

Cyber Truths By E-mail

11. Discussion For Application (July 23, 2005)



Restoration Ministries International

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Dear Friends,

The revised and expanded Demolishing Strongholds books have arrived! We thank God that almost half of them were purchased before publication and mailed out straight from the printer. The cost of the new version is \$7 plus shipping.

For those of you who have been praying for us during the re-write of the book, we offer a heart-felt "THANK YOU!"

We're now deep into producing the Demolishing Strongholds Video. The content of the video goes far beyond the book. We now have 22 segments planned. [There's only so much you can put down on paper. The video is a far more penetrating medium than writing is to impart the truths our Lord has given us. Later in this email we'll explain why.]

The demonic opposition to producing the video is far more intense than re-writing the book. Files are disappearing in our computer. When we re-open different completed segments, many of our settings are changed. One project we worked on for hours couldn't be opened by the software the next time we tried to open it. We had to start all over again.

We both know the Holy Spirit is using this material to shine light on the unseen demonic forces that are engaged in a war for the souls of people. The demons are doing everything they can to remain hidden, and are resisting exposure that this book and video may bring. Unclean spirits find it easy to work in stealth because over 50% of Christians today are convinced that there are no demons. We continue to ask your prayers on our behalf as we work on this project. It will never be completed without our Father's response to intercession.

Discussion For Application:

Opening the Way For the Holy Spirit

In our last e-mail we addressed the effects of apprehension. Apprehension between people blocks their ability to love each other as Jesus would have them love. After we sent out that email, we were amazed to find out how many of you, especially married couples, live with persistent apprehension. We were overwhelmed by how epidemic this form of interpersonal tension is among those who call themselves "Christian."

Since our last e-mail I [Mike] have been anguishing over this situation because the most common source of apprehension in families is the husband/father. And being a one myself, I kept seeking God for wisdom that would help husbands free their families from apprehension concerning themselves.

Two events substantially increased my earnest pursuit of this topic. The first was a visit to a family several weeks ago. The father really felt he was excellent in the area of having discussions with his family. DBut during our visit, Sue was deeply enmeshed with hearing the wife's tearful recounting of her husband's boorish treatment of the family on a recent vacation. The teenagers shared how impossible it was to discuss things with their father. His view of himself and his family's very different perception of him made you wonder if they even lived together.

Another prompting came earlier this week from a close friend. He's been trying to help a buddy lead his family in spiritual development. When my friend shared something painful that had happened during a discussion with this man, I found myself getting agitated. The man's lackadaisical response to my friend's godly counsel is indicative of so

many "Christian" husbands and fathers today. I tried to use my sorrowful dismay about this man's spiritual laziness as personal motivation to fall upon our Lord for wisdom. You probably yearn as much as I do to be His redemptive instrument in the lives of His children. As we've shared in earlier writings: We believe our Lord wants His followers to take negative feelings captive, then use them as prompting to ask Him for help so that we can make each disturbing situation redemptive.

Both of the men I've just written about, along with so many other father/husbands we encounter, have a false assessment of what is going on in their families. Too many men have a far higher self-appraisal of how they're carrying out their biblical role in their homes than their family experiences with him. Sadly, what the father/ husband believes is discussion with his family is really him talking at his wife and children.

Talking at rather than discussing with is especially noticeable when it comes to spiritual conversations. So many husbands/fathers who are still controlled by strongholds are obsessed with being right. There is such a fear of ever being wrong in his family's eyes that he totally misses the way God would have him share biblical truth with his family. As we've written so often before, the focus on who is right rather than what is right is the fruit of Hellenism on the Christian community. And this need to be right especially influences the minds of men. Hellenism promotes philosophical discussion and arguments about the Bible. It's all talk with no regard for applying and living out the Word of God. Hellenism is the demonic influence behind the form of "Bible Studies" that

many attend: All talk and no action of obedient trust! Self-inflating knowledge, not a way of life, is fostered when people gather to spout out their mind's content. Our Father is never glorified by mere knowledge of His Word. It's trust walked out in obedience to that Word that bring joyful testimony of Him.

What we are writing in this e-mail, and a whole lot more, will be covered extensively in the video segments of Chapter 5, After You've Demolished the Strongholds. But we want to share a revelation our Lord gave me [Mike] after weeks of deep searching. On Tuesday our Lord spoke forcefully and clearly to my heart:

"You and Sue are producing these videos, including Jesus In Your Home, to enable families and other people to sit down together in their living rooms in front of their TV's and discuss the truths they will live by. You've taught them repeatedly the truth you've discovered about the Hebraic Stream of Judaism, 'Whenever two or three sit down together to discuss God's Word for application, the Holy Spirit is there in their midst giving understanding and application.'

The two of you are showing people the way to bring the Holy Spirit into their midst. It's through the discussion of two or three seeking to live a way of life that glorifies the Father. My words to all my disciples are built on this truth from heaven, "I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by My Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in My name, there am I with them." (Matthew 18:19,20).

These husbands and fathers you are so frustrated about refuse to enter into discussion about My truths with their families. They want neither Me nor the

Holy Spirit to come forth in their homes. These men want to be in control. The method of discussion I've revealed to you brings about the full work of the Holy Spirit, and this is a threat to them. And they don't want their families to come under the control of the Holy Spirit. The key to freeing my Spirit to do all He was sent to do is through discussion that leads to application — living for Me as a way of life."

This revelation was so powerful I couldn't stop talking about it. Do you see, what these men fear, as do any others who refuse to discuss God's Word to live it, is the Holy Spirit. In fact, there's little evidence in the lives of a number of men who call themselves "Christian" that the Spirit abides within them. For others, the strongholds in their soul have blocked them from desiring to come under control of the Spirit. Instead, the Hellenist spirit that so impacts Christendom today satisfies them with being mere talkers about the Bible. Isn't this how Paul described the men who lived in the center of Hellenism? "All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas" (Acts 17:21).

Discussion that leads to a Christ-like way of life opens the door for the Holy Spirit to be about the ministry the Father and the Son sent Him to do. As you consider the four factors listed below, think of them as indicators of the Spirit's presence in your life.

1. The Holy Spirit convicts people of sin.

None of us would put our trust in

Jesus or repent of our sins if the Holy Spirit didn't do His work. "When he [Holy Spirit] comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment" (John 16:8). If you are a husband/father or anyone who wants their own way, you're not going to let the Holy Spirit convict you. And, you don't want your family becoming convicted of sin, because that only puts you in a worse light.

It's the presence of the Spirit of God in a person that enables them to free themselves from their own sin nature. That is, if they want to be free.

"You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, IF the Spirit of God lives in you. And IF anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ" (Romans 8:9). What a powerful assertion which clarifies the core issue for all of us: If anyone does NOT have the Spirit of Christ, he does NOT belong to Christ."

It's our personal belief that anyone who claims to be a "Christian" but continues to block out this all-important work of the Holy Spirit to convict people of sin blasphemes the Holy Spirit. Blasphemy is adding to or taking away from the nature, character, and work of God. It is a direct attack on His very person. People who refuse to let the Holy Spirit do what is within His character and ministry to do are blasphemers. And our Lord warned us about what happens to such people, "But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin" (Mark 3:29). If you're in this situation, please turn away from it and return to our Father path. HE wants your relationship with Him cleansed and restored!

If you don't agree with what we've

written about blaspheming the Holy Spirit, we encourage you to come up with your own understanding of our Lord's words. You certainly don't want yourself or your family to be "guilty of an eternal sin" through your own stubborn willfulness. And, if you cherish your family, you don't want to be the one leading them down a path that ignores the Holy Spirit.

Again, God's method of using discussion with others opens the way for the Holy Spirit to reveal His will and His ways. Discussion that leads to application of God's Word is also one of the signs of the Spirit's presence in your life. And, with His presence He brings conviction of sin. Conviction opens the way for repentance and being cleansed from unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9). And righteousness leads to your prayers being answered (James 5:16).

2. The Holy Spirit verifies God's truth.

When Pilate was interrogating Jesus he mockingly asked, "What is truth?" (John 18:38).

The Greek word for "truth" means "reality." So when Jesus proclaims, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6), He is proclaiming Himself as the only Reality. He, and all truth about Him, is the foundational reality of our existence as our Father's children. Truth is devoid of lies and deceit. And since lies are the character of Satan (John 8:44), understanding God's truth via the Holy Spirit keeps us from living without deceit in our convictions.

Knowing that His work of redemption was coming to an end, and the need for His followers to live by truth, Jesus promised them and all followers to come, "I will ask the Father, and he will

give you another Counselor to be with you forever — the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you" (John 14:16,17).

The crux of the issue for fathers/husbands who pursue truth is this: Unlike Hellenism that emphasizes "WHO is right", our Lord wants us to free the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, through our discussion with others to confirm "WHAT is right!"

Anyone who desires to live by truth as our Lord would have it understood, must follow His method and LIVE BY His truth. And when we earnestly pursue truth, our sinful darkness will be exposed,

"Whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God" (John 3:21).

3. The Holy Spirit anoints and empowers our Father's children.

The Apostle Paul affirms the importance of the Holy Spirit's anointings in several of his letters. To the Corinthians, and to all of us he says plainly, "Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant" (1 Corinthians 12:1). The Holy Spirit's presence in you is what sets you apart from all of mankind. Not only do we who have the Spirit have a guarantee of a wonderful eternal destiny; we also have God-empowerment to fulfill His purposes through us. And each one of us is empowered differently as the Spirit desires, "All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and He gives them to each one, just as He determines" (1 Corinthians 12:11).

If the Holy Spirit has access through your discussions to freely convict you of sin and to verify God's truth for you, He will certainly empower you. But that can be a problem for those who sit back in spiritual sloth. Spirit-empowered people earnestly seek to be under the control of the Spirit. They know that He will lead them to where His power through them can be manifested. Isn't this why Paul tells us, "Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25)?

We've met very few men who know the Holy Spirit's anointing for them. They have no idea how they are empowered to fulfill our Father's purposes (see Ephesians 2:10). And, even fewer men know the anointing the Spirit has given their wife and believing children. I've beseeched so many husbands/fathers over the years to find out the Spirit's gifts within their families so that he can help them be used as God desires in blessing others.

We're grieved over how few have taken responsibility to know the Spirit's empowerment of their family. It goes back to the man's failure in the first two factors we listed above. He enjoys his pet sins, and doesn't want to be any more responsible to God than he thinks he has to. And, he wants his beliefs and decisions to be verified by himself alone. Ignorance of the Holy Spirit's operation in his family feeds his complacency and irresponsibility. This is where you find the "Tyranny of the Monarch", which we wrote about in our previous e-mail. If the Spirit is in control, then the man's no tyrant! [We discuss this more extensively in the forthcoming Demolishing Strongholds Video.]

4. The Holy Spirit gives us peace no matter what our circumstances.

Paul assures us, "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Corinthians 3:17). What freedom do you think he's talking about? Really, are YOU walking in the freedom the Spirit gives? It's crucial that you do! He gives us the spiritual fortitude to be at peace no matter what is going on around us.

People under stress hope and even pray for their circumstances to change. Then they believe that they'll feel more at peace. But changing hearts by His Spirit is our Lord's way far more than is changing circumstances. Jesus readily knows that love prospers in the heart of a person to whom He gives peace. But, where there is apprehension, the love He desires to manifest through His followers is quenched. Jesus' admonition is for all of us, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27). Shalom, peace, is an active word that imparts a sense of well-being, harmony and of one accord with others. It signifies the complete absence of apprehension. Peace in all circumstances is one of our Father's best ways for His children to be noticed by the world—they aren't troubled or afraid as are the people of the world.

Again, the ministry of bringing peace to a disturbed heart is given to the Holy Spirit, "The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace" (Romans 8:6). This arena of identification with the old sinful self is where husbands, fathers and others quench and grieve the Holy Spirit. Rather than turning to the Source of

Peace, they try to change things on their own through their own efforts and decisions. And even worse, they learn to tolerate apprehension as a way of life, and train their family to live with apprehension.

We wrote *Growing Relationships Through Confrontation* so that you could free the Spirit to bring peace to your heart and your relationships with others. Why do you think we produced the *Jesus In You Home Video Series* and are working so diligently on the video for *Demolishing Strongholds*? Because all our work is useless unless it is DISCUSSED with the desire to apply it as a way of life which glorifies our heavenly Father. We wrote *God's Instruments For War: Discovering and Coordinating Spiritual Gifts As Weapons of Warfare* so that each believing member of a family and faith community could be COLLECTIVELY used by the Holy Spirit to further the Kingdom of God. Do you think our Father is pleased with families who live unempowered by His Spirit? Is He pleased with people who rely on their own strengths?

The best that Sue and I can do is to offer followers of Jesus biblical truths that they can watch, then pause, and discuss in their own living rooms. We found from our research on the earliest church that the HOME is the "basis building block" for ALL spiritual development. As we've discussed what we've shared with you over the years, we've been changed by the Holy Spirit in our discussion. We are offering you and your family the same method that God calls for and has used in our own lives. Discussion is the same method that enabled the first followers of Jesus to be

called "The Way" as they put Jesus' teaching into practice through His Spirit. And, discussion is the only method that will free the Holy Spirit to do His work in you and your family.

Please consider with all your hearts what we've briefly written. Use the videos! Watch and discuss them. Open the way for the Holy Spirit to use your TV to do His work in your home. And we plead with you, "So, as the Holy Spirit says: 'Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts...'" (Hebrews 3:7,8). As we seek to encourage you to act upon what we're writing, we're reminded of someone who almost waited too long to make the right decision:

Many years ago while we were at the retreat center, the wife of one of the pastors who met at our retreat center each month wanted to have another baby. She was in her early forties and her other two children were in school. He wasn't really interested in another child, but for her sake he agreed. All through the pregnancy he had zero interest in her pregnancy or the fact that another child was coming into his family.

He was dutifully in the hospital for the delivery, and shortly after the baby was born he went home. When he arrived home he received a phone call from his wife. She related to him that she'd been told the baby had some serious birth defects. There was a pause, and then she pointedly asked, "Jim, I need to know: Are you with me?" With one question he was faced with all the months of his complacency toward her pregnancy and the arrival of this baby. He responded in tears, "YES!!", and drove immediately back to the hospital.

- Some of you men reading this e-mail have blasphemed the Holy Spirit. This e-mail may be too late for you if you have no ears to hear.
- Others of you may have only quenched and grieved Him. Repent! Ask the Holy Spirit to change your life. Begin to discuss God's truths with the goal of application with your family or others close to you in the faith. Our Lord needs men who are training up laborers for His harvest. Be among them!

Your servants for the glory of the Father,

Mike & Sue Dowgiewicz