

If men are going to be saved, they must have someone willing to take the risk, engage the battle, and rescue them from the enemy.

The battle continues to rage against Christianity. If Christians do not engage this battle, Christianity as we know it will disappear and true Christians will find themselves worshipping in hiding and greatly persecuted for their faith and proselytizing. The time is well overdue for Christians to rise up and *Engage the Battle*.

In this handbook you will:

- Understand the battle waged against Christianity.
- How to prepare for warfare.
- How to engage the battle.
- A strategy for sharing your faith.
- Understand your number one weapon needed for engaging the battle.
- Learn the secret to Elisha's boldness.

The time to *Engage the Battle* and to do something, anything is now. This book will help you to gain confidence in going forth and sharing your faith.

Engage the Battle

a handbook for evangelism



Steve Magill

Engage the Battle: A Handbook for Evangelism

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Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture references are from the *King James Version*.

Emphasis within Scriptures and quotes are added by the author, unless otherwise noted.

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Dedicated to my children,
Rebekah, Christine, Rachel, Daniel, Steven, and Michael,
who encouraged dad to complete this book.



Introduction

Our present days are disturbing, dark, dangerous, and leading America swiftly into a post Christian era. I find it unsettling to look into the future and see the ultimate end of Christianity if we continue our present course. However dark the world may seem, there is a light urgently calling out a remnant to go and be a witness like never before. It is calling Christians to be *so much the more* established in their faith. It is also calling Christians to *so much the more* to engage the battle. Family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and acquaintances in need of salvation are all around us. We are called to compel those with whom we live to escape God's terrible wrath and to receive His wonderful provision of salvation through Jesus.

I encourage you to be part of a great harvest, which could very well be the last. Hear God's call and do something, anything, to *engage the battle* and bring others to Christ.

War is declared. The call is given by the Supreme Commander to engage the battle. We must heed the call before the night comes and we are unable to proclaim freely the hope of the gospel.

With Prayer,
Steven Magill



CHAPTER 1 Declaration of War

Look around you. The battle is engaged. War is declared. You are in the heat of battle...and you are on one side or the other—there are no neutral parties in this war.

AMERICA HAS DECLARED WAR ON CHRISTIANITY

We enter the 21st century with a wide gap between Christianity and culture. After 200 years, Christianity is no longer the common law of our land. As in the parable of the sower, Christianity is being choked out with the cares, riches, and pleasures of our present age (Luke. 8:7, 14). In today’s lingo, this is known as secularism. Secularism is embraced as the ‘god’ of the 21st Century. Because of its pervasiveness, we must sense the urgency to be *so much the more* with engaging the battle and bringing the message of Christ to those around us. Our present age is indeed dark and continues to grow darker. The urgency is to be *so much the more* about the work of evangelism before the door to the gospel is closed. Jesus confirms that such a day is coming when He said: *I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: THE NIGHT COMETH, WHEN NO MAN CAN WORK* (John 9:4). That night is hovering over America.

SECULARISM

Secularism is the age old battle under a new name for our twenty-first century. It is the “treasure” and “mammon” of this world spoken of in Matthew 6:19-21, 24 that draws us from the things that belong to God. It is the forbidden fruit that caused Eve to sin: “it was good for food,” “pleasant to the eyes,” and greatly “desired” to “make one wise” (Genesis 3:6). Secularism embraces what can be seen, touched, felt, experienced, and known within the boundaries of the physical universe.

THREE CANNONS OF SECULARISM

There are three great cannons of secularism that are fired at us in order to destroy our Christian foundations:

Cannon 1 – Humanism: You Are God

Humanism began to wield its influence in 1933 with the signing of *The Humanist Manifesto*.¹ It gave to America a philosophical/religious framework from which to direct the thoughts, morality, and theology of Americans away from Christianity. The basic concept of humanism is that you do not need a supernatural God to direct your life, you can do it yourself—you are god! The humanist doctrine unleashed the idea that man is basically good, the universe is self-caused, relativism replaces absolutes, reason replaces faith, and all religions are equal and essentially useless. With humanism as our philosophical and religious guide, it is easy to understand why we set out to remove all references to Christianity from our history books and culture.

¹ *The Humanist Manifesto* was revised in 1973 with the *Humanist Manifesto I* and then with the *A Secular Humanist Declaration* in 1980.

Cannon 2 – Relativism: My Truth is Truth

If I am ‘god,’ then my beliefs and values are just as valid as anyone else’s. This is the basic tenant of relativism: since all beliefs and values are equal, there is no absolute right or wrong. If there are no absolutes, there cannot be a God expecting people to live according to absolute standards. With such a worldview, the conclusion, as we are witnessing today, is moral anarchy where everyone does what is right in his or her own eyes.

Researcher George Barna, in his book *Boiling Point*, observes how pervasive relativism has become:

At the start of the third millennium, America is a nation in which only one-fourth of all adults and just 1 out of every 10 teenagers believe that there is absolute moral truth. The majority of America, therefore, either believes or yields to the belief that all moral truth is relative to the individual and his/her circumstances.²

Cannon 3 – Pragmatism: If It Works for Me, That is Truth

When America entered the industrial age, we became results driven: whatever it takes to get the desired result is valid. As we begin the twenty-first century this pragmatic worldview has us believing that if it works, that is all that matters. Life has become a process of discovering how our actions work for us, and when it works, that is truth, at least for us. Pragmatism focuses on whether it works, not is it right?

Since these rulings, it has been open season on Christianity

² Barna, George. *Boiling Point*. Ventura California: Regal Books, 2001: 78.

Objective moral standards for all people, given by an eternal God, have been replaced with the ‘god’ within who does what is right in his or her own eyes according to what works for the individual.

THE FRUIT OF SECULARISM

The Fruit of Secularism – Removing God

Here in America, embracing secularism with its humanistic, relativistic pragmatism has deceived us into thinking we could rule ourselves without God. Steps were then taken on June 25, 1962 to remove God from our nation when the Supreme Court heard the *Engle vs Vitale* case ruling it unconstitutional to pray in public schools. This cleared the way for the *Murray vs Curlett* and the *Abington vs Schempp* ruling on June 17, 1963. These three cases, within a twelve month period, reversed everything that had been the norm for America up to this point.

Since these rulings, it has been open season on Christianity and Christianity as the common law has disappeared. Since 1962 the following rulings have also taken place:

- 1980 The Supreme Court banned the posting of the Ten Commandments in public schools with the *Stone vs. Graham* ruling on November 17, 1980.
- 1989 The Supreme Court ruled that a nativity scene in a government building is unconstitutional with the *Chabad vs. American Civil Liberties Union* on July 3, 1989.
- 1992 The Supreme Court ruled that prayer by the clergy at public school graduation ceremonies is unconstitutional with the *Lee vs. Weisman* ruling on June 24, 1992.
- 2003 Alabama Justice Roy Moore is removed from office on August 22, 2003 for refusing to remove a Ten

Commandments monument from the State's Supreme Court building.

All of these rulings indicate that America is fast becoming a secular, anti-Christian nation. Unless there is a dramatic turn-around, the future will be physically hostile toward Christians. We are already witnessing this hostility in events such as...

- The 1999 shooting at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado where Cassie Bernall and Rachel Scott were singled out for their Christian faith.
- In February 2006 outside of Birmingham Alabama ten churches were set on fire.
- On October 2, 2006, in an Amish one room school house in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, a gunman enters the school and kills five girls ages seven through thirteen.
- I have a friend who went through great pressure in the work place because of his Christian faith. He was on the verge of being fired when he appealed and was able to be transferred to another plant.
- I know a pastor who is helping a young girl who is told she is not to wear tee-shirts with Christian words on it in school.
- Television, movies, and music are all becoming more blatant in their hostility toward Christians.

*If the world hate
you, ye know
that it hated me
before it hated*

you...

These are only a small portion of the persecution that is increasing in America. John 15:18-19 makes it clear that to be a Christian in a dark world is to be persecuted:

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

The time is soon coming when life will be very hard for Christians in America. The line is being drawn in the sand to separate true Christians from those with only an image of Christianity.

The Fruit of Secularism – Moral Anarchy

The fruit of secularism moved us into a moral decline that can only be called anarchy, where every social indicator reveals a drastic turn for the worse. Concerning our present condition, one author writes:

The decline of America should be obvious to any thinking American. The explosion of crime, gang warfare, and drive-by shootings in our cities; the disintegration of the American family, with proliferating divorce, infidelity, child abuse, single parent families, and teenage rebellion; the explosion of drug usage (the highest in the world); the killing of 40 million babies in their mother's wombs over a twenty-six year period; the rampant spread of promiscuity, pornography, homosexuality, and sexually transmitted diseases; the dumbing down of American children in the public school system; high taxation; the ignoring of our Constitution; exploding governmental controls over every aspect of the American

peoples' lives; and gross immorality and corruption at the highest levels of the U.S. government, are all irrefutable evidence of a country whose culture, morality, traditions, and spiritual life are in a free fall.³

In his book, *America: To Pray or Not to Pray?*, David Barton reveals statistically America's moral decline. He summarizes some of his findings:

America is the world's leader in violent crime, divorce, teen pregnancy, abortions, drug use, illiteracy, documented cases of aids and has the highest incidence of teenage motherhood of any Western country.⁽⁴⁾

The social indicators have all pointed back to the year 1962/1963 as the year that America's drastic decline began; the year that the Supreme Court ordered God to depart our nation. Until 1962/1963 America had:

...the finest educational system in the world. The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores were the highest ever. America prior to 1963 had a violent crime rate below the national population growth rate. The divorce rate was dropping steadily from the 1940's, and the teenage premarital sex rate was unchanged. By the 1990's, the bogus "separation of church and state" was fully established and everything to do with God had been removed from the public schools and most governmental

³ McAlvany, Don. *Storm Warning*. Oklahoma City, OK: Hearthstone Publishing, 1999: 23

⁴ Barton, David. *America: To Pray or Not To Pray?* Aledo, Texas: Wallbuilder Press, 1994: 107.

institutions.⁽⁵⁾

Since 1962/1963, what once was judged to be wrong is now considered acceptable: abortion, adultery, drugs, promiscuity, sodomy, and pornography are common place. Our schools have become jungles filled with drugs, sex, and violence. Our children have no respect for parents and live in rebellion. It is clear that if there is not a dramatic turn-around, the future will not be a pleasant place.

The Fruit of Secularism – Spiritual Anarchy

The fruit of secularism also moved America into spiritual anarchy. George Barna observed this shift in his book *The Second Coming of the Church* when he concluded that Christians are no different than non-Christians in their lifestyle. This was based on 131 different measures of attitudes, behaviors, values, and beliefs.⁽⁶⁾ Other evidences of the churches spiritual anarchy is revealed in Zondervan's publishing of the *Today New International Version* gender neutral Bible; the Presbyterian Church (USA) conference to determine whether Jesus is the *only* way to salvation; the church's emphasis on social and political action versus disseminating the gospel; its method of evangelism where anything is justified as long as it draws people into meetings and church events; its ordination of sodomites, and the list continues to grow day-by-day.

The world's pragmatism influenced the church to mimic the world's result driven methods, using the world's.⁽⁷⁾

- Wisdom: seeking change through power, politics,

⁵ McAlvany, Don: 23

⁶ Barna, George. *The Second Coming of the Church*. Nashville, Tennessee: Word Publishing, 1998: 211

⁷ Concepts taken from the book, *Whatever Happened to the Gospel of Grace* by James Montgomery Boice: 24-25

- and money instead of the word of God.
- Theology: seeking salvation through principles of living, and social and political action instead of repentance and conviction of heart.
 - Agenda: helping people to overcome their physical, social, and emotional problems instead of striving to expose sin and bring others to repentance through Christ. Sin, hell, and judgment are disappearing from our pulpits.
 - Methods: the social gospel, the political gospel, the entertainment gospel, the emphasis on building projects, church growth, and marketing and money earmark today's church instead of reliance on the power of the Holy Spirit.

The church is so busy doing and planning and building that there is little room for the Holy Spirit to do His work. The result has been the transformation of our churches into entertainment, self-help, and social centers. The church has lost its image as a house of prayer and a place to reverence God. This shift resulted in the filling of our churches with Christians in name only, not in transformation of the heart. The Apostle Paul writes of this as having the *form of godliness* but denying the power (2 Timothy 3:5).

The church also shifted focus from being a house of prayer and worship for the saints to being a place to appeal to sinners and began to adapt the church to appeal to sinners instead of God's people. The sadness is, the church was never meant for unrepentant sinners, neither was it to appeal to sinners by adapting to their methods and lifestyles. The church's mission is to go outside its fellowship and compel sinners to repent...then we are to bring them into the fellowship of believers. The church is meant for those who want to worship and draw close to God, the

people of God. Unregenerate sinners, who refuse to quit their sin, fellowshiping together with God's people, is blasphemy. Paul voices this concern in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18:

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

The Fruit of Secularism – Toned Down Preaching

Secularism's influence caused the church to tone down its preaching about repentance, hell, and God's coming wrath. In the 18th and 19th centuries, in the days of Jonathan Edwards and Charles Finney, the emphasis was upon explaining the wrath of God that was upon all who violated God's laws. People were introduced to a God requiring perfection and, in contrast, were able to see that they were deserving of hell because of their sin. Once convicted, people were then encouraged to cry out to God for His mercy upon them.

Today, the wrath of God is toned down or not spoken of. People are introduced to a God loves you and wants to make you happy gospel, to a God who tolerates sin, and to a salvation that is received through making a decision instead of a broken heart

through repentance. The result has been that only 5-10 percent of those making a decision for Christ follow through on that decision. In the 18th and 19th centuries, 75-80 percent followed through.⁽⁸⁾

THERE IS HOPE—DO SOMETHING!

If God's blessing is to return to American soil, Christians must be *so much the more* about the work of true repentance, going to the lost, and countering the world's destructive forces using the truth. Here are a few suggestions to assist in this process:

- Make the reading and practice of the Bible your number one priority.
- Live a life of separation from the world. While living in the world, separate from its attitudes, behaviors, values, and beliefs.
- Spread the truth that there are absolute standards established by one Creator who will make all people accountable.
- Ensure that who you say you are is translated into your everyday life.
- Live with a clear Biblical worldview guiding and directing your thoughts, words, and deeds.
- Exercise regularly the constitutional right to distribute religious literature and to speak and preach in public places.
- Translate Biblical principles, values, and vision to everyday mundane living as real, practical solutions for everyday life.

If God's blessings do not return, we can expect America's future to be filled with war on its soil, hunger throughout its land, disease

⁸ Institute in Basic Life Principles. *The Power of True Success*. Oak Brook, Illinois: Institute in Basic Life Principles, 2001: 17

running rampant, and an increase in natural disasters.

Because God has been rejected so consistently and blatantly over the past forty plus years, there are perhaps only a few short years left to openly worship and proclaim the gospel and to reap the harvest without fear of legal repercussions and physical persecution. Each Christian must do his part to live in radical obedience to God and to reach out to others, one person at a time. Revival has never taken place through the decisions and actions of an organization or agency. Revival takes place when a person belonging to God determines to live in an all or nothing radical obedience to Him. To be radical is to be willing to stand against the different forms the world has taken, and if necessary, to stand alone.

The battle is before us. The world cries out for you and me. The challenge is to be taken in hand. Let us go and fulfill the last command of our Lord and make disciples, permeating our world with the principles, beliefs, and values of Christianity. Do not wait until God calls you specifically. He gave the call over 2000 years ago to anyone who will heed. Don't wait, go and do something, anything, to fulfill Christ's last command.

ASK GOD

As you journey through this book, ask God to enlighten you to the fields that are ripe and ready for you to reap; inspire you as to how you can work your fields in wisdom and grace; fill you with an all or nothing urgency to go and do something, anything, before the door to the gospel is closed.

DO SOMETHING

There is an urgency to adhere to a strict standard of obedience. As the writer of Hebrews 10:25 wrote, we need to be *so much the more* living the life of true believers by:

- Drawing near to God with a true heart in full assurance of faith.
- Keeping our hearts pure by keeping our conscience clear before God.
- Exemplifying God's righteousness by conforming to His Holy Spirit.
- Holding firm the profession of our faith without wavering.
- Considering one another to provoke to love and good works.
- Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.
- And we must be *so much the more* fervent with engaging the battle and calling our nation to repentance and belief in the gospel.

As secularism continues to choke out Christianity, we must be *so much the more* determined to do something, anything, for the sake of the gospel.

War is declared. It presses hard. The battle must be engaged.



CHAPTER 2

Mustering the Troops

What? The command to go is not for you? It is not your gift? Sorry. Like all commands, the command to go is applicable to all. It is not an option.

The more aggressive the enemy, the more aggressive must be the engaging of the battle. So it is with America's moral and spiritual battle. We must be *so much the more* about the business of fulfilling Christ's last command to *Go* (Matthew 28:19). The urgency is so great the open door we now have to compel others to repent may soon be closed. America will soon be a hostile, unfriendly place for Christians.

WAKE UP THE TROOPS!

The church has a major obstacle in its path: it is so busy praising and worshipping their Master that it has become mockery, even blasphemy. Look at it in this way: Imagine the Captain of the fire department informing his men of a large fire with many potential fatalities. He gives the command to go, put out the fire, and save lives. In response, his men do not go to the fire, preferring to stay in the fire hall praising and worshipping the Captain, extolling the

greatness of his compassion and mercy for giving such a command. Of course you would think this was foolish, but this is exactly what is happening in the church.

The Captain of our Salvation has given the command to go outside the four walls of our denominations to warn men, women, and children of the enveloping flames of hell. In obedience to His command, those in the church remain in their pews praising, worshipping, and extolling the greatness of their Savior while men, women, and children continue to perish in the fire. What mockery this must seem to the one giving the command. Truly we must be doers of the word and not hearers only (James 1:22). Jesus spoke of this when he said: *And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say* (Luke 6:46). God is not as pleased with praise and worship in the pew as He is with love and action on the curb.

ENGAGE THE BATTLE

Our responsibility is to take Christ's teachings to the world, and to inform, warn, preach, teach, and compel all people everywhere to escape God's coming wrath, prepare for His coming kingdom, and to live righteously. Here are a few verses which command us to enter the enemy's territory and engage the battle:

Matthew 9:37: Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few—*engage the battle!*

Matthew 28:19-20: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen—*engage the battle!*

Mark 16:15: *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and*

preach the gospel to every creature—engage the battle!

Luke 14:23: And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled—*engage the battle!*

John 4:35: Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest—*engage the battle!*

Acts 1:8: But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth—*engage the battle!*

Our number one earthly task is not to build a life, but to help others prepare for an eternal kingdom. We do this by de-emphasizing our present life by losing our life (Matthew 16:25), not focusing on the things we see and feel (Colossians 3:1-2), and not getting caught up with the cares of this life (Matthew 6:25) in order to focus on saving souls. John Wesley hit the mark when he wrote: *You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work.*(9) Anything that hinders the saving of souls should itself be removed from our lives.

Our number one task is not to build a life, but to help others prepare for an eternal kingdom.

Go to Where the Battle Is

The authority to ‘go’ is clear, but what does it mean to go? In its

9 Comfort, Ray. *The Evidence Bible*. Gainesville, Florida: Bridge-Logos Publishers, 2000:86

most literal sense it means to go into all the different cities and nations of our world that have not heard the message of the gospel and deliver the message there. A second sense is to bring the message of the gospel to all the different people we encounter in our everyday life. We have family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, acquaintances, and regulars in our life who need to hear and see the gospel we embrace. To them the command to go applies. A third sense is to actively look for those who would not otherwise be in our immediate circle of influence if we had not searched them out. A fourth sense is to bring the message of the gospel to the culture at large: government, education, movies, books, entertainment, etc. We are the *salt* and *light* (Matthew 5:13-16) given the responsibility to permeate all of culture with the principles, doctrines, and morality of Christ’s teachings. In our going our mission is to preach repentance and the gospel in order to compel and gather people out of the world and into relationship with Christ. Remember that the gate to hell is wide. Most will enter through this gate of least resistance. Only a few will enter the narrow gate to eternal life (Matthew 7:13-14). We are called to go and find the few.

The mandate is clear. It is given to all regardless of ability or gift. Everyone lives in relationship with others. It is to these we are to bring the message of repentance and the gospel. What is holding you back? Go and do something, anything, to help others understand the Christ you serve.

YOU CAN DO IT!

The command to go is not an option or a suggestion, but the responsibility of all who belong to Christ. God does not ask if we have the right spiritual gifts or great ability or whether we have the appropriate resources. God’s concern is not with who we are or what we are able to do or with what we have, but with our obedience.

God's concern is that we obey Him in our weakness so that His power and strength might be seen, not our strength and ability. God does not want competition. He will take our weakness and make it His strength. He desires the weak and insignificant of this world in order to confound the wise (1 Corinthians 1:27-28). When you are weak, you are in position to be used by God:

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence (1 Corinthians 1:26-29).

Let us learn from men like Moses, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. Go forth with confidence against all odds—God will indeed empower to accomplish His work through you.

Moses – An Old Man

Moses was an old man, in his eighties, at that time in life when his body was weak, his speech slow, and he felt that he was far removed from being the great deliverer warrior he, perhaps, perceived himself to be when he killed the Egyptian forty years earlier (Exodus. 2:11-14).

When God called Moses his response was a natural one when he questioned: *Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?* (Exodus. 3:11) After all, these were the same people who rejected him forty

years earlier. God assured him: *I will be with thee* (Exodus. 3:12). Moses wasn't convinced, still focused on the people, and felt he needed to know God's name in order to confirm to the people that he was sent by God (Exodus. 3:13). God reassured him: *Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you* (Exodus. 3:12). Still, Moses wasn't confident to go and questioned the Lord: *But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee* (Exodus 4:1). God reassured him a third time by equipping him to do miracles before the people (Exodus. 4:2-9). Yet, Moses still resisted God's compelling and felt insecure about his slowness of speech, that natural slowness that often comes with age: *O my LORD, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue* (Exodus. 4:10). God once again reassured him: *And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say* (Exodus. 4:11-12).

Do you feel too old, insecure, inadequate or fear rejection? Find assurance in Moses. God will also empower you and turn your weakness and inability into strengths. Don't keep making excuses as to why you can't go—go, and do something, anything, knowing that you are going in God's strength and not in your weakness. God's strength is perfected in your weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Isaiah – A Man of Unclean Lips

God called Isaiah while he was yet a sinner: *Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips* (Isaiah 6:5). God calls a man of unclean lips to speak to a people with unclean lips.

When Isaiah recognized God, he recognized his sin and cried out in repentance. God heard his cry, purged him of sin, and removed

his iniquity (Isaiah. 6:6-7).

After recognizing God and his need for repentance, Isaiah was now in position to hear God's voice, asking: *Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?* (Isaiah. 6:8) Isaiah immediately responded, saying: *Here am I, send me* (Isaiah. 6:8).

Perhaps you too feel that you are too sinful to do God's work. Follow Isaiah's example and cry out to God. Allow God to purge you of sin and iniquity. Hear His voice and go in obedience to His word. Find assurance in God's promises that He will remove your sin and empower you with righteousness.

Even as God purged Isaiah's unclean lips to speak to a people with unclean lips, God also wants to remove your sin and send you to speak to sinful people.

Are you a sinner in need of cleansing? Follow Isaiah's example and God will also work in you to bring about change. God will take your sin and transform it to His righteousness.

Jeremiah – A Youth

Jeremiah was a young man, and the last thing on his mind was that he would become one of Israel's great prophets. His response to God's call was not one of rebellion, insecurity or rejection, but a natural response of someone trying to understand how this could be possible: *Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child* (Jeremiah 1:6). God reassured him:

But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD (Jeremiah 1:7-8).

God then touched Jeremiah's mouth giving to him His words to speak (Jeremiah 1:9). God will do the same for you. However young or inexperienced you are, God will equip and empower with His strength and ability. Whoever belongs to God is empowered by Him. To belong to God means to lay down our lives before God and allow Him to pick it up for His purpose, regardless of age.

Are you discouraged from going into the field because of your youth? Do not be. Follow God's leading and let God work in you in mighty ways. God will equip you. He will take away all hindrances and fill you with all that you need to fulfill His work through you. God will take your weakness and make it His strength. In fact, He doesn't want your abilities, but only His strength working through you.

Gideon, Saul, Israel, Paul – The Least Is Called

Other examples of how God calls the least is found with Gideon, who responded to God saying: *I am the least in my father's house* (Judges 6:15). Saul, when chosen to be king, responded in amazement: *Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? And my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin?* (1 Samuel 9:21) Israel, was chosen by God when they were an insignificant group: *The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people* (Deuteronomy 7:6-7). Paul, when ordained to be an Apostle, confessed: *For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God* (1 Corinthians 15:9).

It is clear that we do not go in our own strength, but with God's equipping and empowering for the task He sent us to do. We do not need the right resources or even money to go, only God's empowerment. What is holding you back? Go and reap the harvest. Go and engage the battle.

Character of a Man that Can be Used of God

God is not looking for people who think of themselves as worthy to be chosen by Him or who believe they are able to fulfill the task with their ability and know how. God is looking for those who stand before Him in weakness, fear, and much trembling. The spirit of Paul, as found in 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, is the spirit of those called by God to demonstrate His Spirit and power:

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in *weakness*, and in *fear*, and in much *trembling*. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

*God is calling
people like you
and me...to
engage the battle
and proclaim the
gospel.*

God is calling people like you and me, who are apprehensive, even fearful, to engage the battle and proclaim the gospel. God has called you to demonstrate His power, not your abilities. Go with God as your confidence. He will equip and empower.

LESSONS FROM ELISHA

Point-of-Contact

Many will not engage the battle until they feel that God is indeed with them or have seen great signs of confirmation. However, the

example of Elisha is that God empowers at the point-of-contact.

Elisha was promised a double portion of Elijah's spirit if he saw him taken from the earth (2 Kings 2:9-10). Elisha saw him disappear with the chariots of fire and received the double portion he asked for (2 Kings 2:11-12); yet he did not know or feel that he had been empowered. It wasn't until he put-into-action what he saw Elijah do that he knew God's empowerment:

He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over (2 Kings 2:13-14).

God's power was known at the point-of-contact, the moment the cloak hit the water.

Peter also illustrates this lesson in Matthew 14:26-31. Jesus was walking on the water. Peter asked to walk on the water also. Jesus told Peter to come, and he did. When the storm came, Peter was afraid and began to sink. Jesus did not help until Peter cried out, *Lord, save me*. It wasn't until Peter put-into-action and cried out to Jesus that Jesus saved him. God's power was known at the point-of-contact, the moment that he cried out in his sinking.

In Luke 8:22-25, when Jesus was in a ship with His disciples, He was fast asleep when a storm came, filling the ship with water and putting everyone in jeopardy. The disciples were helpless. Jesus continued to sleep, oblivious to the storm, until His disciples came to him and awoke him, saying *Master, master, we perish*. Jesus rose up, rebuked the wind, and stormy sea...and they were calm.

It wasn't until the disciples' came to Jesus to wake him that Jesus ended the storm. God's power was known at the point-of-contact, the moment the disciples woke Jesus from His sleep.

Are you waiting to know without a doubt that God has equipped and empowered you before you engage the battle? If you are, you will never go. God has already empowered you. You may never know it until there is reason for its release. Therefore, do not hesitate any longer. Something in you compels you to do something. It is now up to you to go and do it, something, anything for the sake of bringing the teachings, principles, beliefs, and values of Christ to a sin diseased world.

Seeing the Invisible

Many will not go into the fields because they are fearful. Fear is often the result of a lack of vision, not being able to see beyond what is presented. Elisha's servant was fearful and ready to run because he did not discern as Elisha did. He saw the enemy army surrounding him and spoke with fear: *Alas, my master! How shall we do?* (2 Kings 6:13-16) In other words, "What shall we do? Our enemy greatly outnumbers us. We don't have a chance." Elisha prayed for his servant that he might see as he sees:

And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha (2 Kings 6:17).

The angelic host outnumbered the enemy's army and victory was theirs (2 Kings 6:18). Be of good courage, those who are with us are more than those who are against us. Pray that God would open your eyes to spiritually discern the protecting host encamping round about each of us day and night (Psalms 34:7).

DO SOMETHING

Perhaps you also need assurance from God. You are more fortunate than the Biblical men and women of God in that you have the revealed will of God and all His assurances written down for you. The following will help you find assurance for your fears and inadequacies:

- Make a list of your fears, insecurities, and limitations.
- Next to this list, write God's promise concerning these fears.
- Understand that these promises are for you.
- Now go and bring the gospel to others.
- Go with God's assurance.



CHAPTER 3

Preparing for Warfare

How silly to say: “I will fly a plane,” without first learning to fly. Yet many will engage the battle without preparing their heart and learning to use the weapons of their warfare.

PREPARING FOR WARFARE—REPENT!

There are conditions placed on being able to win souls for Christ; the most crucial is that our heart must be right before God. This is the example of David as he cried out to God because of his sin with Bathsheba; he recognized that he would not be able to teach sinners God’s way and see them converted until his heart was right before God (Psalm. 51:13).

Recognize the Depth of Sin

David’s example of repentance, in Psalm 51, helps to revive our own heart. David’s repentance reveals that we must recognize the depth of our sin. In verses one and two David uses the words transgression, iniquity, and sin to reveal how great he saw his sin. Transgressions are actions and words that overstep the limits of God’s standard. Iniquity arises out of the heart and is a condition of not being right with God with our motivations, attitudes, and

emotions. Sin is a total missing of the mark where transgression and iniquity are continued in without repentance. David’s use of these words reveal how he overstepped God’s limits, was not at all right with God, and that he was moving further from God’s direction for his life. So great was his awareness of sin that he recognized that he could not be used to influence others for God (Psalm 51:13).

Allow God to Restore You

Before God can use you and me, our hearts must be in right standing with Him. We need to follow David’s example and allow God to restore us to right relationship with Him. Before the church can be restored to its position as a house of prayer, it must repent of its reliance upon the world and its methods and be restored to relationship with God through the power of the Holy Spirit. Repentance, revival, and reformation have nothing to do with great plans or unlimited resources, but with the condition of our own heart before God.

Cry Out to God

David’s example reveals our need to cry out to God for mercy (Psalm 51:1-2). David’s plea is a plea for forgiveness. He pleads to have his transgression blotted out, to be washed thoroughly from iniquity and cleansed from sin. Find yourself a solitary place and cry out to God for mercy.

Confess Your Sin

David’s example reveals the importance of confessing sin to God (Psalm 51:3-5). Sin will not depart unless it is confessed. It also must be recognized as always against God and that God is always just in His punishment of sin. Confession of sin is not limited only to God. James encourages Christians to *confess your faults one to another* (James 5:16). Find that person you can pour your heart out to. Perhaps you need others to forgive you; go to them, confess your fault and ask forgiveness.

Ask God to Renew

David’s example reveals the importance of petitioning God for renewal (Psalm 51:6-12). David asked God to purge him thoroughly and wash his sin as white as snow. He doesn’t just want a surface cleansing, he wants his heart to be recreated and renewed with a right spirit so that he is not removed from God’s presence. David also wants to be restored with joy and held up by God’s generous Spirit. Notice that petitioning God follows David’s crying out and confession. Do we petition God before clearing our hearts before Him? Clear, then petition.

Once David cry’s out, confesses his sin, and petitions to be renewed, he is now in position to *teach transgressors God’s ways, and to convert sinners to God* (Psalm 51:13).

Like David, our hearts needs to be clear and in right standing with God...

Like David, our hearts needs to be clear and in right standing with God before we can help others convert from their sin and turn toward God. Repentance is the first step toward being an influence and making an impact when engaging the battle.

PREPAING FOR WARFARE—EXAMINE YOURSELF

Paul encouraged the Corinthians to *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves* (2 Corinthians 13:5). In Lamentations, the writer encourages: *Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord* (Lamentation 3:40). Seeing our true condition is the first step to repentance. Two areas for self-examination are besetting sins and trials.

Besetting Sin

Concerning besetting sin, Paul writes in Hebrews 12:1: *let us lay*

aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us. Besetting sins are those sins which seem to hang-out with us, trying to catch up to us whenever they can. These are those sins which are easy to commit, often without realizing we have done so. They can be habits, pleasures, self-indulgences, associations, past experiences, educational background or contemporary culture. Because they are often part of who we are, they can overcome us without detection. Have you ever caught yourself saying to someone, *That’s just the way I’ve always been?* Chances are the origin of that response is besetting sin seen by the observer and rejected by the observed.

To recognize besetting sin, look in the following crevices of self:

- Passions and what you enjoy can have you so involved with the object of your passion that sin overtakes you: shortness of temper, impatience, inconsideration, self-centeredness, etc. are ways that sin creeps in.
- Statements such as: *That’s the way I’ve always been* or *If he doesn’t like what I do, I can’t help that* or *I’m only telling the truth* or even *I’m only human, God doesn’t expect me to be perfect.* These are often camouflage for and giving permission to sin. It is important to remember that Christ came to transform, not maintain who we are.
- Irritations, annoyances, outbursts of anger, impatience, etc. are often alarms for undealt with besetting sin.
- Value system, belief system, and your outlook on life are often an intellectual or rational way of explaining away and giving permission for sin.

Besetting sin can be the most difficult sin to recognize, because it

is often so much a part of who we are. To recognize besetting sin, ask those close to you (family, co-workers, friends, etc.) to tell you about you. Don't respond to what they say and don't go on the defensive; let them tell you how they see you. Be sure to have paper and pencil to write down what they reveal. You will find that how you see yourself and how others see you may not be the same. Through their eyes, see your besetting sin. Through their seeing, let them give you sight.

Trials

Trials are those stresses and difficulties which can make us feel as if we're carrying a ton-of-bricks or receiving daily lashings with a razor scourge or feeling like what's the use or thinking that there's no point in going on. It is through trials that James writes that we grow; therefore, we are to look upon them with joy. This is what James encourages in James 1:2-4:

Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

This same outlook is expressed in the following Scripture:

- Romans 5:3: we glory in tribulations...
- 2 Corinthians 12:9: Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities...
- 2 Corinthians 12:10: Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses...
- Psalm 119:71: It is good for me that I have been afflicted...

Trials of themselves are not good and causes hurt; but when we perceive that trials have a purpose in our development as children of God and when we are able to focus on that purpose, then the end result of our trial diminishes the present discomfort, pain and sorrow so that we find joy in our hard times.

Five Categories of Trials

Trials come from various sources: other people, circumstances, situations, health, finances, family, work or anything that impacts our lives from outside ourselves. The Apostle Paul identifies five categories of trials in 2 Corinthians 12:10:

- Infirmities: health issues.
- Reproaches: verbally criticized, blamed, accused, rebuked, spoken evil of, laughed at.
- Necessities: lacking the necessities for living (food, drink, clothing, money, house, etc.)
- Persecutions: Physical persecution, loss of job, prosecution, jail.
- Distress: Various pressures, tensions, fears, and worries that cause sufferings, agony, misery, grief, sorrow.

13 Benefits of Trials/Hard Times

Trials are part of the Christian life: *For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake* (Philippians 1:29; see also 2 Timothy 3:12; Mark 10:30). Trials come to God's people for the following reasons:

- To lead you to the Kingdom of God (Acts 14:22).
- To build character (Romans 5:3-4).
- To keep you from being condemned (1 Corinthians 11:32).
- To lead you to repentance (2 Corinthians 7:9).

- To keep you humble (2 Corinthians 12:7).
- To reveal God’s strength in weakness (2 Corinthians 12:8-9).
- To confirm God’s love for you (Hebrews 12:5-6).
- To reveal your sonship to God (Hebrews 12:7-9).
- To help you to partake of God’s holiness (Hebrews 12:10).
- To develop righteousness (Hebrews 12:11).
- To develop perfection and fulfillment of life (James 1:4).
- To teach God’s word (Psalm. 119:71).
- To lead to spiritual growth (Psalm 139:23-24).

Five Assurances from God when Trials Come

To overcome trials requires steadfast perseverance. To strengthen this perseverance it helps when we understand that God has given us five assurances regarding trials/hard times:

- Trials are ultimately from God (Psalm 94:12-13; Proverbs 3:11-12; Job 2:10; 1 Corinthians 11:31-32; Hebrews 12:5-11).
- There is a future glory that will make all present trials seem insignificant (Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:17).
- The end result of trials is for good (Romans 8:28).
- We are not given trials we cannot bear (1 Corinthians 10:13).
- All trials have an end (1 Corinthians 10:13).

How we deal with and learn from trials is important for spiritual growth. To help you get through your hard times, make a list of your present troubles. Realize that these are what is helping you

to grow as a Christian. Review the thirteen benefits of trials and realize that these benefits will be yours if you hold on and don’t allow the trial to break you. Review the five assurances God gives to you while you are going through your hard times.

Remember: trials are not disasters come to destroy, but stretching posts to grow you. Be patient and patience will lead you to faith and faith will lead to victory.

PUTTING ON THE ARMOR

The second condition necessary for winning souls is to put on God’s spiritual armor, maintaining it in a constant state of operational readiness. The following is an exposition of Ephesians 6:10-18.¹⁰

Put on the Whole Armor (6:10-13)

Grasp this concept: *we are in the enemy’s territory*. If we are not on continual alert, the enemy will pounce upon us when we are at our weakest. Keeping our armor in top working order and firmly secured on a daily basis is a necessity.

The enemy is in control of this physical world, that is why the devil is called the *god of this world* (2 Corinthians 4:4). He is stronger and wiser than any person and without God’s full armor firmly in place, even the strongest of Christians would be defeated (Mark 13:22).

Because of the enemies influence, the whole world groans and looks forward to the day when his authority is removed (Romans 8:22). His mission is to destroy, that is why everything in this world moves from a state of purity to impurity, order to chaos.

¹⁰ I am indebted to *Matthew Henry’s Commentary* for this exposition of Ephesians 6:10-18

That is why America is now far removed from her Christian foundations. The devil found her weakness and immediately set out to corrupt and then destroy her.

Though our pride (the devil's greatest weapon) causes us to believe we can overcome the people, circumstances, and situations that come against us in our own power, we must remember that we have no defense against the enemy except with God's armor. Only then are we protected from the devil's wiles (Ephesians 6:1). We must also remember that our enemy does not come against us in some mysterious, dark, supernatural way, but through people, circumstances, and situations. That is why the Apostle reminds us: *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood* (Ephesians 6:12). The enemy works through people. We often focus on and come against the behavior and unjustness of people and that is what our true enemy wants. In this way we will not focus on the enemy and will fight our battle with words and actions instead of with God's armor. If we fail to keep each piece of the armor in working condition, the devil gains ground and we move closer to losing the war.

We are at war. We must maintain a constant state of battle readiness through securing the armor tightly upon us.

Loins Girt With Truth (6:14)

If the devil can cause us to discard truth (God's absolute truth), he can then distort what we believe about anything else. Once truth is taken captive, Christianity becomes liberal, conformed, and eventually only an image of what it truly is and without power.

Truth is here described as a belt holding all the pieces of the armor firmly in place, undistorted and free of error and conformity: it must cleave to our nature as a girdle cleaves to the body (Jeremiah 13:11).

In our twenty-first century, truth has become what is right for the individual. Don't fall into this snare. There is only one God who established the standards for truth and He has revealed them through His Son, Jesus. Only as we read and understand Scripture do we find protection from all the philosophies and permissiveness and falsehoods of our present day.

We are at war. We must maintain a constant state of battle readiness through constant reading, rereading, and application of the truths found in the Bible.

Breastplate of Righteousness (6:14)

Righteousness is simply conforming our body, mind, and spirit to God's word so that our lives reflect God on earth. Righteousness has two components. First, righteousness requires that we are in God's Spirit and that His Spirit is in us. This unity unleashes the power to live in righteousness. Second, righteousness requires that we walk in the Spirit, that is, to bring our lives in conformity to God's standards. If we live in the Spirit, we must also walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:25).

As our breastplate, righteousness protects our most vital area, the heart. Out of the heart comes the *issues of life* (Proverbs 4:23; Matthew 15:18-19), meaning that everything we do, say, feel, think, intend, etc. has its source in the heart. When the devil overcomes the heart, he overcomes the person and his relationship with God. Practicing daily conformity to God's standards acts as a breastplate protecting our vital spiritual organs.

We are at war. We must maintain a constant state of battle readiness through exercising righteousness in and with all the wherever's and whatever's and whomever's of life.

Feet Protected With the Gospel of Peace (6:15)

Shoes, or greaves of brass (armor for the legs), or the like, were

formerly part of the military armor (1 Samuel 17:6). They were used to defend the feet against the gall-traps and sharp sticks which the enemy laid to injure the feet.

Having our feet protected with the *gospel of peace* signifies that we are to always be prepared and determined to adhere to the gospel and abide by it regardless of the difficulties and dangers that may be in the way. It is called *the gospel of peace* because it brings all sorts of peace: peace with God, peace with ourselves, and peace with one another. We have been called to wear this gospel wherever we go, regardless of the obstacles that may come. Only in the gospel can true peace be found.

Having our feet protected with the *gospel of peace* signifies that we are to be battle ready and fight for that way of life which the gospel calls for: to not be easily provoked, nor prone to quarrel, but reflecting the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). To follow this manner of life will keep us from succumbing to unexpected temptations and persecutions in the same way that shoes of brass protected soldiers from gall traps.

Having our feet protected with the *gospel of peace* signifies that we are to travel with the *gospel of peace* wherever we go. There is no vacation time. Wherever we are and in whatever we do should be seen as opportunities to exemplify peace.

The gospel is called the *preparation* of the gospel of peace because we need to always be on guard and prepared to express a spirit that is willing to strive for peace when called upon, even in the most unexpected of moments. The time for preparation is always before, not during the trial.

We are at war. We must maintain a constant state of battle readiness through exercising peace wherever we go, even if it means to *turn the other cheek* (Matthew 5:39) and *go the extra*

mile (Matthew 5:41).

Shield of Faith (6:16)

If there is one piece of armor to which we must give special attention, it is the shield of faith; that is why the Apostle Paul emphasizes: *Above all, taking the shield of faith* (Ephesians 6:16). Going into battle without a shield is certain death. In our hour of fierce temptation, and in the most surprising of attacks, the shield is our only defense. The breastplate protects the heart; the shield protects from every side. It is the shield that decides the victory: *This is the victory over the world, even our faith* (1 John 5:4).

To have faith is to be fully persuaded of the reality of God and all His promises and judgments that are real, but which are not revealed or fulfilled at this time. Since *Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God* (Romans 10:17), it is important to read, study, meditate upon, and memorize God's word. The more we understand God's message, the stronger our faith becomes so that the things which are real, but not revealed, are now real to us.

The devil is called *the wicked one* (1 John 2:13-14; 3:12; 5:18) because he is wicked and works hard to make us like him. His attacks against us are called *darts* (Ephesians 6:16), because of their swift, undiscerned flight and the deep wounds they inflict on the soul. They are called *fiery darts* to indicate how they inflame the wounds and spread the poisonous venom throughout our soul, in the same way a snake's venom spreads throughout a man's body until he is dead. Temptations and trials are the darts that Satan shoots at us. Faith is the shield that stops these fiery darts from harming us.

We are at war. We must maintain a constant state of battle readiness through engrafting Scripture, making it one with our body, mind, and spirit (James 1:21).

Helmet of Salvation (6:17)

Salvation is the key to.....

Without salvation, there is no protection against secularism or any of the false teachings that tempt us away from Christ and the Scripture as our authorities. Nor is there protection for other parts of the armor.

The Apostle Paul writes that the helmet is the *hope of our salvation* (1 Thessalonians 5:8). This implies that salvation involves right thinking and right teaching. If our minds are filled with wrong thinking and teaching, our hope will not be a true hope, but the workings of the imagination; therefore, our salvation will be spurious.

The helmet protects the head. Without it, all kinds of worldly, liberal, and ungodly thoughts would run through our minds. A strong hope will keep us trusting in and rejoicing in God regardless of the difficulties and troubles that may come. The *hope of salvation* is to spiritually discern the reality and future fulfillment of God's promises and to look forward to their fulfillment. It is our encouragement to look past the troubles at hand to the exceeding glory that will be ours as we remain patient just a little while longer (1 Peter 4:13; 5:1). To put on the helmet of salvation, we must be transformed through the renewing of our minds with the unadulterated gospel of Christ (Romans 12:2).

We are at war. We must maintain a constant state of battle readiness through focusing on the things above (Colossians 3:1-2), seeking first God's kingdom and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33), and spiritually discerning the glory that will be ours (1 Peter

*We are
at war*

4:13; 5:1). The more we discern what is real, but we cannot see, the stronger will be the hope of our salvation.

Sword of the Spirit (6:17)

The word of God is *the sword of the Spirit*. Through the word the Holy Spirit is able to work in God's people to influence and impact the world with the gospel. With the truth of God's word in hand, the power of the Holy Spirit goes out from us to *reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment* (John 16:8). Scripture arguments are the most powerful arguments to battle temptation and wrong doctrine. Christ, our primary example, used Scripture to overcome the devil's temptations: *It is written*, Jesus countered (Matthew 4:4, 6, 7, 10). As we engage the battle, we must counter the world's ungodly ways with Scripture. We must learn to put aside our own rationale and reasoning and point back to the Bible.

We are at war. We must maintain a constant state of battle readiness through understanding the Bible and being able to fight against the various temptations, worldviews, and false teachings with the Bible. We are to be ready to give an answer to any and all at any time (1 Peter 3:15).

Prayer (6:18)

Prayer is the spiritual lubricant that maintains each piece of the spiritual armor. When the Bible says *Praying always with all* it implies that prayer maintains our armor in top working condition. Like a soldier who continually lubricates his weapons before the battle for the day of battle, so must we continually lubricate our spiritual armor with prayer before the battle for the day of battle. When the Bible says to *pray always*, it does not mean to do nothing else but pray, for there are other duties we must maintain in their place and time. To *pray always* indicates that we should keep regular times of prayer and be faithful to them. To *pray always* means to pray on all occasions and as often as it is

necessary. We are to maintain regular prayer and mix spontaneous prayers with everyday business. Though regular prayers may sometimes be untimely (as when other duties are to be done), spontaneous prayers can never be so. To pray always also means to live life with an awareness and recognition of God in all that is done.

We are also to pray *with all perseverance* and continue to pray regardless of changes in our outward circumstances or whether we want to or not or whether we go through bad times or good or whether we are in the heat of busyness or the “chilling out” of leisure. We must continue in prayer as long as we live the world. Without prayer, nothing else in our spiritual and secular life will fit together or work as it should.

We are at war. We must maintain a constant state of battle readiness through maintaining regular times of prayer, developing the habit of constant spontaneous prayer, and recognizing God’s constant presence with us.

DO SOMETHING

Before engaging the battle, it is important to prepare our hearts by keeping it in good standing with God and keeping our spiritual armor in top working condition. If one piece of armor is not working properly, it will affect how the other pieces work. In the day of battle, faulty armor and weapons can be fatal. Here are a few suggestions for keeping your armor in top shape:

- Recognize your sin. Cry out to God for mercy. Confess your sin and petition God to renew your heart.
- Read and reread the Bible to understand its truths, commands, and principles.
- Exercise righteousness in all that you do in the little, insignificant things, as well as the major ones.
- Seek peace in all your dealings with others, especially in the most difficult and unexpected of situations.
- Learn to become one with God’s word. Meditate, study, memorize, and engraft Scripture into your life.
- Learn to think Biblically. Use the Bible to overcome trials, temptations and for living life. Everything we need for this life and the life to come is revealed in the Bible.
- Pray always. Maintain regular times of prayer, develop the habit of spontaneous prayers, and learn to recognize God in all that you do.



CHAPTER 4 Engage the Battle

Pray for revival. How noble. Perhaps it would be nobler to pray for laborers to work the fields. Perhaps it would be nobler if you answered the prayer, put your hand to the plow, and labor in the field.

After the heart is cleansed and the armor secured, it is time to engage the battle. You will find the battlefield filled with rocks, bramble, wild growth, and all manner of weeds. Rocks signify various pressures and difficulties that press upon us. Bramble signifies that which pricks and entangles. Wild growths are those annoyances, irritations, and tensions that seem to be always present wherever we go. Weeds signify the systems and structures of this world such as secularism, humanism, evolution, relativism, money, and various philosophies, religions, and beliefs that grow side by side in competition with Christianity.

THE GOAL

Our goal for engaging the battle is to search out those ready for the Gospel, asking: *Where are they?* Sweep the hearts of our hearers, removing hindrances, preparing it for God’s word, asking: *How*

may I help? Compelling others by exposing them to God’s standards, asking: *Have you considered?* Then receiving them into the fellowship of believers, asking: *Will you be part of our fellowship?* Chapter six speaks more fully of this strategy.

THE VISION

Imagine that you were walking down the street and saw flames enveloping a house. To your horror, you notice that the occupants are oblivious to the fire and continue to eat, drink, watch t.v., and talk on the phone. What would you do? Of course, you would do everything you could to warn the occupants of their danger and save them from the fire. One thing you would not do is ignore the fire and go about your way. You would be compelled to do something, anything.

So it is with evangelism. We are compelled to do something, anything, to warn and save every man, woman, and child oblivious to the flames of hell surrounding them. Our responsibility is to do something, anything, to warn and save those without Christ. Franklin Graham wrote concerning our responsibility to the lost:

Each person we meet on a daily basis who does not know Christ is hell bound. That may make some folks bristle—but it’s a fact. When we refuse to warn people that their actions and lifestyles have eternal consequences, we’re not doing them any favors. If everybody feels good about his or her sin, why would anyone repent?(11)

Do you see the flames consuming our world? Evangelism is nothing more than being able to see that people are going to hell and that we have the responsibility to do something, anything, to

11 Comfort, Ray: 152.

save them.

THE FRUIT

The effort you put forth to engage the battle will produce much, as the following verses reveal:

- Matthew 25:14-30: When you use what God has given, He will equip you to do more.
- John 15:1-8: When you are connected to the vine, the fruit will come naturally and in abundance.
- Luke 12:42-48: When you are faithful with the little that you have, you will be entrusted with much more.

Jesus taught His disciples that there would only be a few who would desire to repent when he said: *for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat* (Matthew 7:13) and that the gate to eternal life was *narrow* and that *few* would enter therein (Matthew 7:14). In other words, the majority of people we talk with will not receive our message of repentance and salvation in Christ.

Jesus also taught in Luke 8:5-15 that of those who do repent, only a few will truly be converted. He made clear that some people will quickly receive repentance, but immediately turn away from it (8:12); others will receive repentance with joy, but in their trials and temptations will turn away (8:13); still others will conform their repentance to the cares, riches, and pleasures of the world (8:14); and then there will be the few who will be firmly converted with their roots planted deep in the soil of Christ and they will bring forth fruit for the kingdom (8:15). The bottom line is: *most people we encounter are not going to receive our message, and the majority of those who do will turn from it*. Our mission is to search for the few who will receive the message.

SHARING YOUR TESTIMONY

What do I share when I engage the battle? After all, I am not a Bible scholar. I do not know a lot of Scripture. I only know that once I was a sinner and now I've been changed—I've been saved. That is all you need to share: *I was and now I am*. Share only what you know through your experience with Jesus.

We are to share what John shared with his readers: *that which we have heard, seen with our eyes, and handled with our hands* (1 John 1:3). We want people to know what we have experienced with Jesus. Like the blind man, we want to proclaim: *I know not, but this I do know: once I was blind but now I see* (John 9:25). Like Paul, we want to proclaim: *I was near Damascus when I heard a voice, became blind, and gave my life to Jesus* (Acts 9:1-6). Or like the Ethiopian: *I was in my chariot, reading Isaiah, not understanding what I read when one of the Disciples explained the passage to me. I received Christ and was immediately baptized in the river* (Acts 8:26-39).

As we grow in our relationship with Christ, so will our knowledge of Christ. In the meantime, share what you know, don't let anything keep you from sharing the gospel with those ready to receive your message. We share because we want others to share in our fellowship because we fellowship *with the father and with His son Jesus* (1 John 1:3). In this fellowship there is a *fullness of joy* that cannot be received anywhere else (1 John 1:4). Once sinners have entered into the fellowship of believers through repentance, we want to encourage them, according to 1 John 1:5-7, to:

- Live life in conformity to God's standards.
- Fellowship with other Christians.

- Have their sins cleansed by the blood of Jesus.

To help you share your testimony, write out what your life was like before Christ and how it is different now that Christ is in control. This exercise will help you to lay the foundation from which you can share Christ with others.

DO SOMETHING

The fields are ripe and ready for harvest. To help identify the fields around you, and to see those around you in, perhaps, a new light, follow through on these suggestions:

- Make a list identifying those fields in which you move in and out of on a regular basis. Perhaps they are family, friends, neighbors, co-workers or even the checkout girl at the grocery.
- Identify what you are doing to bring the most important message in the world to them.
- Ask yourself if the regulars in your life know the message you represent. What can you do to make sure they know?
- As you identify your fields, it may surprise you the great number of people God has brought within your circle of influence with whom you communicate with on a regular basis.



CHAPTER 5

Hand-to-Hand Combat

You cannot fulfill the Lord's command to go? Then you must be dead and buried. Every person is in relationship with someone...it is to that person or persons you have been sent to position yourself and to witness through your life and words of what Christ has done for you.

HAND-TO-HAND, ONE-ON-ONE

Hand-to-hand combat takes place one-on-one, so does effective evangelism. As we engage the battle, the Apostle Paul gives the foundation from which our hand-to-hand combat is to take place:

For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more (1 Corinthians 9:19).

A servant's heart is the heart of the evangelist. Here is how the Apostle Paul describes a servant in the next verses:

And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might

gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some (1 Corinthians 9:20-22).

Though Paul had great intellectual and physical ability and was held in high esteem, he esteemed others better than himself so that *To the weak he became as the weak*. His method was not to exercise authority over any, but to position himself as his hearers so that he might win them to the gospel.

Paul outlines three characteristics of a servant's heart in Philippians 2:3-4:

- Let nothing be done through strife or selfishness (2:3).
- Esteem others better than yourself (2:3).
- Be more concerned for the interest of others than for yourself (2:4).

Paul illustrates this servant's heart through Jesus:

- Though He was God, He did not consider it wrong to be equal with God (2:6), though He was now a man.
- Though He was God, He stripped Himself of all His privileges and power to position Himself with man and all man's limitations (2:7).
- Though He was God, He submitted Himself to the

weak and base, being obedient to the ways of man (2:8).

Living as a servant to all, Paul had access to all sectors, classes, and cultures of people. Paul related to the Jew, heathen, the weak, the Greeks, etc. He gained access to people from where they were, without the need to adopt his hearer's behavior, attitudes or outward appearance.

EVANGELISM TODAY

Sadly, Paul's words, *I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some* (1 Corinthians 9:22) has shifted from the servant's heart to an adapting heart. Paul's *all things, by all means* did not refer to behavior, attitudes or outward appearance, but to positioning himself with his hearers worldview. By emphasizing verse twenty-two, today's church has adopted the ways and even worship of those without Christ. The result has been a church filled with Christians essentially no different than those without Christ. Paul's intent was to become a servant of all, not an imitator of all.

Today, Paul's words may very well be interpreted by many to read: *To the rock 'n roll crowd I became as a rock 'n roller, adopting their musical style, appearance, behavior, and attitudes that I might gain the rock 'n roll crowd.* The error is that the evangelist adopts the immodest appearance, ungodly behavior, and even rebellious attitudes. Instead of winning others to the high standards of Christ, the standards are lowered. Instead of the world becoming more like the church, the church becomes indistinguishable from the world. We are cautioned in another passage by Paul to *abstain from all appearance of evil* (1 Thessalonians 5:22). Paul's method was not to *adopt* and *adapt* but to *position* and align himself with the worldview of his hearers.

Before I was a Christian I hung out with the drug crowd. In this culture there were long haired, short haired, and those with no hair at all; there were those who did not take baths and those who were well kept and clean; there were those who had well paying jobs and those who were thieves; there were those who rode Harley Davidson's, while others rode bicycles; there were those who were violent and those who were gentle; there were those who did drugs and those who did not. Though the outward appearance, behavior, and attitudes were varied, there was a common thread that drew all together: our worldview. This common worldview molded us into a family that watched out for and took care of one another, in other words, we served each other. When Paul made himself *all things*, he came along side of his hearers via their worldview, seeking to understand life from their perspective.

When speaking to Jews in the synagogue, whose worldview saw life through Scripture, *he reasoned with them out of the Scriptures* (Acts 17:2; 10-11; 17; 18:4). Their worldview already convinced them of their sin and need for a savior. With the philosophers and religious people, whose worldview was based on other theology, he first reasoned with them from their philosophers, and then helped them to understand their sin and need of Jesus (Act. 17:23). To the governor, Felix, Paul spoke of *righteousness, temperance and judgment to come*, concepts a governor could relate to (Acts 24:22-25).

In my own life, when I entered the worldview of Bob, talking of herbal healing, music, and philosophical concepts he always had a ready ear and I was able to direct his thoughts toward right thinking about God. With Sandy, it was talking about reaching out to others and meeting their physical needs which opened the door to directing her thoughts toward right thinking and behavior toward God. With Anna, talking about family opened the doors of her heart and permitted me to direct her toward right thinking and

behavior toward God.

If we do not understand the world from our hearers position, we will not be able to present the gospel from their worldview and they will not understand what we are saying. Much like the time this Ohio country boy moved to sophisticated Connecticut. I went to a corner grocery to purchase a *sucker* for one of my daughters. The cashier had no idea what I was asking for. After a few more awkward attempts, I located the word *lollipop* and was able to make the purchase. When I took the position of my hearer, she understood me and I was able to leave the store with a delicious, red sucker that fully delighted my daughter.

So it is with evangelism: we cannot preach the gospel to our hearers with understanding until we understand how our hearers interpret life.

FOUR KEYS TO EVANGELISM

Key One: Key of Position

Paul's method of evangelism is to take the position of his hearers by coming along side of their worldview and helping them to understand the inconsistencies, falsehoods, and consequences of that worldview.

The key to identifying these inconsistencies is through understanding our own worldview. There are four questions that every worldview addresses. As we understand our worldview, then we are able to identify inconsistencies in other worldviews. These four questions are.⁽¹²⁾ Where did we come from? What is wrong with our world? How can we fix the wrong? What am I to do? The Christian worldview is based on the foundation of the prophets and Apostles with Jesus Christ being the chief

¹² These questions adapted from Charles Colson's book, *How Now Shall We Live?*: 24

cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20). Upon this foundation we understand that we were created by God (Genesis 1:2-3); that sin is the source of all our wrongs (Genesis 3:1-24); that Jesus is the solution for solving all our ills (1 Corinthians 15:21-22); and that we are to spread this good news to all who will hear (Matthew 28:19-20).

Understanding our worldview allows us to discern inconsistencies in opposing worldviews and to provide answers to our hearers. In Chapter Seven, several foundation stones are given in order to help build a strong Christian worldview.

Key Two: Key of Understanding

In this second *key of understanding* we position ourselves with our hearer's worldview and explain the gospel within their understanding. This is what Paul did when he spoke to the men of Athens about their *unknown god* and then explained to them about God and Jesus Christ (Acts 17:23-34). Paul did not bulldoze Jesus through them; instead he positioned himself according to their understanding and explained how Jesus fulfills what they believe.

This is the method a missionary I listened to used as he kept having difficulties reaching his tribe with the gospel. The tribe had no concept of what he was saying. The missionary eventually realized that the legends they had repeatedly told him, about a great flood destroying all of life, was similar to the flood brought by God in the days of Noah. He had never given the stories much thought because of all the inconsistencies and discrepancies with the Scriptural account. However, when he spoke from their position, using their own ingrained, cultural legend, many came to Christ and the tribe was transformed, along with their doctrine.

Key Three: Key of Context

In this third *key of context* we take our hearers position from within their life context. As we live and work and play and share

sorrow and joy with others, there is no better way to help them understand Christ's relevancy to their lives. As they listen to our teachings and observe how Christ is translated in our lives, which is a life filled with the same day-to-day events as theirs, the relevancy and reality of the gospel comes to life. This appears to be what Jesus implied when He encouraged His disciples: *And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence* (Matthew 10:11).

Key Four: Key of Becoming

In this fourth *key of becoming* we take our hearers position by becoming as our hearers. There is no room here for arrogance or an "I am superior to you attitude." We must not let positions, responsibilities, and abilities get in the way of our relating to others. We must consider that person of low esteem as greater than ourselves as we become weak with those who are weak and strong with those who are strong. The bottom line is: we are all traveling in the same boat, are on equal footing, and need to spend our time not desiring to be someone, but seeking to serve others, considering their need above our own.

Our best example of becoming as our hearers is found with God. He entered the life of His hearers (mankind) taking the position of a man through Jesus Christ in order to present His final message from our perspective (Philemon 2:5-8). He experienced the world through our eyes (Luke 2:52). He lived as one of us, fully man with all of our limitations (Hebrews 2:18; 4:15). Let us follow His example.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Tour Evangelism

This is the *See Europe in Ten Days* evangelistic approach. In this method evangelism is done for the experience without getting to know the people or the culture, without ever bringing the gospel to

the position of their hearers or walking the walk with them and showing how Christ is translated into their everyday life. Tour evangelism allows a person to have experiences and take pictures without really doing evangelism. When the event is over, so are the evangelistic efforts until the next event. Sadly, this is what many consider as evangelism.

Biblical evangelism happens when Christians live out their Christianity on a daily basis so that family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, etc. are able to observe how Christ translates into everyday life; this is what it means to be a witness. Bringing Christ to our circle of everyday people makes us more vulnerable, but also makes Christ more real and tangible. Perhaps one of the reasons Christianity has lost momentum is that we have failed to show its relevancy to everyday living. Too often we pop in and pop out of the lives of others without anyone ever understanding how Christ relates to everyday experience. Tour evangelism is a temporary, non-committed approach, whereas Biblical evangelism is commitment for the long haul. Tour evangelism has its place when the evangelist lives out Christ on a daily basis wherever he is and not just when participating in an event called evangelism.

Evangelism without Compromise

It grieves the heart to see how the Apostle Paul's words *I am made all things* (1 Corinthians 9:22) is too often translated to mean anything goes as long as Scripture is added to it. This is not Paul's approach. Paul was careful not to compromise God's standards (1 Corinthians 9:21). He would not be involved with appearances, behavior, attitudes or anything that was not in line with God's standards. *To be made all things to all men* means that to save some, do whatever it takes, but don't compromise the gospel in either the appearance of evil or the actual involvement with evil. This seems to be part of what Paul meant when he wrote: *to them that are without law, as without law, being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ* (1 Corinthians 9:21).

There was a contemporary church in a city where I once ministered that instructed their female dance team on how to lean their bodies forward with arms outstretched in order to jiggle their breast to gain the attention of the boys, thereby attracting them to hear the gospel. This compromise of Christ's standards would not have met Paul's approval. Nor would the Christian Contemporary musicians who dress and look and sound no different than their rock 'n roll counterparts. *To be made all things* is not to adopt the world's ways and looks in order to attract to the gospel. We are not to adapt the church to the world, but the world to the ways of the church. To do so requires Holy Ghost power, not worldly adaptation. The culture of the church will not appeal to those outside the church until the Holy Spirit is in the heart. We are not to attract sinners into the church, but into Christ. Our goal is transformation, not attendance.

When Jesus was in the world, He never compromised God's standards in attracting people to the kingdom. In fact, His approach appeared not to focus on attracting at all. Why? It was God's responsibility to draw people to Him (John 6:44; 12:32). It was Jesus' responsibility to place Himself in position with people, to interact with people, and to involve Himself with the affairs of His hearers: weddings, funerals, eating, etc. In the midst of all this, He would exemplify Godly behavior, teach Christian principles, do good works, and exploit sin.

As we take the position of our hearers and live among them, remember: it is the Holy Spirit's responsibility to draw others to God, convict the person of sin, his need for righteousness, and of the reality of the judgment that is coming (John 16:8). Not even Jesus came to convict, but to proclaim, letting the Holy Spirit do His work. The Holy Spirit works through our verbal presentation of the gospel (Romans 10:17) and awakens the conscious to God's standards (Romans 2:15).

Understanding that the Holy Spirit is the convicter, will help temper our own approach with meekness. Our responsibility is to compel using the sword of the Spirit; the Spirit's responsibility is to cut to the *dividing asunder of soul and spirit*, revealing to a person his sin (Hebrews 4:12). The work of God's word is to reveal sin. The work of the Holy Spirit is to take the spoken or written word and convict the sinner of the sin presented to the person (John 16:8): the word of God and the Holy Spirit work hand-in-hand. That is why the word is called the sword of the Spirit: the Spirit takes the word presented and uses it to cut to the heart.

Compel through Proclamation

Some believe that all we have to do is live in position with others and sinners will enquire about Christ; the problem with this is that it is contrary to the command to *go* and *compel*. It is also against the nature of non-Christians, who are naturally opposed to Christianity.

If we do not verbalize our message, illuminate inconsistencies, and warn of the judgment to come, others will never understand the Christ we serve or their need for repentance. At some point we must tell those around us who it is we serve and compel them to repent and believe the gospel. The importance of telling others is made clear by the Apostle Paul in Romans 10:14-15:

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

The importance of verbalizing is also seen in John 6:63: *the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life*; and in Romans 1:16: *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth*. If the word is life and the power of God that leads to salvation, then the spoken word should be the most important element of evangelism, especially since the Apostle Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 1:21 that *it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe*.

DO SOMETHING

Here are six principles for evangelizing:

- Understand your Christian worldview.
- Understand your hearer's worldview.
- Live among your hearers in their life context.
- Become as your hearers, not superior to them.
- Position yourself with others, without compromising Christ.
- Verbalize the Christ you live, to those you live among.



CHAPTER 6

Battle Strategy

There is only one way to get from Pennsylvania to Florida: you must have a plan for getting there; otherwise you will travel in many directions and never reach your destination.

There is a great multitude of people whom we know, don't know, and with whom we have only a slight acquaintance that we regularly pass in and out of life with. From within this multitude we are to search for those receptive to the message of the Gospel.

Many go to the multitude as if the command to go gives liberty to compel any and all who cross their path. Though we are to go into all the world we are not to insist that all the world reason with us. If a person is not receptive, move on, we are to search for the harvest that is ripe and ready (Matthew 10:14).

As you engage the battle, the following strategy will keep you focused on your goal to make disciples. The strategy is to search, sweep, compel, and receive.

SEARCH

Luke 15:4-7

A sheep
Wandering
Alone
Lost.
The Shepherd looks
High and low
Leaving the ninety-nine
Until he finds the one—
Alone
Afraid
Brought back into the fold.

We who are found are to set our attention on the lost (Luke 14:23; Matthew 22:9-10). We are to search the nooks and crannies of our cities until we find that valuable soul ready to receive the gospel. In our search we are to position ourselves with others.

Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10). In his seeking, he did not actively pursue others to follow him except the twelve disciples whom he directly asked to *follow me*. Instead, he positioned himself with people and joined in with their weddings, feasts, funerals, and everyday life. Jesus made himself available and accessible, communicating his message through commands, stories, principles, good works, and compassion to all who were receptive. If they did not want to hear, he did not force them, chase after them or condemn them.

In our searching, faithfulness will open many doors. Through faithfulness, a relationship grows. As we enter in and out of the life of others on a regular basis, the relationship develops. Each visit to the grocery, barber, laundry, dry cleaners, school, work, church, social activity, etc. encourages relationships with those who are also there on a regular basis. The more faithful we are to

the same shops, people, etc., the more opportunities we have to share the gospel.

As we move through the multitude we are to position ourselves with people, make ourselves available and accessible, do good works, show compassion, be faithful, and search for those receptive to our message of repentance and salvation.

SWEEP
Luke 15:8-10

- A coin
- Silver
- Of value
- Lost.
- The woman sweeps
- Carefully
- Until it is found.
- Friends
- Neighbors
- All are told.
- All rejoice.
- The coin is found.

Imagine a man drowning in a river. What would be your response? Stand on the banks of the river and preach to him about the benefits of living life outside the waters? Of course not. You would first pull him out of the waters, put dry clothes on him, and make sure he was safe. After he is saved, then you are able to speak to him about the finer points of living life.

William Booth, Founder of The Salvation Army, wrote that *No one gets a blessing if they have cold feet, and nobody ever got saved while they had the toothache.*(13) It is difficult for a person

weighed down with cares to give attention to anything but their present concern. First sweep away the obstacles, then your hearer will be in a position to hear about repentance and the need for a savior.

The woman seeking her lost coin in Luke 15:8-10 had two tools at her disposal: a light and a broom. The light was used to reveal the obstacles; the broom to remove obstacles hindering the lost coin from being found. The woman also had the motivation to not give up the search.

The Holy Spirit is our light, helping us and our hearers to see the obstacles hindering their life. He also searches the heart and convicts the conscience, helping them to see their dirt (sin) and need of a savior.

The broom is any number of solutions to any number of physical, social, emotional, spiritual or intellectual obstacles weighing upon a person. Before compelling a person to receive the gospel, the obstacles need to be removed. It is difficult for a man filled with care to hear anything outside his immediate need. First sweep the house clean, then a person will be receptive to hearing the gospel.

*The Holy Spirit
searches the
heart and
convicts the
conscience...*

In our sweeping, keep in focus that our mission is not to minister to the outward and physical human need, but to preach repentance and the gospel. We can be so involved with meeting human need and fighting political and social issues that the greater need for the gospel can be neglected. In your sweeping, do not let the sweep become the mission.

13 Sandall, Robert. *The History of The Salvation Army Volume One*. New

York, New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1979: 139

COMPEL
Luke 14:23

A narrow road
A straight road
Eternal life
Is for the few.
A wide road
A crooked road
Eternal death
Is for the many.
Go!
Compel!
Help those
On the wide road
Find their way
To the narrow road.

A person saved from the raging waters is now in position to be compelled. Not all will be receptive and we are to move on from those who reject our message (Matthew 10:14; Acts 13:51).

The road without God is wide, natural, and compelling. Our goal is to compel others to walk the narrow road so that they see their sinfulness and hopelessness without God, and need for the gospel.

To compel is to urge so as to seize, to overpower, and to hold so there is no escape. Once we have found those ready to receive the gospel, and have swept the obstacles out of their way, we are then ready to compel toward repentance.

To compel does not mean we overstep our boundaries with others or to overpower the weak. It is to present the law and the gospel in a clear, persuasive manner that will cause our hearers to either

receive or reject our message. It is to follow Paul's example of *proving, disputing, reasoning, alleging, persuading, rightly convincing, and showing the gospel* (Acts 9:22, 29; 17:2-3; 18:4, 19, 28; 19:8-9; 24:25).

THE MESSAGE

The message we proclaim is that of a warning to prepare for the soon coming kingdom of God through repentance and belief in the gospel.

Jesus appeared upon the earth to usher in a new era in earth's history: the end of all things as we know them. God is patient and does not want anyone to perish (2 Peter 3:9); therefore, He is giving all people time to repent before He destroys the world and all things in it with fire (2 Peter 3:10). The day is coming when God's patience will run out, the end will come, and God's judgment will be released. No one knows when that day will come, but it is coming and our responsibility is to warn every person everywhere to prepare for the soon coming judgment of God (Colossians 1:28; Matthew 24:44, 50-51).

The warning we proclaim is the warning that Jesus proclaimed in Mark 1:15:

- *The time is fulfilled:* the end to our present world is here.
- *The kingdom of God is at hand:* God's kingdom is in position to replace the present world.
- *Repent:* we must prepare for the end of this world and the coming of God's kingdom by recognizing and turning from our sins and turning toward God.
- *Believe the gospel:* we need to consistently live according to the teachings of Jesus. What we truly believe transforms who we are and what we do.

There are three elements necessary to proclaiming Jesus' warning. First, the evangelist must have the burning conviction and discernment to know that the end of our present age is truly upon us and that the kingdom of God is now in position to replace it. Without this vision there will be no urgency, no motivation for engaging the battle. Second, the evangelist must bring the message of repentance from sin as the prerequisite for entering God's kingdom. Sin must be seen if a person is going to recognize his need for a savior. Charles Finney wrote:

Christians are bound to warn sinners of their awful condition, and exhort them to flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold on everlasting life.(14

Third, after a person recognizes his sin, the evangelist then brings the message of salvation from sin through the presentation of the gospel. Once this foundation is laid, then we are able to build upon it with the message of the Prophets, Apostles, and Jesus Christ.

We will now look at our message of repentance and believing the gospel.

Repentance – First Priority

When you help a drowning person out of the raging waters, you do not instruct them on the fine points of living their lives. Your first priority is to rescue, then you will have opportunity to teach about life. So it is when bringing the gospel to others: our first priority is to rescue a person from sin and then to teach the doctrines and principles of Christianity. This is why it is important to focus on repentance and not get side tracked with issues.

14 Comfort, Ray. *The Evidence Bible*. Gainesville, Florida: Bridge-Logos Publishers, 2000.

Imagine this scene: Water has broken through the dam and is quickly flooding the town below. People are loosing everything, being injured, and even dieing. Many are working hard to assist the casualties. One man looks up: tired, worn, and weary. He stops what he is doing and walks up the hill passing the injured and those crying out for help. "How cruel," some begin to whisper. "Doesn't he have any feelings?" others remark. The man keeps walking until he comes to the source of everyone's problems. He then works diligently to plug the hole until the waters stop pouring through. The man becomes a hero.

So it is when we engage the battle. Our primary focus is to stop the source of sin and not on fixing the mess left in sin's trail. Abortion, crime, sodomy, promiscuity, etc. are all the result of sin. When the sinner repents and trusts in Jesus, he will stop his sinning and the mess will be cleaned up. Therefore, our focus is on the transformation of the heart through repentance, not on reformation without repentance. Reformation will take place once Jesus is savior and Lord.

Repentance – The Ten Commandments

As we focus on repentance, the Ten Commandments is a good tool for helping others to see their sin. Their purpose is to expose sin (Romans 3:20; 7:7). Like a flashlight, the law awakens the knowledge of sin within a person (Galatians 3:24). When sin, which is nothing more than transgression of the law (1 John 3:4), is seen and repented of, the law will have done its work of bringing liberty from sin (James 1:25; 2:12). Freedom from sin comes through the knowledge of sin. The law brings this knowledge and the evangelist brings the law.

Jesus used the Ten Commandments to bring people to knowledge of their sin. With a certain lawyer in Luke 10:25-37, he used the law to reveal the lawyers pride and need for repentance. To a

certain rich ruler in Luke 18:18-24, Jesus used the law to reveal how he broke the first commandment by trusting in money as his god. To a scribe in Mark 12:28-34, who had a right understanding of the Ten Commandments, he remarked: *Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.* To the woman at the well, who was an adulterous woman, Jesus used the seventh commandment to reveal her sins and bring her to repentance (John 4:5-30); and in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), Jesus taught the multitude using the Ten Commandments many times...in fact, he commended those who taught them (Matthew 5:19).

The Apostle Paul also used the Ten Commandments as he spoke with the Gentiles who had no understanding of sin (Acts 17:30), with stubborn Jews in Acts 28:23, and he gives to us clear reasons for using the law in evangelism in these verses: Romans 3:19-20, 7:7, 8, 13; Galatians 3:24; 1 Timothy 1:8-9.

Others who used the Ten Commandments included James (James 2:7-10), John (1 John 2:3-4), and John the Baptist (Mark 6:18). Today our world is so dark that it urgently needs a light to reveal sin. That light is the Ten Commandments (Romans 3:20, 7:7). Let us labor, helping others to see their sin and need for a savior, using the Ten Commandments.

Repentance – God’s Work

It is important to remember that though God uses our efforts of proclaiming His message to compel others, it is not our effort that draws others to salvation. We are like farmers who plants, cultivates, and harvests the seed. God is the one who provides the sun, water, and the increase (1 Corinthians 3:6-8).

As we proclaim the word, the two edged sword of the Holy Spirit is then able to convict and judge the conscience of a person (Hebrews 4:12). To use the sword effectively, we must be

students of the word, studying to show ourselves approved (2 Timothy 2:15).

When a person is receptive to the word, the water of the Holy Spirit will nurture and grow the seed. You will find that many will be quick to repent, but immediately turn away from their decision (Luke 8:12); others will repent, but not grow in their faith and turn away (Luke 8:13); others will repent but conform their decision with the world’s ways and standards (Luke 8:14); and others will indeed receive the word with firm conviction and remain faithful and fruitful (Luke 8:15).

In our compelling our appeal is to the conscience of a person more than the arguments presented. A person becomes aware of sin when his conscience is exposed to God’s word (Romans 2:15; Romans 7:9; John 8:9). Intellectual arguments for the sake of arguing hinder God’s word from convicting the heart. Appealing to the conscience is an appeal to the knowledge of truth that everyone already has within them (Romans 2:15; Psalm 51:6).

Believe

After the conscience is awakened to sin and the need for a savior, our hearers are then ready to *believe the gospel*.

To believe is more than an intellectual assent. It is to have faith in and to entrust ourselves to someone or something. A man may say he believes that his car will take him where he wants to go, but he does not entrust himself to his car until he gets in it and drives to his destination. In the same way, a man may say that he believes Jesus Christ is his savior, but until he lives in obedience to Christ and lives according to his standards, he does not really entrust himself to him. It is interesting that the Bible informs us that the *devils also believe, and tremble* (James 2:19). So great are the devil’s intellectual and experiential belief of Jesus that they are

horrified; yet, in their belief, they do not entrust themselves to Him.

After a person repents, he is now in position to hear and understand the gospel message as found in 1 Corinthians 15:3-8:

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 that **he was seen** of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren 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.

After the repentant sinner believes the gospel, we are then to help our hearers to entrust themselves to Jesus by helping them to correct wrong ideas, wrong character, and wrong behavior using the Bible. To bring the truths of the gospel to unrepentant sinners is like bringing precious jewels to a pig: their value will not be perceived and will be trampled under foot. We are not to give the pearls of the gospel to unrepentant sinners (1 Peter 3:15).

Please remember that the gospel message does not awaken a sinner, exposure to the law of God does this. This is why Ephesians 5:14 says: *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.* The light (spiritual understanding and discernment) comes after repentance, not before. Look at it in another way. Would you seek a cure for a disease you did not know you had? Of course not. So it is with repentance: no one is interested in a savior until they understand

their need for one. We must first help a person understand that he is sin-sick and needs the cure of repentance before he is able to live in the wellness of the gospel. If the gospel is received into a sin-sick soul, it will become perverted, twisted, and used for selfish purposes.

RECEIVE
Luke 15:11-32

A son
A prodigal
Leaves home
Lives foolishly.
Humbled.
Repents.
Returns home.
Father rejoices.
Receives son
With gladness.
Celebration.
The son who was dead
Is now alive.

We are to receive into the church all who returns to God in repentance with rejoicing and celebration. Once received, they are in position to be disciplined, live according to Christian doctrine, and go forth to make disciples.

Regardless of who they were or what they have done, we are to receive the repentant sinner with joy and celebration (Luke 15:11-32). The Apostle Paul was a murderer of Christians and sought after them with a fiery zeal. After receiving Christ, this repentant sinner was received into the fellowship of believers. Regardless of the sinner's sin, receive all who repents.

Note that Paul was not encouraged to fellowship with Christians until after his conversion. The early disciples recognized the church as a place for saints, not unrepentant sinners. Sinners are to recognize and repent of their sin before being received into the fellowship of believers (Acts 9:26-28).

DO SOMETHING

Here is the strategy for evangelism:

- Search out your hearers.
- Sweep away the obstacles that hinder their hearing and the receiving of the gospel.
- Compel your hearers with Scriptural truths.
- Receive your hearers into the fellowship of believers



CHAPTER 7 Primary Battle Tool

If I want to build a house, I will need a hammer, a saw, some nails, and wood. So must I have tools to labor for the kingdom. Without tools, the job just won't get done.

A tool is an instrument that a worker uses to do the work. Our primary tool in evangelism is a clear, definitive worldview so that we are able to give an answer to all who ask (1 Peter 3:15) and to discern inconsistencies and error in other worldviews. Building upon the foundations in this chapter will help lay a strong Christian worldview and prepare you for the battle.

In Chapter Five, four questions were outlined that must be answered by every worldview. Make sure you have a clear understanding of the Biblical answer to each of these. Here they are abbreviated:

1. Where did we come from?
We were created, not evolved, from God (Genesis 1-3).
2. What is wrong with our world?

Sin is the source of all wrongs, corruption, and bad things (Genesis 3:1-24).

3. How can we fix the wrong?
By recognizing that there is one God who created us, knows how we work, knows how to fix us, and revealed Himself and His instructions for life to us through Jesus Christ. The solution for all of life is found only through Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:21-22)
4. What am I to do?
Spread the good news that there is hope, answers, and solutions through Jesus (Mathew. 28:19-20).

Understanding our worldview allows us to discern inconsistencies in opposing worldviews and to provide answers to our hearers. We do not need to understand other worldviews to counter them; we only need to know the truth. The truth will reveal the inconsistencies and errors. It is said that the FBI studies only real money in order to identify counterfeit money; so is it the same with us: we only need to study God's word to counter false beliefs.

In the following I have outlined seven foundations important to a Biblical worldview.

SEVEN FOUNDATIONS FOR A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

Foundation One - Creation

The Genesis account of creation has been diminished by the prominence of the theory of evolution. Believing evolution erodes the foundation of our faith. Through the Biblical account of creation we understand where we came from, what went wrong with our world, and how it can be fixed. The foundations of

Christianity were built on the first eleven chapters of Genesis. By discrediting the reality of Adam & Eve, the fall, the flood, and the Tower of Babel, Christianity becomes just another religion without any real validity. The following, adapted from an article in *Creation Magazine* written by Jonathan Sarfati,⁽¹⁵⁾ gives several important facts from which to build a solid Biblical worldview concerning our beginnings:

- The heavens, earth, and everything in them were created in six consecutive normal twenty-four hour days, the same as those of our working week (Exodus 20:8-11).
- The earth is only about 6,000 years old. Jesus said mankind was on earth from the ‘beginning of creation’, not billions of years later (Mark 10:6).
- Adam sinned and brought physical death to mankind (Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22).
- Since man was the federal head of creation, the whole creation was cursed (Romans 8:20-22), which included death to animals, with the end of the original vegetarian diet for both humans and animals (Genesis 1:29-30). How then could dinosaurs have died billions of years before man ever existed?
- God judged the world by a globe-covering Flood, which Jesus and Peter compared with the coming Judgment (Luke 17:26-27; 2 Peter 3:3-7). This destroyed all land vertebrate animals and people not on the ocean-liner-sized Ark.
- God then judged the people by confusing their language at Babel—after they had refused to spread out and repopulate the Earth after the Flood.

It is important to interpret all of the day-to-day, mundane

¹⁵ Sarfati, Jonathan. *Moving Forward*. *Creation Magazine*, March-May 2002: 21

experiences of life and world events through a Biblical framework.

Foundation Two – Righteousness

In our relativistic culture it is important that our righteousness (moral standard) is not compromised. The Ten Commandments are a great summary of God’s moral code. It would be good to memorize them and teach them as the necessary foundation for law, moral, and social health. Here they are as found in Exodus 20:1-17:

- Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.
(Do you love God above all else?)
- Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.
(Do you have your own beliefs about God? Do you reverence and exalt statues?)
- Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
(Do you use God’s name as a curse word or without really honoring Him?)
- Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
(Do you worship God on a weekly basis?)
- Honor thy father and thy mother.
(This doesn’t just refer to children.)
- Thou shalt not kill.
(Jesus tells us that if we have anger and hate in our hearts then we are a murder (Matthew 5:22).)
- Thou shalt not commit adultery.
(Jesus tells us that if we look with lust, we have committed adultery in our heart (Matthew 5:28).)
- Thou shalt not steal.
(Think about it. The value is irrelevant).
- Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
(Have you ever lied?).
- Thou shalt not covet.

(Do you want what you don't have? Are you discontent with what you have?)

Foundation Three – Doctrine

In Hebrews 6:1-2, the Apostle Paul writes of several elementary, ABC's of doctrines that are necessary to understand before we can grow in Christian faith and practice. Understanding these will lay a good, solid, doctrinal foundation to understanding more complex doctrine. Not understanding these could lead to the accepting of error and distortions of the truth.

- Repentance from dead works.
A wrong understanding here can lead to toleration of sin, salvation without repentance, God is love without God is just, and having sin transformed into addictions, health issues, and emotional problems caused by past events.
- Faith toward God.
Our faith is not toward ourselves or anything or anyone...faith is always toward God.
- Baptisms.
What are the two main baptisms revealed in Scripture?
What is the significance of these? Why are they needed today?
- Laying on of hands.
Understanding this concept we understand that we are not to join in ministry with or send others out in ministry unless we are 100% in agreement with their work.
- Resurrection of the dead.
- Eternal judgment.

Foundation Four – Biblical Timeline

Understanding the Biblical timeline will help validate the history of the Bible, help us understand where we are on the prophetic timeline, and help us to see God's movement through history.

- Creation – 4004 BC
Genesis 1-2:25
- The Fall – 4004 BC
Genesis 3:1-24
- Noah and the Ark – 2349 BC
Genesis 6-7
- Tower of Babel – 2242 BC
Genesis 11:1-9
- Promise to Abraham – 1922 BC
Genesis 12-17
- Israel becomes a Nation
Genesis 35:9-15
- Advent of Christ – 5 BC
Matthew 1-3
- Death of Christ – 33 AD
Matthew 27:32-66
- Resurrection of Christ – 33 AD
Matthew 28:1-10
- Second Advent of Christ – Future, 2????
Matthew 24:29-44
- Judgment of all – Future.
Revelation 20:11-15
- New Heavens and New Earth – Future.
Revelation 21:1-4

**B.C. dates taken from James Ussher, The History of the World*

Foundation Five – Dispensation of Christ

Without a correct understanding of Christ and his relationship to God can lead to all kinds of false teachings about Christ. Christ is the chief corner stone of Christianity; what we believe about him determines the tint of our faith or whether we have a true or false faith.

- In the beginning with God.
John 1:1-2; Philippians 2:6
- Separates from God and His divine glory.
Philippians 2:6-7; John 1:14; 17:5; Galatians 3:13
- Comes to earth with life in himself separate from the Father.
John 5:26; Matthew 3:16-17, 17:5-6; John 12:28
- On earth, submits his life fully to the Father.
John 5:30-31, 6:38, 7:25, 14:24, 8:54
- Makes conscious decision to please God.
John 8:29
- Makes conscious decision to die for sin.
Hebrews 10:12
- At death, descends into center of the earth.
Ephesians 4:9; Matthew 12:40
- Rises from the dead.
John 20:16-17; Ephesians 1:20; Matthew 28:1-6, 9
- Enters heaven and is now at the right hand of God, separated from His excellent glory.
Mark 16:19; Luke 22:69; Act. 2:33-35; Romans 8:34; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3, 13, 8:1, 10:12, 12:2; 1 Peter. 3:22
- Returns to the earth, still separated from His excellent glory.
Mark 14:62; Matthew 26:64.
- When all things are submitted to God through Christ, then Christ will unite again with His excellent glory.
Matthew 19:28, 25:31; Acts 2:33-35, 7:55-56; 1Corinthians 15:24, 28; Hebrews 10:12-13; Revelation 11:17; Matthew 16:27.

Foundation Six – Need for and Plan of Salvation

Why do we want others to know God? This foundation will help us to understand our need for salvation and the solution for being saved.

- Romans 3:10 There is none righteous...
- Romans 3:23 For all have sinned...
- Romans 5:12 Death passed upon all because of sin...
- Romans 5:8 While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us...
- Romans 6:23 - Sin wars against us...
- Romans 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved...
- Romans 10:9-10 Confess and believe...

Foundation Seven - God

Without proper understanding of God, we can be tempted to accept many “gods” and believe that all religions lead to and serve the same God.

- There is only one God. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Mark 12:32)
- God revealed Himself on earth through Jesus, His only begotten Son. (Hebrews 1:1; John 3:16)
- God’s only voice to our present world is Jesus. (Hebrews 1:1; John 14:6; John 1:1-14)
- To believe in God is to believe in Jesus. (John 14:1)

DO SOMETHING

- Understand my worldview.
- Develop a strong Biblical worldview and write it down on paper.



CHAPTER 8

The Supreme Commander

Life teaches that everyone is submissive to someone. Why do so many think it strange that there is one God to whom all people are to submit themselves? Why is the thought of an ultimate, absolute authority so appalling to so many?

In our twenty-first century more and more churches and Christians are shifting from the doctrine that Jesus is the *only* way to heaven and are embracing other religions as serving the same God. As I write, the morning paper had this heading:

PRESBYTERIANS STRUGGLE
OVER PATH TO SALVATION.(16)

The first paragraph of the article reported:

The nation's largest Presbyterian denomination wrestled Thursday with what used to be a no-brainer for Christians: Is Jesus the only way to salvation?

16 Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, June 15, 2001

The article went on to report:

A majority of the more than 500 delegates... struck down a proposal that said Jesus is the lone vehicle of salvation.

This should be a warning to all to the pervasiveness of the world's influence. The words of Jesus, warning that *even the elect* would be deceived if that were possible (Matthew 24:24), should strike to the heart. The world's ways are so enticing and woven together with truth and logic that even the strongest of Christians feel the pressure when standing for absolute standards given by one God through one person. That is why it is *so much the more* urgent to live in a radical obedience to God and to adhere to strict standards of a righteous life.

The same forces that have brought the Presbyterian Church (USA) to its level of apostasy are also influencing most churches today. It is imperative that a strict adherence to Scripture be maintained. We must keep from Scripture *plus* and hold firmly to Scripture *alone* for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness, and all of our life present and life to come (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

WHY CHRIST ALONE?

Christianity is distinct in that Jesus' claim was that He is God and that He is the *only way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me* (John 14:6). No other prophet of any of the major religions was able to make these claims.

Throughout His earthly life, Jesus:

- Claimed equality with the Father.

(John 10:25-33; 5:17-18; 8:58)

- Accepted worship as God.
(John 4:20-22; Act. 8:27; Matthew 8:21; John 9:35-39; Matthew 14:33; John 20:27-29)
- Forgave sins. (Mark 2:5-7)

Jesus would not have changed the course of history on His words alone. The demonstration of God's power through His works confirmed His claims. When John the Baptist wanted confirmation that Jesus was the Messiah, Jesus directed his attention to the works that were done:

Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them (Matthew 11:2-5).

The works that Jesus did were those that no other man had done before and pointed to Him as being the Messiah, God on earth.

Another point of interest is that in the Old Testament there are nearly three hundred prophecies concerning the coming Messiah written over a one-thousand year period. Each one was fulfilled in Jesus. This alone establishes a solid confirmation of His claim to be the Messiah—God on earth. For an extensive list of these prophecies, and their fulfillment in Jesus, see Josh McDowell's book, *The New Evidence That Demands A Verdict, Chapter 8*.

Another distinctive of Christianity is the physical resurrection of

Jesus. Of the four religions that are based on a person, Christianity is the only one that claims its leader rose from the dead. The fact of the resurrection is recorded in the gospels (Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20-21). History testifies to this as well as the early church fathers. For more details, refer to Josh McDowell's book, *The New Evidence That Demands A Verdict, Chapter 9*.

Christianity is superior to all other religions by virtue of the miracles, the fulfilled prophecies and the resurrection. Without these, there would be no Christianity and our hope would be in vain. Christians would only be one religion among many.

One last important factor is that Jesus is the only religious figure who claimed He would send a part of God to live within man: *for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you* (John 16:7; 14:16, 17, 26).

Again, Jesus' words would mean nothing if it weren't for the millions of people in every generation who have and are experiencing the living God within them. There is no way for you or I to convince anyone of the reality of God's presence until they experience Him for themselves. Since He is the *living* God, He will indeed make Himself known to all who sincerely seek Him (James 4:8).

DO SOMETHING

- There is only one God who revealed His ways through one person, Jesus Christ. He has set the standards by which all people are to live their lives in order to enter eternal life.
- When you live contrary to God's standards His wrath and judgment are upon you. He judges all people in the life to come and all people will find their eternal destiny in either heaven or hell. Which will be yours is determined by whether you live your life with faith in Christ or not.
- Life at the most is short and should not be wasted; therefore, make the salvation of your soul and the souls of others your first priority and go and do something, anything, to bring the gospel to others.



CHAPTER 9 It's Up to You

You've stayed with me through this last chapter. I don't expect you to agree with every word I've written. I do believe that every Christian needs to awake to...

- One: The war that is aggressively declared against Christ and is affecting the life of every Christian. (Chapter One)
- Two: The need to engage the battle and go to where the battle is. (Chapter Two)
- Three: The need for Christians to repent and to ensure that their spiritual armor is firmly in place. (Chapter Three).
- Four: The need to know clearly what God has done for you: what life was like before Christ; what took place when you repented; and how God has worked in your life since repentance. (Chapter Four)
- Five: The need for evangelizing and helping others to repent and know Christ.

- Six: The need for developing a strategy to counter the present anti-Christian spirit. (Chapter Six)
- Seven: The need for having a clear understanding of our Biblical worldview. (Chapter Seven)
- Eight: The need for understanding why Jesus is the only way to God and heaven and that all religions do not worship the same God. (Chapter Eight)

My goal has been to encourage you to see the battle, to engage the battle, and do something, anything, to counter the anti-Christian spirit that surrounds us. The darkness is great and the light will soon go out...before it does it is now up to you to tell everyone you know about the wonderful God who sent His only begotten Son to overcome the darkness and to bring us hope.

May God awaken each of us before it is too late.