

# B E Y O N D   T H E   B A S I C

## CHAPTER 9 - A CALL TO ARMS - HOME AND FAMILY

### **Spiritual warfare**

Spiritual warfare is not an option; it is a fact of life. When Satan and his angels were cast to the earth, those dwelling on the earth found themselves on the front lines of the battle. Our choices are twofold, fight for eternal life, or give up and face the second death. The Hollywood scenario of mystical rituals, magical chants, and an unbeatable evil foe may be good for the box-office, but it has no basis in reality. The Hollywood cast of characters always omits the most important being, the Lord God Almighty.

Jesus came to reclaim this world for God, to establish His kingdom here (Matthew 6:10, Matthew 12:28). God's army is the church, the Body of Christ. In the not too distant past God's people knew who they were, and they referred to themselves as the church militant. Although we may have lost sight of that fact, we still do remember old hymns like "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "Onward Christian Soldiers". Many of our older saints still remember a time when society would never have dared to openly propose the vile concepts they are now trying to force on everyone, because they knew the church would never tolerate such things. The modern church has lost its zeal for God (Numbers 25:11, Romans 10:2, Revelation 3:19), and its diligence in keeping His Word. We are commanded to be careful to do all the Word of God (Deuteronomy 15:5), not half hearted (Deuteronomy 26:16), without drifting away from it (Joshua 23:6). We are commanded to be doers, not hearers (James 1:25) and not try to rationalize a way around them (2 Peter 1:20&21). Many in the Body of Christ no longer resist evil influences (James 4:7) and we now allow the devil to run unbridled.

There have always been individuals who have a warrior's heart. Today they include firemen, policemen, and the military forces. They are not the worlds bullies or cruel individuals, but are those people who have such a love for family, friend, and their communities that the love drives them to physically place themselves between danger and those they love. That is the same love that drove Jesus to the cross. The warrior's goal is not to just protect, but to remove the danger completely. As members of the Family of God we are called to be warriors and to be the aggressors and take the enemy by force (Matthew 11:12) and if necessary fight to the death (Hebrews 12:4). Our best defense is to keep the enemy on the run. We need to be vigilant in watching (Nahum 2:1) and praying (Matthew 26:41), being brave (1 Corinthians 16:13&14) being sober and alert (1 Thessalonians 5:6, 1 Peter 5:8) realizing the end is near (1 Peter 4:7). We must be prepared to act (Luke 12:35), and stubborn in our determination; abhor evil (Romans 12:9), turn away from it (1 Peter 3:11), and don't even allow any impression of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22). We are not called to wait to be attacked, but seek out evil and drive it away (1 Timothy 6:12, 2 Corinthians 10:4, Matthew 10:1), and replace it with good (Matthew 12:43-45) lest the latter condition be worst than the first. We have a God of war (Exodus 15:3, Revelation 19:11) who is not willing to concede anything to the enemy.

King David was known as a mighty warrior king because he was faithful to God, and he was surrounded by other mighty men. Josheb killed 800 of the enemy in battle (2 Samuel 23:8). Eleazar fought till he was weary, and then continued to fight until his muscles cramped so he could not let go of the sword (2 Samuel 23:9&10). Shammah stood alone and defeated the Philistines (2 Samuel 23:11&12). Abishai killed over 300 of the enemy (2 Samuel 23:18&19) and he was always at David's side in battle, helping him (2 Samuel 21:15-17). The list goes on of the mighty men who actually

# B E Y O N D T H E B A S I C

## CHAPTER 9 - A CALL TO ARMS - HOME AND FAMILY

accomplished feats that we only expect in superhero fantasy stories. We are called to be mighty in the Lord (Isaiah 40:31, Isaiah 41:10) not through our own strength, but in His strength (Zechariah 4:6, Acts 1:8, Ephesians 3:16). Whatever we may not be capable of accomplishing in our own strength the Lord can accomplish through us (Mark 14:36). The fact is, there are no limits to what we can do through Christ (Philippians 4:13). All we really need to do is continually walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16&25). When we see a brother or sister under attack we need to be like Abishai and come along side them and fight for them. David's mighty men fought human enemies who worshiped demons. We are called to fight the demons them selves (Ephesians 6:12).

In spiritual warfare the secret of success is to stand fast in the Spirit, in unity, and in the Lord (Philippians 1:27, Philippians 4:1) and hold the traditions of the scriptures. Endure hardships and afflictions as a soldier of the Lord (2 Timothy 2:3, 2 Timothy 4:5), and never back up, even an inch, and you shall be saved (Matthew 24:13). Never allow the enemy any headway, however small or insignificant it may seem. David's mighty man, Shammah, wasn't defending the city or other folks. He stood alone in a lentil field, not a significant thing of value, and he defeated the Philistines there where there was no danger to home and family. If you are in an unclean environment, even the smallest nick in the skin will provide an entry way for infection. Once in, infection will spread and create havoc in the body. If you are a child of God the enemy can only enter through doorways you open. Never allow any entrance (Ephesians 4:27). Some people think it is thrilling to run as close to the edge of a tall cliff as possible without falling over the edge. They call that getting an adrenalin rush. We are commanded to stay as far away from the edge as possible (Mark 9:43-47). Many of our problems in our physical lives are what are commonly referred to as self-inflicted wounds. Many of our spiritual wounds are also self inflicted, caused by getting too close to the world in order to experience in our imaginations some of the pleasures of sin, and we end up falling over the edge (Matthew 5:21-30).

### **Self defense**

Before we can be of use to the Lord in the battle for eternity we must get our own lives in order. If we are always dodging, ducking, and crying for help, cowering behind locked doors, we are no threat to the forces of evil. Remember who and what we are, God's family (John 1:12, Romans 8:15, Luke 20:38) washed in the blood of the Lamb with all our sins washed away (Acts 2:38, 1 John 1:7). We are a Spirit filled, Spirit powered people destined to become spiritual clones of Jesus. We need to walk in the power we have and boldly demand our rights to this world that Jesus reclaimed for us. When we know we are loved by the Father we will have no fear (1 John 4:18, Romans 8:31). When we have Jesus' heart for the lost we will make His mission to heal and set free (Luke 4:18&19, Acts 10:38) our own mission. When we become like our Heavenly Father (Ephesians 5:1) we will no longer be able to put up with evil (Habakkuk 1:13). Those things that are an abomination to Him (homosexuality, graven images, cross dressers, whores and sodomites, a man who tires of his wife, divorces her, then later remarries her, a froward [unruly, contrary, uncontrollable] person ,a proud look, a lying tongue, shedding of innocent blood, making wicked plans, running to evil, a false witness, one who causes discord among the brethren, cheating, the sacrifices of the wicked, the thoughts of the wicked, those who justify the wicked and condemn the just, false weights and measures, and the prayer of a sinner) will also become an abomination to us, and we will have to do something about it.

# B E Y O N D   T H E   B A S I C

## CHAPTER 9 - A CALL TO ARMS - HOME AND FAMILY

We need to consciously and deliberately put on the full armor of God daily (Ephesians 6:11&13). If we are not wearing the armor it cannot protect us. We need to avail ourselves of everything the Lord has provided to empower us (Romans 4:21, 2 Corinthians 12:9). Remember, He is for us (Romans 8:28-31) and He desires that we be winners (Deuteronomy 33:22, Isaiah 41:10, Ezekiel 18:23, 1 Timothy 2:4). He provided us with what He did because we have need of it, and if there had been anything more required, He would have provided that also (Matthew 6:8).

We cannot study the Word of God without noticing that God wants us to stand firm in the faith. Never waiver and never doubt (James 1:8). Always be aware that He Who is in us is greater than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4, 1 Corinthians 3:16) and that God will never permit the enemy to try us beyond what we can tolerate (1 Corinthians 10:13, Hebrews 2:18). When the enemy tries to convince us that we are weakened beyond recovery, or that there is no way out, or that we are not worthy, tell him we know he is a liar and quote the Word of God to him (Ephesians 6:17, Jeremiah 23:29, Romans 1:16). Stand on the promises of God and never give up nor retreat. Of course, in order to do that, the promises of God need to be in our hearts, not in a book we left behind someplace. Whenever things seem to be at their darkest, call on the name of Jesus for help. The Lord's name is a strong tower of defense (Proverbs 18:10).

If we are to remain strong in the Lord we must maintain contact with the source of our strength, our indwelling God. We need to pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17, Luke 18:1) and never underestimate the power of prayer (James 5:16). We seek His guidance (Matthew 7:7&8, John 15:7&8) and then follow it (Luke 16:46, Matthew 7:21, Titus 1:16). Remember, prayer is a conversation with God and involves listening as well as speaking (Psalm 46:10). God gave us each one mouth and two ears because He intended that we listen twice as much as we speak. Stay in contact with God all the time and be listening for what He is actually saying, not just for what you want to hear. We should not have to devote all our waking hours to self-defense, but should be able to be about our Father's business of rescuing our brothers and sisters in Christ and advancing the Kingdom of God.

### **Defending home and family**

Our homes are the nests in which our families live and grow. We all desire clean comfortable and healthy homes for those we love and care for. If the home is drafty and damp, fungus will grow and people will become ill. The solution to a healthy home is to seal the house against the invasion of moisture and chill air. If we also desire our families to be spiritually healthy we must seal our homes against the intrusion from the spirit realm and the world. If we don't do that we will find ourselves, and our families, becoming spiritually weak and contaminated. The devil and the world work together to inundate us with violence, immorality, cruelty, and an indifference towards God, with the intent that we become insensitive to it all and tolerate it as the norm. The spiritual leaks into our homes are video games, TV programs, rental movies, the Internet, magazines, books, and friends. While none of these may be evil by nature, they all have the ability to be carriers of deadly spiritual viruses. Many of them depict sexual immorality as the acceptable norm for society, and pornography as entertainment. They depict robbery, murder, and rape as every day events that should be expected. They advocate vengeance and cruel control as desirable traits. They are proponents of winning at any cost and stress competition over cooperation. We are told by our Father to concentrate on what is good and decent (Philippians 4:8) and avoid evil imaginations (Genesis 6:5&6, Proverbs 6:16&18, Romans 1:21, 2

# B E Y O N D T H E B A S I C

## CHAPTER 9 - A CALL TO ARMS - HOME AND FAMILY

Corinthians 10:5). God cannot look upon evil (Habakkuk 1:13) and neither should we (Ephesians 5:1). What is being offered in the guise of entertainment is deadly spiritual poison, like kool-aid mixed with cyanide. Enemy agents are attempting to make the home their spiritual battlefield instead our refuge of love and healing. Do not allow their poison to ever enter our homes. A deadly illness such as aids is much easier to prevent than it is to cure. Make our homes into houses of prayer and love.

Friends of both adults and children are always attempting to get us to act like they act and do what they do. This is especially true if the values by which we live causes them to feel guilty about their choices in life. A common term for this action is "peer pressure", which we need to recognize as temptations from the enemy, also remembering people are not the enemy. Our closest and dearest friends should all be brothers and sisters in Christ. We are warned not to be yoked to the world (2 Corinthians 6:14) or participate in their activities (Ephesians 5:11). Worldly people should be acquaintances with whom we associate and interact, but whom are never allowed to influence our Christian walk. We are called to be the salt that flavors life and the light that shows the way (Matthew 5:13-16, Acts 13:47) influencing them for the Lord. When the children of the world say, "Everyone is doing it!" they are telling a lie. Everyone is NOT doing it. Other people and other families are not accountable for our families, we are. Society does not set standards for God's people. God is the only one to set acceptable standard (Galatians 5:16&25). We must learn to recognize the worlds twisted logic and motives (Matthew 10:16). We must be grounded in the Word of God (Deuteronomy 17:18&19, Isaiah 34:16). We must never allow the carnal nature to rise up and steal our families (Proverbs 19:18, Proverbs 23:13&14). It is alright to become very stubborn and bull-headed about accepting only God's way (Matthew 7:13-15). Do you have any friends that are constantly nagging you to participate in their worldly life style? Have you ever told anyone, "I'm a Christian and I do not do that"?

Even human law recognizes that there is a difference between adults and children in their responsibilities, capabilities, and authority in making decisions. Both by God's law and by the law of man, adults are responsible for the care, health, and education of the children. Our God holds parents responsible for the spiritual health and care of the children He gives us (Proverbs 22:6). If we look at the Jewish model of family life, the father exercised authority, the mother ensured the thanksgivings, and the children were raised up from birth as members of God's chosen people. We are usually concerned with secular education so our offspring are prepared to survive in the world. We are usually concerned with political education so our offspring know who to vote for. We need to be just as concerned with spiritual education so our offspring know how to survive in the spiritual realm, which is all that is going to matter for eternity. From their earliest days our children should not be able to remember a time when they were not aware of being a member of the family of God because their daily lives were ones of prayer and study of God's Word (1 Chronicles 16:11, Luke 18:1, Acts 17:11, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). Parents can make no allowances for influences of the world and the flesh in their children. After all, our children are really God's children, left in our care (Psalm 127:3). We need to be parents in fact, not only in name. God has placed a value on the wisdom that comes with godly living (1 Chronicles 22:12, Proverbs 28:8) and has directed the young to respect and obey their parents (Ephesians 6:1-3). We need to provide wholesome alternatives to the call of the world and the flesh. The Lord has told us to ground our families in the Word and love of God (Deuteronomy 6:6&7, Ephesians 6:4). Children should be seen as future mighty men and women of God presently in training under our loving guidance (Deuteronomy 4:9, 1 Timothy 3:4). Parents have to make the rules and

# B E Y O N D   T H E   B A S I C

## CHAPTER 9 - A CALL TO ARMS - HOME AND FAMILY

enforce them with love lest our children grow up to be more lost souls wandering around in the dark (Psalm 82:5, 1 John 1:6). Finally, parents should devote significant time to interceding on behalf of their children and calling for God's protection over them (John 14:13&14). One of our great defensive weapons Jesus asked the Father to grant us was godly unity (John 17:21-23). The enemy knows that rebellion can sow dissention and destruction.

We must always be aware of the fact that we are not only physical beings, but also spiritual beings. When a man and a woman unite in matrimony their physical family includes a husband and a wife, but their spiritual family also includes their heavenly Father (Isaiah 64:8, Matthew 7:11, Romans 8:15&16). When we have children God becomes our children's Father also; He does not have grandchildren, just children. If we, as a Christian family, are to survive we must recognize God as our Father, the senior member of the family. God will set the standards for us (Psalm 143:10), and will provide all our needs; food (Genesis 1:29), power to get material needs (Deuteronomy 8:18), rain for the land (Deuteronomy 11:14), and strength (Isaiah 41:10). He knows what we need and will provide in abundance when we trust Him (Matthew 6:32-34, Luke 6:38, 1 Peter 5:7). God will keep us for eternity (Psalm 37:28, 2 Timothy 4:18). As a wise family we will consult our Father before we act (1 Samuel 2:3). Our concern should be to be obedient to the will of the Father (John 15:10, 2 John 9), walking in His ways (1 John 2:6), and allowing Him to act in our lives (Proverbs 23:26, John 14:26, John 16:8, Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 3:18). We should have times of fellowship with Him (Psalm 73:28, 1 Corinthians 1:9, Hebrews 10:22, James 4:8), because that is what we were created for (John 15:14). We should thank Him (Colossians 1:12), worship Him (Psalm 96:9, John 4:23), and praise Him (Psalm 9:11, Psalm 67:3, Hebrews 13:15). We should be diligent, deliberate, and consciously acknowledge the Father every day, through both the good and the bad time (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). It is when we are in His presence and in His will that the enemy is powerless (Deuteronomy 33:27), because He provides a refuge for us (Psalm 57:1) and will keep us safe (2 Timothy 1:12).