

God's Operation Manual For Spiritual Warfare
Strategies and Principles Used For Victorious Christian Living

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For Spiritual Warfare

Howard Eugene Wright



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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to everyone who is working in God's vineyard to build the kingdom of God on this earth.

The gemstone for this book is a sapphire!

GOD'S OPERATION MANUAL FOR SPIRITUAL WARFARE

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INTRODUCTION

This book is your manual for spiritual warfare. The first thing you need to do is be willing to repent of any sin in your life. This is the reason for the call to general repentance.

To fight the good fight of faith you must know your weapon and how to use it. Thus, there is much scripture in this book to get you acquainted with God's Word, which is the sword of the Spirit.

Next, you must be committed to the battle. This is the reason for the resolutions and Code of Christian Ethics.

The sapphire is the jewel that is used from *God's Treasure Chest of Biblical Truth* for this book.

To be a good warrior of Jesus Christ you must study His Word. Know the Scriptures used in this manual to be able to “give a reason of the hope that is in you.”

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A CALL TO GENERAL REPENTANCE

The reasons for this call to repentance are as follows—

Whereas: Our nation has forsaken the Faith of its Fathers.

Whereas: The good laws of our land are forsaken.

Whereas: Evil men and women are triumphing over good.

Whereas: Lawlessness is ruling supreme in our land.

Whereas: Hatred is being advanced as loving service.

Whereas: Innocent people are being murdered.

Whereas: Judges are the number one lawbreakers.

Whereas: Our government is not protecting the innocent.

Whereas: God's righteous laws are ignored.

Whereas: Good is called evil and evil is called good.

Whereas: The counsel of the righteous is being scoffed at.

Whereas: Wicked foreign laws are being used in our courts.

Whereas: Our enemies are being comforted by tyrants.

Whereas: Our constitutional rights are being transgressed.

Whereas: Perversion is paraded before us as being normal.

Whereas: Our enemies are being allowed to destroy us.

Whereas: Several spiritual leaders have joined our enemies.

Whereas: Wicked people are not being judged or restrained.

Whereas: Communism has replaced our Christian republic.

Whereas: Our enemies have taken over our schools.

Whereas: Our medias have become propaganda rings.

Whereas: There is a growing hatred against Jesus Christ.

Whereas: Man's wicked laws are replacing God's laws.

Whereas: All nations that forsake God are hell-bound.

Whereas: Godless evolution is replacing special creation.

Whereas: God-haters are allowed to make our laws.

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Whereas: Our leaders are surrendering to our enemies.
Whereas: Our families are being attacked by our enemies.
Whereas: Innocent blood is shed in abortion clinics.
Whereas: Good people are being pictured as villains.
Whereas: God has left us because we have forsaken Him.
Whereas: Our only hope is for us to turn back to God.
Whereas: God will hear and heal us if we repent of our sins!

The resolutions toward repentance are as follows—

The foregoing facts being the true picture of our national apostasy with God's willingness to forgive us, compels us to resolve the following call to national repentance!

Resolved that all Jesus' Church members do the following to enlist in spiritual warfare to bring glory and honor to God!

Our Spiritual Warfare Enlistment is urgent! Time is running out! In preparing for spiritual warfare, let us do the following:

1. Take personal responsibility for our own spiritual condition.
2. Do not worry about what others will say or do.
3. Read Jeremiah 29:10-14 with me and enlist yourself into God's army as we stand on His promises together.

"For thus says the Lord, 'That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform My good Word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you,' says the Lord, 'thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall you call upon Me, and you shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And you shall seek Me, and find Me, when you shall search for Me with all your heart. And I will be found of

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you,' says the Lord: 'and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you,' said the Lord; 'and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive'" (Jeremiah 29:10-14 ET).

Are you ready to enlist yourself for the battle?

Resolved, that as God has expressed His love to me, as a member of His Church I will willingly enlist in His army!

To enlist in God's army, do the following in this order!

Repent of your rebellion against God!

Return to the Faith of your Fathers!

Renew your commitment to God and His righteousness!

Restore what you have taken from yourself and others!

Refresh yourself in Jesus Christ's love and grace!

I am resolved to repent of my rebellion against God!

"He that covers his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesses and forsakes them shall have mercy" (Proverbs 28:13 ET).

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9 ET).

I am resolved to return to the Faith of my Fathers!

"And the Lord said unto Jacob, "Return unto the land of your fathers, and to your kindred; and I will be with you" (Genesis 31:3 ET).

"And I will give them an heart to know Me, that I am the Lord: and they shall be My people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto Me with their whole heart" (Jeremiah

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24:7 ET).

I am resolved to renew my commitment to God and His righteousness!

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10 KJV).

“But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31 KJV).

See also Romans 12:1, 2; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18.

I am resolved to restore that which I have taken from others and myself!

Leviticus 6:1-5

“Restore unto me the joy of Your salvation; and uphold me with Your free spirit” (Psalm 51:12).

I am resolved to refresh myself in Jesus Christ’s love and grace!

(Psalm 103:1-5).

Resolved, that seeing I am in a world that does not accept God’s rule over them, I will “obey God rather than man!”

Resolved, that our world, being in rebellion against the true and living God, I will use all non-violent means to call them to repentance toward God and faith in my Lord Jesus Christ!

Resolved, that realizing the seriousness of our spiritual warfare, I will network with my fellow Christian warriors!

Resolved, that I will conduct my life according to “God’s Operation Manual for Spiritual Warfare!”

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I. The Warrior's Code of Ethics

“If any man come to Me, and hate (loves less) not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whosoever does not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sits not down first, and counts the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build, and was not able to finish.’ Or what king, going to make war against another king, sits not down first, and consults whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that comes against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends an ambassage, and desires conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsakes not all that he has he cannot be my disciple. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that has ears to hear, let him hear” (Luke 14:26-35 ET).

Realizing the need of a Christian witness in this world:

†I will trust and obey my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ at all times and in all places.

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†I will keep myself fit as a soldier of Jesus Christ by developing a loving, personal relationship with God and His Church.

†I will keep myself fit for Christian service by studying my Bible and giving myself to prayer.

†I will wear my battle armor at all times with a readiness to fight when called upon to do so.

As a soldier of Jesus Christ:

†I will always keep informed on world and spiritual conditions by studying the history and accurate news of world events, both secular and sacred. There are two resources on the Internet as follows: The “Avalon Project” at the Yale Law School at <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/> and “The Constitution” at <http://www.constitution.org> that serves to help you to inform yourself of our country's history.

†I am willing to suffer the loss of all things, including but not limited to, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, for the sake of Jesus and His kingdom.

Comparing the U. S. Military Code of Conduct with a Christian Warrior's Code of Conduct

Article 1 - “I am an American, fighting in the forces which guard my country and our way of life, I am prepared to give my life in their defense.”

I am a Christian, waging spiritual warfare for the good of my world and the Christian way of life. I am prepared to die for God and others for the defense of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Article II - “I will never surrender of my own free will. If in command, I will never surrender the members of my

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command while they still have the means to resist.”

I will never surrender my Christian faith by my own free will. If a leader of Jesus' Church, I will never forsake my flock to the enemy as long as we have life and means to resist.

Article III - “If I am captured I will continue to resist by all means available, I will make every effort to escape and to aid others to escape. I will accept neither parole nor special favors from the enemy.”

If I am persecuted for my Christian faith I will do all I can to escape. If my fellow Christians are with me, I will make every effort to help them escape. I will never take favors from the enemies of Jesus to escape discomforts received for the sake of the Cross of Jesus.

Article IV - “If I become a prisoner of war, I will keep faith with my fellow prisoners. I will give no information or take part in any action which might be harmful to my comrades. If I am senior, I will take command. If not, I will obey the lawful orders of those appointed over me and will back them up in every way.”

If I am taken prisoner while waging this war, I will do all in my power to encourage my fellow Christians to keep the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. I will do nothing that will bring harm to my brothers and sisters in the Lord. If I am a spiritual leader, I will take charge of the situation. If not, I will follow the leadership of those God has placed in charge.

Article V - “When questioned, should I become a prisoner of war, I am required to give name, rank, service number, and date of birth. I will evade answering further questions to the utmost of my ability. I will make no oral or written statements disloyal to my country and its allies or harmful to their cause.”

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I will not give the devil and his people any advantages that will bring a disgrace or harm to the cause of Jesus Christ. I will do all in my power to call my enemies to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I will not be intimidated by ungodly, wicked people. I will stay faithful to the Lord and my fellow Christians at all costs.

Article VI - “I will never forget that I am an American, fighting for freedom, responsible for my actions, and dedicated to the principles which made my country free. I will trust in my God and in the United States of America.”

I will never forget that I am a soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ, fighting to free our world of ungodliness and rebellion against God. Some day I know I am to give an account to the true and living God for every idle word I have spoken. Thus, without conservation or reservation, I am giving myself to the advancement of God’s eternal kingdom throughout the world. I will trust and obey my God and those He has called to shepherd me.

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II. The War Well-Defined

“From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? You lust, and have not: you kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: you fight and war, yet you have not, because you ask not. You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss, that you may consume it upon your lusts. You adulterers and adulteresses, know you not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do you think that the scripture said in vain, ‘The spirit that dwells in us lusts to envy?’ But He gives more grace. Wherefore He said, “God resists the proud, but gives grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up. Speak not evil one of another, brothers. He that speaks evil of his brother, and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law, and judges the law: but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge” (James 4:1-11 ET).

“For we wrestle 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 KJV).

“Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain

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thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Anointed, saying, ‘Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us’” (Psalm 2:1-3 ET).

The greatest war is the war that is in our hearts as our carnal nature rebels against God. Then, once this battle is won by accepting Jesus as our Savior and Lord, we enter into a battle against the forces of evil, both satanic and man’s rebellion against God and His people.

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III. The Enemy Uncovered

"For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, 'You shall not covet.' But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that

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dwells in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:5-24 ET).

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19-21 KJV).

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:5-8 KJV).

"And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:6-8 KJV).

The Bible is clear as to the identity of the enemy. The enemy is the devil. He has set up his organization of rebellion against the true and living God in the hearts and organizations of

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mankind. He is determined to rule in the affairs of this world. He is working night and day to dethrone God and enslave the whole human race.

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IV. The Warrior's Identity

A saint of God
A lively stone in God's building
A branch of the True Vine
A sheep in the Good Shepherd's fold
A member of the Body of Christ
A faithful member in the fellowship of believers
A chosen generation
A peculiar people
The bride of Christ
A royal priesthood
A holy nation
A warrior in the army of God
A minister of reconciliation
An ambassador for Christ
A Christ-like example
An overseer of the flock of God
One of the redeemed of all ages
A born-again, Spirit-filled Christian
A preacher of the Word of God
A true witness for Jesus Christ
A servant of God
A member of the Church of Jesus Christ

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V. The Ultimate Weapons

“I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith’” (Romans 1:14-17 ET).

“Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knows us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that has this hope in Him purifies himself, even as He is pure. Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abides in him sins not: whosoever sins has not seen Him, neither known Him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that does righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. He that commits sin is of the devil; for the devil sins from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin; for His seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God (1 John 3:1-9 ET).

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Our ultimate weapon is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Seeing Jesus Christ is the gospel, thus, we preach, teach and exhort everyone, everywhere to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. This weapon destroys the works of the devil completely.

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VI. The Warrior's Ammunition

The Bible is our sword. Faith is our shield. To help you understand the teachings of the Bible more fully I have placed some “edges” of Holy Scriptures below that cover various topics for your study. Also, I have also enclosed one of my sermons on “Bearing Up Under Persecution” for your edification. Feel free to use anything in this book you can for the advancement of the lordship of Jesus Christ and His kingdom!

A. Know Your Weapon - The Sword of God

1. The Application of the Word of God - Psalm 119 tells you about the uniqueness of the word of God.

Are you ready to apply the law of God to every area of your life? Let us begin your journey by reading and studying Psalm 119!

ALEPH

“Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD! Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, they will seek Him with the whole heart! They also do no iniquity: they walk in His ways. You have commanded us to keep Your precepts diligently. Oh, that my ways were directed to keep Your statutes! Then I would not be ashamed when I keep all Your commandments. When I learn Your righteous judgments I will praise You with uprightness of heart. I will keep Your

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statutes. Oh, do not utterly forsake me.

BETH

“With what shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. I have sought You with all my heart. Oh, do not let me wander from Your commandments! I have hid Your word in my heart, therefore I shall not sin against You. Blessed are You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes. I have declared all the judgments of Your mouth with my lips. I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies as in all riches. I will meditate in Your precepts, and I will look at Your paths. I will delight myself in Your statutes. I will not forget Your word.

GIMEL

“Deal bountifully with Your servant, that I may live, and keep Your word. Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Your law. I am a stranger in the earth. Do not hide Your commandments from me. My soul has been broken for longing for Your judgments at all seasons. You have rebuked the proud that are cursed, who wander from Your commandments. Remove reproach and contempt from me, for I have kept Your testimonies. Princes also sit and speak against me: but Your servant will meditate in Your statutes. Your testimonies also are my delights and my counselors.

DALETH

“My soul has cleaved to the dust. Keep me alive according to Your word. I have declared my ways and You have answered me. Teach me Your statutes. Make me consider the way of Your precepts: and I will meditate in Your wondrous works. My soul melts from heaviness: strengthen me according to Your word. Remove the way of falsehood from me, and grant

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me Your law graciously. I have chosen the way of faithfulness. I have held Your judgments. I have cleaved to Your testimonies. O LORD, do not put me to shame. I will run the way of Your commandments, for You will enlarge my heart.

HE

“Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your statutes; and I will preserve it to the end. Make me to consider Your law, and I will preserve and observe it with my whole heart. Guide me in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it. Incline my heart unto Your testimonies, and not to covetousness. Turn my eyes away from beholding vanity. Keep me alive in Your way. Establish Your servant in Your word, who is devoted to Your fear. Make my reproach which I feared pass from me, for Your judgments are good. Behold, I have longed for Your precepts; make me live in Your righteousness.

VAV

“And Your mercies and Your salvation shall come to me, O LORD, according to Your word. And I shall have a word to answer him who reproaches me, because I have confidence in Your word. And do not take the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, because I have hope in Your judgments. And I will keep Your law continually, forever and ever. And I will walk in a wide place, because I seek Your precepts. And I will speak of Your testimonies before kings, and not be ashamed. And I will delight myself in Your commandments, which I have loved. And I will lift up my hands unto Your commandments which I have loved; and I will meditate in Your statutes.

ZAYIN

“Remember the word to Your servant, upon which You have

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made me hope. Because Your word has kept me alive it has been my comfort in my affliction. I have not forsaken Your law even though the proud have held me up to utter contempt. I have remembered Your judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself. Horror gripped me when I saw the wicked forsaking Your law. Your statutes are psalms (songs) to me in the house of my pilgrimage. I have remembered Your name in the night, O LORD, and I will keep Your law. Because I have kept Your precepts this has become mine.

HETH

“LORD, You are my portion; I have said I would keep Your words. I entreated Your favor with my whole heart; be gracious to me according to Your word. I thought on my ways, and turned my feet to Your testimonies. I made haste, without delay, to keep Your commandments. The cords of the wicked surrounded me: but I have not forgotten Your law. All throughout the night I will rise to give thanks to You, because of Your righteous judgments. I am a companion of all those who fear You and keep Your precepts. The earth, O LORD, is full of Your mercy; teach me Your statutes.

TETH

“You have done good with Your servant, O LORD, according to Your word. Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed Your commandments. Before I was humbled I was ignorant, but now I keep Your word. You are good, and do good; teach me Your statutes. The proud have forged falsehood against me, but I will keep Your precepts with my whole heart. Their heart is as fat as lard, but I delight myself in Your law. It was good for me to be humbled, because I will learn Your statutes. The law of Your mouth is better than thousands of gold and silver to me.

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YOD

“Your hands have made me and established me: give me discernment so that I may learn Your commandments. Those who fear You will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in Your word. I know, O LORD, Your judgments are right, and in Your faithfulness You have humbled me. Let, I pray, Your mercy be a comfort to me, according to Your word unto Your servant. Your tender mercies shall come unto me and I shall live, because Your law is my delight. The proud shall be ashamed, because they falsely perverted me: I will meditate in Your precepts. Those who fear You and know Your testimonies shall turn to me. My heart shall be upright in Your statutes; therefore I will not be ashamed.

KAPH

“My soul pines away for Your salvation: I hope in Your word. My eyes fail for Your word, saying, When will You comfort me? For I am become like a bottle in the smoke; yet I do not forget Your statutes. How many are the days of Your servant? When will You execute judgment on those who persecute me? The proud have dug ditches for me, which are not according to Your law. All Your commandments are faithfulness; they have falsely pursued me. Help me! A little longer and they will consume me from the earth; but I will not forsake Your precepts. Keep me alive according to Your mercy, and I will keep the testimony of Your mouth.

LAMED

“O LORD, Your word is settled in the heavens for ever. Your faithfulness is from generation to generation: You have established the earth, and it has stood. To this day they stand according to Your judgments: because all of them are Your

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servants. If Your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction. I will never forget Your precepts: because by them You have kept me alive. I am Yours, save me; for I have sought Your precepts. The wicked have expected to destroy me: but I will consider Your testimonies. I have seen the end to all perfection: but Your commandment is very extensive.

MEM

“How I love Your law! I meditate on it all day. Through Your commandments You have made me wiser than my enemies: Or they (your commandments) are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: because I meditate on Your testimonies. I understand more than the ancients (with years of experience), because I have kept Your precepts. I have withheld my feet from every path of evil, that I might keep Your word. I have not departed from Your judgments: for You have taught me. How sweet are Your words to my taste! Better than honey to my mouth! Through Your precepts I gained understanding: therefore I hate every path of falsehood.

NUN

“Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path. I have sworn and determined to keep the judgments of Your righteousness. I was very much humbled: keep me alive, O LORD, according unto Your word. I beg of you to accept the free will offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and teach me Your judgments. My soul is in my hand continually: yet I do not forget Your law. The wicked have placed a trap for me: yet I do not wander from Your precepts. I have inherited Your testimonies for ever: for they are the rejoicing of my heart. I have inclined my heart to always perform Your statutes, to the

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end.

SAMEK

“I hate questionable thoughts: but I love Your law. You are my hiding place and my shield: I hope in Your word. Depart from me, you wicked doers: and I will keep the commandments of my God. Hold me up according to Your word, and I shall live: and do not let me be ashamed of my hope. Hold me up, and I shall be safe: and I will continually look to Your statutes. You have trodden down all those who wander from Your statutes: for their deceit is falsehood. You have put all the wicked of the earth away like dross: therefore I love Your testimonies. My flesh trembles for fear of You; and I fear Your judgments.

AYIN

“I have done judgment and righteousness: You will not leave me to my oppressors. Be surety for Your servant for good: do not let the proud oppress me. My eyes have failed for Your salvation, and for the word of Your righteousness. Deal with Your servant according to Your mercy, and teach me Your statutes. I am Your servant; cause me to understand, that I may know Your testimonies. LORD, it is time for You to work: they have made Your law void. Therefore I love Your commandments more than gold; yes, above fine gold. Therefore I esteem all Your precepts to be all right; I have hated every path of falsehood.

PE

“Your testimonies are wonderful: therefore my soul preserves them. The opening of Your words will enlighten; causing the simple to understand. I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for Your commandments. Turn to me, and be gracious to me, the way You do to those who love Your name. Establish

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my steps in Your word: and do not let any iniquity have dominion over me. Redeem me from the oppression of man: and I will keep Your precepts. Make Your face to shine upon Your servant; and teach me Your statutes. Rivers of waters run down from my eyes, because they do not keep Your law.

SADE

“Righteous are You, O LORD, and upright are Your judgments. Your testimonies, which You have commanded, are righteous and very faithful. My zeal has cut me off, because my enemies have forgotten Your words. Your word is very pure: therefore Your servant loves it. I am little and despised: yet I do not forget Your precepts. Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your law is the truth. Distress and anguish have found me: yet Your commandments are my delights. Your testimonies are righteousness forever: cause me to understand, and I shall live.

QOPH

“I cried with my whole heart; answer me, O LORD: I will preserve Your statutes. I called upon You; save me and I shall keep Your testimonies. I rise before twilight and cry for help: I hoped for Your word. My eyes are open in the night watches, to meditate in Your word. Hear my voice according to Your lovingkindness: O LORD, keep me alive according to Your judgment. They that follow after mischief draw near: they are far from Your law. You are near, O LORD; and all Your commandments are truth. Concerning Your testimonies, I have known of old that You have founded them for ever.

RESH

“See my affliction, and deliver me: I have not forgotten Your law. Plead my cause and redeem me: keep me alive with Your

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word. Salvation is far from the wicked: for they have not sought Your statutes. Many are Your tender mercies, O LORD: keep me alive according to Your judgments. Many are my pursuers and my enemies; yet I have not declined from Your testimonies. I saw the offenders and was grieved; because they did not keep Your word. Consider how I love Your precepts: keep me alive, O LORD, according to Your loving kindness. The sum of Your word is true: and every one of Your righteous judgments endures for ever.

SIN and SHIN

“Princes have pursued me without a cause: but my heart stands in awe of Your word. I rejoice at Your word, as one that has found great spoil. I hate and abhor lying: but Your law I love. Seven times a day I praise You, because of Your righteous judgments. Great peace have they who love Your law: and nothing shall make them stumble. LORD, I have waited for Your salvation, and I have done Your commandments. My soul has kept Your testimonies; and I love them very much. I have kept Your precepts and Your testimonies: because all my ways are before You.

TAV

“Let my cry come near before You, O LORD: cause me to consider according to Your word. My supplication shall come before You: deliver me according to Your word. My lips will utter praise, for You will teach me Your statutes. My tongue shall answer Your word: for all Your commandments are righteousness. Your hand shall be a help to me; for I have chosen Your precepts. I have longed for Your salvation, O LORD; and Your law is my delight. My soul shall live and praise You; and Your judgments will help me. I have wandered like a perishing sheep; seek Your servant; for I have

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not forgotten Your commandments.”

2. The Special Creation Edge

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, ‘Let there be light: and there was light.’ And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

“And God said, ‘Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.’ And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

“And God said, ‘Let the waters under the Heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear:’ and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good. And God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.’ And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day.

“And God said, ‘Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon

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the earth:’ and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

“And God said, ‘Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that has life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.’ And God created great whales, and every living creature that moves, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.’ And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

“And God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind:’ and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creeps upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.’ So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, ‘Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth. And God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every

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tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creeps upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for food:’ and it was so. And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day” (Genesis 1 ET).

3. Speak the Truth in Love Edge

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profits me nothing. Charity suffers long, and is kind; charity envies not; charity vaunts not itself, is not puffed up, does not behave itself unseemly, seeks not her own, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil; rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Charity never fails: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abides faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity” (1 Corinthians 13 ET). (Note: charity means

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love.)

4. Advancing Freedom From Sin Edge

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know you not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more; death has no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He lives, He lives unto God. Likewise reckon you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield you your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know you not, that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that you were the servants of sin, but you have

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obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, you became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as you have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. What fruit had you then in those things whereof you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6 ET).

5. Explanation of Christian Liberty Edge

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the

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body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you. Therefore, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if you live after the flesh, you shall die: but if you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but you have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waits for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who has subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man sees, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the Spirit also helps our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searches

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the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies. Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, yes rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, Who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, "For Your sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8 ET).

6. Outline for Transformed Commitment Edge

"I beseech you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be you transformed by the

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renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teaches, on teaching; or he that exhorts, on exhortation: he that gives, let him do it with simplicity; he that rules, with diligence; he that shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but descend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lies in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.’ Therefore if your enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing you shall heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good” (Romans 12

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ET).

7. Faith Exemplified Edge

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaks. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful Who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having

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received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He has prepared for them a city. By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, ‘That in Isaac shall your seed be called:’ accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshiped, leaning upon the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king’s commandment. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him Who is invisible. Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest He that destroyed the firstborn should touch them. By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

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By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace. And what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions. Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawed asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (Hebrew 11 ET).

8. Explanation of the Bodily Resurrection Edge

"Moreover, brothers, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also you have received, and wherein you stand; by which also you are saved, if you keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures: and

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that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, He was seen of above five hundred brothers at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

After that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so you believed. Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then comes the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that

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shall be destroyed is death. For He has put all things under His feet. But when He said, all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all. Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead? And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantages it me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die. Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame. But some man will say, 'How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?' You fool, that which you sow is not quickened, except it die: and that which you sow, you sow not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God gives it a body as it has pleased Him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differs from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, 'The first man Adam was made a

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living soul;’ the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthly: the second Man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, ‘Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?’ The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be you steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15 ET).

9. The Good Shepherd’s Psalm Edge

“The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures: He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul: He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff they comfort me. You

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prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies: You anoint my head with oil; my cup Runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever" (Psalm 23 ET).

B. Sermons from the New Testament

1. Jesus' Sermon on the Mount

And seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain: and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him: and He opened His mouth, and taught them, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

You are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it gives light unto all that

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are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

You have heard that it was said by them of old time, ‘You shall not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:’ but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, ‘Raca,’ shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, ‘You fool,’ shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has ought against you; leave there your gift before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Agree with your adversary quickly, whiles you are in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the officer, and you be cast into prison. Verily I say unto you, You shall by no means come out thence, till you have paid the uttermost farthing.

You have heard that it was said by them of old time, ‘You shall not commit adultery:’ but I say unto you, That whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed

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adultery with her already in his heart. And if your right eye offend you, pluck it out, and cast it from you: for it is profitable for you that one of your members should perish, and not that your whole body should be cast into hell. And if your right hand offend you, cut it off, and cast it from you: for it is profitable for you that one of your members should perish, and not that your whole body should be cast into hell. It has been said, ‘Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:’ but I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causes her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced commits adultery.

Again, you have heard that it has been said by them of old time, ‘You shall not forswear yourself, but shall perform unto the Lord your oaths:’ but I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yes, yes; No, no: for whatsoever is more than these comes of evil.

You have heard that it has been said, ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:’ but I say unto you, That you resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue you at the law, and take away your coat, let him have your cloak also. And whosoever shall compel you to go a mile, go with him two. Give to him that asks you, and from him that would borrow of you turn not you away.

You have heard that it has been said, ‘You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.’ But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and

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persecute you; that you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love them which love you, what reward have you? Do not even the publicans the same? And if you salute your brothers only, what do you more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Be you therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5 ET).

"Take heed that you do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise you have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when you do your alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when you do alms, let not your left hand know what your right hand do: that your alms may be in secret: and your Father which sees in secret Himself shall reward you openly.

And when you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But you, when you pray, enter into your closet, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father which is in secret; and your Father which sees in secret shall reward you openly. But when you pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not you therefore like unto them: for your Father knows what things you have need of, before you ask Him. After this manner therefore pray you: 'Our Father which are in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For

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Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen'. For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Moreover when you fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face; that you appear not unto men to fast, but unto your Father which is in secret: and your Father, which sees in secret, shall reward you openly.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust does corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust does corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore your eye be single, your whole body shall be full of light. But if your eye be evil, your whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. you cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor yet for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than food, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take you thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even

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Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, ‘What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? Or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?’ (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things. But seek you first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof” (Matthew 6 ET).

“Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged: and with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why behold you the mote that is in your brother’s eye, but consider not the beam that is in your own eye? Or how will you say to your brother, ‘Let me pull out the mote out of your eye;’ and, behold, a beam is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of your own eye; and then shall you see clearly to cast out the mote out of your brother’s eye.

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast you your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asks receives; and he that seeks finds; and to him that knocks it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask

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Him? Therefore all things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do you even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Enter you in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many there be which go in therewith: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads unto life, and few there be that find it.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. You shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree brings forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them.

Not every one that says unto me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name? And in Your name have cast out devils? And in Your name done many wonderful works?' And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity.

Therefore whosoever hears these sayings of mine, and does them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that hears these sayings of mine, and does them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."

And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings,

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the people were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (Matthew 7 ET).

2. Peter’s Sermon on the Day of Pentecost

But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them,

“You men of Judea, and all you that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: for these are not drunken, as you suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days,’ said God, ‘I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy: and I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour (vapor) of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: and it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’ You men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as you yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it. For David speaks concerning him, ‘I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad;

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moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: because You will not leave my soul in hell, neither will You suffer Your Holy One to see corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; You shall make me full of joy with Your countenance.' Men and brothers, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on His throne; he seeing this before spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption. This Jesus has God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the Promise of the Holy Spirit, He has shed forth this, which you now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he said himself, 'The Lord said unto My Lord, Sit You on My right hand, until I make Your foes Your footstool.' Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God has made that same Jesus, whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, "Men and brothers, what shall we do?"

Then Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:14-40 ET).

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3. Peter's Sermon After the Healing of the Lame Man

And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people,

"You men of Israel, why marvel you at this? Or why look you so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His Son Jesus; Whom you delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go. But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God has raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And His name through faith in His name has made this man strong, whom you see and know: yes, the faith which is by him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. And now, brothers, I wot that through ignorance you did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, He has so fulfilled.

Repent you therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. And He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, 'A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brothers, like unto me; Him shall you hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.' Yes, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. You are the children of the prophets,

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and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, ‘And in your seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.’ Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities” (Acts 3:12-26 ET).

4. Stephen’s Sermon to Jewish Leaders

Stephen was the first Christian martyr.

And he said, “Men, brothers, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, ‘Get you out of your country, and from your kindred, and come into the land which I shall show You.’ Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein you now dwell. And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet He promised that He would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child. And God spoke on this wise, ‘That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years. And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge,’ said God: ‘and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place.’ And He gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so Abraham begot Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begot Jacob; and Jacob begot the twelve patriarchs. And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him, and delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and He made him governor over Egypt and all his house. Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Chanaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no

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sustenance. But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first. And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brothers; and Joseph's kindred was made known unto Pharaoh. Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls (75). So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers, and were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem. But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, till another king arose, which knew not Joseph. The same dealt subtilely with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live. In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months: and when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son. And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brothers the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: for he supposed his brothers would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not. And the next day he showed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, 'Sirs, you are brothers; why do you wrong one to another?' But he that did his neighbor wrong thrust him away, saying, 'Who made You a ruler and a judge over us? Will you kill me, as you did the Egyptian yesterday?' Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Midian, where he begot two sons. And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the

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wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush. When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came unto him, saying, ‘I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold. Then said the Lord to him, ‘Put off your shoes from your feet: for the place where you stand is holy ground. I have seen, I have seen the affliction of My people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you into Egypt.’ This Moses whom they refused, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge?’ the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush. He brought them out, after that He had showed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years.

This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, ‘A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brothers, like unto me; Him shall you hear.’ This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spoke to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us: to whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt, saying unto Aaron, ‘Make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not what is become of him.’ And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, ‘O you house of Israel, have you offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness? Yes, you took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god

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Remphan, figures which you made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.' Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen. Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Joshua into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David; who found favor before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. But Solomon built Him an house. Howbeit the most High dwells not in temples made with hands; as said the prophet, 'Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool: what house will you build Me?' said the Lord: 'or what is the place of My rest? Has not My hand made all these things?'

You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of Whom you have been now the betrayers and murderers: who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it."

When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And he knelt down, and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, lay not this sin

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to their charge.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep (Acts 7:2-60 ET).

5. Peter Preaches to Cornelius’s Household and Friends

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, “Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation He that fears Him, and works righteousness, is accepted with Him. The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (He is Lord of all:) that word, I say, you know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him. And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead. And He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believes in Him shall receive remission of sins.”

While Peter yet spoke these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word (Acts 10:34-44 ET).

6. Paul’s Sermon to the Jews

But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, you men

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and brothers, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you that fear God, give audience. The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought He them out of it. And about the time of forty years suffered He their manners in the wilderness. And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, He divided their land to them by lot. And after that He gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years. And when He had removed him, He raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also He gave testimony, and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, which shall fulfill all My will.' Of this man's seed has God according to His promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus: when John had first preached before His coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John fulfilled his course, he said, 'Whom think you that I am? I am not He. But, behold, there comes one after me, whose shoes of His feet I am not worthy to loose.' Men and brothers, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you fears God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him. And though they found no cause of death in Him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of Him, they took Him down from the tree, and laid Him in a sepulchre.

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But God raised Him from the dead: and He was seen many days of them which came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God has fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, ‘You are my Son, this day have I begotten You.’ And as concerning that He raised Him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, He said on this wise, ‘I will give you the sure mercies of David.’ Wherefore He said also in another psalm, ‘You shall not suffer Your Holy One to see corruption.’ For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: but He, Whom God raised again, saw no corruption.

Be it known unto you therefore, men and brothers, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, you despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.”

And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and

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blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, “It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so has the Lord commanded us, saying, ‘I have set You to be a light of the Gentiles, that You should be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.’” And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. But the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:14-52 ET).

7. Paul on Mars Hill

Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him. And some said, “What will this babbler say? He seems to be a setter forth of strange gods.” because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, “May we know what this new doctrine whereof you speak is? For you bring certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean.” (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.) Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars’ hill, and said, “You men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, ‘TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.’ Whom therefore you ignorantly worship, Him declare

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I unto you.

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwells not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed any thing, seeing He gives to all life, and breath, and all things; and has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, 'For we are also his offspring.' Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commands all men every where to repent: because He has appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man Whom He has ordained; whereof He has given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead."

And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, "We will hear You again of this matter." So Paul departed from among them. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them (Acts 17:18-34 ET).

C. Prayers From the New Testament

1. The Disciples Model Prayer

After this manner therefore pray you: Our Father which is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our

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daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen (Matthew 6:9-13 ET).

2. The Lord Jesus Christ's High Priestly Prayer

These words spoke Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You: as You have given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth: I have finished the work which You gave Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify You Me with your own self with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name unto the men which You gave me out of the world: yours they were, and You gave them Me; and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever You have given Me are of You. For I have given unto them the words which You gave Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from You, and they have believed that You did send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which You have given Me; for they are Yours. And all Mine are yours, and yours are Mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through your own name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one, as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name: those that You gave Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to You; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My

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joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through Your truth: Your word is truth. As You have sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as You, Father, are in me, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that You have sent Me. And the glory which You gave me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them, as You have loved Me. Father, I will that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me: for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O Righteous Father, the world has not known You: but I have known You, and these have known that You have sent Me. And I have declared unto them Your name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them (John 17:1-26 ET).

3. The Church praying for a replacement for Judas.

(This is the Church's first prayer.)

And they prayed, and said, You, Lord, which know the hearts of all men, show whether of these two You have chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon

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Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles (Acts 1:24- 26 ET).

4. The Church praying for boldness

And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, "Lord, You are God, which have made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of Your servant David have said, 'Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.' For of a truth against Your Holy Child Jesus, Whom You have anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever Your hand and Your counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto Your servants, that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching forth Your hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of your holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness (Acts 4:23-31 ET).

5. Paul's Prayers For The Ephesian Church

Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His

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inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and has put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all" (Ephesians 1:16-23 ET).

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen (Ephesians 3:14-21 ET).

6. Paul's Prayer For the Colossians Church

For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might,

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according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist (Colossians 1:9-17 ET).

7. Paul's Prayers For the Thessalonians Church

We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; knowing, brothers beloved, your election of God (1 Thessalonians 1:2-4 ET).

Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith? Now God Himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you. And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints (1 Thessalonians 3:10-13 ET).

Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good

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pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power: that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:11, 12 ET).

D. Jude's Message to the Church

Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called: mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though you once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you." But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as

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brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withers, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaks great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage. But, beloved, remember you the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the spirit. But you, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen (Jude ET).

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E. John's Message to the Church

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and his word is not in us.

My little children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that says, I know him, and keeps not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keeps His word, in Him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him. He that says

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he abides in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked. Brothers, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you have heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in Him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shines. He that says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loves his brother abides in the light, and there is none you occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hates his brother is in darkness, and walks in darkness, and knows not whither he goes, because that darkness has blinded his eyes. I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write unto you, fathers, because you have known Him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because you have known the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because you have known Him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he that does the will of God abides for ever. Little children, it is the last time: and as you have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But you have an unction

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from the Holy One, and you know all things. I have not written unto you because you know not the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denies the Father and the Son. Whosoever denies the Son, the same has not the Father: [but] he that acknowledges the Son has the Father also. Let that therefore abide in you, which you have heard from the beginning. If that which you have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, you also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that He has promised us, even eternal life. These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which you have received of Him abides in you, and you need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teaches you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, you shall abide in Him. And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you know that every one that does righteousness is born of Him.

Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knows us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure. Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abides in Him sins not: whosoever sins has not seen Him, neither known Him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that does righteousness is righteous, even as

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He is righteous. He that commits sin is of the devil; for the devil sins from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin; for His seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever does not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loves not his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Marvel not, my brothers, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brothers. He that loves not his brother abides in death. Whosoever hates his brother is a murderer: and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But whoso has this world's good, and sees his brother have need, and shuts up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwells the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment. And he that keeps his commandments dwells in Him, and he in Him. And hereby we know that He abides in

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us, by the Spirit which He has given us.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know you the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of anti-Christ, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God: he that knows God hears us; he that is not of God hears not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loves is born of God, and knows God. He that loves not knows not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwells in us, and His love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God has to us. God is love; and he that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world. There is

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no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear: because fear has torment. He that fears is not made perfect in love. We love Him, because He first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar: for he that loves not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God Whom he has not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loves God love his brother also.

Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loves Him that begot loves him also that is begotten of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God? This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. He that believes on the Son of God has the witness in himself: he that believes not God has made Him a liar; because he believes not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may believe on the name of the Son

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of God. And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He hears us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him. If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death. We know that whosoever is born of God sins not; but he that is begotten of God keeps himself, and that wicked one touches him not. And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen (1 John ET).

Sermon From The Author of This Book

Title: BEARING UP UNDER PERSECUTION

Subject: Being victorious in persecution.

Scripture Background: 2 Thessalonians 1

Key Verse: “Who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver: in Whom we trust that He will yet deliver us;” (2 Corinthians 1:10 ET).

INTRODUCTION: If you are a Christian, you are being persecuted!

Paul tells us that “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” (2 Timothy 3:12. KJV) When we think of a martyr we think of one being torn to death by wild beasts; Caleposius thrown into the river with a millstone about his neck; Saturnius fastened by the feet to the tail of a bull;

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Cassian, a Christian schoolmaster, beaten to death by his own scholars; Marcus, a bishop, hung to a tree and stung to death by wasps; a Protestant clergyman being roasted alive by a slow fire. These most certainly are forms of persecution. However, these are only one type of persecution. Any kind of abuse you have as a result of your Christian faith is known as persecution.

I. In this sense we experience many subtle persecutions: These are the daily taskmasters, which grind away at our being and discourage us from doing our best for Jesus and His kingdom work.

A. There is the persecution of indifference toward the Gospel. They do not beat us, but they do not bless us either. The devil does not care how he gets you to quit—which is the reason for persecution—living for God and proclaiming the Good News to a lost world. As a manner of fact, indifference is doing more to defeat the Christian cause than all the bodily abuse of the communist slave camps put together. It is a very subtle type of persecution.

B. There is the persecution of slander. This is talking you down before others. They will lie about you. They will say all manner of evil against you falsely for your Christian faith. They will call you a holy roller, a Mr. Goody-Goody, say you are too stuck-up to go to worldly places with them, and the like.

C. There is the persecution of temptation. These temptations come in many shapes and forms. It could be denying Jesus before a hostile crowd, committing an immoral act, or staying away from God's people.

D. There is the persecution of false professors of religion. People profess everything in the Book and live by hook or crook. This makes your heart bleed. Something that touches

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the heart causes a deeper pain than that which touches the flesh.

We often wonder why Christians suffer persecution. A study of a few Bible passages will give us the answer.

II. Why Christians are persecuted:

A. Because you are different from “the world.”—“But call to remembrance the former days, in which after you were illuminated, you endured a great fight of afflictions. Partly, while you were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, while you became companions of them that were so used.” (Hebrews 10:32, 33 ET) and “For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, abominable idolatries; Wherein they think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you.” (1 Peter 4:3, 4 ET).

We are living in a standardized world. There are standards for everything. A standard for intelligence, for measurements, for social living, for religion. We would not do so well if we did not have some standards to go by. Standards help us set goals and give purpose to life. One of the big sins that is spoken of as being an abomination to the Lord is an unjust balance. The Ten Commandments are yardsticks for our Christian life. Holiness is the standard by which we enter into Heaven. The problem is not with standards, but with the world’s standards which are different, and in many instances, opposite from ours. The world says be served: we say serve. The world says get: we say give. The world says sin: we say stop sinning. The world says love self: we say love God and others first. Because our standards and goals are different from theirs, they persecute us.

B. In some cases, it is IGNORANCE on their part. “And

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these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me" (John 16:3 ET).

C. In others, it is a hatred of God. "Remember the word that I said unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will persecute you; ..." (John 15:20 ET).

D. The world hates the Gospel. "Yet has he not root in himself, but endures for a while: for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word by and by he is offended" (Matthew 13:21 ET). They see the Gospel, Consider the Gospel, and then reject it. Having rejected the Gospel, they persecute the Christian, which is a constant reminder of the Gospel they rejected. They cannot stand the Christian, because they cannot stand the Gospel. The Christian stands as a constant rebuke to a hardhearted sinner.

E. The world is too PROUD to humble itself to the demands of the Gospel. "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all of his thoughts. His ways are always grievous; your judgments are far above out of his sight: as for all his enemies, he puffs at them" (Psalm 10:4, 5 ET). The truth of the matter is: The Christian is an enemy of the world. The "puffs" of the wicked come to the Christian in the form of persecution.

F. In some cases, it is mistaken zeal. "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yes, the time comes, that whosoever kills you will think that he does God service" (John 16:2 ET). A person who is a Christian will not persecute, but will do all in his power to be a blessing to all with whom he comes in contact. If there is any persecuting going on, you can be sure it is not blessed of God.

Having considered some of the main reasons for being persecuted let us go on to how to bear up under it.

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III. The Christians' attitude toward persecution that will enable them to bear up under it.

A. In the first place, “Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not” (Romans 12:14 KJV). The Greek word *eulogeite* used for bless in this passage carries with it the idea of speaking well of. The Greek word *katarasthe* used for curse is to wish a curse against. What this passage is saying is that when we are being persecuted we are to keep sweet and go out of our way to be good to our persecutors. There is no place for a vengeful or grudging attitude in the Christian’s heart. Not even in a time of persecution of the worst kind. Find something good to say about the person who speaks evil of you. Speak well of your persecutor and wish the best for him. This is the Christian attitude.

B. Pray FOR the salvation of your persecutor. “You have heard that it has been said, ‘You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.’ but I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: ...” (Matthew 5:43-45a ET).

Only a true Christian can keep this command of Jesus. In this sense, persecution is the “acid test” for your Christian experience. If you cannot love and pray for the salvation of your enemy, then you need to dig a little deeper in the Lord. Illustration: Kick a skunk and you have its smell on you for a long time. Kick a honeycomb and it sticks to you and you are obliged to eat it. Kick a carnal Christian and he will raise up a stink. Kick a sanctified Christian and the love of God will gush out all over you and you will long for that kind of religion. You do not prove anything by “flying off the handle” when someone does not treat you right. Only as you bless can

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the world know there is a God in your heart Who really loves and cares for them. Are you revealing God to the world or the world to God? God knows which it is! You cannot fool Him!

C. Pray for your fellow saints who are suffering under persecution.

Paul says: "Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith" (2 Thessalonians 3:1, 2 ET). A day should not go by without us praying for people in communist lands and for our fellow Christians who are under attack at home and abroad.

D. Be assured that God will not forsake you in your time of persecution.

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as you have: for He has said, 'I will never leave you, nor forsake you.' So that we may boldly say, 'The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me' "(Hebrews 13:5, 6 ET).

Our key verse is a good one for this. Notice the three tenses of this verse and the victory that Paul enjoyed in the midst of persecution. Do not get discouraged and quit. God is on your side. He will take you through. "This is the victory that overcomes the world, even your faith" (1 John 5:4b ET).

E. Commit yourself to God when you are under persecution. Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator" (1 Peter 4:19 ET). "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You: because he trusts in You. Trust you in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength:" (Isaiah 26:3, 4 ET). Keep your hand in God's hand He will bring you through the fires of persecution without the smell of smoke upon you. God

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is able to deliver you from the mouths of the lions. He will see you through because He loves you with an everlasting love. Learn how to rest in the arms of Jesus. Your life is always safe when it is in the arms of Jesus.

F. Show patience toward your persecutor. “Being persecuted, we suffer it: (1 Corinthians 4:12c KJV). “Yet if any man suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf” (1 Peter 4:16 ET). When you are persecuted do not feel that it is a disgrace, but thank God that you are counted worthy to suffer shame with your Lord. This will help a lot toward a person fighting back if he realizes it is an honor to suffer for Jesus’ sake.

G. Rejoice in the midst of persecution. “Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in Heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you” (Matthew 5:12 KJV). We can rejoice because our reward will be great in Heaven. God has wonderful things awaiting those who will endure unto the end. As Paul put it: “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18 KJV).

H. Seek to glorify God in times of persecution. “If you be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are you; for the Spirit of Glory and of God rests upon you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified” (1 Peter 4:14 ET).

Illustration: When clay is placed in the sun, it will become hard. On the other hand, if you put wax in the sun it will become soft. It depends on the nature of the material as to whether it gets hard or soft. The same with a person. It depends upon the individual. A hypocrite will become hard and forsake God when times of persecution come. A Christian will be softer toward God, and seek to mold his life more

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nearly to what God expects it to be.

THE SUM OF THE MATTER IS THIS: We stand in a large army of faithful Christians who have fought a good fight of love for hate, blessing for cursing, help for hindrances, compassion for indifference, joy for sorrow, and good for bad. In doing so, they have shown us how it is done. They had recompense unto God and counted not their lives dear unto themselves that they may be counted worthy of the incorruptible crown of life, which does not perish. They saw the hand of God deliver them many times. They were delivered from prison, and found grace to rejoice in the midst of great persecution. These stand as a reminder to us of what God will do for those who will take His way of blessing and love toward those who persecute them. Will the real Christian please stand up and fight for God and His message of holiness? Your prize awaits you at the close of life's little day!

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VII. The Master's Battle Plan

And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go you therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen (Matthew 28:18-20 ET).

And He said unto them, “Go you into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15, 16 ET).

Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, “Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry you in the city of Jerusalem, until you be endued with power from on high (Luke 24:45-49 ET).

But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8 ET).

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

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Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

You are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it gives light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (Matthew 5:3-16 ET).

With a pure heart and in the power of the Holy Spirit, we go out into the entire world to witness for Jesus Christ.

1. We proclaim (preach) the gospel of Jesus Christ.
2. We teach the ways of God so others can know Him.
3. We baptize those who have accepted the teachings and proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
4. We witness: share with others what God has done for us.
5. In doing these things we keep the light of the Gospel of Jesus before everyone.

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6. We rebuke the wicked and encourage the righteous.
7. We work as the salt and light of the world to bring health and healing to our sin sick world.

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VIII. The Spiritual Renewal Mandate

I beseech you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be you transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teaches, on teaching; or he that exhorts, on exhortation: he that gives, let him do it with simplicity; he that rules, with diligence; he that shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind

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one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lies in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," saith the Lord. Therefore if your enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing you shall heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good (Romans 12 ET).

Romans 12 gives us the characteristics of a person who experiences spiritual renewal. This is a checklist to help you stay on track. This is a daily, deliberate decision to follow your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ at all times and places.

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IX. The Order of Command

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: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (Ephesians 4:11-16 ET).

At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, "Verily I say unto you, Except you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:1-4 ET).

But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister,

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and to give His life a ransom for many (Matthew 20:26-28 ET).

The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away (1 Peter 5:1-4 ET).

As a warrior of Jesus Christ, you are in an army where everyone serves. God has put people in leadership positions to be under-shepherds. No one lords it over any one else. Everyone works for the common good, with each receiving orders from the Lord Jesus, Who is the Captain of the Lord's Army. We are "workers together with God!"

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X. The Warrior's Seven Fitness Procedures

1. The Warrior's Commitment

Commit your way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass (Psalm 37:5 ET).

Commit Your works unto the Lord, and your thoughts shall be established (Proverbs 16:3 ET).

And the things that you have heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit you to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also (2 Timothy 2:2 ET).

Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator (1 Peter 4:19 ET).

Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be you idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."

Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur you, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with

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the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry (1 Corinthians 10:6-14 ET).

When talking of commitment, it is as important to know what not to do as well as what to do. Warriors of Jesus are not to commit sin. They are to commit their ways and works to God to be established in Him. They are to commit their souls to the Lord. What God teaches them are to be committed to faithful men so they can teach it to others.

2. The Warrior's Boot Camp!

And indeed you do it toward all the brothers which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brothers, that you increase more and more; and that you study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; that you may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that you may have lack of nothing (1 Thessalonians 4:10-12 ET).

Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth (2 Timothy 2:15 ET).

Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law does he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper (Psalm 1:1-3 ET).

As we neither walk in the counsel of the ungodly, stand in the way of sinners nor sit in the seat of the scornful and make God's Word our delight, God blesses us. This takes real discipline. This also gives us the ability to speak God's Word with power and authority. Taking God's way of doing ministry

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for Him is the true mark of one who is called of the Lord. This takes much work.

3. The Warrior's Exercise

And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men (Acts 24:16 ET).

But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profits little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come (1 Timothy 4:7, 8 ET).

But strong food belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil (Hebrews 5:14 ET).

Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby (Hebrews 12:11 ET).

Exercise is very important for our spiritual health as well as our physical health. We are to exercise in the following areas:

1. To have "a conscience void of offense" toward God or men.
2. To exercise yourself unto godliness.
3. To eat the "strong food" of God so you will be able to "discern" between good and evil.
4. To accept discipline so you will be able to "yield the peaceable fruit of holiness."

4. The Warrior's Benefits

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities; Who heals all Your diseases; Who redeems your life from destruction; Who crowns you with loving-kindness and tender mercies; Who satisfies your mouth with good things; so that your youth is renewed

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like the eagle's (Psalm 103:2-5 ET).

Then Peter began to say unto Him, "Lo, we have left all, and have followed you." And Jesus answered and said, "Verily I say unto you, There is no man that has left house, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brothers, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last first (Mark 10:28-31 ET).

He gives power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint (Isaiah 40:29-31 ET).

The benefits of a warrior of Jesus are out of this world. There is nothing like it anywhere else. When you do God's will, you receive a hundredfold in this life plus eternal life. God makes those He can trust healthy, wealthy and wise. He gives you strength as your day is. He blesses you beyond measure.

5. The Warrior's armor

Love works no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put you on the Lord

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Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof (Romans 13:10-14 ET).

By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, (2 Corinthians 6:7 ET).

Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak (Ephesians 6:13-20 ET).

We must daily take up each piece of the armor and put it on. It covers and protects us completely. There is no armor for our back, because we do not run from the enemy. We face him head on. First, we need to put on the armor of light so we will not walk in darkness. Next we must put on the armor of righteousness on the right side and the left. We do this so we will not get sidetracked on side issues. Then we are to have full "body" armor. This is our full salvation through what Jesus has done for us. The shield of faith protects us from doubts and fears. The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, gives us an offense against the devil's deceptions and assaults.

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6. The Warrior's Diet

And God said, “Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food” (Genesis 1:29 ET).

O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusts in Him. O fear the Lord, you His saints: for there is no want to them that fear Him (Psalm 34:8, 9 ET).

The diet of the warrior of Jesus is very different than that of the world. First, we feast on the Lord with a simple, childlike faith in Him. The physical diet is defined in Genesis 1:29. God does not make mistakes. He did it right the first time. It is raw fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds. This is the very best diet for the animal kingdom, and the human race. Yes, it should be eaten raw and organic as much as possible. Then you should have 1 ounce of pure water for every 2 pounds of body weight. This is God's diet for ultimate health.

7. The Warrior's Rest

Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him: fret not yourself because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked devices to pass (Psalm 37:7 ET).

Blessed is the man whom You chasten, O Lord, and teaches him out of Your law; that You may give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be dug for the wicked. For the Lord will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance (Psalm 94:12-14 ET).

And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious (Isaiah 11:10 KJV).

Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me;

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for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light (Matthew 11:28-30 ET).

Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, were multiplied (Acts 9:31 ET).

There remains therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God did from His (Hebrews 4:9, 10 ET).

The rest of the warrior of Jesus is an internal assurance that will keep that person regardless of the circumstances. The world needs this rest so very much. Share your rest with others. Thank God for it.

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XI. The War-Cry Crystallized

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18, 19 ET).

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified. And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vine dressers. But you shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: you shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall you boast yourselves. For your shame you shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them. For I the Lord love

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judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed Me with the garments of salvation, He has covered Me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth her bud, and as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations (Isaiah 61:1-11 ET).

“Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God; and we know not with what we must serve the Lord, until we come thither” (Exodus 10:26 ET).

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, “Death is swallowed up in victory.” “O death, where is Your sting? O grave, where is Your victory?” The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be you steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:54-58 ET).

For whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith (1 John 5:4 ET).

Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31 ET).

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The battle cry is to take the whole kingdom for the Lord Jesus Christ. Do not leave anything behind. Go from victory to victory. Spread the love of God everywhere you go. Keep faithful to the end. Fight until every wrong is made right and “the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ.”

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XII. The Field of Operation

And He spoke many things unto them in parables, saying, “Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: but other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold. Who has ears to hear, let him hear (Matthew 13:3-9 ET).

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and you gave Me food: I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and you took Me in: naked, and you clothed Me: I was sick, and you visited Me: I was in prison, and you came unto Me.” Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, “Lord, when saw we You an hungered, and fed You? or thirsty, and gave You drink? When saw we You a stranger, and took You in? or naked, and clothed You? Or when saw we You sick, or in prison, and came unto You?” And the King shall answer and say unto them, “Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these My brothers, you have done it unto Me” (Matthew 25:34-40 ET).

The warrior’s “field of operation” is anywhere there are hurting people. The world is his parish. He goes about doing

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good to the bodies and souls of all mankind.

XIII. The Clean-up Operation

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me (Psalm 51:10 KJV).

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Your Word (Psalm 119:9 ET).

All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weighs the spirits (Proverbs 16:2 ET).

Who can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" (Proverbs 20:9 ET).

Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow (Isaiah 1:16, 17 ET).

And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away (Isaiah 35:8-10 KJV).

Awake, awake; put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into you the uncircumcised and the unclean (Isaiah 52:1 ET).

Depart you, depart you, go you out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go you out of the midst of her; be you clean,

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that bear the vessels of the Lord (Isaiah 52:11 ET).

“Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may you also do good, that are accustomed to do evil. Therefore will I scatter them as the stubble that passes away by the wind of the wilderness. This is your lot, the portion of your measures from Me,” saith the Lord; “because you have forgotten Me, and trusted in falsehood. Therefore will I discover your skirts upon your face, that your shame may appear. I have seen your adulteries, and your neighings, the lewdness of your whoredom, and your abominations on the hills in the fields. Woe unto you, O Jerusalem! will you not be made clean? When shall it once be? (Jeremiah 13:23-27 ET).

And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against Me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against Me (Jeremiah 33:8 ET).

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you shall keep My judgments, and do them. And you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and you shall be My people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that you shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. Then shall you remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations (Ezekiel 36:25-31 ET).

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Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be My people, and I will be their God (Ezekiel 37:23 ET).

And they shall teach My people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean. And in controversy they shall stand in judgment; and they shall judge it according to My judgments: and they shall keep My laws and My statutes in all My assemblies; and they shall hallow My Sabbaths (Ezekiel 44:23, 24 ET).

“In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. And it shall come to pass in that day,” saith the Lord of hosts, “that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land” Be you not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what concord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has he that believes with an infidel? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? for you are the temple of the living God; as God has said, “I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be you separate,” said the Lord, “and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,” saith the Lord Almighty (2 Corinthians 6:14-18 ET).

Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us

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cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God (2 Corinthians 7:1 KJV).

That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish (Ephesians 5:26, 27 ET).

For God has not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despises, despises not man, but God, who has also given unto us His Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 4:7, 8 ET).

For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (Hebrews 9:13, 14 ET).

But He gives more grace. Wherefore He said, God resists the proud, but gives grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up (James 4:6-10 ET).

If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. ... If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness

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(1 John 1:6, 7, 9 ET).

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints (Revelation 19:8 KJV).

There is much uncleanness in our churches and our world. As you look at the above passages of Scripture you will see that the heart is what needs to be cleansed. The heart needs to be cleansed from sin and sinning. This can only be accomplished through the blood of Jesus Christ. The warrior of Jesus needs to be pure in body, soul and spirit. Anything less than this is subnormal Christianity. Our churches are full of non-biblical doctrines or teachings that are encouraging the wicked to remain in their sinfulness and disgraceful living in the name of Jesus Christ. So we have everything from “born-again homosexuals” to “sinning saints.” First, we need to clean such bold-faced corruption out of our hearts and lives. Then, there is the heart-searching task of clearing our church rolls of all members who refuse to turn away from their rebellion against God and His ways. Lastly, the cleansed church needs to go into all the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ to clean up all the abominations and tyrannical activities that are destroying everything that is dear to God in every nation.

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XIV. The Victory Celebration

A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory. And in His name shall the Gentiles trust (Matthew 12:20, 21 ET).

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is Your sting? O grave, where is Your victory?” The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be you steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:52-58 ET).

Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loves Him that begot loves Him also that is begotten of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son

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of God? This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. He that believes on the Son of God has the witness in himself: he that believes not God has made Him a liar; because he believes not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may believe on the name of the Son of God. And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He hears us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him. If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death. We know that whosoever is born of God sins not; but he that is begotten of God keeps himself, and that wicked one touches him not. And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen (1 John 5:1-21)

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ET).

The warrior of Jesus Christ finds reason to celebrate victory on three fronts: 1. Victory that is won in our hearts as sin is overcome on a day-by-day, moment-by-moment basis by the mighty working of the Holy Spirit in our inner beings. 2. Victory over the circumstances of our daily life in answer to prayer. 3. The ultimate victory when all the warriors of Jesus stand around the throne of God in the Holy City where all is peace and rest.