Overcoming the Accuser

by

Rick Joyner



COMBATING SPIRITUAL STRONGHOLDS SERIES

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Part I

The Gates of Hell and the Doors of Heaven

Understanding Spiritual Gates

The gates of hell are the entrances through which evil gains access to this world. Likewise, the doors of heaven are the openings through which divine grace and truth flow to the world. We are now entering the period when the gates of hell and the doors of heaven will be fully opened. It is imperative that we be able to recognize each, and use the authority given to us to close the gates of hell while opening the doors of heaven.

Spiritual Boundaries

These spiritual "gates" and "doors" are often localities, especially cities where

people are concentrated in greater numbers. The conflict between the kingdom of God and this present evil age is not over territory, but over people. When the Lord moves to impact a nation, He is not after their land, but after their hearts. He sees nations more in the light of cultures, customs, and behavior rather than borders. In fact, spiritual borders are often different from natural borders—the spiritual influence of a city may reach far beyond its designated boundaries. We must learn to distinguish spiritual borders by the boundaries of influence.

A striking example of this is Cologne, Germany, which has been one of the most influential cities in world history, yet its influence has remained remarkably hidden and obscure. Some of the most remarkable and deadly theologies and philosophies the world has ever known originated in Cologne. It is possible that more bloodshed has resulted from the influence of this city than any other empire or superpower in world history.

None of these diabolical theologies or philosophies which originated from Cologne have yet been overcome. They continue to sprout and cause rivers of death to flow in almost every new generation. We will begin to address some of these doctrines of demons by exposing their source.

However, this is only the first step in a long and difficult march to defeat and close these gates. Just winning battles against this darkness is not enough.

Like Joshua at Ai, we must learn to hold out our spear until the enemy is utterly destroyed (see Joshua 8:26).

If we fail to complete this job, our children will be confronted by the same deadly enemy.

A Spiritual History of the Crusades

The Province of Cologne was founded at the very time of the birth of Christ. Emperor Augustus'

niece (Agrippina senior), who was said to be a descendant of Aphrodite, the goddess of love, married Germanicus, the conqueror of Gaul in 15 A.D. in Cologne. In 16 A.D. she gave birth to a daughter, Agrippina Jr. in the Oppidum-Obiorum in Cologne, a Roman and Germanic cultcenter which was situated where the Cathedral of Cologne now stands. Agrippina Jr. became the mother of the Roman emperor Nero, one of the most cruel and demented of the Roman

emperors. It was under Nero that Christians were first fed to the lions in the Circus Maximus. It was also Nero who condemned both Peter and Paul to execution in Rome.

Thus it was that the first great Roman persecution against the church had its roots in Cologne. Due to the fact that Nero's mother and the subsequent Emperor Caligula both came from Cologne, in 69 A.D. the city became the capital of the Western Roman Empire, which it remained for two centuries. Provinces governed from Cologne included France, Spain, Germany, and Britain. During that time Cologne gained considerable influence and became the host of every conceivable god and temple.

The Sin of Achan

In the year 313, Emperor Constantine, who made Christianity the state religion of Rome, sent a bishop called Maternus to Cologne, Trier, and Tongern to destroy their idols and temples. However, not all of these idols were destroyed. Some were actually used as building materials for the first Christian churches.

This could be compared to the sin of Achan, who tried to preserve some of the treasure of Jericho in spite of the decree to destroy it all. This resulted in the subsequent defeat of Israel before the city of Ai.

This also seemingly became a prophetic parallel of what was to come in Cologne. Though the structures were meant to be Christian, some of the most anti-Christian evils the world would ever experience would arise from this region.

There are many in the church who believe they can mix human and even cultic philosophies such as Masonry, into the fabric of the church or their own spiritual lives without consequence. This is a tragic delusion. The Lord will not share His temple with idols. Judgment may not always come immediately as it did at Ai; sometimes the Lord will even wait for a generation or two as He did with some of the kings of Israel. But such presumption will always result in defeat, captivity, or destruction.

The roots of many destructive heresies in the church today began many years ago in the heart of one who compromised like Achan. As we move to possess our promised land, we will learn quickly that every "Achan" must be removed from the camp or the whole camp will be defeated. This is why Paul, in his first

letter to the Corinthians had them remove the sinner from their midst. Every time spiritual leaders fail to take the proper action against sin in the camp, they allow the seeds to be sown for future defeat, division, and destruction. However, we are in the age of grace. This does not mean we tolerate the sin, but that we are willing to accept the *repentant* sinner back into our camp, just as Paul exhorted the church to do in his second letter to the Corinthians.

The Seed of the Crusades

In 632, the Muslims began making advances into Europe and the Middle East. In 638, Khalif Omar conquered Jerusalem, which had been held by the Christian Byzantine Empire (which later developed into the Orthodox Church). Its capital was Constantinople, now the modern city of Istanbul. It was believed that this empire would never fall because it was Christian. Nevertheless, the Turks, led by Alp Arslam, destroyed the Byzantine army in Mantzikert on Friday, August 19, 1071 and took captive the Christian emperor of Byzantine, Romanos Diogenes.

The Muslims then advanced deeper into European territory, targeting France, Spain, and the Balkans. As their progress began to threaten all of Europe, a letter from the Christian bishop of Jerusalem convinced the pope to devise a strategy for retaking the ancient city. This would also relieve the pressure on Europe, requiring the Muslims to return to defend their own lands. The pope mobilized sovereigns and knights convincing them of the necessity of his plans. Peasants, the homeless, and even prostitutes, wanting to be free from the bondage of serfdom, were also recruited. The pope then claimed to possess a letter from heaven which appointed him to summon the European nations to liberate the Holy Sepulcher.

In March 1096, Peter of Amiens (also called "Peter the Hermit") left on his donkey and arrived in Trier just before Easter. On Easter Sunday, he marched into Cologne with about 10,000 men. He then sent out preachers to proclaim the gospel of the crusades and to raise further support in the Rhineland area. Consequently, his army grew to a total of 30,000 men. Peter was thus given the credit for starting the Crusades that would change the known world, leaving some of the deepest cultural wounds between Christians and Muslims, which still exist to this day. He also began persecution against the Jews with doctrines that would lead to some of the most diabolical atrocities in history.

The Seed of the Holocaust

Needing more money for their venture, the Crusaders determined to force the Jews to financially support their mission, as Jews were the primary bankers of that time. Many of the knights financed their participation in the crusades by mortgaging their estates to the banks. Then the Crusaders later decided that they did not want to pay the banks back; they declared it a divine mandate to turn against the Jews because "they killed Jesus on the cross."

Gottfried of Bouillon was the sovereign of Lower-Lothringen, which also included the Ardennes (present-day Holland) and the Rhine Provinces of Cologne. He issued a decree that all the remaining Jews living in Lower-Lothringen should be killed in order to atone for Christ's death. As a result, the Jews in Cologne and Mainz gave Gottfried five hundred silver coins in order to buy their protection, which was used to pay for and arm his forces. This method of raising financial support quickly became popular throughout Europe. In this way the Jews found themselves not only loaning money to the Crusaders through their banks, but paying ransom money to bishops and knights as well.

Even after they had paid for protection, Rhineland Count Emmerich began killing the Jews in the region of Cologne. Peter's army then attacked the Jews in Prague while Gottschalk, Peter's former pupil, massacred them in Regensburg. Thus began almost nine hundred years that the Jewish people would be subject to continuous threats of annihilation. In one of the greatest perversions of the Savior's message, the people through whom the Prince of Peace came were threatened with extinction by the very ones who claimed to be His ambassadors.

During the following centuries, Jews were periodically assaulted and robbed. At times whole ghettos were massacred, sparing only those who would submit themselves to baptism. There were many Christians who took stands against this tragic intolerance, such as Bernard of Clairveaux, who tried earnestly to protect Jews from the bigotry and fanatical violence of the church, though with little success.

These attacks on Jews were not exclusive to the Roman church. With the emergence of the Protestant church in the 1500s, theologies were promulgated within that branch of Christendom which continued this persecution, ultimately leading to some of the worst atrocities of all in Nazi Germany. The remarkable Jews have survived each succeeding and seemingly more vicious assault, but the wounds this people have received from Christians over the centuries go very deep. This has caused them to equate Christianity more with the destruction of

their souls than with salvation.

Many Jews have tried magnanimously to keep alive the memory that with each attack there were always some Christians of a different spirit who came to their aid. Understandably, this has created a powerful ambivalence in the Jewish community toward the church. Only the most extraordinary love and grace will be able to heal this, which is precisely what the church must demonstrate in these last days.

The Crusades and Cologne

At the end of April 1096, Peter and his army marched from Cologne. They arrived in Constantinople on August 1. Since an army of that size (which was also escorted by women and children) had to be fed and provided for, and because there was very little discipline, they left a wide trail of pillage and destruction. Soon they became odious even to the Christian cities they were supposedly marching to protect.

Most in this first crusade had little or no military experience, and so it was recommended that they wait in Constantinople for the better trained army of knights that was being prepared in Europe. However, because of the rising strife between the Crusaders and the local population, it was decided that the army should march from Constantinople as soon as possible. They left on October 21, and were quickly defeated by the Turks at Civitot. The entire army of 30,000, including women and children were killed.

Only Peter and a few knights survived the massacre and escaped back to Constantinople.

Gottfried of Bouillon departed from Lower-Lothringen in 1096 at about the same time that Peter of Amiens was arriving in Constantinople. After marching for weeks along the Rhine and the Danube, he finally reached Constantinople at Christmas. By the most conservative estimates, his army numbered no less than 600,000. Peter, who had survived the battle against the Turks, joined him and took the lead of the new "Farmer's Army." At the end of April 1097, the Crusaders set off from Pelecanum near Constantinople. They crossed the Bosporus in October and besieged Antioch, which fell eight months later on June 3.

Defeat in Victory

On January 13, 1099, the army headed for Jerusalem and arrived at the city on June 7. At midday on Friday, July 15 the Holy City fell. It is a biblical truth that many of God's victories look like defeats to the natural man, the cross being the greatest example of this. When Jerusalem fell to the Christians, what may have appeared in the natural a great victory for the church would live in infamy as one of her greatest defeats.

The Muslim mayor had been relatively tolerant with all of his citizens, including the Christians and Jews. He allowed them to have their own places of worship, and freedom to come and go as they pleased. He even allowed the Christians in Jerusalem to go over to the side of the Crusaders during the siege. When it was obvious that the Christians would prevail, the mayor and his subjects likewise expected a high degree of chivalry from their conquerors. They were terribly mistaken.

Many had gathered under a Christian banner where they had been promised amnesty. The Crusaders, having them surrounded, slaughtered them all. The Jews of the city fled into the synagogue.

Trapped inside, the Crusaders then torched the building, killing all of its inhabitants in a gruesome spectacle. This was a deliberate strategy to eradicate all non-Christians so that Jerusalem could become a Christian city. The triumphant Crusaders, many completely covered in the blood of their victims, then gathered at the Holy Sepulcher, and weeping with joy they offered thanksgiving for their great "victory."

More than 50,000 Saracens alone were killed in this terrible massacre.

Gottfried of Bouillon, the first Christian sovereign and primary instigator of the massacre, died one year later on July 18, 1100. King Balduin I became his successor. The Kingdom of Jerusalem existed for eighty-seven years until the Empire was conquered by the Muslim King Saladin. Crusades repeatedly marched for the next two hundred years, but they never managed to retake Jerusalem.

Many of the leaders of the church during this time were appalled at the atrocities of the Crusaders.

Some even demanded that those responsible for them should be excommunicated. There were many noble and courageous souls who

participated in the Crusades. Some were obviously motivated by a sincere desire to recover the honor of the name of the Lord in Jerusalem. Even so, regardless of how noble our motives may be, whenever we use methods that are contrary to the fruit of the Holy Spirit, evil will be the result.

From beginning to their end, the Crusades released some of the most evil forces, philosophies, and theologies into the world. Their fruit has been that countless millions have been separated from the gospel by the huge barriers which these events erected between peoples. The evil strongholds empowered by these misguided tragedies must be addressed for the gospel to be freely released in some of the most strategic regions of the world.

The Spiritual History of Communism On July 23, 1164, Archbishop Reinald of Dassel brought what were supposedly the bones of the three wise men to Cologne. Emperor Friedrichs Barbarossa had given them to the city as a reward for their archbishop's loyalty. In 1181, the golden coffin made to contain them was completed (which can still be seen in Cologne today). Consequently, many pilgrims from all over the Western World came to the city to venerate the golden shrine and the bones. As the crowds of pilgrims became more numerous, a larger cathedral became necessary. On August 15, 1248, the foundation of the Cologne cathedral was laid as a place of honor for the bones of the three wise men.

The building of this great cathedral continued for more than three hundred years until it was abruptly stopped. In a remarkable legend recorded in the city's history, it is said that the master builder had to make a pact with the devil to complete the project. The pact stated that an aqueduct had to be built from the city of Trier to Cologne before he would allow the cathedral to be finished. This was so that water could flow from Satan's throne just as it did from the throne of God.

This would be a river of death that would ultimately eclipse all of the previous rivers of death that had originated from Cologne, resulting in an estimated 100,000,000 killed in the twentieth century alone.

Amazingly, work on the cathedral was stopped from 1560 until 1842. In 1818, Karl Marx, the founder of socialism and the world's most powerful atheistic system, was born in Trier. In 1842, he moved from Trier to Cologne, so work on the cathedral began again. It was finally completed in 1880. This was no coincidence—the pact with the devil had been honored.

From 1842 to 1843, Karl Marx was the chief editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung* newspaper, published in Cologne. In 1848, he became the publisher of the same paper. It was from this position that he printed *The Communist Manifesto.* On May 6, 1849, his communist broadsheets were thrown into the crowd assembled in the Gurzenich Hall in Cologne. This marked the birth of the communist movement led by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

Other powerful leaders of this new movement which began in Cologne included: Ferdinand Lassaile, Andreas Gottschalk, and Matthilde Franziska Anneke.

Shutting the Gates of Hell

As the birthplace of the mother of the first Roman persecutor of the church, the Crusades, the Christian persecution of the Jews, and then communism, Cologne has been the womb of the greatest human tragedies in history. However, the way the Lord shuts the gates of hell is to open a door in heaven. Light is more powerful than darkness.

When shades are opened at night, darkness does not come in, light shines out into the dark. The Lord's strategy for Cologne is to open a window from heaven there, to make it a testimony of His power of redemption. The Lord will raise up new armies of Crusaders from Cologne, and Germany with weapons that are not carnal but spiritual. They will bring life and healing to all of the places where they once brought death and destruction. The Lord always overcomes evil with good.

It is interesting that Robert Blum and Moses Hess also started their careers in Cologne, just as the construction of the cathedral was being completed.

They are considered by many to be the modern founders of Zionism. Just as the enemy has been successful in sowing tares in the Lord's wheat fields, the Lord often sows wheat in the enemy's fields of tares. This city where the most deadly persecution of the Jews originated is also regarded as the birthplace of the movement that resulted in the establishment of the modern state of Israel.

Moses Hess actually followed Karl Marx as an editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung* newspaper in Cologne, and he first published a pamphlet called *Rome and Jerusalem—the Final Question of Nationality,* in the 1860s. Later Dr. Bodenheimer of Cologne, who was one of the three major founders of Zionism, wrote his poem, *Vision,* in 1891, which 16

The Gates of Hell and the Doors of Heaven prophetically described the future establishment of Israel. He began to correspond with Dr. Theodore Herzl in 1896, the year Herzl wrote his landmark book *The Jewish State.* Cologne then became the home of the global Zionist movement and the Jewish National Foundation, which began to purchase property in Palestine. When Herzl died in 1904, David Wolffsohn of Cologne succeeded him as head of the Zionist movement, keeping its headquarters in Cologne.

It is also interesting to note that after Wolffsohn died and Bodenheimer retired, Weizmann took over the organization and moved its headquarters to London. This followed the work of Karl Marx, who, having been expelled by the Prussian government, also moved his headquarters to London. It was nearly five centuries earlier that William Tyndale, the famous English reformer, was expelled from London and went to Cologne. It was Tyndale who first translated the Scriptures into common language, and is called "The Morningstar of the Reformation." He actually had his first Bibles printed in Cologne.

This is an official German banknote that was circulated in 1922.

In the top view, we see the back of the note depicting the chief engineer making a covenant with the devil to finish the cathedral.

The inscription above it reads, "Emergency-money of the city of Cologne," and underneath, "The dome (cathedral) master-builder and the devil."

The writing on the front of the note is translated, "City of Cologne 1922," "Voucher in the value of fifty pennies," and in fine print, "This voucher is taken into payment by all city cashiers. It loses its validity by August 15, 1922. The City of Cologne is liable for its redemption."

Part II

When Heaven and Hell Collide

When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Lord will raise up a standard against him (see Isaiah 59:19). Through His church, the Lord is raising up a people who live by the opposite spirit of that manifested through the strongholds of Satan. In the place that seems to have been the very seat of Satan for the last few

centuries, where some of the most terrible sins have arisen and abound, grace will abound even more.

Job is one of the great biblical examples of how the Lord uses His people as a witness to principalities and powers. The Lord actually asked Satan if he had considered Job, purposely drawing the enemy's attention to him. He then gave the enemy permission to assault him, with the only stipulation being that he could not take Job's life. Satan has likewise been given almost free access to assault the church, but he cannot destroy it. Ultimately it will come back twice as great as it was at the beginning.

Moses restrained the Lord from destroying Israel because he knew the whole world would say that God could deliver His people from Egypt, but He did not have the power to bring them into the Promised Land.

Satan's accusation against God in regard to the church is that He can redeem us, but He cannot really change us. Just as Job stood the test, the Lord will have a church that testifies to all of creation throughout all eternity, that God not only has the power to redeem and change us, but also to bring us all the way into the Promised Land. Like Job, we may be a mess for a while, but there will be a church that remains faithful through all of her trials. Then, after the church learns to pray even for her accusers and tormentors, she will be given a double portion of what she had before.

Why Look Back?

Many believe that it is wrong to now uncover the terrible mistakes made by the church historically, such as the Crusades. But it is quite clear that the greatest mistake of all has come from trying to forget them. Just as the world shudders at the thought of Germany forgetting her tragic history under the Nazis, knowing that she could then repeat it, the world also shudders at this same terrible folly of the church. There are good reasons why the world is appalled by the thought of the church again asserting political power—our historic use of it has ended in horrible abuses and tragedies.

This does not mean the church cannot use political power for good, but until we recognize our mistakes, *and understand them,* we are doomed to repeat them. The history of the church has basically been the continued repetition of the same mistakes.

Forces are still working powerfully in the church to lay the same stumbling blocks before this generation that caused our forefathers to stumble. However, the Lord is preparing to give us the wisdom to use these stumbling blocks as material for sealing some of the most powerful gates of hell.

We Have Committed the Same Sins

The Crusades are only one example in the history of the church's tragically misguided religious zeal. No Muslim despot or Ayatollah in history has been as ruthless and cruel as some leaders of the church during the Inquisitions. We may protest that they were the works of Roman Catholics, but Protestants were guilty of all the same errors, only to a lesser degree because they had less political power.

As Evangelicals we may point at Catholics and Protestants and declare that we are different, but we too are guilty of the same sins. We can protest that the Catholics have a pope who has usurped Christ's rightful place as the Head of the church, but we have many leaders or "popes" who do the same. We abhor the veneration of Mary the mother of Jesus but we worship our churches. We are shocked by prayers being made to saints, but we are constantly raising up our own leaders as idols to mediate for us.

We can become indignant as we read about the Catholic practice of selling indulgences (decrees sold that supposedly released the holders, or deceased relatives, from the consequences of their sins); and we should be because this is one of the greatest affronts to the cross by which alone the grace of God was purchased for man. Even so, for almost a decade one could hardly turn on an evangelical television or radio program without hearing promises of blessings if we would just give to their ministry, which is the same diabolical attempt to sell the grace of God.

We are appalled as we study the Crusades, which were claimed to be expeditions for the glory of God and the name of Christ. It is true that they manifested some of the darkest evils of fallen human nature, resulting in far more damnation than salvation.

However, almost every "crusade" the church has initiated since has resulted in far more being turned away from the Lord than turned to Him. The Crusaders claimed to carry their swords for the sake of the cross, the very symbol of

salvation, yet they ruthlessly hacked men, women, and children to death.

We have been given an even greater sword, the Word of God, but we often use it also to wound and destroy the ones we claim to want to save and heal.

The Death Cycle Must Be Broken

It has proven to be a truth that "those who do not know history are doomed to repeat it." The history of the church is one of the greatest proofs of this. The wars that the previous spiritual generations waged against subsequent movements continue unabated because of theologies that were released into the church centuries ago through the gates of hell. It is now time for those gates to be shut. To do this we must understand them and repent of these sins. We may protest that we have not yet committed such sins, but we ultimately will if we do not address them properly.

It is no accident that the great restoration ministries in Scripture, such as Ezra and Nehemiah, gave so much attention to repenting for "the sins of our fathers." They understood the biblical principle that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children, generation after generation (see Exodus 20:5). This is not for the purpose of punishing the children for what their fathers have done, but every time there is a sin, there is a wound. Contrary to popular belief, wounds do not heal themselves with time; they become infected unless they are properly dressed and closed. The way that they are dressed and closed is through repentance, which releases the power of the cross.

The Scriptures declare that there are sins that will defile the land, not just those who commit them.

Procedures were given in the Law of Moses for cleansing the land from such sins. This is why we see in II Samuel 21 that a famine came on the land during the reign of David. When he inquired of the Lord as to why the famine had come, the Lord answered,

"...It is for Saul and his bloody house, because he put the Gibeonites to death" (II Samuel 21:1).

To remove the curse, David had to go to the Gibeonites to make restitution for the sins of Saul. Even though David had nothing to do with these sins, he had to make restitution for the land. The restitution was to give the Gibeonites Saul's

remaining sons so that they could hang them on trees. This was because under the Law, restitution was "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth."

We are no longer under the Law, but under grace. The cross has made restitution for all the sins of this world, including all the tragic sins the church has committed. However, sins still defile much of the land, and curses remain that release and give authority to evil principalities and powers to take dominion. Why? Because the cross has not yet been applied to them. Jesus paid the price for the sins of the whole world, but the whole world has not been saved because it has not yet embraced the cross.

The Ministry of Reconciliation

It is our commission as priests and ministers of reconciliation to carry the power of the cross to this world. Because we are now in the age of grace, the procedures of the Law will no longer cleanse the land

—God's grace must be applied. We do not appeal to the Law, but to the cross. Even so, if there is to be reconciliation, the cross must be applied to every wound caused by sin, including deep historic, cultural wounds. Then the power of the gospel will be released.

How is the cross applied? Through the humility of repentance. Grace has been popularly defined as "undeserved favor." That is not the complete definition, but it is accurate enough for our present focus. As soon as we begin to feel that we deserve the favor of God we have made a departure from the path of life. How do we attain God's grace?

"...God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6).

Simple humility can release the grace of God to our land and us. It is a terrible pride for us to say that we are different from our forefathers. We must have the grace of humility to acknowledge that we have all sinned and come short of His grace. That simple humility can release the grace.

True Humility

The most basic quality of true humility is the knowledge of our dependence on God. Only true humility will keep us in the grace of God, which will give us the

light to see all of the stumbling blocks, traps, and diversions that continually try to assault us.

Humility can also open our eyes to "the sins of our fathers," of which we must repent in order to bring restoration.

David was not allowed to build a permanent house for the Lord because he was a man who had shed blood. The permanent house that Solomon constructed was to be a representation of the permanent kingdom that would be established by Jesus, who did not come to shed blood, but rather to give His own blood for our salvation. When Solomon's temple was dedicated, the Lord gave a promise that transcended the age of the Law and pointed to the kingdom of our Lord Jesus: **If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people,**

and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land (II Chronicles 7:13-14).

No longer would the healing of the land require the restitution required by the Law, but the Lord's people can humble themselves, pray, seek the Lord, turn from their own wicked ways, and the Lord will hear, forgive the sin, and *heal the land.*

We can try to beat up principalities in order to bring revival, but sometimes there are curses on the land that give the powers of darkness the authority to be there, and there will be no revival until these sins are repented of by the Lord's people. When there is a curse on the land, the church has authority, through humility and repentance, to bring healing to the land.

This is why the whole of creation is groaning, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.

We Are Guilty

It is easy when we study church history to judge and criticize all of our church fathers, whether they are Catholics, Protestants, Evangelicals, or otherwise.

We can even find cause to criticize the most recent spiritual movements.

However, this criticism only ensures that we, too, will fall short. There is a difference between criticism and the righteous judgment that we must use to remove sin from the camp.

Even the most terrible evil resident in the "man of sin" is the sin of man that is in all of us. We all desire the worship of ourselves—influence, authority, and the chief seat of honor. If we no longer have these evil motives, it is only because the grace of God has delivered us. If we begin to think we no longer have these evil desires because we ourselves are good, we have at that point departed from grace, and they will come back like a flood.

One of the most tragic mistakes we can make is to look at the sins of our forefathers and think that we are better than they were. We must not consider the sins of the historic church or the contemporary church as *their* problems, but as *our* problems. If we are ever going to receive deliverance from the sins that are passed from generation to generation, it will come when we humble ourselves, and identify with the tragic evils that we, the church, have committed. We must repent and seek the Lord for grace from these tragic, historic sins of the church.

The whole world was wounded and cursed by the fall of Adam, who is the forefather of us all. The Lord Jesus, even though He was completely innocent, identified with the whole sin of man, taking it upon Himself so that He could make restitution. How much more should we be able to identify with the sins of the world, humbling ourselves and repenting for the sins of mankind, interceding to release the forgiveness that Jesus purchased for the whole world?

What we release in the heavens this way will be released upon the earth.

It is in this spirit that is not condemning but rather seeks to bring restoration and reconciliation, that we will continue to examine some of the gates through which hell has gained access or influence into the church. As the Lord Jesus warned: **Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it.**

For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

You will know them by their fruits.

Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they?

Even so, every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit.

A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.

Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

So then, you will know them by their fruits (Matthew 7:13-20).

Can good and evil come out of the same tree?

Yes! They may both come from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. However, good *fruit* and bad *fruit* cannot come from the same tree. A foundation for some of the greatest errors the church has ever fallen into is the failure to understand that the "good" from the Tree of Knowledge is just as deadly as the "evil" that comes from the same tree.

The knowledge of good and evil has the same root, and its fruit will result in death regardless of whether it comes in a "good" form or an "evil" form. Human "goodness" is as deadly a poison as any human evil.

Once we understand that the *good* from the Tree of Knowledge is just as deadly as the *evil*, we also begin to recognize that it is *far more deceptive*, and therefore has been far more successful in spreading death. One of the ultimate issues facing every Christian is how to discern between what is *good* and what is God. Only that which originates with God will give life.

Because this difference between the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and the Tree of Life is covered in depth in my book ***There Were Two Trees in the Garden,*** I will not belabor this point any further here. However, we must understand this as the reason behind the Lord's continued discourse: **Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.**

Many will say to Me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your

name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness" (Matthew 7:21-23).

This warning highlights several startling facts.

First, we can continually call Jesus "Lord" yet not enter His kingdom. Second, we can do many great works using His name and still not enter, because we are in fact practicing lawlessness.

This corroborates the Lord's warning in Matthew 24:5: **"For many will come in My name, saying, 'I [Jesus] am the Christ,' and will mislead many."**

This text has often been quoted as saying that many would come claiming to be the Christ, and mislead many, but that is not what it says. He is literally saying that many will come in "His name," saying that *He (Jesus) is the Christ*, and they will be the deceivers who mislead many. History has adequately verified this, as many "Christian leaders" have arisen, claiming to come in the name of Jesus and declaring Him to be the Christ, misleading multitudes.

How could the church, which was God's planting, bring forth such evil and such good fruit in history?

First, the church in this world is not just a single plant. The apostle Paul called the church "God's field" (see I Corinthians 3:9). In this field many theologies have been planted—some for good and some for evil, some for life and some that have brought forth death. The Lord Himself warned that every time He planted wheat in a field the enemy would come along and plant tares in the same field.

One of our tragic mistakes is that we have failed to judge the fruit of many of the theologies and doctrines that have been sown in the church. It is right that we challenge them with the Scriptures, but some doctrines which appear to be biblical can still bring forth evil fruit. The enemy himself used Scripture in this way to tempt Jesus, and the enemy himself will often come tempt us with Scripture as well. That is why the Lord never said we would know His people by how biblical they were, but by their fruit.

The Evil Root

There has been one doctrine that has proven to be particularly devastating throughout history, and was a main source of all the tragic follies discussed in this booklet. It is still one of the most popular teachings, or emphases, in the church today—the delusion that we can accomplish the purposes of God by might and power. However, as the prophet solemnly warned, it is; **'"not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit' says the LORD of hosts"**

(Zechariah 4:6).

The Lord is called by many titles in Scripture, and each one is used strategically. It is no accident that He calls Himself the **"LORD of hosts,"** or the **"LORD of armies"** in this text. His army does not use military might or political power, but that which is infinitely more powerful—the Spirit of truth.

The truth, spoken under the anointing, is more powerful than all the weapons and bombs this world can muster. Why is it that we, who have been entrusted with the most powerful weapons of all, continually stoop to using those which are so inferior? As the apostle warned:

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete (II Corinthians 10:3-6).

When our obedience is complete, being completely yielded to the Spirit, learning not to war in the flesh but only according to His weapons which are not carnal, we will be ready to **"punish *all* disobedience."**

However, the church is not just called to do something, but to follow the Lamb where He is going.

One of the reasons for the Laodicean spirit that prevails in much of the church today is because she is simply worn out from all the causes and projects that have not born true spiritual fruit. Activism that is not in submission to Him will

ultimately result in an even greater retreat by those who are injured by the extremes—and there will be injury. We need zeal, but for the Lord and His purposes. Anything less is merely "zealotry," which is just another form of humanism or even fanaticism, regardless of how righteous the goals are. It is not just sacrifice, but obedience that counts.

Part III

The Two Mandates

The Lord has given two different mandates to two entirely different forms of government—the civil government and the church. He has given a mandate to civil governments to keep order on this earth. They keep this order with "carnal weapons"—the sword.

That is why Paul wrote:

Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.

For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same;

***for it is a minister of God* to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not *bear the sword* for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil.**

Wherefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

For because of this you also pay taxes, *for rulers are servants of God*

(Romans 13:1-6).

This exhortation was written during the reign of the same Roman Emperor Nero that we discussed earlier. He was one of the most wicked men ever to hold a scepter, and the initiator of one of the bloodiest persecutions ever raised against the church.

Nero eventually took Paul's life! This was written after the apostle had spent many years being persecuted at the hands of civil governments.

All authority in both heaven and earth have been given to Christ, but He has not yet *directly* taken His authority over the earth, nor given it to us. This is because He has not yet manifestly set up His kingdom on the earth. However, He has *indirectly* taken His authority over the earth because there is no earthly ruler, or spiritual principality, that gains dominion without His approval—even the most wicked.

A Higher Power

The church has also been given authority from God. The power entrusted to the church is *much greater* than that entrusted to civil authorities. Civil authority is temporary—ours is eternal. They can change laws, but we can change men.

Margaret Thatcher, the former Prime Minister of Great Britain, once observed, "The veneer of civilization is very thin." She made this remark after watching men behave like animals when the power went out in New York City. When the lights and alarms go off, and the police are not immediately present, the true nature of men is quickly revealed.

This "thin veneer" is the realm of civil authority. We need the lights, the alarms, and the police, and we should thank God for the civil authorities that provide them, limited as they are.

In contrast, true spiritual authority is as limitless as eternity. Spiritual authority is not found in the streetlights that keep men in check—it is the light in men's hearts that compel them to do right even when the lights go off and the police are not around. It is this light that keeps young girls pure, or after they have made a mistake, shows them such love and respect for life that they would not even consider an abortion.

King David is one of the great biblical examples of one who walked in true spiritual authority. He is also one of the great types of Christ, who will one day

exercise both spiritual and civil authority over the earth, along with His church. Even when David was unjustly persecuted by the civil authority of his nation, after he had already been anointed to take Saul's place, David would not lift his own hand "against the Lord's anointed." His heart was smitten for cutting off the edge of Saul's robe.

It was this great respect for every authority that God had established which enabled David to build a house and a throne that would last forever—as Jesus Himself is "seated upon the throne of David." One who walks in true spiritual authority would never take a position by his own hand, but will patiently wait for the Spirit to make the way, even if it is a position in the realm of civil authority. If we aspire to sit with Jesus on His throne, it can only be accomplished this way.

The Lord is presently allowing His church, which is called to rule with Him, to be subject to all of the testings that David went through to prepare him for the throne. The temptation of Jesus by Satan in the wilderness was basically an attempt to pressure Him into taking His authority over the world prematurely, enabling Him to avoid the cross. This is also Satan's primary temptation for the church. He knows that if he can get us to seize temporal authority before we too, have been through the trials that are meant to prepare us for this rule, we will end up worshiping him by doing his bidding. Thus far he has been very successful with this temptation.

The Stumbling Block

There have been a number of Christians in history who were called to take a position in the realm of civil authority, and they accomplished great things for humanity. William Wilberforce, the Prime Minister of Great Britain who succeeded in abolishing slavery in the British Empire, was one. But even this great accomplishment was still just a superficial victory in the realm of the "thin veneer,"

as exploitation through colonization would continue for centuries, and economic oppression in many forms continues today. Even so, in the realm of human history, this was a huge step in the right direction for mankind. The great evangelists, John Wesley and George Whitfield, had much to with laying the foundation.

Whenever the church has left her true realm of authority to impose her will in

the realm of civil authority, she has fallen to tragic and even diabolical excesses. The key here is that these mistakes have taken place, *whenever she has left her realm of authority to do this.* The church has been called to be the "light of the world," to be a force for good, upholding God's standard of righteousness. The trap she has often fallen into has been to try and accomplish this through the civil authority not within her realm.

The church will never be the light because she excels at the ballot box. When the people came to make Jesus king, He fled to the mountains. If the people make you king, who is going to rule? That the people wanted to make Jesus king seems very noble, but it was actually one of the most presumptuous acts in Scripture. The people thought that they could make God King! He was *born* King! The source of His authority never came from the people, but from the Father above. Likewise, the church's authority also comes from above. Every time she has sought authority from any other source, the consequences have been devastating.

Our Sphere of Authority

Paul explained to the Corinthians that he had been given a sphere of authority that he would not presume to go beyond (see II Corinthians 10:13-14).

Those who understand spiritual authority will be very conscious of the sphere that has been appointed to them, because to go beyond it invites disaster. Just as a policeman from Atlanta has no authority in Mexico City, and would probably get hurt if he tried to use it, we do not have spiritual authority beyond the realm God has given to us.

The sphere of authority given to the civil governments is different than that which is given to the church. Whenever the church has tried to accomplish its means by using the sphere appointed to the civil authorities, or whenever the civil authorities have tried to accomplish their ends by using the church, there have been tragic results. The sphere of authority for civil governments is the realm of law, and the sphere of authority appointed to the church is the realm of the spirit. The boundaries of our sphere of authority can easily be recognized as the "fruit of the Spirit."

As Jesus said, "...If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Matthew 12:28).

If we try to cast out these demons by any other spirit, we can be sure that the kingdom of darkness will come upon us, and we will be left wounded and naked, at best. The Lord Jesus never once tried to use the civil authorities to accomplish the Father's purposes—neither did the apostles or other leaders of the early church. They understood that to do so would have been to come down from the high position that they were given. They let Caesar have that which was his, and gave themselves to the things that were God's.

Prophetic Authority

The church is called to speak prophetically to governments, and it is that prophetic anointing which is a foundation of our mandated influence with governments. Prophetic authority is the moral authority and power of the truth, clearly articulated and established by a righteous life. Neither can we continue to expect the government to do our job. Not only abortion, but also infanticide was a major problem in the first century Roman Empire, but writers of the New Testament did not even mention the issues. Their silence was not because they were ignorant of the problem, and certainly not because they thought such practices were acceptable. They were not going to waste their time flailing at the branches. They chose instead to put their ax to the root of the tree—sin and estrangement from God.

When men are reconciled to God, abortion and every other evil will be dealt with.

Jonathan Edwards, who was used to ignite the first Great Awakening, preached one anointed sermon, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, that accomplished far more for the morality of this country than all the laws that were on the books at that time. All of the morality laws combined could not accomplish what the Great Awakenings did.

Protests and demonstrations can have a place in a democratic society, but the church has a much higher calling. The church's authority is not found in the power to demonstrate, but in demonstrations of power.

Leo Tolstoy, possibly the greatest novelist who ever lived, once said: "Prophecy is like a spark lit in a dry wood. Once it ignites, it will burn and burn until all of the wood, hay, and stubble has been consumed." The history of slavery was given to us as an example. This had been an accepted institution until it was

clearly articulated under the anointing that it was wrong. The truth spread like a fire lit in dry wood. Within just a few years the world was aflame with this truth, and slavery, at least in its most blatant forms, was quickly abolished throughout the earth.

One of the great sparks thrown on the dry wood of slavery was Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* This novel so clearly revealed the evils of slavery that it became impossible for that evil to abide any longer in the civilized world. When Abraham Lincoln met Mrs. Stowe during the middle of the Civil War, he exclaimed, "So you're the little lady that started this great war!" She was.

One of the greatest demonstrations of prophetic power in the church age came through Martin Luther.

Luther was just a monk, but when he nailed his *Ninety-Five Theses* to the door of a tiny church in the obscure little town of Wittenburg, Germany, the whole world changed! Not only did he change the world in his own generation, he set in motion changes that have profoundly impacted every generation since. There has never been an emperor, king, or even a dynasty that has so influenced the world as this one monk.

Martin Luther is a profound testimony that even the most humble man armed with God's truth, refusing to compromise his convictions, is more powerful than armies. The power of Luther's prophetic stand is unequalled since the first century when Paul and Silas caused the most powerful rulers of the most powerful empire to tremble in fear, declaring in dismay, **"These who have turned the world upside down have come here too!" (Acts 17:6 NKJV).**

Mahatma Gandhi was said to have had a genuine conversion experience. However, he refused to be baptized when he saw how the event was being made a spectacle for the self-promotion of the evangelist.

Nevertheless, he clung to many of the teachings of Jesus. He was especially captured by the Lord's admonition to overcome evil with good, and to turn the other cheek when assaulted. He determined to live by this code. By focusing on just this one small part of the Lord's message, Gandhi was able to bring the most powerful empire of his day to its knees, giving birth to a nation. Gandhi refused to accept a political office, even though he could have easily been India's first prime minister. He simply stated that he had found a power greater than any

power that a political office could ever give to him. He was right.

If Gandhi could so change his world by living such a small fraction of the gospel, what kind of power would the church have if we all started to live by the whole gospel? If we really understood the power we have been entrusted with, no pastor of a flock would ever care to stoop so low as to just become a president, much less a senator or congressman, unless it was a yoke placed upon him by the Lord.

The Deadly Trap

One of the greatest traps that is set for one with spiritual authority is the temptation to use their influence in the realm of secular, civil authority. It is possible to use our influence to do good there, but good is the worst enemy of best. This is the same seduction that began in the garden—the appeal to the positive aspects of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. If we eat from that tree, we may be able to do a lot of "good," but in the end we, and the good that we have done will perish.

Some have been called to serve in political positions, but it is symptomatically delusional to label that a "high calling." It is in fact a very low calling as compared to a position of spiritual authority. When we have truly come to see who Jesus is, and who He has called us to be, we will have the constitution of Elijah, who could stand before the king and declare:

"As the Lord, the God of Israel lives, *before Whom I stand"* (I Kings 17:1).

By this, Elijah was saying to Ahab, "I am not standing here before you.

You're just a king, a mere man. I don't live my life before men; I live my life before the living God."

When the church learns to likewise live before God rather than men, she will be entrusted with similar power.

Why should we even want to see a king, or president, or any other man unless we have a divine mandate? We can go directly to the King of the universe *with boldness anytime we want.* Why should we want to waste time trying to get legislation passed through the bizarre chaos of our legislatures? If we have seen the King in His glory, how can we even be impressed with presidents or kings

from this earthly realm?

The Battle of Life

One of the great spiritual battles being waged by the church today is over abortion. The side that wins this conflict will have taken one of the truly important battles of our time, and it is right for the church to be fully engaged in this battle. However, if we "win" in the wrong spirit, the consequences can be a defeat for the cause of the gospel.

If there is a greater demonstration of the depravity of humanity than that revealed through the institution of slavery, it is abortion. Regardless of how many laws are passed legalizing this great evil, the laws of nature have already been passed. Nature itself reveals that abortion is probably the lowest level to which depraved humanity has yet fallen. Even the beasts will instinctively sacrifice their own lives to protect their young, but we have proven willing to sacrifice our children for the most petty reasons of convenience and selfishness. While we bemoan the whales and spotted owls, we massacre our own young, helpless and innocent, by the most cruel, torturous means. This is a tragedy of epic proportions. How the church confronts this great evil can potentially result in one of her greatest victories, or greatest defeats with even more lives being lost for eternity.

Revival is usually God's final attempt to show mercy instead of judgment. The last Great Awakening this country experienced came just before the Civil War. That awakening was given by the Lord as a way to prevent the Civil War. Had that revival continued on track, it would almost certainly have abolished slavery without the worst bloodshed this nation has ever experienced. When the revival was turned from its course by the political zealots of that time, the abolitionists, the fate of the nation was sealed and bloodshed was inevitable.

The abolitionists were some of the most courageous, truth-loving and self-sacrificing people in the country. Most were Christians, and true patriots. However, they were also driven to extremes and blown about by the winds of impatience. There is no question that their goals were noble, but their means were the way of destruction. They did not comprehend the nature of the wisdom from above as described by James:

Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good

behavior his deeds in the *gentleness of wisdom.*

But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.

***And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace* (James 3:13, 17-18).**

The abolitionists had the right goals, but they tried to achieve them by the wrong means. Whenever we do this, we will depart from the wisdom that is from above, and we will then display a nature that is quite the opposite of the Savior's. Zealotry is the wisdom of Judas Iscariot who thought he could force the Lord to take His authority and declare His kingdom. Such political manipulation comes from the spirit of the evil one, regardless of the motives of those who use it. The kingdom of God will not come that way.

One of the ultimate choices now facing the church is to decide whether we want our political goals accomplished or the kingdom of God to come.

John Brown (of the famous "John Brown's Raid") was considered by many, including himself, to be a prophet. There are many with his same spirit moving throughout the church today. They pressure others to act prematurely, and to use carnal weapons to assault spiritual fortresses. They exert this pressure with the argument that so many babies are being lost each day because of abortion. This is a truth that should weigh on us, but their means will not result in any less being aborted, and their ways can ultimately lead to more bloodshed than we can now comprehend.

Whenever spiritual men have tried to establish authority or influence in the civil realm, without being called to such a position, they have almost always become extremists who inevitably damage their own cause. Those who fall into this trap are usually the most zealous for the Lord and His purposes, but zeal without humble submission to the Holy Spirit will become a useful tool of the enemy. If he finds someone he cannot stop, he will then try to push them too far. Unfortunately, this is often very easy with the zealot. As soon as the enemy is able to push people into a realm where they have not been called, beyond the grace that they have been given, he can use them as effective weapons in his hand.

We must stop expecting the government to do our job. The Lord hears prayer,

and He has more power than the President, Congress, and Supreme Court combined! The issue of abortion has the power to divide this country like it has not been divided since the Civil War. Prayer can bring a revival that can prevent this. The revival, if it is not sidetracked by zealots, will have the power to abolish abortion and replace it with the greatest esteem for life that civilization has yet realized.

God's History Book

The Book of Life is God's history book. It is very different from human histories. In God's history, many of the great heroes are men and women that the world has not known. These praying saints had authority with God and accomplished much more for the human race and the human condition than any president, prime minister, or king ever did. Praying saints have freed many more slaves than Wilberforce and Lincoln combined—and they brought about a freedom that was much greater! This is why the Lord said in Luke 10:18-20:

...I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.

Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall injure you.

Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.

It is a wonderful thing to have been given authority over all of the power of the enemy, but it is an even greater thing to be found in God's history book—the Book of Life. The way that we make His history book is to live by the authority of His Book, without succumbing to the temptation to live by human authority. What good will it do us to be known by all men, but not be known by God? It is much better to have influence with God than to have influence with all men. Jesus warned us: **Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.**

Many will say to Me on that day,

"Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?"

And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you

who practice lawlessness" (Matthew 7:21-23).

Part IV

The Battle for Life and Liberty

In nature the preservation of life is the most basic and powerful motivation. Because of this, except for only a few of the most base species, *family* is a primary drive of life. It was no accident that the very first test of Solomon's wisdom was concerning the issue of a mother's sanctity for life. The very first test of wisdom for any government is its commitment to the sanctity of life.

Just because something is legal does not make it right. There are fundamental laws that prevail in nature which reveal a great deal more wisdom than politicians have been able to display. True morality is not measured simply by legal compliance; true morality is doing what is right. A civilization that is not based on law will be open to despotism and tyranny. Yet a civilization that cannot rise above the law to live not just by what is legal, but also by what is moral, has lost its humanity and its potential for true greatness. Lawlessness always results in tyranny.

The inability to rise above law also results in tyranny.

The preservation of life is fundamental to both nature and morality.

Parents who would sacrifice their offspring would have difficulty finding acceptance even in the animal kingdom. There will be no peace of mind or peace on earth until life is esteemed above selfish ambition or convenience. It is not only unnatural for a mother to destroy her child, born or unborn, but it reveals a fundamental departure from civilization to embrace barbarism in its most base and inhuman form. Resolution of the abortion issue gives us the opportunity to provide the world with leadership in finding higher standards of morality, justice, and esteem for life. Failure to resolve it with courage and honor, not just with law, will certainly leave a major crack in our foundation, which must ultimately lead to tyranny of the most frightening kind.

As stated, there is no question that the church should be involved in the battle for life, whether it deals with abortion, euthanasia, or other issues, such as those being raised in the field of biochemistry. The questions are: 1) under what sphere

of authority will we address them, and 2) will we compromise our given authority by trying to do the right thing in the wrong realm?

Spiritual authority comes from the Holy Spirit, and He is the Spirit of Truth. He will only endorse with His authority those who are true, who live what they preach. Can we cast stones at the mother who aborts her child if we are sacrificing our living children at the altars of the petty gods of selfish ambition and personal success? Could even the greatest success of our enterprises be interpreted as anything but a terrible human failure if we lose the souls of our own children in the process? Who can count the "successful" Christian businessmen, sportsmen, coaches, and even church leaders who have accomplished their goals only to say that they would trade everything just to have their families back? The first condition that God said was not good was for man to be alone—and it is not good. Yet that is exactly where we will end up if we do not give our families the priority they deserve.

Spiritual Abortion

In 1989, I had an experience in which I was caught up into the presence of the Lord. In this experience I was a witness to the anger of the Lord over abortion. But to my surprise, His anger was directed at the church and not the heathen. He declared that if the church had not aborted the *spiritual* seeds that He had planted in her—for missions, outreaches, and even the simple witness to our neighbors, then the heathen would not be living in such darkness and would not be aborting their *natural* seed. He said that the church was aborting His spiritual seed for all the same reasons that the heathen were aborting their unborn—because of our selfishness, that these "children" would be expensive and we did not think we could afford them, or give them our time. He affirmed that judgment would come upon our country because of the evil of abortion, but that He was going to start with His own household first!

How many of those teenage girls and young women would not be needing abortions now if we had responded to the Holy Spirit when He impressed us to witness to them? It is time for us to quit flailing at the branches and put the ax to the root of the tree!

Abortion is a great evil, but it is just one of the symptoms of the terrible disease of humanity, which is sin.

Abortion must be stopped, but it is now far beyond the government's ability to stop it. This does not excuse the government for not trying, but the only thing that can stop abortion in this country now is a revival on the level of another Great Awakening. As a believer, I will give the majority of my attention to obedience, prayer, and seeking revival. In a revival atmosphere, effective laws can be passed that will help against this evil, just as Finney's revivals helped to spark our government's actions against slavery.

Without revival the same laws would be useless—the people would simply break the law on a scale that the government could do little about.

It is fundamental at this time for the church to repent of her own sins, and then realize the Source of her power if she is going to accomplish anything of significance regarding abortion or any other issue.

for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, *and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete"* (II Corinthians 10:4-6).

When our obedience is complete we will have the authority to deal with **"all disobedience,"** not just with demonstrations, but with demonstrations of power that can accomplish far more.

The Stronghold of Homosexuality

If we believe the Bible is God's Word, we must understand that homosexuality is sin and must be dealt with as sin. So we must ask the question: Should the church tolerate sin? Now that gets a little sticky.

Most of us are still struggling with some problems that would have to fall under the sin category.

Outbursts of "anger" and "strife" are listed right along with immorality, idolatry, and sorcery as works of the flesh in Galatians 5:19-21. If we tried to remove everyone from the church who had a problem with anger, there would not be many people left.

However, the Lord did not call every sin in the Bible an "abomination" and "perversion" like He did homosexuality. The Lord only named those sins abominations that were especially repulsive to Him, or that were especially corrupting and destructive to society. Homosexuality falls into that category. The Lord destroyed Sodom for this sin and there is a point at which the Lord will judge a nation for the spread of this sin, because of its corrupting influence.

Paul called homosexuality a sin **"against nature" (KJV)** in Romans 1:26, and promised that those who practiced it would receive **"in their own persons the due penalty of their error" (verse 27).**

AIDS is an obvious example of this penalty.

Biblically we can see that most plagues have their origin in the spirit, as the result of widespread sin.

The characteristics of the plague usually reflect the sin that has released it. AIDS is a virus that causes the destruction of the immune system, or the body's defenses. Homosexuality and other forms of perversion are the cause of the release of AIDS, and those sins do destroy a society's defenses against evil in all forms.

God Loves Gays

So how should the church respond to homosexuals? Love them! Love them because God does and **"desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:4).**

God loves homosexuals and desires their salvation.

God is love and even His judgment through plagues or other means is a result of His love—it is His last call to repentance that they might be saved. The church will not have any true authority over this problem until she loves those with the problem. When we get into shouting matches with gays we are only multiplying the very demon we are seeking to cast out.

Does this mean we should just open our churches, our schools and our families to the influence of homosexuals? No. Homosexuality is a genuine threat to the very foundation of our social order. It will also become an increasingly blatant threat to our religious liberty, which is the greatest threat to their particular sin.

But Satan will not cast out Satan. If our confrontation with this sin is not in the right spirit, then we are multiplying the power of the evil we are seeking to cast out. This may come as a shock, but the church must also repent of her part in being a major cause of the release of homosexuality in society.

Homosexuality and Worship

The growing release of homosexuality in society is the result of an increasing departure from true worship. Men were created to be worshipers. If they are not devoted to the proper worship of the Creator, they will fall to worshiping the creation, which Paul explained in the first chapter of Romans to be the cause of homosexuality.

Music and other forms of art were talents given to men so they could express their adoration for God.

Using our spiritual gifts, or natural talents in adoration for God is the highest form of fulfillment we can know on this earth. Many of the most gifted and talented artists in history were homosexuals.

Many of these fell to homosexuality because there was no outlet in the church for their worship through the arts. Therefore, they would turn to worshiping the creation instead of the Creator. Homosexuals who are delivered from their sin, and given a proper outlet for the gifts that God has given to them, will become some of the most pure worshipers of the Lord, and will help release true worship in the church.

This is not to imply that the entire problem of homosexuality is the result of the church being closed to certain forms of worship through the arts. The bulk of the depravity is the choice of men to worship the creature rather than the Creator. However, the church is called to be the light of the world. If the world is falling into increasing darkness, we should not blame it on the government, or even society, but on the church. The answers to all of society's problems are spiritual, not political. When we seek to combat social and moral problems, we must share the truth that will set people free, not just condemn and alienate them.

Homo-sect-uality

There is a "spiritual homosexuality" that the church must be delivered from if we are going to have spiritual authority over this sin. Spiritual homosexuality is

having relations only with your own kind, which is sectarianism.

A root of homosexuality is the fear of rejection, which pushes one towards isolation and the compulsion to stay away from those who are different. Men and women represent the ultimate human differences, and almost everyone has to overcome the fear of rejection in order to cross the bridge to a relationship with the other sex. The same is true in the church—it is the insecurity of much of the leadership that causes them to refrain from any kind of relationship with those who are different. This results in sectarianism, which is a subtle form of spiritual homosexuality.

An important key to the deliverance of one who is in the bondage of homosexuality is not to reject them, but to love and accept them—not their sin, but them. **"...Perfect love casts out fear" (I John 4:18),** and it is fear that holds them in bondage. One of the remarkable characteristics of the Lord's own ministry, which is to be the model for all true ministry, is that He was the friend of sinners. Not only did He feel comfortable around them, but even more amazing, they felt comfortable around Him. Jesus did not condemn sinners, He changed them by loving them.

This is not to imply that He did not challenge their sin, but He did it with genuine love. This enabled Him to share the truth that would set them free, not just heap more burdens on them.

We must learn to treat sinners the way Jesus did, with open arms and the answers to their problems.

The answer is not to alienate them further, but to reach out to them with genuine love and help. We must always remember that the majority of them are not like the extreme caricatures we have often made them into, just as most Christians are not the caricatures that unbelievers tend to see us as.

Can a Christian Be a Liberal?

There are many sincere Christians who are political liberals. Unfortunately, this is usually because they see more genuine caring for the poor and the oppressed among liberals than they do among conservative Christians. Some politicians have stated that when they see Christians caring more for the needy than the liberals do, they will start listening to the church more than the liberals.

Winston Churchill once said: "If a man is not a liberal when he is twenty he has no heart. If he is not a conservative when he is forty he has no mind."

Most Christians do agree with liberals that we must take care of the needy and the oppressed, but disagree with the premise that the government should, or even can do it.

There are some people who really do need charity and will need it their entire lives. As the Lord said, **"the poor you have with you always" (Matthew 26:11).**

It is not realistic that poverty will be eradicated before the kingdom comes. We must also recognize that the poor are an opportunity for us to love and help others, and it is a great privilege to be able to do it. But when we try to do this through the government it becomes depersonalized and institutionalized, not to mention the fact that it gets so bogged down in waste and inefficiency that only a fraction of the resources will actually reach the needs of the people. Unfortunately, this is not just a problem with the government. When any charity becomes institutionalized it has a way of dehumanizing the people and perpetuating a dependency on the institution. Many times the government and charities' cure for society's ills has proven worse than the disease.

The church and the needy have greatly suffered from the recent tendency to expect the government to do the church's job serving the poor and needy, and establishing and upholding moral standards. We can also point to the tendency of the government that is attempting to be the answer to all of our problems because of the failure of the church to live up to her mandate. The government is likely to continue degenerating into socialistic delusions until the church stands up to do her job. The answer to every human problem is found at the cross. The answer to every human need is found in Christ. Until the church lifts Him up, the world will continue to live in darkness and delusion.

Part V

Summary

The church has had a long history of trying to bring the kingdom of God to earth by might and power, without the Spirit. But the Lord stated: **"That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John**

3:6). Even if we are trying to attain the right goal, if it is not done by the Holy Spirit we will end up wounding instead of healing, bringing further division instead of reconciliation.

The historic church, called to carry the gospel of salvation to the world, has been responsible for some of the deepest wounds that mankind has suffered.

Inevitably the roots of these tragic mistakes can be traced to the same mistake: well-intentioned men trying to use the civil realm of authority to accomplish spiritual goals. Whenever men have tried to bring down spiritual strongholds with carnal weapons, it has resulted in a terrible defeat for the gospel. Such will always fall to using another spirit to accomplish the purposes of God, and the spiritual strongholds of the enemy are only made stronger, regardless of the political consequences.

The whole world is very aware of this history of the church. It seems that only the church is ignorant of this history, so each new generation has stumbled into the same traps. Regardless of how painful it is, we must examine our history, and judge the fruit of the methods and teachings that we continue to repeat.

Contrary to popular belief, time does not heal wounds; they will only heal if they are dressed and closed. The terrible wounds inflicted upon Muslims and Jews by the Crusades remain open and have become increasingly infected with the passage of time. It is for this reason that the sins of the fathers are passed on to the children, generation after generation. This is not to punish the children for what their fathers have done, but until a generation arises to repent of the sins, and address and bring closure to the wounds, the sins continue to be perpetuated. This is why the leaders of restoration movements in Scripture, such as Ezra and Nehemiah, gave so much attention to addressing and repenting for "the sins of our fathers."

The enemy knows the power of the church when she devotes herself to the ministry of reconciliation.

That is why he continually tries to divert her from this commission, and has been very successful doing so.

Every new movement somehow allows the same seeds of its ultimate destruction to be sown within it.

Churches, denominations, movements and even individuals are still trying to conquer by might and power rather than by the Spirit—and every such "crusade" only results in more wounds.

It is true that there were many historic atrocities afflicted upon Christians by Muslims, and even some by Jews, but that is not our problem. Regardless of what was done by others, *our* mistakes were the most tragic of all because they were done in the name of the Savior who had come to deliver men from such evil.

For the church to accomplish her last-day mandate, she does not need public opinion, force of numbers, financial resources, or political power— *we need the grace of God.* Because God gives grace to the humble, we must learn to take every opportunity we get to humble ourselves. One of the primary ways for the church to do this is by acknowledging our historic mistakes and asking forgiveness from those we have so tragically persecuted and wounded. There is an extraordinary power in such humility to tear down the barriers and walls that separate people and cultures, so that the ministry of reconciliation can be released.

This powerful weapon of humility was demonstrated by Jesus on the cross, when He suffered the worst humiliation that the ruthless powers of this world could muster against Him, for the sake of the very ones who tortured Him. In His most pressing moment, He did not ask for retaliation—He asked for forgiveness on behalf of His tormentors. By the power released through His humility, He overcame the world, and was exalted to a position above all powers and authorities. The Scriptures are clear that in the final days of this age, the church will be exalted to a position of spiritual authority like she has never experienced before. This authority is essential for her to accomplish her last-day mandate. The path to that great exaltation is humility. Only when she has been properly humbled can she be trusted with this great authority.

From the time that there were just two brothers, Cain and Abel, men have not been able to get along and murder has gripped the fallen human heart. Until true redemption prevails, war will be with us. On that terrible day when the Crusaders took Jerusalem, Satan obviously saw one of the best chances he would ever have to defame the glorious name of Jesus, and he took full advantage of it. The Lord is now looking for a generation that will live by another spirit, the Holy Spirit, those who will humble themselves and pray, seeking the Lord's face

and turning from these wicked ways. Then the Lord will hear from heaven and heal our land. When this healing has reached Jerusalem and touched the heart of the Jew with the grace and truth that is realized through Jesus Christ, it will mark the completion of the great work of this church age. Then we will know that the bride has come of age, and the spots have been removed.

Special Note

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