in Christ seek the giver of the gifts.

Evil can be stopped cold in its tracks by a knowledgeable believer. All the fallen angels banded together are no match for two or three sons of God in the will of the Father.

We are too close to The Return to be silent spiritually. The 'politically correct' laws now in place do demonstrate the power of the anti-christ spirit. But the "restrainer" (2 Thes 2:7) hasn't yet been removed so we can take control over the very spirit that under-girds the enforcement of many of these unholy laws. We have the power to bind the strong man working against us and to loose the power of Godly declarations (Job 22:28) into our situation. Where Satan has control in tactical areas of our natural lives we need to recognize our power to walk right through the trap that has been set.

Those who control what is said do control the direction society goes in, but we can make a difference by taking charge in the spiritual realm to interfere with the enemy's plans. When we fail to do this a stronghold is gained by the enemy. There are hidden plans working against us. Many in the church fall into these traps because of deception. Regardless of the blindness of other believers we need to follow scriptures clear leadings.

3

false thinking

unacceptable public pronouncements

Much false thinking has achieved widespread individual and public acceptance across America. Children are reaching adulthood believing that a lot of lie-based thinking is truth for instance that abortion is OK. A secular world view is increasingly in charge of the public arena. Errors are being programmed into personal thinking at an alarming rate. This is a deliberate process that is taking us toward a far different world view and away from what is biblically correct.

Lying is now acceptable for many if it helps them to achieve their intended objective. It is perfectly alright. The end now justifies the means in our country and not just under communist rule. An increasing number of our leaders hold to the truth that there are no moral absolutes. Teachers, educators, and other influential child experts can no longer be automatically trusted by parents since a biblical world view has been outlawed from the public arena. A teacher's certificate is no longer an automatic reason for us to feel safe putting our child in a secular classroom or day care.

testing for disposition

Just about every secular education school and a growing number of seminaries are now testing for disposition. That test determines whether or not some one has the proper disposition for teaching. Guess who this new test question is aimed at disqualifying? Those who believe in absolute values and have a biblical world view!

Can we be certain future teachers will have a heart that is open to Jesus? God gives us the responsibility to teach our children. We can't delegate this responsibility given by God to parents. He is our primary authority. We must take utmost care in discharging this responsibility. We must closely supervise and oversee their instruction if we place others in charge.

judge by fruit not credentials

Judge others by their spiritual fruit not their spiritual gifts. The high standard of the Word of God is our only reliable standard. There is a great deal of intellectual garbage considered educated thinking today in America. Parents who routinely give their children over to the care of others could end up with spiritually dwarfed children because of their lack of supervision. It is shocking for me to see how different adult children can be from their parents in the area of religion, sex and politics. Can it be because many parents have trusted them over to the professional education system?

walking free

If we are to walk free from the influence of the politically correct world that surrounds us we have to obey the command to, “*come out of her my people.*” How different our attitude, thinking and behavior must be from those who have bought into the Madison Avenue advertising point of view which is the accepted wisdom of our society. Many Christians seem to have no practical understanding of the phrase “*to be in the world but not of the world.*” (*John 1:10; 8:23; 15:19; 16:33; James 4:4*)

We who believe that all of the Bible is the inspired Word of God understand what it is to deal with programmed people, though we are the ones accused of being programmed. Those with a biblical world view must become used to seeing abrupt changes in conversation designed to isolate us. Most of us who are alert slowly become aware that many seem to not even hear a spiritual point that is made and simply continue on with their interest not seeming to hear the spiritual comment. Slowly we become aware as we mature in the Lord that demons do effect conversations (2 Cor. 4:3-4).

demon occupation

I find it alarming how easily they seem to steer and guide even those who are aware. We know that demons attempt to occupy people. It is not a comforting thought. Many refuse to think about such things. Scripture warns us not “*to give place to the devil.*” A careful reading of scripture shows clearly they view us as a habitat. We see that when one finds a dwelling place he invites his spiritual friends to join him. This provides one

explanation why some people can so quickly seem to breakdown emotionally, physically or spiritually becoming one you no longer know. (Matthew 12: 43-45)

Jesus majored in casting out demons in God's people to set an example for us. (a fascinating personal study is to look at the twenty six different scripture verses where the words "...cast out...demons..." are used to see that Jesus Christ demonstrated how important it is to use our delegated authority and power over demons for our good and the good of those we care about) In one encounter Jesus asked the personality's name. *Legion* was the answer. He then cast them all out. They were numerous enough to occupy 2,000 swine. (Matthew 5:7-14) Satan had enough demons at his disposal to allow at least 2,000 to enter just one poor soul. So it is safe to assume he has enough demons at his disposal to dramatically influence events that directly affect us.

The rapid growth of pure evil in the world and lack of power in much of the local church to even slow it down is of concern. We all can observe evil's progress. It definitely explains what is happening when you factor in the supernatural factor. Too many pastors never teach about such matters. It is quite obvious there seems to be no demonic labor shortage.

our generation

Jesus knew demons would be a problem in our generation. He gave us much instruction on how to war against them. He demonstrated how to cast them out of troubled souls. (Mark 9:38; Luke 9:49, 11:14; 2 Corinthians 10:5) When he sent out the twelve, two and two, and later the seventy, two and two, they "*marveled that even the demons were subject to them.*" (Luke 10:17) He made it quite clear He came to minister to the children of Israel (believers in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) not the unbelievers. So deliverance is all about helping believers not non-believers (Matthew 15:24)

Mark 16:17 is a spiritual warfare verse everyone should memorize before going out to take the gospel in to their domain. Jesus never walked more than 200 miles from where He was born. He encountered many demonized people. He taught a lot on this subject. Many want healing but don't want to fight for it. Although they don't know it they listen to what demons tell them. They think it comes from themselves. Rather than take the risk of being uncomfortable they reject deliverance the few times it might be brought up. Demons are a major problem in the church; not just in the unsaved world. Those who say that a believer's lack of healing can't be the

result of demons should consider that their thinking may be influenced by distortion of doctrine as the result of demonic influence.

Certainly many people who are genuinely under evil influence at the time of salvation don't get set fully free after they are born again as is easily observed. Their influence needs to be aggressively removed as the Holy Spirit reveals this influence. Continuing bondage will result if we neglect pursuing growth in our new life. There is much confusion concerning this subject in those who are unfamiliar with the deliverance promises of God. Why do so many believers not have victory over bondages? The reason is because so many leaders don't teach God's promises.

The world is coming more under the control of the devil than Christ no matter how you measure it. How do we explain this phenomena without acknowledging satan's growing influence in the organizational world which is prophesized (Rev. 12:17)?

4

our enemy wears camouflage

It is hard to pinpoint a properly trained frontline soldier when he is in hiding. To defeat the enemy you must first find him. This is far more difficult than it might seem to an untrained civilian. Soldiers are trained to blend in with their surroundings through the use of camouflage techniques and the use of undetected movement. Our natural enemies camouflage and use stealth when on the move.

We can safely assume such techniques are also used by supernatural foes to make them hard to detect when operating against us through our thoughts, emotions, wills, conversations, friends and circumstances.

a training ground for spiritual warfare

Discovery was especially difficult during the Vietnam War because of the terrain and small unit tactics employed. Both the enemy and innocent civilians all dressed in black. Young and old, male and female, inside our perimeters and beyond; all in black! The enemy often coerced women and children as lookouts and to set booby traps. Many in our media discounted that such tactics were used but Iraq proves otherwise. The same tactics are being used in the Middle East today. Our latest foes studied the Vietnam War. Saddam Hussein had a Vietnamese soldier guest worker program in his country for twenty years learning how to fight Americans. One day he knew the lessons he learned would be useful in Iraqi against America.

American forces have elaborate rules of engagement that we follow in order to avoid the taking of the lives of innocent civilians, which we are strictly held to. Our enemies place no such value on human lives. Horrified we see tactics like suicide murders being used by the enemy which is beyond any thing most Americans can imagine doing.

Real evil cares nothing about human life. The end would never justify our using such evil tactics, but continuing U.N. resolutions against Israel and growing hostility towards America in support of the Muslim extremist's goal to eradicate the Jews proves it is working for them. Behind all murder

always stands demons. Only supernatural tactics can overcome demon influence. The key to overcoming demons is specific declarative prayer employing the word of God and the all powerful name of Jesus Christ on our behalf. The Holy Spirit empowered, knowledgeable believer is the restraining influence that God will soon remove from this earth in the rapture. (2 Thess. 2:7-8) We see the growing influence of the anti-christ spirit as that day rapidly approaches.

trust and confidence versus fear and suspicion

The people of God need to continue to exude an attitude of trust and confidence in their God in the midst of their daily activities in the general population which is coming more and more under Satan's influence as we careen toward the one world government, economy and religion all controlled by the mark of the beast. All demonically controlled cultures are operating in a growing spirit of fear and suspicion with the governmental hammer being the use of brute force when needed to control the outcome. Non democratic countries don't allow a free press. But they adroitly use our free press to gain a strategic advantage over us.

It is alarming to see the growing influence of evil also in democratic governments such as America's. Presently the Muslims fanatics (certainly a doctrine of demons) are artfully working our culture to their great advantage which assumes a general reasonableness towards all people groups, and doesn't allow profiling Muslim extremists. Because our country is at war every believer needs to understand how this war relates to spiritual warfare and how we help restrain and hinder until we are removed in the rapture. As Napoleon aptly stressed, "*the moral is to the physical as three to one.*" All war is confusing. All war is spiritual, no matter the level. The blame game used by those who hate war no matter how it started need to know that they serve their master, the accuser of the brothers.

In this present war the primary focus properly needs to be on the devils behind all ungodly action and not on the humans that are manipulated even though they seem to be and often are willing accomplices.

obtaining the edge

Gathering intelligence on the enemy's habits and methods of attack is vital in warfare. The better you understand the way a particular enemy thinks

strategically and tactically, the better your chance of countering his use of force. To increase the chance of victory you need to discover everything that gives you an edge over your adversary. In war you may be on the right side in a battle and still lose your life or the lives of others through lack of specific tactical knowledge. With this in mind let's consider spiritual warfare.

The church is at war

Believers can be unbelievably naïve when it comes to Satan and his tactics. Quite often it is not a moral problem that brings down a Christian, but his or her spiritual ignorance. Many get beat up by the enemy over and over never knowing demons were the real cause of it all. You have heard the saying: *“a little knowledge is a dangerous thing.”* Many know just bits and pieces of scripture opening themselves up to the lies of Satan who uses truth as a carrier for the lie. Consider Matthew 16:19:

“And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Most of us have read these two verses of scripture. It is an encouraging scripture. Do we really understand the power given to us in this verse? Revelation is necessary for deliverance. If you don't know demons are part of the problem you won't think deliverance is a solution.

A key warfare lesson here is our ability to bind and loose in the spiritual realm activating supernatural force into the physical realm that will make a difference in our particular lives. Are most Christians using these spiritual tools to make their lives and the lives of those they care for better? It appears not from the struggles going on in the lives of so many good people. God Himself says the world is wiser than many of the people of God (Luke 16:8), though he also says in Hosea 4:6 this should not be. What is missing in the understanding of so many pertaining to this offered power? We could have saved us a heap of historical and cultural trouble if we had learned the truth revealed here in this above passage.

wrong thinking

When you think church, think first of its individual parts, single individuals and families. Think first of the part you in fact play (2 Corinthians 6:16).

“And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

Verse 17-18 goes on to say: *“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”*

God doesn't see us as part of any religious man made system, but in fact as an individual part of his living body on earth, the Kingdom of God. He sees no institutional structure as part of his body. Only people. Membership in a religious organization doesn't make you part of His Body. It's the born again experience and your cooperation with Holy Spirit that is key to God's acceptance or rejection.

just one promise

Many Christians are discouraged about the church as an organization because they see its glaring organizational and leadership faults; its fallibility. Some quite deceitfully attend only with an attitude of taking advantage of the membership with an attitude of personal gain. That is the wrong attitude to bring into any assembly of believers. The institutional church is made up of many who think they are going in the rapture, but will some day hear from the Lord: *“I never knew you.”* (Matt. 7:23) No matter that others are weak in their faith; we can't be weak in ours. God's promises come true for those of us who get a hold on them, not when an organizational leader gets a hold on them. Just one promise laid hold of will make a difference in our lives. When we get a grasp of more than one promise, things really begin to look up for us, no matter what is happening around us. Many of us go through life never really personally getting a hold of any of the promises other than the one promising salvation in eternity. Such fall far short of what God intends for us and our families in this life.

For those of us who are frustrated, I expect we need to reexamine our grasp of the power of scripture to change our personal situations. God clearly says its not His promises which are the problem, but our relationship with the giver of promises. (Hosea 4:5) *“My people perish for lack of knowledge.”* Some believers walk in miracles. (Mark 16:17) Many of us do not. Whose fault is it? The promise, the understanding of it; or maybe our understanding that a supernatural foe stands between us and the fulfillment of our promise and that we need to battle through.

Many initially get a hold by faith of a promise but don't understand there can be a battle and that they may need to fight through to secure the promise. We all have been given access to the supernatural power necessary to walk in the promises of God for our lives, but few of us procure the knowledge to do so through diligent study and application because we fall into one of the traps of the enemy. One of the biggest is looking to another for inspiration where we should be looking to God alone.

what about camouflage?

Let's discuss further the camouflage aspect of the spiritual war we are engaged in. Look at the body count. (the national level statistics of individuals who are pinned down by supernatural enemy activity) Look at statistics for drug and alcohol abuse, for accident rates, for unemployment, for child and spouse abuse, for bondages to habits like pornography, homosexuality, materialism, to divorce, adultery, murder, theft, and escapism into hobbies and sports beyond what is good for us! Look at character traits like greed, pride, envy, sloth, and gluttony. In most every category the numbers in bondage to addictions are rising. In spite of optimisms expressed by government leaders and preachers with positive mental attitudes, growth in numbers of those losing their personal battles to these tendencies is alarming. These problems are real. We also see pastors and secular leaders getting burned out. We see supporting leaders with family problems because their focus is too much on organizational problems which while well intended leaves them no quality time for their loved ones.

World views opposed to Christianity are making headway in all areas here in America. Where Christianity used to be dominant many now look to other religions for solutions to these cultural concerns. Why? The church looks weak and ineffectual to many Americans. Yet there are single Christians in all areas of the culture that walk in victory which is in contrast to many

others in the institutional church fellowships they gather with on Sunday mornings. What is their secret?

Barna Research just indicated a million believers are leaving local fellowships annually in America. Those departing are hearing messages week after week that are apparently not holding their interest. Why is this? I wonder if it could be a fear could be generated by 501c3 pressure to not preach certain messages. Also some of the mature and discerning might want more than is being preached in some churches and that is why they are leaving! Some may be tired of sitting in the pews not making a difference. Also the growing doctrinal differences that divide Christians may dishearten some.

Fellowships that don't have a doctrine that includes the reality of devils and demons we will not be able to overcome many individual problems which certainly has an impact at the organizational level. Some pastors seem to have more of a civilian than military outlook. War seems not to be a part of their vocabulary. Some seldom talk about the very real spiritual warfare going on all around them that impact the natural realm. Such followers are therefore not practiced in picking up the sword of the Spirit to fight. They don't think in terms of being part of an army of soldiers because they are seldom reminded of the spiritual enemy! We need to learn to fight to overcome certain personal problems and to cooperate in overcoming other problems! We need both offensive and defensive supernatural tactics to achieve victory on every front.

Changing church bodies is seldom the answer. It might help, but most of us simply need to take charge of our own lives and destiny. Don't leave important spiritually understanding to others to keep you informed or bring you up to speed.

the enemy is us

Why is much of the church doing so poorly in this world? Scripture provides the answer. Many have opinions. But only one opinion counts, the LORD's. Human nature has been universally corrupted. Man can't be counted on. Only the LORD is trustworthy. We all have seen the enemy and he is us. My wife, Karen, recently had a vision of a mighty warrior. *He was dressed like Goliath when he was facing David. He looked invincible. But he was lying on his back like he had been knocked down and was looking up at something with the thought: 'This one can take me out.'* As Karen looked over in the direction the warrior was looking, she saw a large mirror with

the reflection of this warrior in the mirror. We all are our own worst enemies. Many believers are arm chair warriors. We have all sorts of opinions we believe in. But time after time we are caught off guard and don't know how to react. We are unprepared at the time of the attack. We have left the study of the Word of God to the experts so have gapping holes in our defensive perimeter when attacked.

5

knowing your enemy

It is important to know about your hidden enemy. This is a given for professional soldiers. For twenty five years I worked to have a professional soldier's understanding of warfare. Though I was a practicing Christian during that time I had a paradigm shift in 1978 spoken of in Chapter One. It changed my life. I learned I knew next to nothing about the supernatural dimension of life. As a Marine I had seen first hand the carnage that man can work against man. Theologically I knew Satan and his demons were behind it all, but I didn't know it practically in terms of my daily habits and attitudes. The world didn't seem so demon infested forty years ago, but my spiritual eyes in the aftermath of my vision have now been opened.

Following that vision I anguished about retiring early from the Marine Corps, but finally determined I could better help the Lord help others by changing my warfare focus from natural warfare to supernatural warfare. After my life changing vision I knew with certainty who the biggest troublemakers were, spiritual beings who had rebelled against God.

While on active military duty I would have answered differently than now about who the United States' primary enemy was. My perspective was international and earthy. I saw the major world troublemakers to be Russia and China. My entire active duty military service was during the Cold War, before the rise of militant Islam. Civilians with no military experience and an anti-war sentiment that ran high during my career had a much different take on the question than did I, but their views seemed carnal too not spiritual. Americans with broken hearts have a hard time thinking beyond their difficult situations and probably would answer this question in a more personal way naming in-laws, co-workers, a rebellious teenager, a hated neighbor or a despised politician as their primary enemy. But still their perspective would be carnal not spiritual.

Few of us bring a supernatural perspective into our every day life in practical ways. Most intellectualize or are ruled by their emotions in thinking through the question of who is the major threat. When real life situations rise up and smack us in the face most of us are quick to blame

ourselves or another-in-their-face person. It seems to be our nature to think only in the natural realm. No matter how much we try our nature seems to rule us.

Those who have adopted the perspective I am trying to convey in this book are far different than those in the mainstream. For them the major premise of this book is unrealistic and foolish. “*Seriously...do you really believe demons and hell are real?*” they would say.

In my experience what I am writing about triggers reactions that could be from demons such as:

‘Don’t give any glory to Satan by talking about him.’

‘I don’t talk about what I can’t see.’

‘It’s too controversial.’

‘I know that all I really need to do is to keep my mind on positive things.’

‘I don’t think we are to give place to the devil by talking about him.’

‘I try not to be negative.’

There is an element of truth in such comments. But, do you not see that the dominant world media programmed view has blinded the masses and many in Christendom.

We are told in scripture to remain alert; that the enemy goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he can destroy. We are warned to be vigilant.

How is it possible to remain alert and on guard, against an enemy you know little or nothing about? (2 Corinthians 11:14-15) Yes, we must keep things in balance.

But when you know the whole truth you can better recognize the counterfeit. Of course we must not go off half cocked when we begin to see from a spiritual perspective. That would be obsessing which is not wise.

But surely it is much more important to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus than on anything else. He is the author and finisher of our faith. He is the answer to every situation. Real freedom comes when you “... *know the truth and the truth shall set you free.*” (John 8:32)

It is proper and right to spend most of our study and prayer time focused on our Commander, his strengths, his capabilities, his promises, and his love for us. But when we read through scripture we shouldn’t skip over the passages that give us insight into our enemy’s capabilities, methods, limitations and weaknesses. If a professional soldier ignored information about his enemy he would be considered short sighted and relieved of his duties. Professionals study their adversary’s capabilities, limitations, strategy and tactics. Even in business this is so. You learn from your competitors.

Scripture tells us Satan has already been defeated at the cross by Jesus Christ. Most of us know the fact that a dead rattle snake can still kill unless you have pulled out his fangs. So we need to stay covered by the blood of Jesus Christ, which requires a daily motivation to do so. Daily like a career soldier in combat we must put on our spiritual body armor. Of course this routine can become boring when the enemy seems far off. Those who grow tired of such routines aren't sufficiently motivated. It is when we let down our guard that we become open to attack.

The task for the church in the aftermath of Christ's victory on the cross is to mop up like was necessary in the Pacific against bypassed and isolated pockets of enemy soldiers in WWII. By-passed pockets of enemy soldiers are not harmful to the ultimate victory, but will certainly disrupt us as we move toward the final objective if we do so carelessly.

Why is the church so weak in the eyes of many in the world? Certainly seeing the many discouraged and struggling Christians helps them form such an opinion. Why are so many believers frustrated and discouraged? Could it be they have underestimated their enemy?

another problem

Many have a far too complicated understanding of spiritual warfare. Many are overwhelmed by the thought that a supernatural foe can come against us and our households. There are several levels of warfare that go on in a theater of operations. The soldier first needs to be trained to defend and attack on the individual level. Several soldiers then need to practice how to support each other while defending and attacking at the small unit level. Various sized units increasing in size must learn and practice working together to accomplish various missions. But this is not the way in the Lord's army. His preferred fighting force is two and two.

Before we go off to free a neighborhood, city or a nation we must have confidence in our own family's ability to survive in our absence. Spiritual warfare principles are the same. There are times when we need professional help beyond our personal experience and knowledge.

But Jesus never said we could totally dependent on another human being. He said first to look for supernatural help by looking to Him as He did to His Father. (Psalm 50:14-17) Too often we look first to our pastor, doctor, wife, parents or to some other professional when our first response should be to call out to God in prayer.

It is rare for a Christian to immediately think that Satan might be the real problem when fear or unbelief wells up in his personal thoughts or emotions. Those who aren't daily students of the Bible are not knowledgeable enough when attacks come. The Word of God must be our first line of defense not a physical weapon. When finding the answer is difficult the solution is often a supernatural one. The Bible offers both offensive and defensive weapons to repel the attack and solve every problem. But our predisposition is to first identify a human suspect that we are predisposed to fix the blame on

I marvel 4,000 years later that the day after the crossing of the Red Sea Israel seemed to have forgotten yesterday's saving power of their miracle working God. But, how many miracles have I seen growing up that I explained away as luck or chance never considering it to be God's saving power because of His love for us.

Our human tendency is to discount supernatural influence while blaming the child, the dog, our spouse, boss, neighbor, or politician for something that goes wrong. I still have difficulty automatically praying for the available scapegoats in my own life. Sometimes I will bind the strongman when a problem arises but often I don't. (Mark 3:27) Sometimes I think to declare a blessing when presented with a dilemma, but more often do not (Job 22:28) Do I speak things that are not as though they are when contending for a change? (Hebrews 11:1) The author of this study needs more faith in the promises of God so first of all I write to encourage and remind myself.

we war not against flesh

The Bible says: "*We war not against flesh and blood, but against principalities against powers against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*" (Ephesians 6:12)

Our typical reactions during the day and morning prayers indicate we probably don't yet get it. We see from scripture that we are in good company, for the original disciples were just as dense as we until after they experienced Jesus Christ in a different light following His Resurrection.

Satan and his evil troop are so effective in their camouflage and undetected movement techniques they are seldom ever seen to be the primary problem. They are highly adept at switching the blame to us, the fall guys. Our own lack of understanding is the major problem in our lives. We have "*ears, but do not hear and eyes, but do not see.*" (Isaiah 6:10; Jeremiah 5:21; Ezekiel 12:2; Matthew 13:15; Acts 28:27)

6

familiar spirits

Scripture plainly shows that believers can be defiled by wizards because of the familiar spirits that guide them. The phrase ‘familiar spirits’ is only found seven times in the Bible; only once in the New Testament. But the new age movement in our generation is rife with information on spirit guides, and many national and world economic, political and religious leaders now are guided by familiar spirits. It is obvious that these biblical warnings concerning the dangers from familiar spirits are also meant to warn us in this generation which will see the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

The word ‘*defiled*,’ associated with ‘familiar spirits,’ is much more common in the Bible. *Defiled* is found in twenty books of the Bible. The very first time we see this word used is in Genesis 34:2 where Jacob’s daughter is taken by a prince who *defiles* her. In Leviticus 5:3 we see that whatever is unclean (the function of our conscience is to warn us when someone or some thing is unclean, so we are without excuse) must not be touched or we will be *defiled* by it. Further on in chapter 18, verse 24, we learn that whole nations can become *defiled*. In such a case we see that God Himself visits iniquity on such a nation because of its *defilement*. If you have wondered why God told the Israelites to ‘kill every man, woman, child, and beast when they conquered certain lands it was because of all having been demonized by ‘familiar spirits’ which back then could not be cast out. Back in those days they didn’t have the power we do in the New Testament to deliver people from demons. We see in the book of Acts a woman delivered of a familiar spirit. Those who walk in this power will tell you that it is not easy to help those who have willingly been taken over. People become co-dependent with these ‘familiar spirits’ because they gain power. It’s rare to free those who don’t have a desire to be free.

Psalms 106:38 tells us that our own works can *defile* us. Isaiah 24:5 tells us the earth can be *defiled* by inhabitants who have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, and broken the everlasting covenant. Satan likes to work with such people. Isaiah 59:3 tells us our hands are *defiled* by blood and our fingers with iniquity and our lips have spoken lies and our tongues

have spoken perversities. Ezekiel 5:11 tells us we can *defile* his sanctuary. (1 Cor. 6:19) Ezekiel 36:17 tells us we can *defile* our land by our doings and our ways. Mark 7:2 equates *defiled* with unwashed hands meaning that anything we do in the flesh for God is *defiled*. We learn from Titus 1:15 that for the unbelieving everything is *defiled*, nothing is pure, because their consciences are not pure. Hebrews 12:3 talks about a root of bitterness springing up in one to *defile* many. Revelation 3:4 talks about ‘a few’ not being *defiled* and walking in white garments. Revelation 14:4 talks about ‘a few’ who are not *defiled* with women, being virgins. This word is important in gaining an understanding of the danger of familiar spirits.

Look at the seven verses that talk about this danger.

Leviticus 20:6 “And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people.”

Comment: What should the church today make of this second sentence? Don’t go a whoring after the crowd, the world. Humanism is making more of an impact on the church than the church is impacting the world view. If you do go a whoring God says He will set His face against you, and will cut you off from your people to protect His people from such individuals.

That is a scary thought to me. Even though I am a believer I can forsake God’s Word and go chasing after the notions, the wisdom of the world, thinking I am somehow pleasing God. If I do such He will set Himself against me. I need to be very careful such a thing doesn’t happen to me or to those I am responsible for influencing.

Deuteronomy 18:10-12 “There shall not be found among you anyone that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer, for all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doeth drive them out from before thee.”

Comment: This is an interesting classification of people that we are not to bring into our circle of influence because their activities are an abomination to the LORD. God will drive them out from before the church. Who might these people be in our day? Certainly all those who walk in the ways of the world who are not attempting to please the LORD by their ways are

included. Romans 1:22-32 shows us specifically who this crowd is that we are to stay away from in powerful New Testament language.

1 Samuel 28:3 “Now Samuel was dead and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.”

Comment: Now what can we learn from this verse? King Saul was at one time a Godly man, but lost his anointing. The prophet he looked to for spiritual advice died and there was no one to replace him, He had put away all those who gained insight from the spiritual world who were guided by familiar spirits. We see in verse nine that he went to an adjacent land to a witch looking for someone who could contact the dead Prophet Samuel. We too can fall from grace so beware. It takes work to remain humble enough to wait on God.

2 Kings 21:6 “And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.”

Comment: This verse is talking about the actions of such as Manasseh, son of King Hezekiah who reigned after his godly father who did much wickedness in the sight of God. He worshiped false gods and got into witchcraft and sorcery. Because he was King his people followed after him and suffered much because of his leadership. He undid all the good his father did before him.

2 Kings 23:24 “Moreover the workers with familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the imagers, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiyah the priest found in the house of the LORD.”

Comment: Here we see where a leader came into power during a desperate time when spiritual wickedness reigned because God’s ways that had been lost were discovered in a book by one man who went to the King with the book which he put into action. This leader put away those things that were an abomination to God and performed the words of the law, i.e.; applied what was in the Bible and good things began to happen.

Isaiah 8:19 “And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?”

Comment: The unbelievers are caught up in the lie and are therefore the children of the Father of Lies, Satan, himself. Because we are in the world but are not of the world we will hear advice to seek after the ways of the world. We will always have a choice. Will we heed God or will we heed Satan’s world system counselors and experts? Our source is the Word of God. But there are many other non-biblical sources the world consults for advice. Will we go after strange gods or adhere to what God has to say about a matter?

Isaiah 19:3 “And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards.”

Comment: Who is the spirit of Egypt? We certainly see in Scripture that it was a political, social, religious system that opposed Moses and held the people of God in slavery. Even after they were delivered from bondage in Egypt, Egyptian ways held people captive in the Wilderness the next forty years. Only Joshua and Caleb were not under this satanic spirit’s sway so it had to be very powerful. And since spirits never die it has to be influencing the world in our age too. If we don’t come out of the present world system of our day (Rev 18:4) its counsel will fail us because God promises to destroy its effectiveness in opposing His counsel. We can be sure this system at some point after the world becomes dependent on it will fail. God is no respecter of persons. His ways in one generation are His ways in the next for He changes not.

he changes not

Though we only find the term ‘familiar spirits,’ in the New Testament in the Book of Acts and only in one account and we don’t find the term in the four gospels Jesus does teach us a lot about demon influence over people. In twenty-six verses we see Jesus casting out demons. This term is reserved for those spirits that are adept at influencing others through a person that is deliberately codependent with a familiar spirit.

But we do see that people can be familiar with other types of spirits that can have an indirect if not direct effect on other family members and friends for we see different types of problems that run down through generations of family members such as alcoholism, anger, gluttony, homosexuality, greed, jealousy, etc. One major objective of this book is to show how spirits can be codependent with people and that we can be delivered from them.

7

the battle zone

All of life can be safely viewed by a believer as a struggle between two opposing spiritual forces in an arena we could call the battle zone. Scripture talks about the first heaven, second heaven, and 3rd heaven. We know that Satan has been thrown out of the 3rd heaven where God reigns. There is no battle zone in the 3rd heaven; all is peace there. The second heaven is where Satan has his temporary throne. Opposing angelic forces do battle their and in our world. Satan will soon be dethroned from this realm, and thrown down to earth where he will cause great wrath for a short season called Jacob's Trouble or the Great Tribulation. Jesus will come again into the realm of the 1st Heaven to rescue, judge, restore, and rule for a 1,000 years.

Presently we see everywhere the influence of the anti-Christ spirit at work in the 1st heaven realm as Satan's people feverishly prepare for his long planned take over of the earth. Jesus Christ told us of this:

John 5: 43 "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."

We presently live in the realm of the 1st heaven, but it is not our real home. Jesus refers to Satan as the god of this present world. Ancient prophecy tells us a lot about this short, intense period that is coming. There will be a final battle in and around Jerusalem where all of the nations will gather against the Jews in one final attempt to eliminate God's people.

There is a scripture that would terrify me, if I was one of the smug, self-satisfied God haters in control of this increasingly dark world. 2 Corinthians 4:4 says: *"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."*

blinded minds

The god of this world has blinded the minds of the lost. They can not even perceive the truth of our GOD. Look at what Jesus said after striking down Saul on the road to Damascus. Jesus commissioned Paul with these words:

“But rise, and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom 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 26:16+”

If I understand this mission statement correctly, we can not help those in darkness. While in darkness no amount of reason can bring them into the light. They must first be brought into the light through the power of the gospel. They need their eyes opened through the presentation of the gospel. Only the gospel has the power to open blind eyes. The blinded can't even be forgiven until this happens.

No argument. No persuasion. No persuasive reasoning. No good example setting. Only speaking the gospel has the power to change lives by bringing them into the light. (Romans 1:16)

We know Jesus will return to this earth soon to save the Jews, to destroy the wicked who have taken the mark of the Beast, and to take personal charge of the affairs of this world. He will rule with us who believe one 1,000 years with an iron rod.

All around us we hear world news reports on the destructions (battles) that are now raging: hurricanes, fires, destructive winds, earthquakes, volcano eruptions, wars, plagues, famine, serial killings, suicide-murders, hatred of Jews and Christians, etc. Jesus said this would happen before his return. Like birth pangs before a birth. The birth pangs are getting closer. But, what is the everyday battle zone that most affects you and me?

everyday battle zone

Romans 12:2 hints at the location: *“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.”* This discourse goes on to warn us not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought. This is certainly my predisposition. 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 gives another strong clue as to where it is:

“(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds:) 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;”

These two scriptures refer to the human mind. The mind is the great battlefield where the daily struggle takes place to control the final outcome of our eternal destinies. The Word teaches we can sin in thought and word as well as in deed. In 1st Chronicles 28:9 we see a caring father’s warning to his son about guarding his thoughts: *“And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee: but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.”* We see from Ezekiel 38:10 (an end time scripture) that we can think evil thoughts that provide legal ground for our enemy. *“Thus saith the LORD GOD; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought:”*

If we were to do a serious study on the battlefield of the mind we would look extensively at the words ‘heart’ and ‘soul.’ They often represent what we call the mind. Hebrews 3:12 says: *“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living GOD.”* The actions of believing or not believing certainly begin in the mind before they become lodged in the heart and are worked out through word and deed.

I love what can be learned from reading five Psalms and a Proverb as a daily discipline. There we learn much about the personal struggles of King David. Look at how he takes charge of his soul (mind). *Psalm 42:11: “Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my GOD.” (also see Psalm 43:5)*

I also like what is conveyed by *Psalm 94:19. “In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.”* What are ‘thy comforts?’ I

believe they are God's promises. I use his promises as offensive weapons to battle the enemy of my soul, until he flees. This he has to do if I persist when applying one of God's Written Promises in the Name above all names in warring about a situation I am contending for. We see in the Psalms where David takes charge of his own mind. He doesn't let the devil control it. Many of us are not in the habit of carefully selecting our words not really knowing there is a battle for us to win here. Psalm 103:1 tells us to: "*Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.*" We see the wonderful effects of taking charge of our thoughts in the following five verses. *Psalm 103:2-6 "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. The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed."*

Also, throughout Proverbs we see warnings on controlling our thoughts. I also love the revelation I have personally gained in two verses in the story of Jonah: (2: 7-8) "*When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed, Salvation is of the LORD.*" Things couldn't have been more desperate for Jonah then when he was inside the belly of that whale. There he took charge over his soul while dying; and cried out thanking the LORD, who then marvelously delivered Jonah. Things don't get more desperate than the act of dying while in rebellion to what the Lord wanted you to do. All he had control of in that desperate moment were his thoughts while inside the belly of the whale. He made outstanding use of the little time he had remaining before death to think holy thoughts rather than terrifying ones. What faith!

It seems good to me to daily remind myself that the primary battle of life is about controlling my own thoughts. I don't always have a lot of control over my external circumstances. But I do always have the ability to control my own attitude and to resist incoming thoughts that are not Godly no matter my present difficulties.

8

the willingness to fight

Few believers I know seem to be “fighters.” Taking a personal stand against evil is often a very lonely battle. If this were not true there would be no such thing as “no fault” divorce, legalized abortion, lack of prayer in schools, freedom of speech for pornographers, and other such obvious nonsense. There were courageous Christians who protested these anti-christ movements, but in far too many cases they embarrassed their local church leaders. Many Christians seem to be followers not leaders; and seem more ready to follow the crowd than the brave few. I do believe we need to pick and choose our fights in the Holy Ghost. But never to fight? This can’t be of God. His Second Coming is all about coming to fight the evil doers.

what separates leaders from followers

We are all called to set a Christ-like example. What in my mind distinguishes leaders from followers is that leaders have a positive testimony of Christ while followers are more likely to remain silent when Christ needs defending and look to someone else to do it. If we consider ourselves a fighter we must be willing to fight. There is a fight coming soon, if you are not already so engaged; get ready. I am not talking about fighting in a physical sense. Although, boxing can be a useful skill if one is physically backed into a corner.

Here in this book I am emphasizing the willingness to fight spiritually. In the first chapter I shared an open, daytime vision. The central lesson I learned from this awesome transforming personal experience was the importance and power of personal intercession. I witnessed Jesus Christ himself interceding for us in Heaven. If He considers it that important, and let me observe Him interceding for almost an hour, He must consider it to be time well spent.

Have you noticed how many people there are who seem unwilling to stand up verbally for principles you know must be important to them?

Correspondingly there are also the few we have seen who will defend their personal values appropriately and non-appropriately, when backed into a corner. One reason evil abounds is that so few are willing to stand up to evil with the truth even in an appropriate manner. All confrontation involves personal risk. The majority seem unwilling to take such risks.

a small number willing to risk

Only a small number have sold out to pure evil. Most will follow gifted, charismatic leaders who are adept at manipulating the truth. The majority seem bound up by personal fears and anxieties, and just go with the flow whatever direction it takes them. Few are willing to step out from the crowd and do the right thing when the crowd starts to cross the line, when their conscience tells them its wrong to go along.

Most of us who have good tendencies hope someone else will do the right thing and lack the courage to take the lead in resisting evil. Evil is seldom as strong as it appears. The nature of boldness is that it often carries the day no matter whether for right or for wrong. Evildoers count on fear in the opposing camp to cower potential opponents into silence. There are real dangers involved for those who do resist evil. It requires a level of trust in God above what is ordinary.

evil is advancing

Evil is advancing on most fronts worldwide because of lack of effective resistance. Jesus prophesized this would happen in the last days. Few have the courage to risk their life in the fight against evil. The courageous few are under appreciated until the danger is knocking at their neighbor's door.

We have all been asked to pray for someone about a specific matter and have not been diligent in doing so. Many learn from sad experience they must too often struggle alone. It is rare for someone to notice our struggle and step in to help. Asking a friend for help often puts a strain on the relationship. Many shy away from the continuing problems of a friend.

Often we are reaping what we have sown. Many today are unhappy and unequally yoked to a spouse and were warned not to marry their spouse but ignored the warning, and now ask for prayer. They have lost control of their life because it is in the hands of an unbelieving spouse. Scripture warns us not to get involved with such. But many go blinded forward and suffer the consequence. Many learn from sad experience they must endure their

primary struggle in life alone because they initially went contrary to the better judgment of those who loved them. Often a major life burden is ours alone to carry. Others don't feel the burden, so find it hard to pray. When we get into complaining about it many respond by stepping away from a relationship with us.

Real fighters in the spiritual realm are rare in the body of Jesus Christ. This is sad. God has given us all the tools we need to wrestle through to victory with or without the help of others. It is natural to want human empathy from those that should care for us. But often we will have to fight alone. Such tests are an opportunity to draw closer to the Lord. He is the only one who can ultimately effect the change needed.

Personally, I know few in my own circle of acquaintances who are "heavy weights" in their knowledge of spiritual warfare. Most don't seem to like discussing such matters. Our own "hidden wars" remain largely private inside our own thought life.

It is rare to find another who will stand with you to pray a matter through to its conclusion. You are fortunate indeed if your primary prayer warrior is your spouse. This is of course ideal. But I fear it is rare. In most relationships there is one who has more faith concerning a particular matter, and one who has less. In typical pairings it is rare for one with a greater faith to be able to rely on the one with lesser faith concerning a particular matter. Reviewing many past friendships in my own life, (what is and isn't said), I conclude most believers around you aren't mature, seasoned spiritual warriors.

Most don't live the victorious life they dream of. Many do love Jesus Christ and think of him as their personal Savior. But many of these don't appear to have much heaven in their everyday lives.

My question for those who identify with this observation is this: Is God really LORD or just a hoped for Savior?

Many who have a lack of victory have good hearts. There are many explanations given for their state of unhappiness. But one huge explanation I see is an unwillingness to fight in the spiritual realm.

impact of personal experience

Unless we grow up in the home of an ex-prize fighter and live in a tough neighborhood, chances are we aren't physically imposing or adequate in defending ourselves physically or intellectually. Those who grow up in tough neighborhoods are forced to learn defensive skills to keep from

becoming reoccurring victims. Some don't have the physical anatomy needed but adapt by developing communication skills to better influence the actions of the more aggressive. Most of us gravitate over time towards a spirit of compromise in the area of absolute Biblical values as our first love wanes. This is self-defeating behavior.

I found it a great personal comfort when I learned by experience that the spiritual realm is dominate over the physical realm, and that my personal intercession will make a huge difference in my outcomes when they line up with the will of God. Most never seem to learn this, other than maybe in a theoretical sense.

My childhood was spent growing up in and around Marine Corps bases. My dad was a career Marine officer. He trained and applied what he learned in the Pacific Ocean area in WWII and in Korea against our ally's national enemies. Units he commanded in combat fought against the Japanese, the North Koreans, and against Chinese forces. You could say he made a career of fighting.

I followed in his footsteps spending twenty-five years studying, practicing and experiencing the martial arts skills. I spend twenty-seven months in a combat zone in Vietnam leading infantry Marines in tough circumstances. This experience is background to what I am attempting to write about, warfare in a different realm. All war begins in the spiritual realm then makes its physical appearance in the realm of our physical eyes and ears. War began in heaven when Satan led a rebellion against God.

a passive, non-combative church

When I read scripture on my own rather than hearing it preached to me I see things more from a soldier's perspective, more than from that of a civilian. After becoming spirit-filled in 1978, the result of a life changing vision, I immediately was interested in the subject of spiritual warfare, having personally met Jehovah of the hosts of heaven. Though I knew of nothing authored by others at this time my eyes were opened to the spiritual realm. I was a Christian before this experience, but had no understanding of spiritual warfare in spite of a career that required a wartime perspective. I knew my relationship with Christ was important to my eternal destination, but didn't understand its power to transform situations and players in real

time in the natural realm in this present life. In fact, in spiritual matters I thought like a civilian, not like a soldier.

I had been on a career Marine path since 1958 when I entered college as a Naval R.O.T.C. student to become a future Marine officer. I was commissioned in 1962. In my first sixteen years as an active duty officer my understanding of the connection between life as a believer and life as a career fighter was more theoretical than practical. I was not a daily reader of the Word of GOD before my experience in 1978. I was familiar with scripture from my upbringing in the church and involvement in various positions in the Christian physical structure, but had no practical understanding of supernatural power in my life.

In 1978 I took the time to further discipline myself spiritually by becoming a daily student of the Word of GOD. I am embarrassed to say I was a believer for a long time, and yet saw no practical value for me personally in reading his word daily. Neither of my parents ever opened the Bible in our home that I noticed, so had no family example to draw from.

I now know from personal experience the huge difference this daily involvement makes. A once a week experience is not enough to counter the world's daily brain washing through radio, print and other means. I prayed daily in a programmed way most of my life. Prayer is vital, but mine was for the most part ineffective at best. It was the written Word of God that really opened me up to daily communion with God. Only in this resource given to us by God can we ever learn how much he wants to be a part of our life at all times of the day and night.

While I have never enjoyed a physical fight, the discipline of football and basketball experience, quite physical, taught me the practical benefit that comes from a higher ability to command your body and mind in a physical sense to get things accomplished. Discipline of body and mind is quite important to life, but I had neglected my spirit. If we can't discipline ourselves physically, emotionally and mentally we will be disciplined externally by outside forces. I didn't really see the connection between the spiritual and the physical realm until I had my first vision. At that time the spiritual realm became real to me in a revelatory way that began to affect me physically, emotionally and intellectually.

I spent much of my early life involved in sports. I have achieved a lot of satisfaction from physical competition. I now see that disciplining myself spiritually will bring the same level of satisfaction. I did not really know anything of the spiritual realm before I met Jesus Christ beyond my natural senses. His word tells us in *2 Chronicles 16:9*:

*“For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.
..”*

This verse tells us that GOD himself will go forth to fight for us if our heart is perfect toward him. GLORY! So, I am learning how much our personal intercession and worship of Him effects what happens in our natural world. This knowledge gives me a whole new level of understanding about the importance of having a fighting spirit.

9

widespread deception and apostasy

There are many wonderful leaders, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally in Christendom. But many people are leaving the church. One reason given for leaving is the quality of leadership. George Barna polls the church and has written a book titled, *THE REVOLUTIONARIES*. It is about those who want to go deeper than they are permitted to go in the institutional church.

The words “clergy” and “laity” are not biblical words. Neither word can be found in the King James Bible I use. The Bible condemns those shepherds who feed on the sheep and refers to them as hirelings.

While this book’s focus is on our supernatural enemies, it has to be acknowledged that for evil spirits to do damage in this world they need the cooperation of humans. How clever Satan is in duping all, both leaders and followers who turn from God.

It doesn’t take many humans to render an organization ineffective. They just have to be well placed. A few in higher positions in the organization whom come under the control of Satan are enough to cause great damage to the organization.

This past August I turned sixty-eight. It’s now April, 2007. I am shocked at how rapidly we are going down hill in America. It doesn’t matter what scene one looks at: business, church, government, entertainment, or society in general. In every direction we look we see anti-Christ forces at work. America is accelerating forward towards the coming system of the beast empire. It is shocking to see how different things are now then fifty years ago. Only yesterday I was eighteen and starting college.

No matter the gage used: moral, spiritual, physical, or intellectual: things are worse. Yes, there are some marvels unimagined fifty years ago

technologically. But, try to explain to me using logic how leaders acting in a responsible manner could have taken our country so off-course morally or ethically without supernatural guidance from a hidden enemy. Something is in control of this downhill slide in America from behind the scenes. No other explanation explains effectively how much worse things are now than fifty years ago. Yet most Americans don't see it.

Trusted leaders tell us things have never been better, but they aren't believable when they say it. Can you really believe this and not be deceived?

Some church leaders have their followers praying for a turn around; hoping for revival. These spiritual leaders must not see what I am seeing. Maybe they are too caught up in annual plans and programs, and are focused on meeting objectives and so miss seeing, or fail to analyze the magnitude of the sweeping national and international changes taking place spoken of in biblical prophecies. Few are expressing any alarm from pulpits as far as I can tell.

Yet even some observant unbelievers are now asking: "Could we be in the last days?" Many of the faithful are so totally involved in raising families, making a living and following their passions in the free time they have, that they might as well have their heads in the sand, blindly trusting those in charge to do the right thing. Don't see that "sudden destruction" is almost at their front door?

I can understand why Ezekiel, Jeremiah and other prophets railed at the shepherds of their day:

Ezekiel 34: 1-13 and 16 says this: "And the word of the LORD, came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the LORD GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them. Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; As I live, saith the LORD GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field,

because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flocks; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country...but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.

It is clear from the above passage that God must also be angry with many in the role of under shepherds today. Will He very soon be stepping back into this world to take personal charge of matters? It appears to me that Christendom is largely deceived. Many seem to be living in apostasy confirmed by the blindness of their under shepherds.

Look at what the LORD says through his prophet Jeremiah in chapter 23: 1-4, 9-12 *“Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! Saith the LORD. Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD, And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD...Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets! All my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the LORD, and because of the words of his holiness, For the land is full of adulterers, for because of swearing the land mourneth; the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their course is evil, and their force is not right. For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the LORD, Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery ways in the darkness; they shall be driven on, and fall*

therein; for I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitation, saith the LORD.

Two passages written by two different prophets in two different ages are according to scripture, shadows of things to come. Have we fallen in this Laodician age into the same trap the people of God fell into in the age of these two great prophets?

I don't know any pastors in my particular local that are warning their people that we are in the last of the last days. I have not heard of any other local teachers that are comparing the Bible prophecies for these last days with current events in and around Israel. Why are Christians not openly talking about what is happening that has been biblically predicted? Of course Jesus said it would be so.

The anti-Christ spirit is alive, well, and openly on the move today. All can see who care to look. Satan has the same plans he has always had; bondage, death and destruction.

Why aren't local pastors pointing out how the forces of nature (the plagues, famine and wars predicted in the last days) are signs that the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is close at hand?

Can't local pastors see the tightening controls of government? The Bible foretells how Satan plans to implement a mark in the hand or on the forehead so that no one will be able to buy or sell who has not the mark. Why aren't our leaders concerned that the technology is now in place for the first time in history to bring this about?

I don't hear Christians talking about our blessed hope, the rapture. I don't hear testifying of the healing and delivering power of Jesus Christ in public places as the result of ministry in the local churches.

There is correspondingly interest in our local culture about the "bigger is better" movement that many refer to as "church growth" plans. But I am aware of very few church programs that extend beyond the four walls of a local church.

Jesus mentions seven things He hates in Revelation 2 and 3. These things all exist in many churches today. I hear about no preaching concerning such dangers. Is the local church a social club with clicks or a fighting army on the move?

I don't happen to know anyone in my locality who seems to understand spiritual warfare, and that our principal enemy is spiritual. There seems to be no understanding of the enemy's schemes.

To conclude, people are being kept so busy living their lives, most have no clue of what is about to happen.

10

the sleeping church

If many in Christendom are asleep prophetically as described in the last chapter what are concerned believers to do? Scripture is quite clear on one safe course where the enemy has gained firm control of one's environment. It may be time to flee!

There is a command in Revelation 18:4 that has always troubled me:

“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye, receive not of her plagues. “

Fleeing is an honorable military course of action. When the enemy force is so overwhelming further resistance is pointless fleeing becomes sensible. Hear me! I am not talking about the general pagan society we all find ourselves in, when I say it's time to flee. Where would you go? Paganism is everywhere. Yet, Revelation 18: 4 states the wise course of action is to:

“... Come out of her, my people.”

In every generation biblically speaking, both scriptural study and personal observation confirm that the majority of professing Christians personally choose to stay on the broad path and conform to the larger culture rather than to separate and walk the narrow, more lonely path. The saving power of Jesus Christ is available to all who see their sad state, and genuinely repent. When we actively choose the surrendered life those who won't join us separate from us. There is a separation now in progress.

Following the example of Jesus Christ includes following His advise to invite the Holy Spirit into our lives. He should be our constant, daily companion and helper. This is not the popular road that most choose. Scripture talks about only a remnant separating from the majority in each

generation. The Bible indicates that few truly have “*ears to hear and eyes to see.*”

Two thousand years have passed since the first coming of Jesus Christ. History records what happened the first time that government partnered with Christianity during the time of the Roman Emperor Constantine in the 3rd Century. Historians called the next 1,000 years the “dark ages.” This period included almost constant “religious wars.” Different groups both claimed to represent Christianity; one hating and attempting to exterminate the other. There was also a war between Muslims and Christians depicted in a recent movie titled *The Kingdom of God* that was quite entertaining.

A major reformation of the dominate religious system of Christianity finally ended the dark ages. It was led by courageous efforts from men like Martin Luther about 500 years ago. The reformation he led was a major protest again the religious abuses of the Roman Catholic Church which dominated for a 1,000 years in Europe. During those very dark times institutional Christendom was largely form, ceremony and religion. It was mostly void of the holy fire and blaze among the faithful of the apostolic days. Miracles mostly ended around 300 AD as relationships were formalized into a rigid religious structure of clergy and laity which still persists today.

History shows it wasn't long before Martin Luther's disciples were doing the very same thing that had been done to them, killing the Ana-baptists by drownings, beheadings, and by fire. The Ana-baptists took the reformation too far in the eyes of Martin Luther and other reformers. The reformers discovered the power of the written word; the Ana-baptists seemed to have discovered Christ Himself.

In these last days the warning in Revelation 3:6 that, “*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches,*” seems to me to be critical for individual survival. Scripture tells us to study to show thyself approved. Believers are not to depend solely on a local leader to save him or his family from spiritual error, no matter how wonderful he might be.

Salvation is too important to look to mere man for leadership. There is only one fully capable leader. His name is Jesus Christ. He told us to watch for and seek the Holy Spirit, not a man, in our everyday life to ensure our spiritual safety. The actual word “pastor” I have found only once in the New Testament. When I read the New Testament with an open mind it seems to step away from the Old Testament pattern of one man leadership. Jesus Christ Himself warns us early in the book of Revelation about his hatred of the “Nicolaitan spirit” (2: 6, 15). This means ‘power over the people.’

The book of Acts seems to emphasize that when believers came together in houses it was a plurality of leaders they looked to, not one leader. God in the New Covenant (we see clear leadership abuses in the Old Testament) definitely steers us away from the clergy-laity system of government. But, we like order and control. Most people want someone in authority over them. It is the way it seems to be in spite of what we read in the Bible.

We tend to think bigger is better. But this is not the thinking of God. Read the scriptures carefully. You will see this is true.

Wherever two or three believers come together Jesus Christ promises to be in their midst. (Matthew 18:20) When that happens we are having fellowship with Jesus Christ Himself. Even where our numbers are few, we are not forsaking the fellowship of the saints if we look for opportunities to come together in His Name.

From a warfare standpoint, it is easier to spot deception when it creeps into a small group, than when evil creeps into a larger gathering. Where the numbers increase of those you don't know personally, evil can hide in our midst. I have found that the quality of prayer and worship has little to do with the size of the group. Worship in large gatherings seems to me often to be performance oriented. The few participate, the many observe. Great emotion is often present, but how often do we see the spirit of God truly manifest in power and wonder?

The smallest group according to God, has all the spiritual combat power necessary; two or three believers in unity. Jesus Christ Himself confidently sent them out two and two. (Matthew 10: 1, 5-42) In this passage he gives a fight talk that is awesome to take in. In the book of Luke we also see that He sent the seventy out in pairs. We see in Chapter 10 verse 17 that they came back in joy confessing "*even the demons were subject to us.*" Now who were all these men ministering to? Jews! Believers.

Look at the tendency of Jesus Christ while on earth. He left the large crowds every chance He got to be alone with His Disciples; Often we see He withdrew from them to be alone with our Father in Heaven. He Himself had a different tendency than do many of us. He moved away from the crowd, rather than seeking to be with the crowd even when gathered in His Name. He moved toward the small. We gravitate toward the large.

Isaiah 55:8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD."

Jeremiah 6:16 “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 18:15 “Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up;”

Ezekiel 18:25 “Yet ye say, the way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? Are not your ways unequal?”

Ezekiel 33:9 “Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.”

There is much to be done for the Lord in this lost, corrupt world outside the door of our household. Yet surveys reveal most Christians never evangelize even one soul during their lives. Jesus Christ said: “*the harvest is white, but the laborers are few.*” (*Matthew 9:37; Luke 10:2*) I expect He said this very sadly to the few gathered around Him.

Let us spend a few minutes looking at two opposite strategies available to the church being used to win souls and train up disciples:

TWO DIFFERENT STRATEGIES

1. First Soul Winner Strategy: **CENTRALIZE for vertical growth around a few talented leaders housed in a headquarters building (the Old Testament clergy-laity system; the “catch and keep” fishing technique)**

Advantages:

- (1) Can use the 501C3 tax advantage
- (2) More efficient for professional training
- (3) Better control
- (4) Paid professional leaders
- (5) Convenient for measuring progress
- (6) What people expect

Disadvantages:

- (1) Need for bigger and bigger facilities (buildings)
- (2) Larger child care services handled by strangers

- (3) Worship tends toward entertainment
- (4) Lord's supper tends toward ritual and ceremony
- (5) 70% of tithe goes to salaries, buildings and maintenance
- (6) Fewer dollars for missions work
- (7) Fewer dollars for widows, orphans, and the needy
- (8) No real involvement of other five-fold giftings.
- (9) Message is more 'milk' than 'meat'
- (10) Hard to get people out of pews and into ministry.
- (11) Growing separation between leaders and followers.
- (12) Atmosphere become more and more formal.
- (13) Constant need for new building programs.
- (14) Ministry mostly inside buildings.
- (15) Feels more and more like secular organizations
- (16) (purpose, plans, policies, procedures, programs)
- (17) Spontaneity is replaced with production
- (18) Less dependence on Holy Spirit
- (19) Increased burn out in pastors and their families
- (20) Shepherds bypass sheep to concentrate on lambs

2. Second Soul Winner Strategy: DECENTRALIZE for horizontal growth back into households like in the book of Acts. See households as the primary hospitality center ("a catch and release" fishing strategy. Gifted leaders are invited house to house. When a house becomes too crowded the saints divide their gathering together into two houses. Leadership is seen at first as part-time rather than full time, As the movement spreads into more houses there is increased opportunity to send out missionaries to help where needed in the various houses.

Advantages:

- (1) Horizontal expansion, difficult to control
- (2) Must depend on the Holy Spirit
- (3) No looking to government (501C3)
- (4) Less reliance on the talents of the few
- (5) Leaders take a servant approach (fewer titles)
- (6) Childcare in hands of household leaders
- (7) Priesthood of believers not professionals
- (8) All minister, not the few
- (9) Lord's supper, a celebration
- (10) Atmosphere, more intimate
- (11) Emphasis, on-the-job training not professional training

- (12) As house numbers grow, must divide to multiply
- (13) No need for capitol expenditures
- (14) Only those who are sent out need financial help
- (15) Little dependency on the tithe which is more for missionary outreach
- (16) More dependence on scripture
- (17) No full time staff
- (18) No large buildings to maintain
- (19) The many minister, not just the few
- (20) More participation in worship
- (21) Men less likely to get “puffed up with pride
- (22) Easier to spot and deal with infiltrators
- (23) More like an extended family
- (24) Can rent space one time for periodic gathering of households
- (25)** More accountability due to more intimacy in relationships

Disadvantages: None

11

what will it take to wake up the church

Much of the visible church is asleep. Consider the effectiveness of its outreach beyond the four walls. No matter what you think is going on in the wider world, look at what is going on in your own extended family and neighborhood. Is the Great Commission being fulfilled in your observable world? No. The opposite seems to be the truth. We are becoming more like the world and the world is not reflecting the love of Christ.

is revival the answer

What will it take to wake up the church? Some pastors talk about the need for “revival.” But, will revival wake up the church? The history of revival around the world, is not encouraging. Yes, revival does wake up a few. It has an effect for a season. But the effect is not long lasting. Look at most Christian communities and institutions over fifty years old. Past revivals run a short course in their lasting effect. Most of those affected eventually seem to return to life as normal before the revival started. Yes, praise God, some individuals are changed forever. That is wonderful. But look at the culture in which we live. We see a pattern: growth, decay and destruction. This is true in every generation we look at in the last 2,000 years.

Is seeking yet another revival, while a wonderful experience of God, going to turn culture around for good. Should that even be a goal of the church? To turn culture around? Human nature says it can't be done! What then is the answer?

will judgment do it

The opposite of revival is “judgment.” Look at the short six thousand year history of mankind using history or scripture. We see evidence of lots of judgments. Chastisements have been far more frequent than revivals in changing historical situations. Yet, evil marches ever forward. Evil has a supernatural capability to rebound and grow stronger. God Himself gives us

prophecy concerning the number of “beast empires” that will have dominion over Jerusalem in the books of Daniel and Revelation before his return. Each beast empire that rules over the Middle East overcomes the prior beast empire as it weakens.

The most exact and accurate record of mankind is in the Bible. Here we see that judgments have come on God’s people with telling frequency as they rebelled against the Word of God.

In its pages civilizations rise and civilizations fall with regularity, always the result of judgments. The history of the Bible can be looked at through its many judgments and fewer revivals. It is a sad testimony of the corrupting power of human nature.

If God is indeed in control of Kings and nature as the Bible claims, than these civilizations come to an end because of the will of God. God finally has enough and deals with the culture’s combined sin. When the cup of God’s wrath is full, it then begins to flow.

Judgment alone doesn’t appear to be the answer to lasting change either. So what will God do. Can or will he awaken the church to bring in the last great harvest? Israel (God’s demonstration nation) has been so often judged without any lasting change. Look deeper at what God might do.

When someone says the church is asleep; what do they mean? Certainly they are saying the church on the whole is not doing what Christ asked it to do, mature believers and win souls. What do we see in the church pews? On fire souls? Not in most churches! Mostly we see in America a game of musical chairs as potential members rotate between churches looking for the best church home, while all the while apostasy and deception spreads through the body of Christ. Heresies, strife and division abounds. Look at the American Christian culture as a whole.

Over the course of the centuries many of the people of God have gone into apostasy and deception with regularity. Just a small remnant of believers seems to come out of the religious system in their generation to pursue truth and thus avoid the judgment so often experienced in the larger church culture.

a short lesson

In the first book, Genesis, we see Adam put to sleep. Out of his side comes Eve. They fall through the effect of their sin. Later we see the people of Noah’s day go into apostasy (sleep). Only Noah and his family survive the judgment that falls on society. We see a discussion between Abraham and

God concerning what it would take to prevent the judgment that ultimately falls on Sodom and Gomorrah. Only Lot and his family are allowed to flee out from the system. Angels are sent in to pull them out because of Abraham's prayers. We then observe the Jewish religious system with its ups and downs finally go into total apostasy and deception (fall asleep). Out of the side of the Jewish system of worship (Old Covenant represented by the sacrifice of Jesus with His side being lanced) comes the New Covenant church.

a warning to the church

In the final book of the Bible, Revelation, written about 60 years after Christ's ascension, we see warnings to six of the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3 that represent the sweeping 2,000 year history of the church (according to some theologians). What are these seven specific warnings:

- (1) Rev. 2:4 (to Ephesus) "leaving their 1st love"
- (2) Rev. 2:9 (to Smyrna) "Blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not"
- (3) Rev. 2:14 (to Pergamas) "holding the doctrine of Balaam"
- (4) Rev. 2:15 (to Pergamos) "deeds and doctrine of the Nicolaitans"
- (5) Rev. 2:20 (to Thyatira) "allowing Jezebel to teach and seduce God's servants"
- (6) Rev. 3:1 (to Sardis) "having a name that you are alive but you are dead"
- (7) Rev. 3:16 (to Laodicea) "being lukewarm"

Note the fact that the only church that is not warned is the Philadelphia Church. That is the only church given a specific promise in Revelation 3:10:

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

The last part of the two thousand year church history described in Revelation 3: 14-20 is characterized by the "lukewarm" attitude of the Laodician Church. This is the dominant church of our present American

culture which has a great, but mostly ungodly influence on the world. Alert observers of the American church like George Barna, who specialize in studying the American church, confirm this accurately characterizes the condition of the American church.

The word of God tells us in the book of James that God will spew this church out of his mouth. Biblical prophesy warns us in many places that judgment is coming to this, the last generation of mankind, before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

We don't see most pastors in mega-churches preaching anything about the last day prophecies which are quite specific with a few exceptions. (John Hagee, an exception?) Few local pastors preach about the coming rapture of the church. Few discuss what is going on in and around the nation of Israel and its capital city of Jerusalem. Yet very specific prophecies are being fulfilled in the Middle East. Israel's rebirth after Jerusalem its capitol was destroyed as prophesied by Jesus Christ in 70 AD in 1948 is a major example of a fulfilled prophecy. Few talk about the revived Roman Empire that was also prophesied in the book of Daniel being fulfilled in present day Europe and the Middle East.

Instead we see increasing numbers of local pastors being swept up into the effort to gently bring sinners into the fold with soft sell messages as if that were really possible. This strategy doesn't ring true with many mature believers. Increasing numbers have had their fill and are leaving. "Once saved, always saved" replacement theology ignores last days prophecy concerning Israel, saying that the church has replaced Israel. It preaches a dominion theology, which says we must take over government and subdue the earth so that Jesus Christ can return. This is no different from the goal of socialism and communism. Most churches ignoring what Jesus Christ says about a final tribulation and the coming rule of the anti-christ.

what will it take

Since neither past judgment nor revival has worked, in changing the direction of the flow of humanity, what will it take to wake up the church? Human nature has proved to be quite stubborn. Considering the wiles of our supernatural foe, the devil, and his fallen angels, it is apparent something more is needed than judgment and revival to shake us awake and keep us awake to get us on purpose which is supposed to be about helping to bring in a larger harvest of souls.

Fewer and fewer I personally know who are genuinely wonderful people are hanging on to what the Bible calls “the blessed hope,” (Titus 2:13) **the rapture of the bride of Christ**. Could it be that only a remnant of believers will come out of the side of a sleeping church with their eyes fixed on Jesus Christ, much as you would expect the eyes of a bride to be on her groom during preparation for a wedding? It appears that only a remnant have not lost their first love! Is this the Philadelphia church referred to in Revelation 3:10?

Is your particular church body going against the general flow of the Christian culture? If only one of seven are to be saved from the hour of trial coming upon the whole world, what does this mean for the members of the other six type churches who because of a spirit of false loyalty haven't yet gotten into a personal study of what scripture has to say that might be different from what is being preached from the local pulpit?

Could it be that the last great revival is led by 144,000 on fire Jewish evangelists who wake up to the fact that Jesus Christ truly is the Messiah, after the rapture of the bride?

That would certainly encourage devote Jews to get busy in the midst of the Great Tribulation. Will many Christian believers wake up from their sleep having missed the rapture of the bride of Christ? Certainly those left behind would know exactly when the second coming of Jesus Christ will be, seven years after the rapture of the bride.

Will this be the motivation needed to make it in to the Wedding supper of the Lamb? Will a death sentence staring believers in the face be the motivation necessary to set them on fire to win souls for the Kingdom of God? Could the example needed be the example that is set by the 144,000 Jewish witnesses who go out to evangelize the world, 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel like the short historic example of the Ana-baptists?

What will it take to wake up the church? Could it be the rapture of only a small portion of the church, the Bride of Christ?

12

beyond human nature

Go deeper into the study of scripture and more revelation should come on the promises of God. Revelation of Christ opens up fresh understanding of the Word of God and its importance in our daily lives. So why do we see born again, spirit-filled, believers get off track? How does this happen?

Remember we are still human and we have a supernatural adversary who knows how to use our human nature against us. We grown in our understanding of the spiritual world with the ups and downs of experience. When we get knocked off our purposed walk with God, we need to analyze why it happened. If we never discover why, we will not learn like a soldier how better to fight.

Human nature doesn't like to fail. I have learned from the observations of a World War II and Korean War army historian, named SLA Marshall. I don't remember his exact quote on human nature. It was in a handout I received when I attended the Basic Officer course for 2nd Lieutenants at Quantico, Virginia in 1962. Marshall said this about human nature: (a paraphrase) "a minority of men and women in the offices and factories across America keep the work places humming; the majority are so weighed down by fear and worry that our efficiency and effectiveness is the result of the few."

I have read three of his seminal military works. He was an outstanding observer of men at war. His SOLDIER'S LOAD AND THE MOBILITY OF A NATION and his MEN UNDER FIRE are classic studies. He seemed to understand human nature as few do.

Our human nature works against us. The Bible says this:

Luke 8: 14 "They...are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection."

2 Peter 2:10-22 "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the LORD. But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and

destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness: But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet. These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. 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. For if after they have escaped the pollution of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 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. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

If such passages don't put the fear of the LORD into believers I don't know what will. Obviously they talk about believers who are overcome by their human nature, and fall back under the control of their old sin nature. Abraham Maslow taught about a hierarchy of needs. The Bible is more direct referring to *"the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, and the lust of the flesh."*

We have a brilliant strategist and tactician who commands the supernatural forces of darkness who are adroit at using our own human nature against us. Men and women in high places given over to the kingdom of darkness are even now setting traps for the children of God to fall into.

God warns us not to trust our human nature. We must put this human nature to death to overcome the world.

Romans 6:23 tells us: "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Jeremiah 7:24 “But they hearkened not, or inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward.

Matthew 9:4 “And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?”

It is so easy for believers when they read the Word of God to take the tough talk and attribute it to non-Christians and the promises, and attribute the good things said to our inheritance.

A dangerous conclusion some make is the “Once saved, always saved doctrine.” Such thinking doesn’t keep us watchful and on our toes. Yes, no one can tear us out of the hand of the Lord if we surrender our life to him. If we are sincerely trying to service and please Him, when we are tripped up by the enemy and fall, he will give us the grace to get back up. But if we tire of the walk of righteousness and climb down out of the hand of God and turn and walk away, God will give us over to our desires. Freedom of action is a free gift from our Creator. He isn’t seeking slaves for his Kingdom, but sons and daughters.

Human nature is a force in itself. But the real battle is with the strongman (Mark 3:27) and the demons Satan has assigned to war against our desire to walk in the counsels of God. He is a worthy foe. We must take him seriously. We can’t win the battle if we don’t daily lean on Jesus and the Holy Spirit, cry out for help when we are being overcome.

13

self deliverance

I recently read the term “evil supernaturalism.” What a descriptive phrase for what ails much of the world including Christendom.

Only the most wounded person can’t see the evil things being done around the world with the hidden blessing of many of our appointed leaders: economic, governmental and religious. Some live in a dream world they have created because of deep woundings while a young child. This dream world is a filter that effects how they look at the world as adults. It should not be that way, but is. Such people have a great need to control and work hard to get into controlling positions. On the other hand mature adults have the capacity to adapt to changing circumstances, can function more effectively.

Titus 1:15 exhorts us to concentrate on the pure and lovely and think on these things. It doesn’t mean we should not be “watchmen on the walls” however to warn our brothers and sisters of approaching danger.

Many know of the work of watchers like Jack Van Impe, Hal Linsey, John Hagee, Dave Hunt and others who have achieved a certain prominence, so are able to sound the alarm about approaching danger to a wider audience. Such leaders follow world-changing developments related to biblical prophecy. Their observations are weakened when local pastors don’t reinforce such truths in Sunday sermons. Many depend only upon their local pastor for their spiritual truth.

careening towards destruction

So we are careening towards the one world government that will soon be taken over by the coming anti-Christ. Only the naïve doubt it. The evidence grows every day around us. Tight control of the masses is being planned in secret by “*workers of iniquity.*” They will bring in persecution against believers. The seven years of tribulation is at hand. Satan’s kingdom is planning to eliminate true believers from the face of the earth. Who has not heard about the coming Mark of the Beast? Soon “*no man will be able to buy or sell unless he takes the mark.*” (*Revelation 13:17*)

Yet hope is eternal. Many sit under the teaching of false teachers in Christendom never hearing a thing about unfulfilled prophecy, the end times, or what God has said is coming in these latter days.

How will they know when the wolf is at the door? Local pastors have no interest in prophecy. It is too controversial. They are the local authority on what to believe. Since they aren't searching these things out for themselves, shouldn't we be? In another manuscript titled **THE COMING AMBUSH** I wrote fourteen years ago, I sounded a warning to family and friends.

In this particular work I am trying to motivate you to take control of your own mind, will, emotion, and flesh. Don't let it be controlled by Satan through default. He does with us what he wants unless we give control to Christ and stay in the power of the Holy Ghost. If we won't take control in little things, how can we expect to take control in greater things? In too many lives Satan has far too much control of the person.

re-gaining control

Too many believers think they are in control where Satan is in fact in control. There are many great teachings at believer's web sites on the internet and in books about how to use the weapons of our warfare. I am not going to re-teach what is already free on the internet somewhere else. Every American has library access to the internet even if they don't own a personal computer hooked up to the internet. There are some good websites for the discerning who care to look. The time is short for looking. At some point we are going to lose our free, uncontrolled use of the internet. It is too great a check against the anti-Christ spirit, and those whose ambition it is to control the world. One good on line book is **DELIVERED FROM DEMONS** written by C Parker Thomas at Midnight Cry Ministries. He is an excellent writer and story teller. If you don't understand or have an open mind about how demons can personally attack you and your loved ones after reading this great work I don't know what to tell you.

Attitude is everything in life. We don't have a lot of control over our circumstances, but we do have absolute control over the attitude we choose to adopt in the midst of our circumstances.

To regain control after one wakes up and realize that he doesn't, as a believer, have the understanding of the situation he thought he did, is hard work. Work first to change your attitude. We can be so conditioned by our present circumstances that when things begin to change because our attitude hasn't changed we can still end up being the main obstacle to continuing

change before our situation becomes positive because of our present lack of stability. Before things can get better, they often get worse. Many of us need to go through a season of change. None of us likes change. When it appears to us that our situation has worsened we can be the one to cry loudest, not trusting God. Yet an attitude change may be needed to set us on the right path.

don't make too big a thing of it

Many churches make too big a thing of it. What am I talking about? Deliverance! Casting out demons! The main problem is not that demons could be behind our problems. The big problem for many is probably the thought that this could be at the root of one's personal problems. This is a big problem in self deliverance. Set your personal pride aside. Use yourself as an experiment. Trust God's Word on the need we all have at times for deliverance, Trust the power of His Name for your authority. Trust the power of His blood to cleanse you. Trust what the Word says about your position in Christ. Expect Him to show Himself strong on your behalf.

Once we see the power we have in Him to deliver ourselves, we will never fear helping others to get delivered. When we start with ourselves it humbles us enough that it won't go to our head when we begin to share our testimony publicly and have the opportunity to use our authority in Mark 16:17 and Luke 10-19 to help others get delivered.

The promises of God are not just for eternity, but also for this life. How can others get excited if we don't have a testimony of what Jesus Christ has done in our life?

Many make too great a thing of saving souls. In the first place "*Unless the Father is drawing them they can't be saved.*" (John 6:44) Secondly it's the overcoming power of His Blood, and then our testimony that empowers us. (Revelation 12:11) Without the blood no matter our testimony nothing of lasting value will take place.

Look what Jesus said in Matthew 7:3-5 "*And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?...Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.*"

I believe strongly that Christians can have a demon problem. The argument that they can't comes from Satan himself. That is a primary reason many of us in the church have so little power to change things. Something in us laughs at our feeble attempts to help others before first helping ourselves

by building a testimony of our own deliverance through the mighty power of the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. He is our Savior, our Lord, our Deliverer, our brother and the one who told us about our mighty friend, the Holy Spirit.

If you don't have victory in an area of your life, look first to yourself for the reason why not.

14

a church divided

Most of the church in America is not organized for war, but for class room training. The American army is organized for training during peace time. But when they go to war they task organize for particular combat missions. You bring people together to train in one way. You organize to fight quite differently. Many churches put so much money into their training effort they have no money left to go and fight the enemy. In war we organizationally disperse the troops for their own safety. We only use the principle of mass to come together quickly to overwhelm the enemy at a particular point of decision then quickly disperse again so as not to provide tempting organizational targets. In combat when we do train, it is usually at the small group level and informally. Otherwise we present too juicy a target to the enemy.

There are two basic viewpoints of where the church is when we analyze the different leadership views throughout Christendom. The larger group of leaders has a peace time view point. They are focused on training. They center their weekly messages on improving personal comfort, prosperity and relationships. The second group has a wartime focus. They see the church as engaged in warfare.

I have seen small groups with very effective regularly scheduled outreaches that have had more of an impact on souls than much larger ministries and groups. Even in the smallest group, two people, with increased intimacy and unity of purpose, Satan will attempt to cause disagreement and division over methods where there is unity of purpose.

No matter the size of an organization expect supernatural enemy counter-attacks to try and break unity of purpose and destroy intimacy. It is easier to spot the enemy in a small gathering than in a larger one.

Is more training needed before the church goes to war, or is time to structurally reorganize for combat? In war those who fight may not feel they have had enough training, but in a war zone training is a luxury.

Jesus warned us about the effects of a spirit of division through the mouths of three credible witnesses: Matthew, Mark and Luke (12:25; 3:25; 11:17)

“But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every Kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation: and a house divided against a house falleth.”
Luke 11:17

a house divided

Attacking armies often use a ruse to confuse the enemy being attacked. A well planned attack maneuvers along several fronts. The attacker disguises his intentions by using the principles of mass and economy of force to confuse the defenders as to which is the main attack, and which is the supporting attack. This tactic causes a division of the defender's forces to slow down or stop the two attacks. By keeping the defender guessing you weaken him, forcing him to guess how to deploy his forces.

It is the same in the spiritual realm. Satan has a full court press presently going on against the church. As I observe the body of Christ at large I see two primary divisions or points of view forming. There is first the:

more widely accepted point of view.

Most Christians seem to be acting like things will go on as they always have. Most have little or no interest in prophecy. Many seem to have discounted its relevancy in our age. Such love the Lord in a general way, but their primary focus appears to be on other priorities: family, friends, hobbies, saving for the future, etc. They don't seem too interested in soul winning. This point of view certainly appears to be the majority's focus.

This attitude towards life controls most pulpits. The secular professionals in the area of finances, health, and in the management of relationships are the experts that are looked to. These believers state that God is in their everyday lives, but believe He isn't likely to intervene in direct ways. Their prayers are more general in nature. They are likely to be more content with what goes on in their local church. Most don't really get too involved in church matters. Their focus is in other areas. Church affairs tend to be more social and occasional except for those who make faith their career.

Few such faithful have any interest on what is going on in and around Jerusalem. What does the Middle East have to do with their life? These believers often believe that our nation is going in the wrong direction

morally, but are less likely to pray and intercede to God to change America. Some might run for political office to make a difference. Others might change how they vote in the next election. Some will campaign for a particular party to change things in America. Few holding such opinions see the hand of God in everyday headlines. For some of these believers the word of God is seen as a good guide line but not the inspired word of God to take literally. They want to be politically correct. They don't want to offend anyone.

WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE PRIMARY FOCUS OF THIS POPULAR POINT OF VIEW?

Growth, happiness, success and yes, revival! They see themselves as good citizens of this present world.

Then there is the:

less widely held point of view.

These Christians are accused of being more passionate in their spiritual viewpoints. They are definitely more likely to express them to others. Most have an interest in prophecy, and believe we are in the end times. Most like to talk about the things of God and are not likely to be politically correct. Many are more likely to be unhappy with the direction of their local church and may even be thinking about leaving it and looking for another.

They are more likely to look to God for help with their everyday needs. Many of these believers are intensely interested in the affairs of the nation of Israel. They often believe that what happens to America is directly related to how we are treating Israel. These people are more likely to pray in very specific ways, and will intercede to God to change spiritual conditions that don't line up with God's Word. Many don't see voting and political actions as the primary way to change the nation and are more likely to pray specifically for change in these areas. They are more likely to read from the Bible and to believe literally the Word of God.

WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE MAJOR FOCUS OF THIS SMALLER GROUP OF BELIEVERS?

Their main focus is watching in preparation for the imminent return of Jesus Christ. They see themselves as the bride of Christ and citizens of heaven. Of course they also work to be good citizens of this nation.

your christian world view is critical

Each of these points of view have real life applications and consequences. The camp you think you are in will determine what happens to you in the near future. There are sincere believers who love Jesus Christ and want to serve him in both camps. Tragically God won't help us in ways that he wants to help us in this life if we choose the wrong path to walk down. There are many different viewpoints within Christendom. They all can't be the best way to think in terms of eternity. Most of us who are born into the church never really investigate to discover which of the many different views line up best with the written Word of God. We are more likely to go along with the crowd we are in, in our local church body. We become unhappy with a pastor, go to another church, or drop out of the system all together in our pursuit of comfort. Yet, the world view we do have is critical to what happens to us in the future. Could the correct world view be the one we are most uncomfortable with at the moment?

heresies in christendom

Satan is an expert at creeping into a body of believers and slowly taking them off course. There are many warnings in scripture about false shepherds, false prophets, the blind leading the blind, etc. What do I believe are some false teachings? Some of the faith teachers I believe have gotten off course. I believe that "once saved, always saved is dangerously naive. I believe that "dominion theology" is mostly error. I believe that "replacement theology" is definite error. The different rapture teachings can't all be true. I am not saying that those who hold to such teachings are going to hell not knowing their heart, but they are certainly being taken off course. Spiritual life is tougher for those who lose the way. Satan is a master at helping believers to "lose their way."

what do we do about the differences

We love those who believe views opposite of ours in the church. But when we are sure of the truth we don't back down when others believe differently and pressure us. We pray for them. We hope they see the truth. We ask the Lord to open our eyes further to show us errors in our ways, any wicked thing in us, lest we fall.

We need to be able to tell others the reason for the hope that lies within us. When our understanding is challenged we must be able to express why we believe as we do. We must know what is essential, and what is not. Satan shouldn't be able to divide us over non-essentials.

If we find we are sitting under teachings we can no longer support than in love we must leave so as to not cause dissension in the body of Christ. We shouldn't stay where we are unhappy due to difference in beliefs that are important to us. We don't have to remain where we are being devalued by others because of deeply held beliefs. Praise God, whether right or wrong about the timing of His Coming, He looks at "hearts." There are good hearts on both sides of differing points of view that we find developing in Christendom.

the major difference

Both types of Christians can be saved. Those in the majority seem not to be intensely longing for a face to face relationship with the Lord. Those in the minority seem to have a bride's longing for their groom's return. Are you waiting for him to come with bated breath. The passion of the majority seems to be this life not the next. Their desire to help others however may rightly stem from their thankfulness to the Lord. In one case the love of God is more direct. In the other case it may be more indirect. But those closest in relationship to the general of an army know him best, and are better able to recognize his voice when he speaks.

task organize for combat

An army during peace time is logically grouped more closely together to make it easier to focus on army training. When war comes the army is reorganized for dispersion to make it a less tempting target. The general of the army task organizes to better able his forces to accomplish assigned combat missions.

The church is at war. There is no peace. Peace is an illusion. Much of Christendom is not effectively organized to accomplish their combat mission (winning souls). In the next chapter we will talk about God's organization for combat.

15

the household of God

Trust what you sense you are actually seeing and hearing. Don't discount it. Be suspicious of the spin artists. The world is in a mess: "*waxing worse and worse,*" just as the Bible says will happen "*and then the end shall come.*" No matter what indicator we choose to use, be it politics, financial, weather, demographics, spiritual or the state of deterioration inside our own family, we see a slide down hill morally in our society. During such times smaller is often better. Much of America's leadership focus is on getting bigger.

A truthful observer looking at the church in America would tell you that most churches are too focused on self, and not enough on winning souls. What goes on inside the four walls of many churches (its stated purpose, policies, plans and programs) is the focus. Beyond the four walls is where Jesus told His disciples to GO, INTO ALL THE WORLD. (Matthew 28:19-20)

The world effects the church in America far more than the world is effected by the church as God intended. The church today is irrelevant to the world.

What is the true purpose of the church? How should it be reorganized for effective spiritual combat, to become more effective in evangelizing?

two primary points

My first point is this: The first purpose of the Church is to get saints trained for Combat. The present church structure is not a combat structure. It should be a place where the true fighting units of the church come together to get properly motivated, organized, trained and equipped for combat before being sent back to their neighborhoods for battle. The real work of the ministry is to fight the good fight.

LOOK at Ephesians 4: 11 ***“And he gave some, apostles, and some, prophets and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:”***

Experienced shepherds should feed the sheep. The sheep in turn should feed the lambs. In much of the church world the shepherds bypass the sheep to feed the lambs. This is not the natural order. Even worse some shepherds by pass the sheep to feed unbelievers attempting to do the work of the ministry themselves in violation of the intent of Ephesians 4:11.

See clearly that the assembly’s job is TRAINING the saints for spiritual WARFARE.

LOOK at Matthew 28:19-20 ***“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost teaching them to....”***

Who goes? It is clear from Ephesians 4:11 that church leaders send out combat units from that body just as Jesus did with the twelve and later with his disciples. (Mark 6:7, Luke 10:1) Yes, sometimes leader go with them as did Jesus to demonstrate, set the example and teach. We see in Matthew 10 that Jesus gave his small band power and sent them out two and two. First, He sent out His apostles in pairs. He later sent out seventy other disciples in pairs, and lastly in Mark 16:17 he gives us authority to go and do.

What we need to see clearly is who one of the most powerful of God’s pairs is intended to be. I believe a sanctified married couple submitted to Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit can make a huge difference in their neighborhood. (Micah 2:13) I could spend the rest of the chapter teaching on how a unified married couple can make a huge difference in the world, but this is self evident. So I will spend the rest of the chapter emphasizing my second point to reinforce my first point on how important Fathers and Mothers are when in scriptural unity.

So what is my second main point? It concerns who the primary fighting unit of the church really is. Lets take a discerning look at the word “HOUSEHOLD” in the written Word of God. In the King James Bible we find this word used seventy times; fifty-three times in the Old Testament and seventeen times in the New.

The 1st place it is found is in Genesis 18:19. ***“For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment, that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.”***

There is a lot to learn from studying this one verse. Ponder it! Read it slowly.... It would be well to memorize this verse and pray it daily in a personalized manner until it becomes personal to you and your household.

The 2nd Place the word HOUSEHOLD is found is in Genesis 31:37. Here God records the encounter between Jacob and his household who have fled and Leban, his uncle, who pursues Jacob with the men of his household to regain valuable household items that were stolen from him.

We find Jacob saying to Leban: ***“Where as thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? Set it here before my brethren and thy brethren that they may judge between us both.”***

Jacob is sure none in his household would have taken unlawfully anything belonging to Leban. Here we see him so sure of himself that he actually brings a death curse on the love of his life, Rebecca, through his spoken outburst.

What story would our own household stuff tell our neighbors about our true spiritual interests and allegiance? What if our hidden things were laid out in the open for prying eyes to see?

Turn next to Genesis 35:2 ***“Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments:”***

Do the fathers in our generation command such an example of holiness in our own households as did Joshua in his generation? (Joshua 24:15) This term household encompasses more than what we include in the more familiar term, home. It also includes our influence in our places of work. In ancient times where most men lived, and worked were for many, one and the same. We may not be the authority at our work place today, but even the custodian has his tool storage place. How many are doing things in secret at their work place unknown to members of the family at home that is affecting them spiritually in the home?

It is a shame I can't systematically go through all fifty-three verses in the O.T. to add weight to the significance of this important word, household. I have included here only a few verses in this chapter to make my point, but I hope you will investigate each verse where it is used and the context to add further weight to what I am trying to convey about the responsibility and accountability of Fathers and Mothers.

Turn now to Deuteronomy 6:22. ***“And the LORD showed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes.”***

In the neighborhood where each of us lives there are many households we drive by every day as we go to and from our place of work or school. All of

these households are impacting our neighborhood and communities to a greater or lesser degree. In this above verse the LORD did a work that impacted all of Egypt and Pharaoh and his ruling household before all the people.

God is in the business of showing Himself strong on behalf of those households that show themselves strong on behalf of the LORD. As He did for Moses and Israel in the clear sight of all of Egypt he will do for you. Maybe we have a Pharaoh led household in our neighborhood that commands the attention of the community.

God takes sides

Receive what I now say into your spirit. **God takes sides in every controversy.** If we are sons and daughters of God we have his ear. He is waiting for us to make our requests, our holy declarations, known unto Him. God has not changed from when the prophet recorded the above verse of scripture.

He has drawn a line in the sand in the Word of God. Will you believe His Word, or will you not? He is causing separation as this age draws to a close. Jesus didn't come to unite the world, but to divide the world. There is one coming to unite the world who the world will accept, the future anti-christ according to Jesus' own words. (John 5:43)

God will in the future judge his enemies right before the eyes of the people of God just as he did in Egypt long ago through his servant, Moses, a type of Savior. Which side of the line will our families be on when that judgment falls? Judgment begins in the house of the LORD. If household leaders are on the wrong side of the judgment line, what are we doing now while there is still time to change our household destiny?

Turn now to Deuteronomy 11:6 “*...how the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households and their tents, and all the substance that was in their possession, in the midst of all Israel:*”

This sounds a lot like the weather-related judgments that are happening in many parts of the world that we follow in the daily news.

a common theme

There is a common theme in many of these seventy “household” scriptures: the phrase “YE AND YOUR HOUSEHOLD.” The eternal fate of leaders and their households are connected together in scripture. Especially the

fathers help determine the fate of their households. That is why a requirement for spiritual leadership in the body of Christ is that your household be in order. (1Tim. 3:2-7, Numbers 27:16)

If someone can't even command his own household keeping it in order why should he be trusted with a greater number of souls? The Bible says such a man is unfit. 2 Timothy 3: 6-7 describes the state of many families today. When a leader is blessed or cursed, so is His or Her Household according to God's own word.

The decisions leaders make have greater consequences for their households than most of us know in this life considering the confusion that is wide spread today.

Turn to Joshua 2:18. I won't read this verse. Here we find the phrase '*THY FATHER'S HOUSEHOLD.*' In this story of the harlot, Rahab, we see that because of who she deliberately chooses to line herself with, two of the spies, even her unbelieving Father's household was blessed as they humbled themselves and came within the protective bloodline established for Rahab's protection when the army of Israel came up against the city to destroy it. We see in Joshua 6:25 that this entire household within the bloodline lived while all others in the city died.

Turn to Judges 6:27. Here we find details of the story of Gideon. We see that Gideon feared his own father's household because his father and his household worshipped other gods than the one true God of Gideon. Gideon in this case stood alone with the LORD against the rest who worshipped different gods. He stood against Baal and became a judge over Israel for forty years.

Turn to 2 Samuel 19:18. In this verse we see the phrase "*THE KING'S HOUSEHOLD.*" In this story we see where an enemy of the King humbles himself and this king, David, spares his life going against the custom of the day to kill all the king's enemies and all their households too. What saved this man's life was his willingness to humble himself before the King.

Sovereignty is the key issue of our day as it was in the day of King David. One's view of this critical issue will determine which side of the line he and his household (those not in rebellion to his authority) are on. Are we humbling ourselves before the King in the presence of those whose allegiance is not towards Him who died for all, or are we silenced by the rebels in our midst?

Turn to 2 Kings 8:2. Here we see the *phrase* "*SHE WENT WITH HER HOUSEHOLD.*" Some things jumped out at me in this verse. The first thing is that even in the O.T., some household leaders were recognized by God as the principle woman of the household. We see this clearly evident in Acts

16:31 and in Proverbs 31. These verses show the vital importance that the household leader, (man or woman), hears clearly and obeys the word of the LORD. In this case women leaders had spiritual ears to hear with the result that they and their households were blessed.

Turn to Isaiah 37:2. This verse is one of many that show how important it is, “*WHO IS OVER THE HOUSEHOLD*”, the spiritual authority. What reigning spiritual influence is over your household? Look at the fate of Eli because he wouldn’t control his sons (Remember you had to be thirty to be a priest and at least one of them was obviously married.) It is important for fathers to consider the fate of Eli. His name is mentioned twenty nine times in the book of 1st Samuel. The father usually determines whether there will be blessing or curse in a family. God expects the natural, appointed leader to be in control.

I have only highlighted a few of the fifty-three O. T. verses. I want to look at the New Testament then draw some important final chapter conclusions.

Turn to Matthew 10:25. “*It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his LORD. If they have called the Master of the House Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household.*”

Also, look at verse 36. “*And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household.*”

When we are “born again,” “Spirit filled,” and get into the written word things change dramatically in the spiritual world. That change instantly begins to manifest and change things in the physical realm. We may have assumed before being born again that our parents, brothers and sisters or spouses, were saved and filled with the Holy Spirit. But once transformed by the new birth (John 3:3) our spiritual eyes and ears are opened. We now see in a whole new way. We can’t hang on to our salvation without the help of the Holy Spirit so strong is the attack against us after the new birth. It causes problems with family and friends we know and love as we in our new enthusiasm begin to walk in our transformed spirit out of the dead spirit of the world. Those that are walking in the world’s spirit now have a problem with us. It often surprises us who they are.

four verses in Matthew

There are four verses in Matthew I want to comment on briefly. (13:27, 13:52, 20:1, and 21:33) In these four verses we find a new term: “*HOUSEHOLDER.*” This refers to the leader of the household. In the first

of these four verses, 13:27, we see the phrase “*SERVANTS OF THE HOUSEHOLDER.*” Who is our householder? If it isn’t Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit it is another, a strong man referred to in Mark 3:27 and in Matthew 12:29.

Things will not go well for us in our households until we follow the advice here and dethrone Satan and enthrone Jesus as LORD over our households. This is a spiritual battle. In this process we will encounter continued resistance. Expect it. Deal with it!

Turn to Matthew 24:45. “*Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his LORD hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?*”

Are we leaders truly the Lord’s servants giving meat in due season? (See also Luke 12:42) Or, have we delegated this to others who are hirelings?

Turn to Acts 16:31. We see here the phrase “*And when she was baptized and her household*” This implies a level of sovereignty on the part of this female leader that most household leaders today no longer have in America.

Finally, turn to Romans 16:11 (see also, 1 Cor 1:16, Gal 6:10, Eph 2:19) These scriptures clearly distinguish that certain households are “households of God” while others are households of the devil. We have looked at the purpose of the church, and at the primary fighting unit of the church, the households of God.

To conclude this chapter, I have six points:

1. The church is a gathering of the HOUSEHOLDS of GOD for the purpose of TRAINING the leaders for the spiritual fight.
2. God is looking for LEADERS and sees them in the context of HOUSEHOLD leaders.
3. HOUSEHOLDS are where the major battle is fought; where victories are won or lost.
4. As households go, so goes the church; so make sure there is no sin in your camp.
5. Most:
 - a. STRONGHOLDS need to be first broken in households before a leader can ever hope to affect his community and the world beyond.
 - b. If he can’t deliver his own family what hope does he have of helping others.
 - c. HEALINGS need to manifest in households first or they won’t happen in the churches.

- d. BREECHES must be restored in households before the church can be strengthened.
- e. BREAK-THROUGHS must occur in households then such households will attract the world beyond.

6. It is urgent that church leaders get a hold of the truth that is found in the opening scripture, Genesis 18:19. God is looking for ways to show Himself strong on behalf of the Seed of Abraham, the household of God.

In closing pray Genesis 18:19 with your family in mind. ***“For God knows me, that I will command my children and my household after me, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment, that the LORD may bring upon me and my household what God has spoken about Abraham, our father. Amen!”***

16

leadership

What kind of leadership is needed to overcome the demonic realm? I have written a book called: LEADERSHIP THAT WORKS. I don't specifically address deliverance in that book which is a vital tool in overpowering the dark forces allied against us in the hidden wars that is the topic of this book. Any serious leader knows that deliverance issues, and behind the scenes supernatural leadership, affect all formal organizations and all informal relationships too.

There are two basic types of leadership: formal leadership that everyone recognizes because it has been formalized with appointed positions and an established structure, and informal leadership that fewer recognize that also operates both within and outside all formal organizations.

Whether you are a formally recognized (employer, household leader, social, political or spiritual) leader of an organization, or whether you just have people frequently approaching you on an informal basis for counsel and help you need to know something about the important subject of leadership.

a major difference

A major difference between leaders and followers is that leaders feel a burden to get something accomplished to change a situation. Those who aren't leaders don't feel a responsibility. Many will agree with the leader that something needs to be done, but few are willing to take on the burden necessary to cause the change that many agree needs to take place. Leaders take a lot more personal risk than followers in effecting necessary change in society and in personal relationships.

While many generally recognize that the spiritual world affects the natural world, and that things need to happen spiritually before lasting change will

happen in the natural world, it takes courage and boldness to do anything about it.

There has to be leadership in the supernatural realm (intercessory prayer), but the natural rewards for spending the time are not there for most. They don't think eternally.

If it is natural rewards that motivate you, you will never do much to affect supernatural change in the world. All I can guarantee you in this life if you show supernatural leadership is resistance, animosity and even open hostility from many you love. Most of your rewards for leadership in this realm are delayed for the next life.

levels of warfare

C Peter Wagner talks about three levels of warfare: (1) Ground Warfare against demons, (2) Occult Warfare against those who oppose us from hiding through curses such as those in the covens, and (3) Strategic Warfare against the principalities and powers in the heavens. Certainly all three of these levels of warfare are real. I address mostly the face to face level of human relationships. This is the level where most people are at, the level of ground warfare.

At this level you first have to have the burden to want to see a change. In most cases you won't find others willing to share the burden. We all would like to see someone else pick up our burden and battle through to victory. But it seldom happens. Ministry that makes a difference begins with us below the level of formal community leadership positions.

importance of testimony

The only real difference I see between a leader and a follower in the army of God is that a leader has a testimony of the saving and delivering power of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, and is willing to share with others, what a follower does not.

The power of personal testimony is critical to the life of the church. We "*overcome by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony unto the death of our flesh.*" (Revelation 12:11)

We all have heard that the victory is assured because of the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. But if you want angels to assist you in this life you need to attract them to your side by your testimony. (Mark 8:38) The

first thing we must learn to overcome in this life is our own flesh. We must put it to death if we expect to be used much by God in this life. The road to leadership is self-denial and the attitude of a servant.

17

a warfare mentality

You have a choice when you come to Jesus.

You can pick up the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, dress yourself for warfare, invite the Holy Spirit into your life on a daily basis, kill your personal flesh as it tries to rise up, and be ready to fight when attacked knowing of course that:

“(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) 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

Of course you want to seek wise counsel, the full counsel of God before taking deliberate action, but are you going to consider yourself a soldier ready to battle? Are you going to do what “*the father shows you to do*” as Jesus did. (John 5:20; 10:32; 16:25)

Or, you can do like many seem to do, pretend there is no such thing as spiritual warfare and pretty much go on as before, a little more conscious of the things of God depending on others to lead you.

If we continue to think like many in Christendom, as civilians tend to think, seeing warfare as the responsibility of others, we can't be blessed by God in the way those who have a good soldier's attitude concerning the scriptures and their commander will be blessed. (2 Timothy 2:3-4)

The Bible is a manual of arms, a soldier's Bible. When we think like a civilian we won't get a lot from the Bible that will do us much good in a practical sense. But if like a soldier we think like someone who knows there

is an enemy army out there trained to “*kill, capture, and destroy,*” we will be prepared when attack comes in a way the civilians will not. (John 10:10)

In a believer’s ability to fight, Christians, who love God and want to have victory over sin, seem to fall somewhere along a spectrum between the two extremes: very passive or militant. Certainly either extreme is not good in most cases. Many see that the sixth commandment of God as “*Thou shalt not kill.*” (Exodus 20:13; Numbers 25:37; 35:30; Deuteronomy 4:42; 5:17; 19:4; 2 Samuel 14:7; 21:17; Mathew 5:21; Romans 13:9) Most Bibles use the word kill not murder when done in defense of life. I don’t mean to attack the use of a word but just the interpretation of it. For many the choice of kill rather than murder seems to me to breed confusion of thinking. If that were the case no judges and juries could be in the will of God in sentencing a murderer to death. No armies attacked by Tyrants from other countries could defend their country. No Christians could be policemen and use killing force in defense of life. Isn’t it a blessing if you are a murderer sentenced to die knowing the exact time of death? You can repent and make peace with God up to the final moment rather than to go on your own way and die suddenly without time to make peace with God?

Kill is a wrong interpretation of the Hebrew word. The word kill is not in the Ten Commandments. The word murder is. “*Thou shalt not murder.*”

Certainly everyone loves a God of Love. We can have fellowship across religious lines if our Christian God is only a God of Love. It is that other God who is love, but can kill and send people to hell that most people hate. Look at one of God’s favorite people. It is said of him, that he had a heart after God, King David. We see that he was a murderer and an adulterer. But when confronted by Nathan the prophet he fell on his face and repented and was made clean by God. Read Psalm 51.

We are all familiar with the phrase “*if looks could kill.*” Who can not identify with an event or two where you have received such a look or given one? (Matthew 9:4; 15:19; Mark 7:21; Luke 2: 35; 9:43; Acts 8:22; Romans 2:15; Hebrews 4:12) Many of the words of Jesus lead us to conclude that our thoughts are counted as deeds in the mind of God. So if you have murder in your heart toward someone who has crossed you beware....and forgive, or you too shall be judged.

the promises of God

One of the things you see many soldiers doing during idle times in a combat zone is working on their equipment. Field stripping their rifle and cleaning it, sharpening their bayonet and checking other equipment, etc.! They want their equipment to function properly if they have to use it. But there are other soldiers who have to be ordered to do these chores and you have to stand over them to see they do it. They are still in the fighting organization but are not as dependable. You might have to watch them closely when it comes time to fight. It is like this in every army in the world. Some are more dependable than others. Some are not dependable at all.

As I observe Christendom I see it is the same in the army of the Lord. It shouldn't be so. That is the truth. If I see it, you can be sure that the Lord does too. To me the promises of God are the warfare tools given by God to the Saints to bring Heaven down to earth and into their circumstances. They are personal tools that we have to wrestle control of our circumstances and those of our family away from Satan back into our hands, the hands of the sons and daughters of the Living God where control belongs.

Throughout the Bible God tells us what He hates. He wants us to hate the same things He does. Here are just a few scriptures showing that our God hates some things. (Exodus 18:21; 20:5; Deuteronomy 12:31; 16:22; 30:7; Psalm 45:7; Ezekiel 35:6; Amos 5:15; 6:8; Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:13; Hebrews 1:9;)

If we want the anointing of God to flow we need to hate the things He hates. Hate is a strong emotion. A warrior needs to have it at times to do the things he is commanded to do. It is that way with the God we serve for He says:

“Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”

Psalm 45:7

“Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.”

Amos 5:15

“All their wickedness is in Gilgal: for there I hated them: for the wickedness of their doings I will drive them out of mine house, I will love them no more: all their princes are revolters.” Hosea 9:15

Becoming a mature Christian is all about having the right attitude concerning war.

2 Samuel 22:35 “He teacheth my hands to war; so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms.”(to understand this verse read the verse that follows which I won't quote here) God says this again through His servant, David in Psalm 18:34 and again in Psalm 144:1. Three times God tells us His will towards war.

Has he changed his will in the New Covenant? No! In Matthew 11:12 it is said: *“And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.”*

Read Matthew 11:13-24 and you will see Jesus was not speaking as a lamb here, but as a soon coming judge.

If our fellowship is not preaching about the soon coming judge we may want to investigate this message, as it makes a lot of difference in our daily spiritual preparations and alertness to the things of God concerning warfare.

an attitude of war

True Christianity is not about present comforts so much as about engagement in war to take back what has been stolen or to keep what is about to be stolen. Calling one's self a Christian and walking out this lifestyle as a disciple takes a different attitude than many have. “What ever will be will be,” a passive attitude is more common. Attitudes have present and eternal consequences.

We need to have an attitude of war when attacked with sickness.

We need to have an attitude of war when our family is attacked.

We need to have an attitude of war when our income is in jeopardy.

We need to have an attitude of war when we are in bondage or see those we love in this condition.

God sits on his throne having given us the victory.

We need to walk it out. This means a fight is necessary. Satan does not give up easily ground he has captured.

He too has soldiers willing to defend his Kingdom of Darkness in this present world.

One tough Marine Sergeant Major had this to say about war: “When soldiers are no longer willing to fight they will be overcome by those who are willing.”

18

live clean before God

As we start to bring this study to a close a warning is in order. Books have been written examining the lives of great men of faith who were overcome by temptation and fell, destroying their work and causing their families great heartache.

When God allows one to come up higher in the arena of supernatural achievement in the faith will we in the end be found trustworthy? We will meet a new level of temptation, resistance and warfare. If it is going to result in a disgraceful fall, why would a wise person even want to go up higher? He wouldn't. We need to seek humility not fame. Only humility will keep us safe.

With a great level of anointing comes great responsibility! We can expect great temptation! Be careful what you ask of God.

Humility is an absolute must for sustained leadership success. Only a victorious battle over self will obtain this remarkable attribute and be able to hang on to it. God is very clear. If you won't humble yourself, He will humble you. This is the great battle, the battle against self, those chosen by God for greater works must fight. It may not be evident to those watching the rise of a leader who walks in an ever increasing anointing his quiet, continuing battle against self. The opposite of humility is pride. God is very clear about pride. *"it comes before a fall."*

In the book of James we see that the last battle fought is the inner one we have to fight to gain control over our own tongue: Leaders do well to read the book of James frequently, especially chapter three which deals with the bridling of one's own tongue. The tongue loves not only to tear others down, but to build up self.

a powerful daily tool

It is important to cleanse yourself immediately following individual and group ministry. What follows is a very valuable prayer used in the Yakima Healing Rooms, a part of the healing movement started by John G. Lake in the early 20th Century.

a cleansing prayer

Dear Lord, I thank you for granting me the privilege of ministering into _____'s life. I now want to release both _____ and the responsibility for his/her healing to you. Thank you LORD, for your love for _____ which is far greater than mine could ever be. Where I have become connected to _____ in any way that is outside of our will, I ask you to forgive me and to now unbind the cords drawn between us and cause us to be connected to you in those areas instead. Father, please cut me free, by the sword of your Spirit, from any transference, spiritual, emotional, mental or physical that took place during our time together and nail it to the cross of Christ. Wash me LORD, and restore me to your original design, and renew me where my energies have been depleted through ministry. Seal that which has been accomplished in _____'s life today, and protect it from enemy forces. I give all of the honor, the glory, and the praise to you. Thank you LORD, Amen

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the philadelphia church

I have been hard on the system that calls itself the church but picks and chooses the scripture verses it chooses to teach soft peddling the gospel. Look at the whole of scripture and you see God is hard on his people and their shepherds. In the long run he is even harder on his enemies. If I didn't speak the truth concerning the system called church and its many hirelings in this book you could rightfully accuse me of being a false teacher. We are in the Laodician age of the church. This last church is a sign we are at the close of the age and the Second Coming is at hand.

I am indebted too hard working, dedicated, truth-telling pastor-teachers, evangelists, prophets, and apostles whose ministry has impacted my life. Many leaders live and exhort others to live up to the stiff requirements required of those in leadership. Many who are full time for the Lord entered their vocation in their youth with an idealistic zeal, and have grown up spiritually in the process. Overcoming many personal challenging they did not expect, they experienced shock and disappointment from fellow church-members and family members, they have endured and matured while serving to the best of their ability.

Many do battle the religious spirits that constantly attempt to take control of the body of Christ. They refuse to cave in to their demands made through influential tares in the church. I thank all the dedicated men and women of God who have in one way or another influenced my walk in Christ.

Many have been disillusioned by someone in leadership. Like most other leaders, elders too get caught up in the attempt to balance the needs of the many looking for help and support with their own family's needs. Like the rest of us occasionally they come up short in having enough of what is needed to go around. Hard choices must sometimes be made, bringing hurt to others where legitimate needs are deferred.

You look at the job descriptions put out by denominations searching for pastors to fill vacancies. You quickly see the job is impossible for an ordinary man. Expectations for pastors are unreal; more than anyone person

can live up to. Many do function to the very best of their ability, and don't seem to become jaded in the process.

We all appreciate those who in love take on the trying vocation of eldership. Becoming an elder is one of the most demanding jobs on the planet. It requires one's family to make sacrifices for the good of others which are very difficult.

The key ingredient in a Philadelphia Church is the inner motivation of its people. Motivation is everything when it comes to judging a people. Their leadership is a reflection of the people. Who is the pastor trying to please? Self? Wife? Child? Parent? Brothers and sisters in the Lord? Elders? Or, the LORD!

A believer's number one priority in life must be God alone. A church where the majority have lost their first love is soon taken over by the plans, policies and programs mentality of the corporate world that has invaded the religious system called Christendom. Such a system soon goes off in many directions that take it far off track. It soon ends up trying to please the anti-Christ controlled culture beyond its front doors. Pleasing God alone must be a believer's first focus. Wherever such believers band together there you will find the spirit of the Philadelphia church.

Ask a local church in America which of the seven type churches described in the book of Revelation they are. Many would look at you with a puzzled expression. A corporate mentality is increasingly taking over more and more of Christendom in America. Many fellowships now march under the Lordship of the 501C(3) Tax status regulations of government that has largely destroyed the ability of churches to act independently of government.

We are called by our Lord to be a fellowship of priests and kings under the control of the Holy Spirit and no other governmental authority.

Where real freedom in the Holy Ghost reigns you will find elders of unusual humility. This fellowship is the only one of the seven types of churches found in Christendom that does not receive criticism from the Lord Jesus. Such a group is the only one that Jesus makes a crucial promise to.

a critical promise

“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” (Revelation 3:10)

In the very next verse (v. 11) He issues a warning to hold on, that this promise is not stolen from you. Satan hates the Philadelphia Church.

Praise God! There are still good churches in America. The elders in such churches have a fighting spirit. It takes a fighting spirit to win the battles that must be fought to remain such a church.

In war, a situation not properly dealt with will dramatically change the nature of the church body over time. If your church is such a church, do have a spirit of thanksgiving for such a blessing. Daily pray for those in leadership that it will remain so.

you need to know

What distinguishes the Philadelphia Church from all the others? You need to study out chapters two and three of the book of Revelation to find the answers. You need to get a hold on some of the things Jesus Christ says he hates that aren't preached on by very many pastors anymore. You need discernment to understand some of the words like Nicolaitan, Balaam, and Jezebel and what they have in common. I have been in the church all my life. It is rare to hear a pastor devote any time to the book of Revelation. What Jesus says in chapters two and three are so important. Why are these chapters not studied from the pulpit?

The absence of the seven things Jesus hates are what is right with the church Jesus loves, and what are wrong with the other six church types.

The order of the listing of these churches in Revelation is important. While all seven type churches exist some where in the world today, the order most agree indicates the organizational progression of Christendom through the last two thousand years and what defines where we are in these last days. If this is true we see that how the Lord characterizes the Laodicean Church, nails much of the American church, what it looks like in this 21st Century.

“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot, So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see, As

many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

Revelation 3:14-20

I am not in this chapter going to go into the seven things that Jesus Christ hates, previously listed. But it is highly worthwhile for a believer to find out, so he will avoid doing what the Chief Shepherd says he hates.

The spirit of the Philadelphia Church is a major blessing in every community fortunate enough to have one. It is my personal experience that it is an increasingly rare experience to be a part of such a church as its major characteristic is holiness. As America becomes ever more secular and controlled by the anti-Christ spirit it becomes ever more unholy.

In a Philadelphia type church I believe the individual household leaders that collectively make up that body are the secret strength of such a church. As the household leaders go, so goes the church which is why wise elders preach sermons on Sundays to the household leaders coming to hear the meat of the Word and leave concern for seekers to those that invited them to come to hear the gospel preached. The message of the elders must be oriented towards maturing the priesthood of the believers and their households through the teaching of all the Bible; not just parts that all the world can agree about.

Bless you pastors who have taken on a most challenging and difficult job. Your rewards for faithfulness are truly in the next life.