

RESTORATION MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Prophetic Insight

5/22/19 “Therefore we must pay much more careful heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away”

Deception Is A Pandemic Spiritual Cancer (Part 1)

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus,

We'll soon be uploading to Youtube the next set of videos in our series, ***Mutually Serving Jesus Your Lord With Resolute Determination***. In this next set we discuss two Bible-based imperatives which represent the *distinctiveness* between a person our Lord Jesus calls His own, and those who call themselves “Christian” but are in fact “lord” of themselves:

- **Biblical authority** and the responsible Christ-like exercise of it.
- **Biblical deference** and the Christ-like humility it entails.

As we've served our Lord Jesus for over four decades, one of the greatest voids we've observed within contemporary Christianity is the biblical enactment of godly authority along with the humility that's demonstrated in appropriate deference.

Please consider this. *If* your marriage or the marriages of others who are close to you have been routinely plagued by ongoing apprehension or relational discord, we strongly encourage you to prayerfully take to heart what we'll be discussing in these upcoming videos. Authority and deference are paramount Scriptural foundations for both a family and a fellowship family. So few self-identified “Christians” today have any idea what righteous authority and readily given deference are, and that our Lord's Kingdom entails both of these components. Therefore they aren't aware of the consequences in their lives that come from not knowing these components and incorporating them into their character. It's vital for you that if you're living by grace in the Lordship of Jesus, you must understand God's purpose for authority and the depth of humility which authentic deference requires. These two distinctives which are so absent these days are essential Kingdom ingredients!

You may not have ever served in the military, worked as a police officer or firefighter, or been involved in any other occupation in which **immediate obedience to authority with a deferential attitude is absolutely necessary**. But our Father still purposes that you practice a Bible-based lifestyle that emanates from these two distinctives. Being transformed in these areas of Christ-like character means you'll need to die to many of your own self-determined, self-willed motivations and attitudes.

The Kingdom of our Lord isn't built on the **loosey goosey** view that dominates so much of Christianity today: “I'm okay; your okay. Let's just all get along.” “If you don't correct or admonish me, I won't correct or admonish you.” “Live and let live. After all, God accepts everyone just the way they are.” In previous materials we described *authority* as the God-given responsibility to *commend* or *correct*, to *include* or *exclude*. To have the loving courage to exclude or correct someone means that you understand our Father's righteous standards and, if you're the person in your family or faith family to whom God has entrusted this authority, you are prepared to put His standards into practice. On the receiving end, if you're yearning to become more like Jesus in your character, you can't try to avoid being corrected when it's necessary.

Our society is filled with the stench of chaos as each person does what they consider their right, regardless of the impact or effect on others. That's *lawlessness*, a condition which defies God and snubs

His righteous standards. No one is willing for anyone else to tell them what to do. And this “lawless” rationale has infected many within Christendom too. **Loosey goosey** “Christians” fear the exercise of biblical authority, such as through parents, bosses, elders, and public service officials. They especially despise being corrected or excluded by those who’ve been given that authority according to God’s Word.

Many have slipped deeply into **insolence, insubordination** and **rebellion** — but are blinded to that influence in their own attitudes and behavior. They’re obsessed with the quest to be accepted by others at all costs. You’ve seen this yourself. Agreeable (though “plastic”) smiles gain you acceptance among other Christians who have neither the time nor the inclination to come alongside you in your time of need. And behind the smile is someone seeking “likes” even from people with whom they have no personal relationship. 

Buck up, or as Paul puts it in 1Corinthians 16:13, be a person of holy courage! Don’t choose acceptance at all cost as a greater priority to you than making biblical authority and humble deference your personal distinctives in Christ. Our Lord Jesus warns His own that if you’re to walk as He did, you will be corrected and even excluded by others (see  Matthew 5:10-12; Luke 6:22,23). Are you prepared in your heart to yield to the Spirit in the classroom of authority and deference? Or, have the world’s ways so permeated your spirit that compromise is your mainstay?

“But as for me and my household, we WILL serve the LORD” (Joshua 24:15).

We who earnestly seek to be true to our Lord Jesus in fulfilling our Father’s will must make intentional and difficult choices for ourselves, our families, and our fellowship family. Wholehearted, obedient trust as Christ’s ambassadors is the only course of action we can take in the midst of this self-indulgent, self-obsessed decadent society. Many years ago the founders of *Voice of the Martyrs*, Richard and Sabina Wurmbrand, were faced with a choice that captures the sobering decisions many of us need to make — especially when it comes to making choices that are totally counter to what’s publicly accepted and applauded. Consider this true account:

“1945: The Romanian government had invited all the religious leaders — over 4,000 attended. First, they chose the Communist leader, Joseph Stalin, as honorary president [we’ll be discussing Stalin’s long-lasting demonic influence on the world in our next email]. One by one, the priests and pastors of Romania stood and offered words of praise for Communism and declared their loyalty to the new regime. It was absurd and horrible — bishops and pastors arose and declared that Communism and Christianity were fundamentally the same. Out of fear, these men of God were filling the air with flattery and lies. It was as if they spat in Jesus Christ’s face.

[Sabina whispered], “Richard, stand up and wash away this shame from the face of Christ.” Richard knew what would happen: “If I speak, you will lose your husband.” Sabina replied, “I do not wish to have a coward for a husband.” Pastor Richard Wurmbrand took the stage...” (Excerpted from the book, *Jesus Freaks*)

The lives of the Wurmbrands as well as many others who didn’t love their own lives but were willing to sacrifice themselves even unto death (Revelation 12:11) have deeply inspired both of us. Our Lord’s grace and love remind us that the Holy Spirit is keeping both of us persevering in fulfilling our Father’s will as we share these messages with you. May you too find encouragement and inner strength as you ponder the lives of those who’ve suffered for Jesus and were found faithful.

Deception Is A Pandemic Spiritual Cancer

A Healthy Dose Of The Lordship of Jesus And His Word Can Heal You

Do you find yourself yearning to become a child of our Father who fully embraces the Christ-like understanding and biblical mandate of **authority** and **deference**? If so, you may find yourself appalled as we discuss the ways in which **DECEIT** has seduced our nation into the rebellious, antagonistic and belligerent mindset that is so prevalent. We'll be presenting this topic in the a video, but we'd like to mention it briefly here. May you, like the sons of Issachar in 1Chronicles 12:32, understand the times we live in and know how you as one of Christ's own should respond. To do this, it's imperative for you to first flee the decadent pit this nation has put itself in.

If you've never heard the phrase "The Greatest Generation", it's a term used to describe those who grew up during the Great Depression and fought in World War II, or whose labor helped win that war. The Greatest Generation didn't want their children to grow up suffering the same hardships they'd gone through. So they were more lax in biblically disciplining their kids, today's self-identified Baby Boomers.

Without realizing it, the Greatest Generation was putting into practice the humanist view that children are basically good and that correction and discipline are harmful to their well-being. And their Baby Boomer offspring were the forerunners of the generations who are driven by **insolence, insubordination and rebellion** which dominate our society today. The Baby Boomer generation makes up a substantial portion of our retired population — the doting grandparents who are fearful to correct their children or grandchildren because these might cut off contact with the older folks.

But consider this. It's the Baby Boomers who lit the fuse of unrestrained self-indulgence which has led to today's societal chaos and belligerence. It's the Boomers, with their unbridled desire for retirement's creature comforts and self-gratifying activities, who have piled up the National Debt that neither they nor their offspring can ever pay back. As Boomers ourselves, we strongly encourage you who are younger than we are to never get caught up in pursuing the self-absorbed, earthly-security-minded goals of our generation. Ours will most likely be the "Least Generation" — the least represented generation in heaven. Spiritually speaking, **Boomers are Doomers!** As the Bible makes clear, those who are obsessed with comfortable, easy living on this side of death are positioning themselves for an eternity of suffering (see our Lord's parable of warning in Luke 16:19-31).

In the emails and videos we're working on, we prayerfully hope we'll be able to help instill in you our Father's purpose for biblical authority and your need for willing deference if you're to live with Jesus as Lord of your life. Setting yourself a goal of retirement years filled with pleasure and self-pursuit, as so many Boomers have, has nothing to do with Kingdom living. Of the followers of Jesus who have deeply influenced us, a senior couple in North Carolina has especially encouraged us over the years by their selfless lives. For decades they've served their Lord in overseas areas by serving His people who are desperate for their specialized abilities. They're ten years older than we are, and by their example they have spurred us on in our own persistence as they've poured themselves out on behalf our Lord. And as an eighty-something brother in Christ told us before he passed into the presence of Jesus, while we were still in our 30s, the word "retirement" isn't in God's Word! We hope each of you have people like this in your lives!

***“...a great door for effective work has opened to [us],
and there are many [demonic forces] who oppose [us]”***

(1Corinthians 16:9; see also 1Thessalonians 2:18)

We’ve noted on previous occasions that whenever we begin to produce materials about **demonic strongholds** or **authority** or **Bible-based applications for Christlike living**, all hell breaks loose against us. Next to lifting up and exalting the precious Name of Jesus, we haven’t encountered any other topics besides these that inspire such fear and opposition from the demonic world. If you’ve sought to be resolute through love-grounded obedient trust to fulfill our Father’s will, we know that you too have faced equal resistance from the unseen world. We only hope you recognize it as such and don’t let yourself become annoyed or bitter toward a human being the demons may be using against you. That person is a prisoner of a devious and insidious master, as Paul so pointedly describes in Ephesians 2:1-3.

Shortly after we began to work on these materials about **authority** and **deference**, we discerned an evil verbal assault being waged against us by a woman in our mobile home park who has openly applauded her spiteful attitude. As a widow who has allowed neither rightful authority to influence her life nor given deference to anyone, she has been used by the enemy to ridicule and mock us as followers of Jesus. And through multiple conversations in the neighborhood she has been able to put a **Jezebel-induced “emotional downer”** (see 1Kings 19:1-4) over the minds of many other women living here. This situation isn’t new turf for us. We’ve experienced similar demonic opposition in past years in other areas where we’ve lived. At first we wondered how (or why) people could so readily believe the terrible reports they were listening to without questioning the speaker or seeking confirmation of the accusations from the victims of the venomous diatribes.

It took some time in our early walk with Jesus to understand the spiritual power that’s exercised by demonic principalities and powers, even to deceiving entire nations. In an upcoming email we’ll write about ways in which demonic spirits cloud people’s discernment so that even someone who is living righteously begins to listen to and believe lies. During a time of prayer this morning I (Mike) asked our Lord to help me understand from His vantage point what is going on around us in the unseen realm. I asked Him to reveal a passage for guidance as I let my Bible flop open in my lap. And just as it did 26 years ago when I asked why Sue and I were being sent to Israel, my Bible opened to the same verses, Jeremiah 1:17-19:

“Get yourself ready! Stand up and say to them whatever I command you. Do not be terrified by them, or I will terrify you before them. Today I have made you a fortified city, an iron pillar and a bronze wall to stand against the whole land—against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests and the people of the land. They will fight against you but will not overcome you, for I am with you and will rescue you, declares the LORD” (also see 26:2).

When Sue awoke I told her what happened. It’s like our Lord gave us a spirit of understanding in our hearts to perceive the demonic opposition around us. Over the years we’ve become deeply concerned for Christians who have drawn close to us as friends. Why? Because as soon as the demons see the emotional connection between us and them, they search out every vulnerability these dear people have and attack them in ways most have never experienced. We know firsthand how painful these onslaughts are, and out of love we caution them to make sure they’re not more committed to us as friends than they are to the truths our Father gave us to incorporate into their lives by His Spirit. There’s a parallel in history to not being forewarned or prepared for calamitous attack:

“If the Japanese only knew the devastation that would result from the atomic bomb being carried by the Enola Gay on August 6, 1945, they would have done everything they could to stop it.”

Ever since we were first told to go to Israel in 1993, Satan’s lackeys have been hatefully aware of our Father’s purpose in giving us the Hebraic foundations to share until the Dark Days of Chastisement come on the US. Over the years only those followers of Jesus whose hearts are resolute in fulfilling Father’s purposes in their own lives haven’t been driven away from us by **demon-perpetrated assaults**. If you’d like to know more about how this happens, or if you find yourself experiencing people abruptly turning against you or cutting off relationships with you, type **“sweaty body”** in the search box on our website. (We’ll expand on these issues in upcoming emails and videos.) We just want you to be wary of getting picked off through ignorance.

We’re not trying to herald our own purpose in the Kingdom as much as present a reality of what life is like and is often misunderstood when people who love and serve Jesus get tested by demonic attack. From our Father’s perspective, all sorts of trials test the genuineness of your faith, as stated in 1Peter 1:6,7. The “wheat” gets separated from the “chaff” as people have a chance to repent and change if they need to. Scripture demonstrates that we’ll indeed face trying circumstances and events which will filter out impurities in our hearts. Look at these examples: •Job in chapters one and two, being tempted by Satan to curse God because of his dire trials. •Jesus’ warning to Peter that Satan will sift him like wheat (Luke 22:31,32). •Our Lord Jesus warning everyone who would follow Him that we must forsake all that we hold dear (Luke 14:26-33). •Paul’s dispute with Barnabas over whether to take fear-prone John Mark with them (Acts 15:36-40). It’s not difficult to recognize that something transformational must have happened in the young man’s life along the way because later Paul speaks well of John Mark as a fellow laborer for the gospel (Colossians 4:10; 1Timothy 4:11; Philemon 24).

Here’s a thought for you. In 2Corinthians 13:2-4 Paul boldly proclaims the power of God at work in him and his fellow workers despite their human weakness. God’s power is working as a testimony to validate that Christ really is speaking through Paul. The apostle then confronts the Corinthians with these words of self-scrutiny, *“Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you — unless, of course, you fail the test?”* (2Corinthians 13:5). We would rather validate our ministry through the guidance and power of the Spirit of our Lord than live by the ruse of **false confidence** which Nicolaitan theologians have instilled into so many within Christianity.

Our Lord confronted a group of Jews in John chapter 8 who took offense at Jesus. They were convinced they were children of God because they considered themselves descendants of Abraham. Yet Jesus rightly identified them as belonging to *“your father, the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do”* (v. 44.) Talk about **false confidence**! Yet Hellenist-influenced theologians have produced so many false gospels that claim salvation is fixed upon a “sinner’s prayer”, while anti-Semitic denominations practice infant baptism, contrary to the Scriptural practice of a follower of Jesus knowingly and intentionally dying to sin through immersion and rising up to new life. People are being deceived into a **false confidence**. As a result they never examine themselves to determine if their faith is authentic under the Lordship of Jesus.

Please take this to heart in your own spiritual journey:

Even though we’re always at war with demonic forces which hate our Lord’s presence within us, we are not always in the battle. There are certain things we do or certain things we share that really rile them. You may be experiencing the same thing, and we hope that what we describe about the opposition we face will help you in your own faith walk. We and you are serving a glorious King Who unrelentingly loves His family. Don’t give up in weariness or give way to compromise. **Persistence requires resistance as we press on to our eternal existence.** By His grace we can overcome and endure to the end whatever is flung our way. (See Mark 13:13; 1Corinthians 1:8; Revelation 2:26.) Our Lord is waiting to welcome you!