

And if the bugler doesn't sound a clear sound, how will the soldiers know they are being called to battle? 1st Corinthians 14:8

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FIRST LOVE MINISTRIES, INC.

Prayer Study #216

Are You a Soldier of the Cross?

2nd CORINTHIANS 10:4-5

“The world in which we live is a combat zone, a violent clash of kingdoms, a bitter struggle unto the death. I am sorry if I am the one to break the news to you; you were born into a world of war, and you will live all your days in the midst of a great battle, involving all the forces of heaven and hell and played out here on earth. Where did you think all this opposition was coming from?”

John Eldredge in *Waking the Dead*

THE CURRENT STATE OF THE CHURCH IN AMERICA

1. The American Church is largely asleep: *Watch ye, therefore, for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning; lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping* (Mark 13:35-36).

Wherefore, he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give thee light (Ephesians 5:14).

And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed (Romans 13:11).

Rick Joyner a while back wrote of the American Church: “America has not fallen to the lowest state of depravity that Isaiah declared, where we call evil *good*, and good *evil*, where we honor the *dishonorable* and dishonor the *honorable*. This is the last state before we are assured judgment will fall. These judgments have been coming in waves for years, each one seeking to wake up His people. The American church has been like Jonah, running from God and sleeping through the storm. The reason for the storm was the sleeping prophet, not the heathen. The heathen actually had to wake up the prophet and tell him to call on his God. Will we wake up? If the church in America awakens, it will be given the kind of anointing Jonah had in preaching in Ninevah to bring repentance. Our finest hour and America's greatest times can yet be future-it depends on

those called to be salt and light. Will we wake up, repent, call on our God and preach the Gospel? Will we hear Him knocking and open to Him?”

2. The American Church, as a whole, is mostly powerless because it has quit preaching the Word. *They have denied the LORD and said, It is not He; neither shall evil come upon us, neither shall we see sword or famine; and the prophet shall become wind, and the Word is not in them...(Jeremiah 5:12-13a).*

AGAINST THIS BACKDROP, WHAT IS THE LORD DOING?

1. The Lord is standing at the door knocking: *Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with Me (Revelation 3:20)*

Rick Joyner commented on this verse: “One of the most remarkable verses in the Bible is Revelation 3:20, where we see the Lord standing outside the doors of His own church, knocking to see if anyone will hear Him and open to Him. During this age, He will not enter where He isn’t wanted, even in His own church. For the last few decades, America has basically asked the Lord to leave every public place.”

2. He is calling out and gathering a Last Days’ Remnant Company of Believers who will war against the kingdom of darkness. *And the dragon was angry with the woman and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:17).*
3. The Lord is restoring the five fold ministry offices and equipping the Saints. *And He gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry for the edifying of the Body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, by which they lie in wait to deceive, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, who is the head, even Christ, from which the whole body fitly joined*

together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increases of the Body unto the edifying of itself in love (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Why did Jesus give the five-fold ministry offices to the Church?

1. For the perfecting or equipping of the saints
2. For the work of the ministry
3. For the edifying or building up of the Body of Christ
4. So that, we, as the Body of Christ, come into unity and knowledge of Jesus
5. To a perfect of complete or mature person

Why is this necessary?

Because Jesus is coming back for “*a glorious church, not having spot Of wrinkle or any such thing; but that is should be holy and without blemish*” (Ephesians 5:25).

EVEN THOUGH WE ARE SURROUNDED AND ARE AT WAR WITH THE BABYLONIAN WORLD SYSTEM, AS WE WAIT FOR THE SECOND COMING, THE LORD HAS NOT LEFT YOU DFENSELESS:

Revelation 12:11-17

And they overcame (conquered) him by means of the blood of the Lamb and by the utterance of their testimony, for they did not love and cling to life even when faced with death [beholding their lives cheap till they had to die for their witnessing]. Therefore be glad (exult) O heavens and you that dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in fierce anger (fury), because he knows that he has [only] a short time [left]! And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he was in pursuit of the woman who had given birth to the male Child. But the woman was supplied with the two wings of a giant eagle, so that she might fly from the presence of the serpent into the desert [wilderness] to the retreat where she is to be kept safe and fed for a time and times and half a time (three and one half years or 1260 days). Then out of his mouth the serpent spouted forth water like a flood after the woman, that she might be carried off with the torrent. But the earth came to the rescue of the woman, and the ground opened its mouth and swallowed up the stream of water which the dragon had spouted from his mouth. So then the dragon was furious (enraged) at the woman, and he went away to wage war on the

remainder of her descendents- [on those] who obey God's commandments and who have the testimony of Jesus Christ [and adhere to it and bear witness to Him].

1st John 4:4

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.

Jeremiah 39:18

For I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword but thy life shall be a prize unto thee because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord.

ARE YOU A SOLDIER OF THE CROSS?

Characteristics of a Good Soldier

1. Spiritually fit, trained and equipped. *But refuse profane and old wives' fables and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come (1st Timothy 4:7-8).*
2. Not entangled by the things of this world. *No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier (2nd Timothy 2:4).*
3. Obedient to the commander. *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ (2nd Corinthians 10:4-5).*

WHAT IS THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF THIS AWAKENING, WARFARE AND RESTORATION?

It is preparation for the Second Coming of Christ: *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them who are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even as them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede them who are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; Then we who are alive and remain shall be*

caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord

(1st Thessalonians 4:13-17).

The Kingdom of God will be established on the Earth: *And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever* (Revelation 11:15).

Until then, we must fight, against the kingdom of darkness and the corrupt world or Babylonian system, in the Lord's Army.

Exodus 15:3: *The LORD is a man of war; the LORD is His name.* (The Lord is in us so the warrior is in us!)

Exodus 14:14: *The Lord shall fight for you...* (The battle belongs to the Lord but He has called us to make His enemies His footstool.)

Psalms 24:8: *Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.* (He is might in battle!)

Psalms 119:61: *The bands of the wicked [demons] have robbed me, but I have not forsaken thy law.* (There is a demonic company that is set against you!)

Revelation 19:11: *And I saw heaven opened and behold, a white horse, and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.* (One of the Lord's main purposes is to make war against the kingdom of darkness.)

Revelation 17:14: *These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them for He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and they that are with Him are called and chosen and faithful.* (The ten kings make war with the Lamb. Since the Lamb is in us, they are making war against us.)

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

1. **Identify your enemy.** *Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, like a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour* (1st Peter 5:8).
2. **Listen to the Lord.** *And David inquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? Shall I overtake them? And he answered*

- him, Pursue; for thou shalt surely overtake them and without fail recover all (1st Samuel 30:8).*
3. **Have a strategic plan.** *Where there is no vision, the people perish...(Proverbs 29:18).*
 4. **Be under spiritual authority and keep the leadership informed.** *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God (Romans 13:1).*
 5. **Seek Him with pray and fast.** *And ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart (Jeremiah 29:13).*
 6. **Don't throw your pearl before swine.** *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and lacerate you (Matthew 7:6).*
 7. **Remember that there will be a counterattack against you when the enemy is being pushed back.** *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house from which I came out. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first (Luke 11:24-26).*
 8. **Don't allow discouragement or fear to stop you.** *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind (2nd Timothy 1:7).*
 9. **Go out in pairs.** *You need warriors around you to fight with you. And He called unto Him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two, and gave them authority over unclean spirits (Mark 6:7).*
 10. **Fight until you win.** *And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day; and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, who rode upon camels and fled. And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away; and David rescued his two wives. And there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons or daughters, neither spoil nor anything that they had taken in them; David recovered all(1st Samuel 30:17-19).*