

RESTORATION MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Prophetic Insight

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

The Kingdom Of Our Lord Jesus Has Two Legs

Recent news reports have been exposing past sexual misconduct. Some people question why these evils are being revealed after so long a time, while others think there's a sinister motive behind the whistleblowers. Still others, who have experienced the **oppression of intimidation**, understand the reluctance to be a **whistleblower** and endure further humiliation. These are worthy considerations. But the problem runs deeper than the exposure of wrongdoing. It starts in a Christianity which has been hopping on one leg for generations, the leg that believes charitable aid alone is the best method for outreach ministry.

But there's a second leg that Christendom at large has refused to use and therefore has found its efforts thwarted:

The divine power in the authority of Jesus's name so that each of His followers is able to free individuals, families, communities, and even a nation from demonic captivity.

If You're Following Jesus As Lord, Be Sure That The Demons Know Who You Are!

Jesus told the people of His day, **“I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven”** (Luke 10:18; see also Revelation 12:7-12). The demons—Satan's host of workers who fell with him—are at work here on earth! So if you say that our Lord Jesus knows you as one of His own, never let the devil say this about you: **“Jesus I know, and Paul I know about, but who are you?”** (Acts 19:15). We challenge you as a “soldier of Christ” who loves Him heart and soul to go through your neighborhood, workplace, school, or even your “church” building to free the captives and evict the demons by relying in trust on the authority that's inherent in the name of Jesus. Then watch the counterattack that's hurled against you or some member of your family. The devil will not only try to stop you from evicting his workers, he'll also try to make you reluctant to challenge him again. Don't take spiritual warfare lightly!

We learned a lesson about Satan trying to create an aversion within followers of Jesus who purposed to evict him—it's what we call **“the sweaty body scenario.”** For thirty years Mike played a lot of pickup basketball. When he realized that the much younger men he played against hated to get sweat on themselves, he'd intentionally come up and slide against them. Sure enough, they'd back off and not closely guard him. He was able to make shots more easily because the young guys hated sweat!

The devil will use his **“sweaty body scenario”** against you to keep you from ever relying on the authority of Jesus's name. Paul makes clear in his letter to the Ephesians that spiritual warfare is real. Yet so many Christians today are blind to this scriptural reality. And until you're a threat to the devil, whom you can't see, you won't be convinced about the evil he is accomplishing among people for whom Jesus died until you enter the battle by trusting in His name. Again, it's an awful reputation in our Lord's sight to be so spiritually reluctant and impotent that **the demons don't know you**. Keep in mind that it's out of a *loving trust in Jesus and having His love for others* that you actively engage and deliver people from demonic captivity through prayer. Taking up that weaponry of faith helps you more fully experience •your rela-

1 “This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Give careful thought to your ways’” (Haggai 1:7).

tionship with your Lord Jesus, •your role in His Kingdom, and •your understanding of the divine power and gifts He has apportioned you. You'll live as a changed child of your Father who by His power and grace can stand on both legs in the Kingdom. And as Paul emphasizes about engaging demonic powers, "*when you've done everything to take your stand, then stand!*" (Ephesians 6:13).

It's crucial to recognize that no one is born with a Kingdom-mindset! Until you're born of His Spirit you have neither the loving power of Christ nor the responsibility to engage in the spiritual warfare that's needed to rescue the souls of mankind. But once you are born again, YOU are responsible to be taught and guided by the Holy Spirit so that YOU know and live out the purposes our Lord holds YOU accountable to fulfill in His strength. This is why we are commanded:

"Keep letting yourself be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will" (Romans 12:2).

Renewing your mind means changing what's in there, especially your motivations. A huge change in your thinking process is required in its ongoing transformation:

- from being passive or resistant about freeing people from Satan's power,
- to being a warrior on the frontlines who stands up to Satan for the souls of mankind (see Acts 26:18).

When it comes to how critical it is for you to renew (make new) your mind, we can learn a lesson from the Older Testament. In Deuteronomy 11:10-14 our God made known to the Israelites of the exodus how vastly different the land He was leading them to was from the land they'd left. He was preparing them for the *extraordinary transformation* they'd need in order for Him to bless them with provision for their lives. He was making known the depth of **personal and collective responsibility** they must demonstrate toward Him which they hadn't learned in the 400 years they'd spent as captives in Egypt:

"The land you are entering to take over is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you planted your seed and irrigated it by foot as in a vegetable garden. But the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of is a land of mountains and valleys that drinks rain from heaven. So IF you faithfully obey the commands I am giving you today—to LOVE the LORD your God and to SERVE Him with all your heart and with all your soul — THEN I will send rain on your land in its season, both autumn and spring rains, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and olive oil."

If you've been in an organized religious system for any length of time, you may not even be aware of how much you've been hopping on one leg in your own effort. The Israelites had depended on the canals of the Nile to water their crops in Egypt's arid climate. Now God was leading them to a hilly land that depended on the spring and fall rains He sent rather than on manmade irrigation to water their crops. He needed to transform their way of thinking: Receiving rain depended **totally** on their love-based obedience to His commands. In the Kingdom that's outside established institutionalized religion, you'll find that serving on two legs brings you joyful blessing as our Father is glorified.

Refusing To Be Ensnared By One-Leg Christianity Or Government Or Business

Very similar to the established canals of Egypt are the established religious organizations which are headed by a clergy hierarchy. Religious organization expends vast effort to keep the

hierarchy in place. Since they're satisfied with the way things are in their position, they aren't concerned with engaging the devil and freeing those who are held captive by him. The sorry results of this one-leg effort in which only charitable activities are acceptable as "Christian expression" pour out onto the government and business arena as well — and are blatantly exhibited through this nation being ruled by a demonic principality, Jezebel. Satan the deceiver has blinded contemporary minds through the humanist lie that the demonic domain is fictitious; even 65% of "Christians" don't believe that the devil exists.

It's little wonder that so few "Christians" think that Satan is real despite what Scripture confirms. If their clergy speak of our spiritual enemy at all, it's in terms of one-leg hopping which tells listeners to ignore demonic attacks: **"Don't even think about the devil; just think about Jesus."** Is denial and ignorance the course Jesus set for His disciples as He sent them out to confront and overcome any demonic interference? No! The diabolical scheme from hell tries to convince Christians that there isn't any such thing as demonic intrusion in their lives or in the lives of people around them — and that any evil taking place is "just the way it is." This means that throughout Christendom are those who deny that spiritual warfare is going on in the unseen realm, or who are fearful and cowardly when it comes to fighting and overcoming the devil's workers and their assaults.

In light of this deception you need to anchor for yourself that the Kingdom of our Lord is built on the ***renewed minds of the righteous***, who through the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit are each resolutely determined to mutually fulfill their Father's purposes. With Lord Jesus as their ONLY Head, any establishment hierarchy and organization are unnecessary. In the Kingdom of our Lord, as we His subjects focus on Him, He sends us out to engage the devil and his forces in spiritual warfare, and overcome them in His Name.

Other demonic lies have infiltrated Christendom and caused people to hop on one leg. One of these enemy schemes is an obsession with meeting physical needs. This kind of charity makes "Christian activity" acceptable to the world, but is also spiritually impotent because sin and eternal loss are ignored: **"Charity is all that's needed for outreach in the world."** This demonic lie is called the **"social gospel"** — creating converts who only look to how they'll benefit here and now through Christianity. Missiologists refer to these shallow converts as **"Rice Christians"** — they equate Christianity with food, schooling, or some other benefit. When the goodies cease, so does their "faith." Offering charity is never an affront to the demons. And charity certainly doesn't compare to the fear demons have of the Biblical pattern of freeing people from demonic oppression through the authority of the Name of Jesus.

The **"social gospel"** cares for the physical needs of people without revealing the spiritual power of the Person and Name of Jesus to meet their real need — forgiveness from their sin and reconciliation with a heavenly Father through His Son. Throughout Europe, Africa, the Far East and the United States, organized Christianity is losing ground due to its lack of spiritual power. It's become just a powerless religious system, a feel-good structure of beliefs. But from heaven's vantage point, Jesus's declaration that ***"the gates of hell will not withstand His called-out ones"*** (Matthew 16:18) is made out to be a lie.

"Rice Christians" will "believe" anything they're told — as long as the food or other benefit is forthcoming. This self-perpetuating methodology produces dependent believers who are like children trapped by expecting handouts. The fruit of this **"social gospel"** is so very limited. Many mission agencies have been in the same place doing the same thing for decades

with the same limited results. The shallow commitment of the Native peoples has engendered countless numbers forsaking Christianity when the tangible benefit goes away.

The **“Church Growth Movement”** that’s so popular within Christendom is an abscessed outgrowth of the **“social gospel”** — offering a benefit that meets the emotional/physical needs of people yet denies the call for the redeemed to live transformed lives as Christ’s servants. People feel accepted and good about themselves when they experience cheering music and entertaining sermons in comfortable surroundings. **“Church Growth Movement”** congregations are often the largest in a given area. There’s a pointed reason why this is so: The **“social gospel”** persuasion accepts into fellowship the *unrepentant*, whether they are engaged in ongoing fornication, domestic abuse, homosexuality, embezzlement — anyone who is actively sinning and has no intention of changing their ways. God’s righteous commands and the person’s need to repent have been done away with. People are told that they’re “relying on works” if they heed Father’s command to *“purify [them]selves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God”* (2Corinthians 7:1). “Christianity” is presented as a culturally acceptable and tolerant religion among many. But here’s God’s stance in 2Corinthians 6:14,15 regarding that deceit:

- *“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.*
- *For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common?*
- *Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?*
- *What harmony is there between Christ and the devil?*
- *What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?”*

“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin condemns any people” (Proverbs 14:34).

There is one other broad area in which contemporary Christianity has failed as it continues to hop on one leg. It’s the demon-induced belief that human beings and government systems can solve spiritual and moral crises apart from God. This nation has forsaken God’s righteous principles for government *and* for business. If you talk to almost any “Christian” about government or business matters, few could cite even one of God’s commands governing each of these areas. Many churchgoers tell us that God isn’t involved in government. In fact, most believe that our collective wealth and military might protect our land. In reality the slogan “In God We Trust” that’s found on our currency is little more than a buzzword of bumper stickers.

All too many churchgoers identify themselves politically by two choices: **to be conservative and vote Republican, or liberal and vote Democrat**. Yet neither of these represents our Father’s perspective. Satan delights in the politically “conservative” who favor the rich and successful but despise through their policies the less fortunate. That’s just as heinous a sin as being “liberal” and nullifying God’s moral laws. Our Father’s Word is changeless:

“If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as law-breakers. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. (James 2:8-10).

When you are Kingdom-minded you recognize that both of these political choices are equally devilish. Kingdom people ask the Holy Spirit to guide them concerning each and every person our Father wants in office. As His children, voting is another area of our lives in which we fulfill His purposes which He’s prepared in advance for us to accomplish (see Ephesians 2:10).

God foresaw that when the Israelites settled in the Promised Land they would yearn for and establish a king over them like the pagans around them had (see Deuteronomy 17:14-20).

“Now it shall come about when [the king] sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel” (vv. 18-20).

In order for the king to maintain **peace, justice** and **receive God's blessing**, his people needed to have confidence that his decisions emanated from God's commands. If this is what God required of His chosen people Israel, do you think He demands any less of a nation that claims to trust in Him? Reread the U.S. Constitution and see how much of it directly represents the heart of God for justice and the principles of Scripture which it so eloquently sets forth to establish peace.

God Cares Deeply About How Businesses are Operated

Our heavenly Father recognizes that human beings have material needs. And, business practices which are done according to His Word are His means of creating provision for owners and workers alike.

Mike: While I was in the Navy I was sent to graduate school because of a specific military assignment. California Lutheran College, which I attended from 1973-75, had a graduate program right on the base where I lived. At that time I wasn't following Jesus yet, nor had I ever read the Bible. In my Ethics course we had to do a major term paper. However, rather than letting me choose my own topic like the rest of the students, my professor assigned me one. “I want you to write your paper on the parable of the vineyard owner in Matthew 20:1-16. Tell me what you learn about God from this parable.”

I remember opening our old family Bible that had collected dust under the coffee table. I found Matthew 20 and began to read. The first thing that struck me was, “Why do they put numbers in front of the sentences?” (I was totally illiterate about Scripture!) But as I began to pursue other chapters and books in the Bible, I was astonished at how much it had to say about justice in business practices.

Here's just a bit of what I learned from Matthew 20 at that time:

A denarius was a day's wage, so the vineyard owner realized that the men he hired later in the day also needed a means to live. His reply to the workers who complained about the same pay to those who worked all day and those who worked just an hour revealed his complete understanding of God's priorities and his responsibilities: *“I want to give the man who was hired last the same as I gave you. Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?”*

The earliest followers of our Lord Jesus understood and put into practice their responsibility for the well-being of others, a character quality which God wanted them to have: *“All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had”* (Acts 4:32).

[For more insight about business done God's way, see, **Operating A Small Business-Ministry To Extend God's Kingdom** <http://www.restorationministries.org/business-ministry.html>].

That paper was just the beginning of an odyssey in which I used God's Word as a handbook to develop biblically-based business practices. After I left the Navy I spent a number of years helping businesses and Christian institutions learn how to do business God's way. The most noticeable *renewal of the mind* for most business owners was realizing how much the Bible deals with conducting business. Unlike institutionalized religious systems that treat business as something secular and therefore outside their teaching parameters, the business owners learned about God's principles of doing business and His concern for the well-being of owners and workers. God's concern for the good of their workers overruled the business owners' quest for profit or self-aggrandizement.

“Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act” (Proverbs 3:27).

Certainly not every business owner accept this wonderful concern of our Lord for the welfare of people who worked for him or her. That's why James directed this warning:

“Now listen, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.’ Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, ‘If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.’ As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil” (James 4:13-16).

James isn't just blowing in the wind when he warns both business people and the rich about the way they live and how their workers are treated. His disapproval of their presumption finds its foundation in the Older Testament as God warns Israel:

“Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe His commands, His laws and His decrees that I am giving you this day. Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, Who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You may say to yourself, ‘My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.’ But remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms His covenant, which He swore to your ancestors, as it is today” (Deuteronomy 8:11-18).

Be Sure That You're Walking On Two Legs As You Serve Our Lord Jesus

If you belong to our Lord Jesus, then engaging the demonic powers that hold captive the people you care for and freeing them in the authority of His Name is not an option. It's a response of love! The courage to fight this battle comes through absolute trust in the name of our Lord Jesus and placing no confidence in the people who run the government or religious organizations. Your relationship with your Lord is first of all personal and grounded in obedient love and trust in Him. *Fellowship* is the mutual responsibility of repentant people to be determined for Christ in engaging His enemies.

Your daily lives exist to bring your Father glory through the people and events you encounter. Being mindful of His indwelling Spirit means you're being renewed moment by moment in awareness of Who enables you to discern what's in your Father's will and what isn't. Don't let anything that's made of man, whether government, business, or religion be more important than the spiritual intimacy of being a temple of the Spirit. **You're called to live in such a way that the devil knows who you are — and shudders because Christ is in you!**