

REFORMERS

UNLOCKING THE DESTINY OF A GENERATION

SPRING '09

Articles:

**The Danger of Strongholds
And Its Cures**

**The Spirit of Sheba
In The Local Church**

**How to Properly Intercede
and Pray for Your Leader**

Features:

**Following The Heart
of Your God Given Leader**

GIRDING THE LOINS OF YOUR MIND

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

—1 Peter 1:13

If we want to be successful in our spiritual lives and truly walk with God, then we must start by dealing with the “loins of our minds.” In other words, we must seek to deal with all the loose ends in our thinking that have not yet been submitted to the Word of God or surrendered to the Holy Spirit’s power. The phrase, “gird up the loins” was used to describe Orientals who wore long robes. Before taking a long journey or before running in a race, they would gather up their loose robes and tuck them up under their girdle. Most frequently these words would be used to depict a runner who was running a race.

To run freely and without hindrance, the person would reach down to gather the long, dangling ends of his garment and then tuck them up under his belt. With the loose ends out of the way, he could then run freely and without distraction. But the runner would get in trouble if he ever allowed his garment to fall down and become entangled about his legs. Even though he may have been picking up his stride and running a good race up to that point, the encumbrance of dangling, loosely hanging clothing would hinder his steps. Allowing those loose ends to dangle would be a sure way to lose the race.

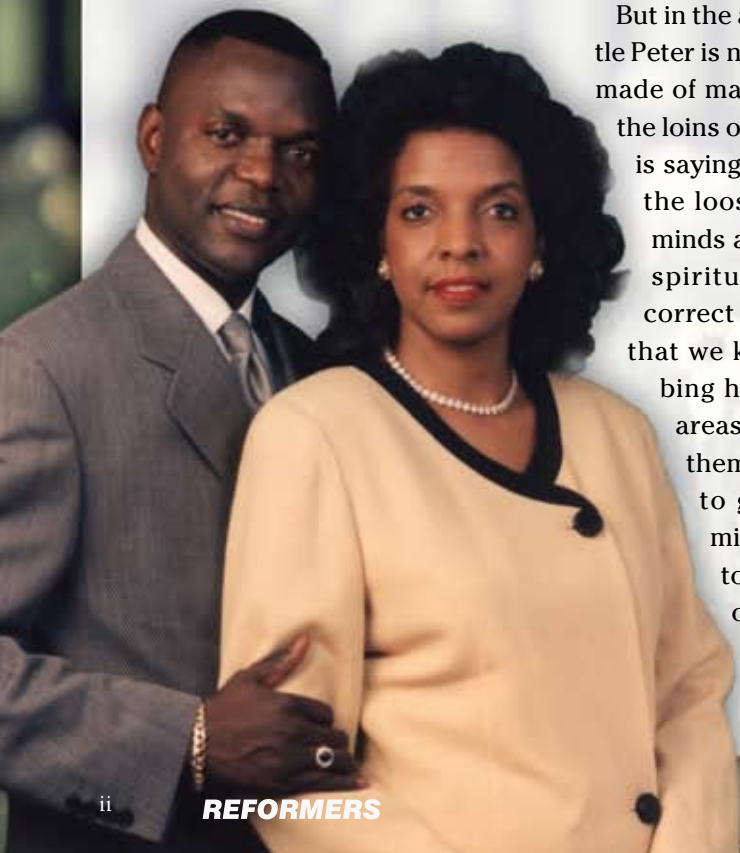
But in the above Scripture, the Apostle Peter is not talking about a garment made of materials. He is referring to the loins of our minds. The Scripture is saying that if we don’t deal with the loose ends that exist in our minds and emotions, we will lose spiritual momentum. We must correct the parts of our thinking that we know are wrong by grabbing hold of all those dangling areas in our thinking, and put them out of the way. If we fail to gird up the loins of our minds, then we are choosing to permit things to exist in our lives that will hinder our steps and slow us

down in our race and in our ability to successfully walk with God.

When we deliberately allow wrong thinking and wrong believing to continue in our lives, we are making the same kind of mistake the runner does who deliberately allows his garment to hang down and get caught up in his legs. This is why the Apostle Peter admonishes us to tighten up those areas that the devil will try to grab hold of and use against us. Are there any loose ends that you need to deal with in your life right now? The Holy Spirit may have been trying to deal with you about those areas for a long time, but have you been listening? If we continue to ignore His voice, we will pay the price of failure, of never realizing our maximum potential.

God is only trying to help us when He speaks to us about the loose ends in our lives. We must focus our attention in order to grab hold of those dangling ends and get them out of our way once and for all. Gird up the loins of your mind. Then you’ll be able to run the race set before you without distraction. If we will open our hearts to the Holy Spirit’s help, He will assist us in identifying every area that needs our attention. Then He will help us grab hold of those loose ends and move them out of our way forever. **R**

Drs. John & Vickie Tetsala



REFORMERS

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Affecting the World for Christ



The Danger of Strongholds And Its Cures

by Dr. John A. Tetsola

Strongholds are developed from footholds of evil. They are inner influences that distort our mental ability to process the truth. From a spiritual consideration, the enemy forms strongholds in us with thoughts contrary to the truth. Strongholds consist of mentally embraced images, reasonings, arguments, thoughts, or theories that contradict or oppose God's Word.

How to Properly Intercede and Pray for Your Leader

by Dr. Vickie Tetsola

One of the most significant things you can do for a leader is to pray for them. Praying for the authority over your life is very crucial to your success. Quite often, this is not always understood by Christians because they fail to understand the connection between the authority they are under and their destiny. There is a connection between the leaders over your life to your destiny.



The Spirit of Sheba in The Local Church

by Dr. John A. Tetsola

Corporate destiny is "a group of individuals acting as a whole." It is a company of believers under spiritual authority flowing and working together to achieve a common purpose which is corporate vision in the kingdom of God. But there is a spirit of Sheba that opposes the fulfillment of corporate destiny. In the Old Testament, Sheba is a person. But in the New Testament, it is a spirit whose purpose is to derail the vision of God.

Understanding The Communion Table and Its Power

by Dr. John A. Tetsola

One of the most misunderstood and neglected sacramental practices in the church is the communion table. Communion in the church has been relegated to just a religious act without significance. In most churches and with most believers it is rarely practiced. And yet it is one of the most powerful avenues provided to receiving the fullness of God when it is practiced with revelation, understanding, and reverence.



Following The Heart of Your God Given Leader

by Sheila Chang

Following the heart of a leader is paramount in making vision a reality in a local church. Down through the years, I have noticed the emotional distance between leadership and those who come to serve. Often this distance is the result of a lack of understanding the heart of the leader.

Our Purpose:

The purpose of this magazine - **Reformers**, is to provide the highest balanced quality spiritual food for the King's household, to solidify and strengthen the local church, to strengthen present and future leaders and thereby create a forum for leaders to serve the Lord together in order to see authentic apostolic ministry restored upon the earth.

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THE DANGER OF Strongholds AND ITS CURES

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 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;

—2 Corinthians 10:3-5

By Dr. John A. Tetsola

A stronghold is an impregnable settlement or fortress established as a place from which to stage battle. Strongholds are developed from footholds of evil. They are inner influences that distort our mental ability to process the truth. From a spiritual consideration, the enemy forms strongholds in us with thoughts contrary to the truth. A stronghold consists of mentally embraced images, reasonings, arguments, thoughts, or theories

that contradict or oppose God's Word.

Any area of unusual weakness, whether moral, physical, mental, or spiritual—can become a stronghold. In Judges 16:5-6, the Philistines bribed Delilah to report to them the source of Samson's strength. Samson's mental weakness made him subject to a stronghold. Satan will employ any means at his disposal to learn the areas of our strengths and weaknesses. Demonic intruders will make inroads if they

can find an entry point. When we continually indulge in unbridled passions we attract forces of darkness that can expedite a quick fall. Such was the case with King David who failed after being weakened by lust.



Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

—James 1:15

Watch how the process works. In James we read about the sobering process. “When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” David looked, lingered, lusted, and lost. And as surely as Bathsheba became pregnant with David’s child, a stronghold was conceived in his heart as well. Spiritually, there are Godly strongholds and ungodly strongholds. A Godly stronghold is a state of mind that accepts as true something in line with the will of God as written in the Word of God. However an ungodly stronghold is a state of mind that accepts as true something contrary to the will of God. When we believe lies that contradict our standing in Christ, a beachhead of lies develops.

How an Unholy Stronghold Becomes Demonic

The mysteries of the spiritual dimension reveal to us that once we embrace and identify comforts of choice – whether from an abusive experience, a lie we have believed about ourselves or others, or a bad habit or addiction, a door is left open for demons to gain access. Satan the strategist capitalizes on our ignorance. This

is why we must learn to recognize the deceptions he’s chosen to trap us. The Scripture says in 2 Corinthians 2:11, “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.” The Greek word translated “advantage” means “to covetously overreach, to take advantage for the purpose of defrauding and making gain.” Satan knows he will gain nothing by directly attacking God, his real enemy. Instead, he attacks God’s children. He does this through deception. As we reject truth and believe lies he gains access to both enter and work in us.

Four Key Purposes of Demonic Strongholds

Demonic strongholds are established for four primary reasons and they are not to make us happy, but to move us far from pleasing and walking with God.

The first important reason why demonic strongholds are built in our lives is so that the enemy can control our lives from within. The enemy does this by appealing to our lower nature—our own lusts, fears, and tendencies to sin. Like a stringed puppet he pulls our strings and we dance for him. But the knowledge of Christ has freed us from the power of sin. And Christ’s goal for us is that we become and remain overcomers.

Second, strongholds are built in us so that we can become confused and double-

minded about our purpose. In the state of confusion and double-mindedness we find ourselves shadow boxing – motion without movement and crying without changing. The Bible says that a double-minded person is unstable in all his ways. He is confused in his opinion and in his purpose. He is inconsistent in his pursuit. If you don’t know God’s destination for your life, you will not be able to get there.

Third, strongholds are established to cause the absence of supernatural intervention. The enemy does not want you to experience God’s manifestation, so he distorts our mind and thinking by making it possible for strongholds to be erected. With strongholds in our minds our view of God becomes distorted. Under Joshua’s leadership the children of Israel lost God’s divine assistance in their battle against Ai because there was a stronghold of greed as expressed in the sin of Achan. God gave Joshua clear instructions to resolve the problem. The process went like this: identify the problem, repent for it, then dismantle and destroy the stronghold so as to restore God’s supernatural involvement. When we ignore strongholds in our lives we give place to the enemy and place ourselves in a position where we cannot experience God’s miraculous power.

And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

—Matthew 13:14

Fourth, strongholds in your life will deaden your spiritual sensitivity. You become more insensitive to the things of the Spirit. Seduction by a stronghold deadens your spiritual knowledge, distorts your spiritual understanding and perception, and dulls your spiritual discernment. Jesus, referring to those who refused to see and hear said, “...by hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive.”

How Demonic Strongholds Are Built

How does a demon build its strongholds? Demons don’t build strongholds... we do. We construct the enemy’s stronghold—a mindset or house of thoughts that is contrary to God’s Word by believing and doing sinful things. The building blocks of strongholds are generational iniquities, traumatic experiences, and personal sins. The mortar that holds them together is what we be-

continued on p.4

continued from p.3

lieve and do that's contrary to God's truth. Demonic spirits can serve as the spirits directing and provoking us, but in the end, we build their strongholds for them. Once the stronghold we have constructed is completed to the enemy's satisfaction, demonic spirits contend for it. The one who prevails moves in, becomes the strongman, and then sets about to recruit similar but weaker spirits to serve its purposes. This process can be repeated with other open doors to strongholds.

Here is how the sequence goes: It begins with a thought. You think about sin, any sin. Then a feeling is developed. You emotionally desire to commit that sin. An act of it is carried out. You willfully choose to engage in that sin. After an act, then you now have the creation of a habit. This is when you continue to give way and room to the sin which in turn forms a pattern. Once the pattern is formed, a stronghold is then developed. Now there is an inner pulling toward that sin, increasingly overpowering and uncontrollable. Eventually, a stronghold becomes a demonic empowerment. This is when likeminded demonic spirits enter the stronghold the person has built and ultimately begin to express their own evil desires through the individual. The individual's evil desires carry an evil anointing. The demonic spirits control and keep him bound until the



person repents of his sin, turns from and renounces it, and commands the demons to leave. Until this process is accomplished he will fall progressively into deeper levels of sin.

him to leave the house. This causes the strongman to lose his authority and strength. Why does Jesus teach us to bind the strongman first? Because the strength of the leader (the strongman) is

“Most people don’t know how a stronghold got there to begin with, so we think that we can just shout at it or wave a handkerchief and it will disappear.”

Defeating the Strongman of the House

Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

—Matthew 12:29

A strongman is the ruling demon that resides in a stronghold—a house in which lesser demons hide and utilize for their own benefit. Jesus said, “How can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? And then he will spoil his house.” Jesus is teaching that a person's lasting freedom is gained through first binding the household boss (the strongman), then commanding the spirits operating under

apparently determined by the collective strength and number of lesser demons who serve him. He doesn't strengthen them, rather they strengthen him. So when we dislodge and discharge the strongman, then the strongman has no remaining support system.

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; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

—2 Corinthians 10:5-6

Most teaching and preaching regarding a stronghold is that you cast it out, you re-

buke it, you scream at it, or you bind it. But the problem is that very little of that has proven to be of any real and lasting success. Most people don't know how a stronghold got there to begin with, so we think that we can just shout at it or wave a handkerchief and it will disappear. Strongholds don't just appear. They are built. The word stronghold in the literal text means a castle. A castle is a building or a series of connected buildings that are built or fortified for the purpose of defense against the enemy.

When strongholds are built in our lives, they are erected by the enemy to prevent the entrance of truth and light into our lives that bring deliverance. They fortify themselves against the power of God to free us. God shows us how they are built in verse five of Second Corinthians chapter ten. The Bible says “casting down imaginations,” that is, the pictures, the images, and the reasonings that don't produce any value or addition to your life or growth. Govern the thinking processes that affect your behavior in life.

Satan Has No Power or Hold Over You

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;

—2 Corinthians 10:5

Notice what Paul wrote, “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.” The first thing Satan can bring into your mind is a thought, just a suggestion. Satan cannot make you do anything. He can only tempt, persuade, reason, or convince you. He did not have any power over Adam or his wife Eve. Satan has no power or hold over you...unless you agree with his thoughts or suggestions.

If you don’t do anything to cast down the thought the enemy brings to you, it will then produce a contradiction to that which you know, to that which has been taught to you, and to that which is true. Eventually a base or foundation of reasoning is established which validates and okays your actions in your mind. Often when you are in this place, there is not much fear of the Lord established in you. You just do what you want to do and validate it with reasoning. You now have a stronghold in process and in operation in your life.

Adam and Eve’s Stronghold Process

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of

every tree of the garden?
—Genesis 3:1

In Genesis chapter three, the serpent began the progressive stage of creating a stronghold. Now watch the process in action.

First, he said “Yea hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” He began by asking a question, making a suggestion, and just giving a thought. It is not necessarily wrong to ask a question for information. But this is not what Satan was doing here. In the literal text what he was saying was “Has God said you shall not eat of every tree of the garden...but why?” It is a questioning spirit. And when people do this in business, in a church, on a leadership team, or on staff it is to cast doubt on the one who told you. It is not asking the question that is an evil thing. It is asking it with an intention to create doubt, suspicion, and accusation. Eve did not deal with her thought. She toyed with it. She entertained it in her mind. Every manifestation of sin in our lives begins

with a thought.

And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

—Genesis 3:4

Second, notice the progression to the contradiction in verse four. Satan says, “You shall not surely die.” He is already calling God a liar. Already Eve has bought into the allure and thought. She did not take the thought captive. She entertained it instead and the thought, not held captive, began to create and produce a contradiction to that which Eve and Adam were instructed by God. This is how an affair begins. This is how we begin to backslide. This is how we begin to withdraw from a church or place where God has planted us. This is very real in life, but it is never okay to question God’s Word.

For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

—Genesis 3:5

Third, now Eve is imagining the fruit will be delicious. She is imagining it will make her like God, and all of this is occurring in her mind. She has not yet touched anything. It was still all in her mind. Eventually she ate the fruit, and she ended up with a stronghold so strong, we are still living under it today.

What we call a weakness is actually a stronghold that ends up destroying our health, our marriage, our finances, our career, and our ministry. It didn’t just happen. It was built. It started years ago, and God commanded us as believers to tear them down. We don’t like that. We want to cast the stronghold down, but a castle is not built overnight. It is built one stone at a time, so it has to be torn down in a similar manner. Most people don’t like to hear about dismantling the strongholds because it puts the responsibility on them. They want a quick fix where people lay hands on them, shout at them, and spit on them, and then they expect to go free. That is nonsense. Prayer works well when you are playing your role properly. Prophecy or prophetic words don’t just change our lives. They just indicate what the Father wants to do for you. Your job is to find your role or responsibility in the Father’s plan and to do it. If you won’t do anything, nothing will happen in your life.

continued on p.6



continued from p.5

How to Dismantle Strongholds

The dismantling of strongholds does not happen overnight or in one day. It is little by little and step by step. It has to be consistently done in order to see results. The Scripture says "precept upon precept" and "line upon line, here a little, and there a little." It speaks about a process of progression. You have to begin somewhere to get somewhere. It takes a little one to become a thousand, and a small one to become a strong nation.

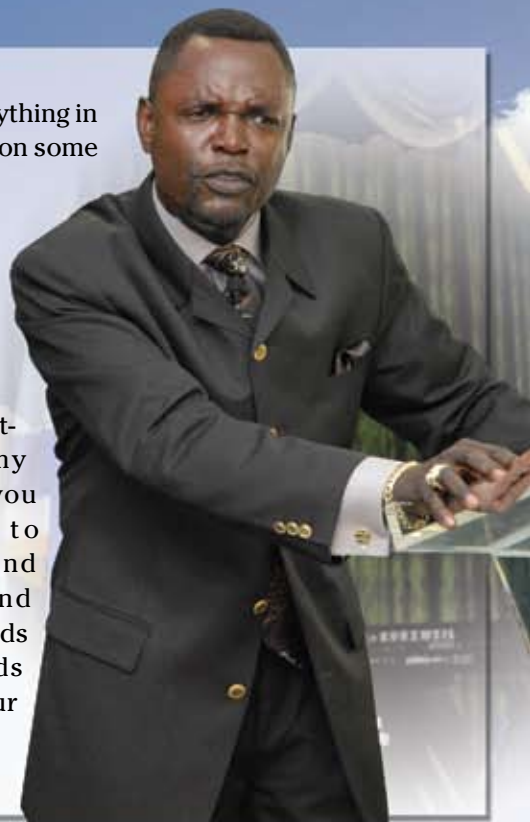
The first step to dismantling a stronghold in your life

is to admit that your weakness is really a stronghold. As long as you don't accept that your weakness is a stronghold, you will never see the need to change, and you will never have a sense of urgency in dealing with it. You will think it is something that cannot be changed, and that it is a part of your life. But when you see your weakness as a stronghold, then you can begin the process of dismantling it.

Second, know the source of your strongholds. We say that a stronghold is a castle. A castle in the natural sense is built with three components:

a. **Foundation.** Anything in your life stands on some foundation.

b. **Cement and mortar.** That which is in your foundation is glued to something. Whatever the enemy uses against you is attached to something. Find the cement and mortar that holds the strongholds together in your life.



A Partner's Harvest

"Not that I seek or am eager for [your] gift, but I do seek and am eager for the fruit which increases to your credit [the harvest of blessing that is accumulating to your account]."

Partnership is about more than commitment. It is also about our unlimited supply of Holy Ghost power. And the combination of commitment and power in ministry knits the church together and makes it an unstoppable force. The anointing in partnership reveals God's plan for the success of the church in the last days. A partnership is defined as "a relationship between indi-

viduals or groups that is characterized by mutual cooperation and responsibility, as for the achievement of a specified goal." Healthy God-given partnership always gives the individual involved the ability to do more than they could ever dream of doing on their own. Notice he says, "...fruit which increases to your credit." These Philippian believers multiplied their efforts in reaching and teaching souls by sowing finances into Paul's

life and ministry through partnership. They gave that which is temporal, thereby converting it to the eternal. In the process, it is multiplied as well! When you enter into this type of partnership, Paul says you will have a "harvest of blessing that is accumulating to your account..." This includes your heavenly account.

As you partner with Ecclesia Word Ministries International, you join with us as we touch

—Philippians 4:17 AMP
others through our many outreaches. Here is the exciting news: the more you invest, the greater your reward. Know this, God does not judge the gift so much by the amount, but by your faithfulness to sow. God the Father is looking for quality gifts of the heart. He loves and blesses our obedience. Discover how partnership truly releases the flow of His anointing power, by being a partner with this ministry today.

To become a partner, please call or write to request your partnership package.

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c. **Bricks, rocks, or stones.** Know the ingredients and the make up of what created the thing that became a stronghold.

In order to dismantle the castle, you have to get rid of all three components. To dismantle the stronghold in your life, you have to find out what the foundation of that stronghold is—where it began, how it started, and then begin to deal with it from there. Every stronghold stands on a wrong thought or a wrong belief system. The moment you find the foundation of your stronghold, then you can change

the contradiction that the enemy brings. The good news is that you can destroy a bad stronghold in your life and you can build and establish good strongholds in your life.

Finally, once you know the foundation of your stronghold and you tear it down in an area of your life, the next thing you must do is to determine to stay within the boundaries of kingdom mandated thinking. As believers there is a mandated way of thinking that God expects of us. We are required to think only on those things that are stipulated in the Word of God. If you stay within

the kingdom mandated way of thinking you will be safe and you will maintain good strongholds.

Prayer of Deliverance from Strongholds

Matthew 18:18 says “Whatever I bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatever I loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.” So Father, in Jesus’ name, I bind the strong man of _____. I dismantle, uproot, and take dominion over every thought process and faulty mindset contrary to Your Word by the power of Your blood. I forbid its operation and declare it inoperable against

me. Heavenly Father, I bind my will to Your will, and command every thought to be held captive to the obedience of Christ. I command the revelation of every stronghold, known and unknown, and its source. I loose deliverance, freedom, liberty, wholeness and soundness of thought and I establish healthy strongholds based on Your Word. In Jesus’ name. Amen. **R**



The strength of true relationship is in true accountability. The Reformers Ministries International (RMI) is an apostolic network of churches, ministries, and cutting edge leaders around the world. It is designed to bring supportive strength to existing churches, ministries, and leaders in covenant leadership teams around the world. It is a network that is based on relational accountability and that provides apostolic covering to churches, leaders, and ministries.

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How to Properly Intercede and Pray for Your Leader

Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

—Romans 15:30-32

by Dr. Vickie Tetsola

One of the most significant things you can do for a leader is to pray for them. Praying for the authority over your life is very crucial to your success. Quite often Christians don't realize this because they fail to understand the connection between the authority they are under and their destiny. All throughout Scripture the Bible has always connected the God-given leaders over our lives to our destiny. The Scripture says that when the leader (the shepherd) is stricken, it affects the sheep. There is a domino effect that takes place when the author-

ity over our life is stricken.

In Romans 15, the Bible shows and teaches us how to pray for our leaders, pastors, or the God ordained authorities over our lives. The Apostle Paul was asking for prayer in Romans 15 because his ministry demanded so much of him, and because there was so much resistance against him. By studying this specific prayer request of the Apostle Paul, we can gain insight about how we need to be praying for our own leaders or for those who are in spiritual authority over our lives.



**...that ye strive together
with me in your prayers...**

—Romans 15:30b

First, Paul says, “that ye strive together with me in your prayers.” The words “strive together” carries the meaning of doing something with someone else resulting in the pain of intense agony, a violent struggle, contending with an enemy, or fighting in a contest. Paul was in a great spiritual battle at the time he wrote this prayer request. In fact, the fight was so intense that he felt the need for others to join with him in prayer. He did not want to face this spiritual fight alone, so he opened his heart and asked others to join with him in fighting this battle. As you pray for your spiritual leader, remember that he or she needs your support in prayer. Just as Jesus

requested Peter, James, and John to pray with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane, your leader needs your prayer support. Yes, he can pray alone, but it will be such a help for him to know that others are standing in faith and in the spirit with him. Jesus needed this, the Apostle Paul needed this, and your leader needs it as well.

**That I may be
delivered from
them that do
not believe...**

—Romans 15:31a

Second, Paul specifically asked them to pray: “That I may be delivered from them that do not believe...” The word “delivered” is the Greek word “ruomai,” which means “to be rescued, to drag out of danger, or to snatch out of a thing.” It may sound strange that Paul would request others to pray that he would be delivered from those who did not believe. But Paul had gone through many experiences with “unbelievers” who resisted him, as well as with so-called “brethren” who gave him constant trouble. It is simply a fact that the devil primarily works through people. When he wants to stop the advancement of the Gospel, he often tries to resist a local church or a pastor by stirring up someone in the community to be against the leader. Sometimes the enemy even uses people inside the local church to create problems that bring division and disaster. So when you pray for your leader, remember to pray that he will be snatched out of the traps and snares set for him by people who have wrong motives.

**...that my service which I
have for Jerusalem may be
accepted of the saints;**

—Romans 15:31b

Third, Paul asked for prayer: “...that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints.” The word “service” is the word “diakonia” which is the Greek word for the ministry. The other word

that stood out in Paul’s request for prayer here is the word “accepted.” The word accepted means “to be pleasing and well received.” This is an expected prayer request from a leader. Paul has sought God through prayer and listened to hear what the Lord was saying to his spirit because he wanted to do well in his ministry. Paul desired every word to be spoken correctly, accurately, and in a way that pleased God. Furthermore, he wanted people to believe in the sincerity of his motives and not to question whether he had ulterior motives for speaking to them about the Lord. Thus he prayed that his ministry to the saints in Jerusalem would be well received.

As you pray for your leader, be sure to include these items in your prayers. Pray that your leader’s ministry will be blessed and accepted, and that people will receive him and hear his heart the way he means to convey it. Your leader needs your prayer power working behind him as he takes specific words from God into various situations.

**That I may come unto
you with joy...**

—Romans 15:32a

Fourth, Paul asked that the believers in Rome pray, “That I may come unto you with joy...” The word “joy” is the Greek word “chara,” which means “rejoicing and fullness of gladness.” Paul wanted to have joy in his ministry. He wanted to enjoy

ministry. Often times we have leaders working for God in the ministry who are frustrated, stressed, depressed, and without joy as they work for the God who has called them. This is a common occurrence within the Body of Christ. The Apostle Paul faced many hardships which gave him many opportunities to lose his joy—broken friendships, dashed expectations, church divisions, and so on. Paul’s request was very simple, “Please pray that I will enjoy the ministry and will keep my joy in the midst of everything I have to deal with in my ministry.”

Just think for a moment of the things that happen in your own life that tempt you to lose your joy. What about your leader? Think of all the people he counsels, the marriages he tries to help, the sermons he has to prepare, and the organizations he has to oversee. Then, on top of all that, think of the disappointments your leader is tempted to feel when people he has helped in the past decide to leave the church. So

continued on p.11

Understanding the **STRENGTH** and *Blessing* of a **Divine** **Joining**

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continued from p. 9

take Paul's prayer requests to heart and apply them to your leader. Pray that your leader will have joy, and will hold on to it in spite of everything he has to deal with in his ministry.

That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God...

—Romans 15:32a

Fifth, Paul prayed, "That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God..." The word "will" is the word "thelema" in the Greek, meaning the design, purpose, and plan. Paul wanted to be right in the middle of God's will for his life. Just as we pray to make no mistakes and to be right where God wants us

to be, Paul prayed the very same prayer. He wanted the saints to pray that he would make no mistakes and that he might always stay in the perfect plan of God. So when you pray for your pastor, pray that he will have the wisdom to know what he is supposed to do in the various situations he faces in his ministry. Questions come at him all day long, and he needs your prayer support to make right decisions. And just as Paul requested prayer that he would be in the will of God, help your pastor by strongly praying that he will stay sensitive to the Spirit so that he could avoid making costly mistakes and follow God's will for himself and for

the church.

...and may with you be refreshed.

—Romans 15:32b

Sixth, Paul requested prayer that he might be "refreshed." The word refreshed means to be calm and to soothe. In the Greek it actually means "to be refreshed with someone else." Everyone needs to be refreshed from time to time, including leaders. People tend to think that leaders don't need the same refreshing that others need, but everyone needs to be refreshed and touched by God from time to time. Paul makes his need for refreshment known by telling the

Roman church, "I need to be refreshed just like the rest of you, so please pray that I will be refreshed and invigorated in spirit."

As you pray for your leaders and for the ministries you support, utilize this prayer request of the Apostle Paul to the Roman church to guide you in your prayers. This prayer request, I believe, was included in the New Testament by the Holy Spirit to let us know that everyone—including leaders in ministries, need people to constantly stand behind them in prayer. **R**



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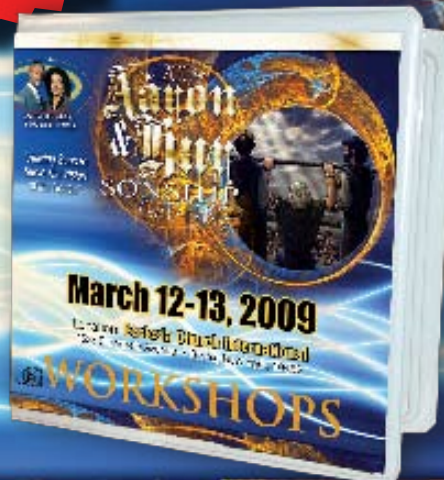


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The Spirit of Sheba in the Local Church

by Dr. John A. Tetsola

Corporate destiny is “a group of individuals acting as a whole.” It is a company of believers under spiritual authority flowing and working together to achieve a common purpose which is corporate vision in the kingdom of God. But there is a spirit called the “Spirit of Sheba” that opposes the fulfillment of corporate destiny. In the O.T. Sheba is a person,

but in the N.T. context it is a spirit whose purpose is to derail the vision of God.

And there happened to be there a man of Belial, whose name was Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite: and he blew a trumpet, and said, We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to his tents, O Israel.

—2 Samuel 20:1

In biblical times names were not just given by chance. Names were given with significant reference to one's past, present, and ultimate destiny. For instance, God changed “Abram's”

name to “Abraham” to be reflective of his destiny to be a “father of many nations.” Jacob's name was changed. “Jacob” spoke of his present position—“supplanter,” but “Israel” pointed to his ultimate destiny and princely status: “Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men.” A New Testament example of this principle is found in (Matt. 1:21), “And thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.” According to Hebrew custom it was believed that names had the power to produce manifestations, and study-

ing Scripture from a Hebrew point of view it was disgraceful not to live up to one's name. Sheba failed to live up to his.

Who was Sheba? Sheba was the grandson of Abraham through Keturah (Gen. 25:1-3). In the O.T. Sheba was a person, but in the N.T. context Sheba is a spirit with the potential to destabilize and create confusion in the local church. Because it views problems in a church as evidence that leadership is out of God's will, it blows a trumpet and makes covenant-breaking statements: "We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse." The name Sheba means "seven" or "oath." It signifies a person of covenant called alongside to complement, strengthen, and to bring completion to a person or place. Based upon his name, Sheba should have been an oath-bearing, covenant-keeping individual brought alongside King David to complete that which was lacking in David's life. But instead, Sheba's true colors were revealed in an atmosphere of strife. "...all the people were at strife throughout all the tribes of Israel" (2 Sam. 19a). The one called to bring completion into David's life became the ring-leader of a revolt in Israel.

Recognizing the Symptoms of Sheba

So every man of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba...

—2 Samuel 20:2a

The spirit of Sheba on a believer causes one to break covenant and then seize the opportunity to divide the very place and people they were called alongside by God to cover, protect, complete, and strengthen. This spirit on a believer attacks from a trusted and unsuspecting place as it seeks to destroy corporate destiny and derail the vision of God. It operates from within because the person was originally called alongside to complement and com-

"Sheba possessed something in him to enhance David's ministry, but instead he broke covenant and betrayed David..."

plete that which was lacking in the ministry or business. Sheba undermines the weakness of a church. It looks for cracks in vision in hopes of gaining position without process. The spirit of Sheba on a believer is an opportunist that switches loyalties and instead of remaining a trusted asset, this spirit makes the individual a liability. It takes advantage of leadership's vulnerability in an attempt to weaken an existing unity and loyalty. Silence the voice of Sheba by speaking well of your leader when others complain. Recognize that God has Aaron and Hurs who will never get distracted by Sheba's voice. They will lift up their pastor's hands until the battle subsides, they won't break covenant, and they will promise to love, cover, and protect their leader.

The Kingdom Concept of Covenant

Sheba possessed something in him to enhance David's ministry, but instead he broke covenant and betrayed David from an unsuspecting place. But there are some who will never break covenant. Men like Amasai who will protect and serve their leader with everything that's in them because they understand the "kingdom" concept and responsibilities of covenant.

I will punish him for breaking my covenant and disregarding the solemn oath...

—Ezekiel 17:19b NLT

Covenant is responsibility. It is a transaction between God and man, or between individuals wherein each party binds himself to fulfill certain conditions or obligations. In O.T. times, a breach of covenant was regarded as sin worthy of God's punishment. Presently many believers hold a "church" concept of covenant which pales in comparison to the "kingdom" concept—God's way of doing things. When God connects you to a leader or church, He brings you into the kingdom concept of covenant and oath making. And although you don't actually make a solemn oath when joining a ministry or

business, there is the kingdom principle and concept of covenant that takes place which involves loyalty—something Sheba failed to understand.

The Responsibilities of Covenant

...the spirit came upon Amasai, who was chief of the captains, and he said, Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers; for thy God helpeth thee.

All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king.

—1 Chronicles 12:18, 38

Amasai understood the kingdom concept of covenant. Speaking on behalf of David's helpers, he made solemn, covenant-making statements which revealed his affection and allegiance to the vision and purpose of God on David's life. Notice the elements of Amasai's covenant-making statements. **FIRST**, covenant was established with God's leader—with the "David" of the house. "Thine are we David." Put your personal agenda on the altar of God, and let your only agenda be to make David king. **SECOND**, covenant was established with the vision of the house. They came to connect with and serve David's

continued on p.16

continued from p. 15

vision. "There's no conflict of interest David. We are on your side because we know that God is with you." FINALLY, covenant was established with the helpers of the vision. "Peace be to thine helpers." Pledge to love one another and never give up on one another. The kingdom concept of covenant emphasizes the promise to love, to serve, and to protect the people and places in your life.

...Sheba...blew a trumpet, and said, We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to his tents, O Israel. So every man of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri: but the men of Judah clave unto their king, from Jordan even to Jerusalem.

—2 Samuel 20:1b-2

Right on the heels of Absalom's recent insurrection and death, Sheba led each man from the ten tribes of Israel to turn on King David. The tribes of Israel repeatedly swayed in their commitment to King David. When Absalom revolted, they followed Absalom, and when Sheba revolted, they followed Sheba. But this was not the case with Judah. The Bible says "but the men of Judah clave unto their king from Jordan even to Jerusalem." This signifies that the men of Judah were committed to David until the battle was over. Not because it was easy, but because they loved David and understood that

commitment is the faithful adherence to those whom God has connected you to in spite of the obstacles. Webster defines commitment as "a decision that cannot be recalled." Commitment is priceless to a leader. To appreciate a leader's need for commitment and loyalty is to understand at least two significant things: First, leaders are not superhuman. They hurt and feel the pain of rejection just like you, and probably a great deal more due to the mandate of God upon their lives. Second, and just like you, they need to be loved, appreciated, and defended.

"Right on the heels of Absalom's recent insurrection and death, Sheba led each man from the ten tribes of Israel to turn on King David."

Sheba Needs a Base from which to Operate

But all the men of Israel complained to the king, "The men of Judah stole the king and didn't give us the honor of helping take you, your household, and all your men across the Jordan."

There happened to be a troublemaker there named Sheba....Sheba blew a ram's horn and began to chant: "Down with the dynasty of David! We have no interest in the son of Jesse. Come on, you men of Israel, back to your homes!"

—2 Sam. 19:41; 20:1 NLT

When Judah took the

lead in restoring King David back to his throne, the ten tribes of Israel became offended and jealous. They complained to David saying, "The men of Judah stole the king and didn't give us the honor of helping...." David's response (or lack thereof) to Israel's complaint was "perceived" by the tribes as evidence that the king was playing favorites. This argument over the king's affection would serve as a base of operation from which Sheba would launch his attack and turn all the men of Israel against David. The Sheba spirit is an opportunist. It creates a base of suspicion

against a leader from which wrong judgment operates. It then establishes a platform to undermine the weakness of a church or business at a time when they are most vulnerable. Because the enemy had a base of operation from which jealousy, suspicion, and offence prevailed, Sheba was allowed to slip in like an impaired immune system. Dismantle Sheba's base of operation by maintaining a pure heart toward the vision of God upon your leader. The maintenance of a pure heart is a surety against the spirit of Sheba, so sacrifice misunderstanding, wrong judgment, jealousy, suspicion, and rejection issues on the altar of commitment and

position yourself to say as Jesus did in John 14:30, "The enemy cometh, but he has nothing in Me."

The Spiritual Dynamic Between Sheep and Shepherd

... strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.

—Matthew 26:31b Amp

In order to attack the whole, the enemy attacks the leader. Strike the shepherd and the ripple effect extends to the sheep. When your leader is smitten, there is a spiritual dynamic that goes into effect because something happens in the spirit realm to affect you. The life of the leader is directly connected to the lives of those following, and the pain of the leader is the direct pain of his followers. Speak well of your leader when others complain. Recognize that your responsibility is to pray for, to strengthen, and to remain committed



to your leader during times of attack because there is a direct link between his/her life and yours. The spirit of Sheba on a believer fails to discern this truth.

When Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; and when he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed.

—Ex. 17:11 AMP

God in His own mercy calls a man to leadership and then graces him with the gifting to execute the purpose

of his call. It takes revelation of how God operates for a believer to understand that your leader is the strength of your destiny. Protect him. The outcome of your battle is determined by the steadiness of your leader's hands. If you touch him, you touch God. When you protect and serve your leader's vision, you're indirectly serving into fruition your own dream and vision. Steady your leader's hands and bring stabilization to the corporate vision of God upon his life, and to all that concerns



you. It's evident that Sheba didn't have this revelation. The spirit of Sheba on a believer sets up his own base of personal ambition in order to hold up his own rod—but the rod and vision of God is never successful in Sheba's hands.

How to Pray for Your Leader

First of all, then, I admonish and urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be offered on behalf of all men, For kings and all who are in positions of authority or high responsibility, that [outwardly] we may pass a quiet and undisturbed life [and inwardly] a peaceable one...

—1 Timothy 2:1-2 AMP

When you pray for your leader, you in fact pray for yourself. Praying for your leader leads to an outwardly "quiet and undisturbed life," and inwardly "a peaceable one." So pray for your lead-

er and his God-given vision. Pray that he understands vision well and leads according to God's agenda. Pray that he doesn't quit ministry or become unduly stressed by the demands of ministry. Pray that your leader remains strong mentally, emotionally, and physically and is never sidetracked by sickness. Pray that he's never bound by fear in doing God's work. Intercede for his family so that he can remain focused, and pray for helpers so that the vision of God upon his life is never stagnated. Make it a priority to cover your leader. He's a gift of God to you. Don't expose an area of weakness that you were called of God to complete and strengthen in a ministry or business because exposure comes with a curse. And finally, never underestimate the spiritual dynamic between sheep and shepherd. Sheba did, and it ultimately cost him his life (2 Sam. 20:22). **R**

The **“Unheralded”** *Sign* **And** **SEAL** **of an** *Apostle*

Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

—2 Corinthians 12:12

by Dr. John A. Tetsola

During Paul’s day, the problem of false apostles was so rampant that he felt it necessary to validate his ministry by pointing out the “signs” of an apostle that were evident in his life. In second Corinthians 12:12, Paul gave certain indicators to help us determine whether or not a person is truly apostolic. The word “signs” in this Scripture is the Greek word “semeion.” This word was used in secular business to describe “the official written notice that announced the final verdict of a court.” It also described “the signature or seal applied to a

document to guarantee its authenticity,” and was “a sign that marked key locations in a city.” This secular word was carried over into New Testament language, as used here by Paul.

Paul used this word to declare that certain official signs exist as the final verdict to prove a person’s apostleship. These accompanying activities are like a signature or a seal which authenticates and guarantees that a person truly is an apostle. If you see these particular marks in a person’s ministry, you can know that you are standing on or near bonafide apostolic territo-

ry. Paul says, “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you.” In this verse, Paul uses the word “apostle,” taken from the Greek word “apostolos,” which means “to send away.” It is the idea of being “commissioned and dispatched” with authority and power and “sent as a personal representative” of a powerful figure or



as the official representative of a government.

Consumed by Your Assignment

Notice that Paul says that “the signs of an apostle were wrought among you....” The word “wrought” here is the word “katergadzo” in Greek. It presents the idea of “a work that is totally consuming or dominating,” such as a work that takes every ounce of one’s being. We know from Scripture that Paul was not afraid of work. In addition to glorious moments when Paul experienced spectacular visions, revelations, and special demonstrations of power, he also worked hard in his ministry. He referred to this very hard work when he said, “But by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all...” (1 Cor. 15:10a). The word “laboured” here depicts “the most difficult, most exhaustive type of work.” We could even call it hard labor.

Apostolic ministry demands the highest level of commitment and work. This is not a calling for title-hungry men or for those who want a lifestyle in which they can take it easy. It is a demanding, all-consuming, and dominating call that requires every ounce of a person’s life. Part of apostolic ministry involves the following:

- Going into territory where the church is non-existent

- Dealing with aggressive and hostile governments
- Facing the opposition of false religions and systems opposed to one’s very presence
- Pushing the evil forces of the demonic realm out of the way
- Taking converts from the bleakness and blackness of paganism and turning them into living, breathing members of the body of Christ.
- And much more

The Seal of Patience

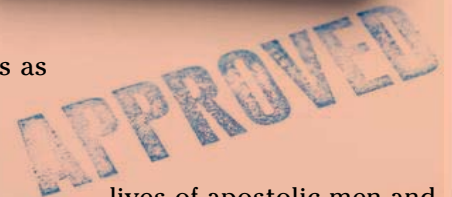
All of this is involved in the calling of the apostle. This divine call is not for the light-hearted, but for the extremely committed. This leads us to the first sign, the first criteria that Paul lists as evidence of true apostleship. Paul writes, “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience....” Considering the hostile forces at work to stop apostolic ministry, it shouldn’t surprise us that Paul lists patience as the first major sign or characteristic of apostolic ministry. The word “patience” is the Greek word “hupomeno.” This word portrays a “person who is under some type of incredibly heavy load, but who refuses to stray from his position because he is committed to his task.” Regardless of the load, opposition, stress, or weight that comes against him, he is not going to move. He is going to stay put in his spot and not surrender it to anyone for any reason.

“Hupomeno” is sometimes translated as endurance, staying power, or hang-in-there power.

It is interesting that Paul lists this as a sign of apostolic ministry. We usually think of wonders and miracles as perhaps the major sign of the apostolic ministry. But before Paul mentioned anything about what we would normally deem as supernatural, he first mentions his supernatural ability to hang in there and to stay put regardless of what forces came to stop him. God causes supernatural favor to rest on apostles, enabling them to stay on the frontlines and out on the cutting edge. Apostles face huge challenges in order to take new territory for God’s kingdom. But because His grace is on them so strongly, they are able to endure it and stick it out, even when it becomes very difficult.

The Grace that Comes and Stays Continuously

What I am describing is just as supernatural as any other kind of supernatural sign or wonder. Anyone who can do what the apostle Paul did day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year, and do it joyfully and successfully, is definitely experiencing something that is truly supernatural. It is a sign from on High of a divine endowment. “Hupomeno” on the



lives of apostolic men and women is just as supernatural as any of the other signs and wonders that apostles experience.

Supernatural signs and wonders come and go, but the supernatural ability to endure and joyfully succeed in difficult circumstances is a grace that comes and stays continuously. This quality of patience, endurance, and staying power is part of the divine equipment for this job. It is a divine grace that is just as supernatural as any miracle or wonder. God makes miraculous grace available to us to help us live victoriously for Him where we are. When this supernatural grace or endowment starts to work in you and you are suddenly empowered beyond your natural strength to endure in the midst of turmoil or adversity, you will realize what a supernatural gift it is. This supernatural ability to endure and to move beyond the place of pain is not as broadly announced or proclaimed, making it the “unheralded” sign and seal of an apostolic anointing. **R**

Local Church Seminar Resources

Volume I

Building anything of significance starts from the bottom up so also is the Local Church. Building an effective local church involves an understanding of the strategy of building. The Local Church Seminar is a good resource that would assist every leader and believer to build with divine strategies. This resource is available in both CD and DVD and has a companion booklet with it. In this seminar resource you will come to learn the following:

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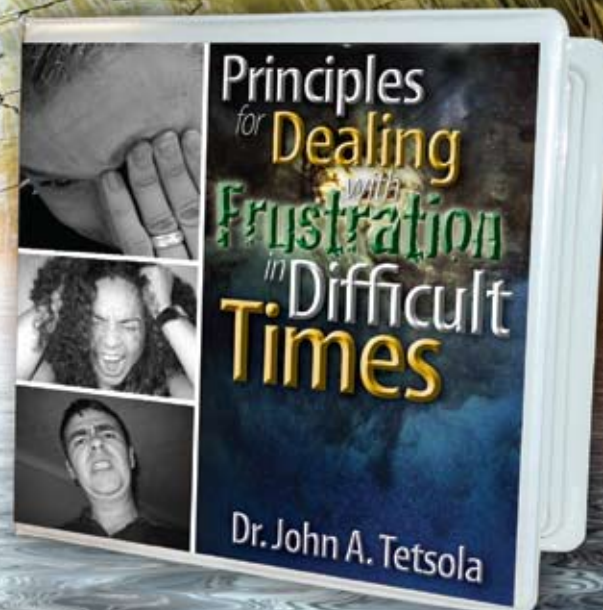
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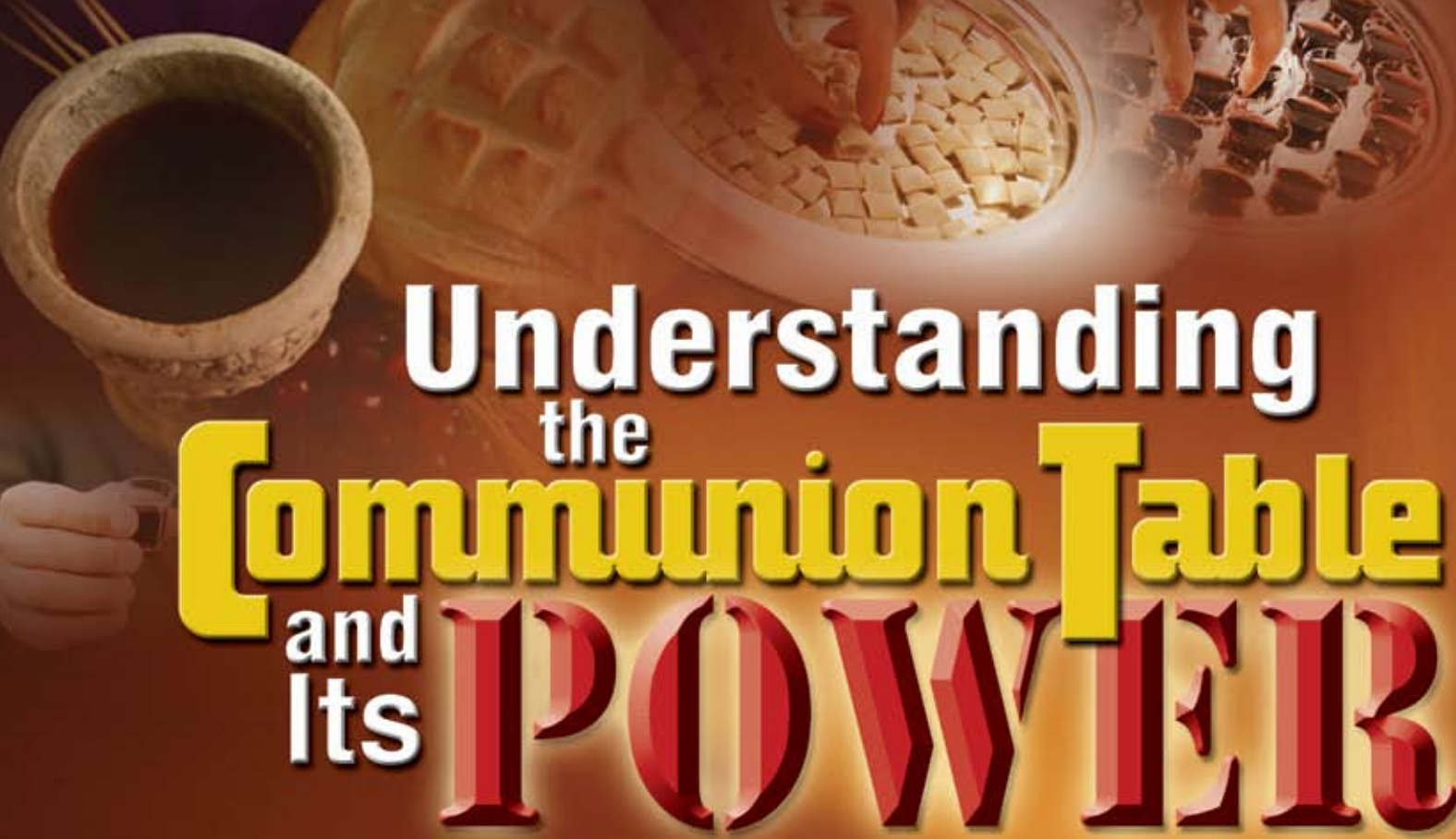
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REFORMERS



Understanding the Communion Table and Its POWER

by Dr. John A. Tetsola

One of the most misunderstood and neglected sacramental practices in the church is the communion table. Communion in the church has been relegated to just a religious act without significance. In most churches and with most believers, it is rarely practiced. And yet it is one of the most powerful avenues provided to receiving the fullness of God when it is practiced with revelation, understanding, and reverence. When a believer partakes of the Lord's Supper, he should do so with full understanding of its significance. Communion, to many people, has become only a religious observance. But it has a much deeper meaning than that.

The communion table is an emblem of Jesus' sacri-

fice for us. Primarily, the church has centered its attention on the wine as an emblem of Jesus' blood that was shed for sin. We take the emblem of the blood and say, "Thank God, we are delivered from sin," and that is true! Praise God for it. But the blood is only half of communion. The bread is an emblem of Jesus' body that was broken for us. The emblem of His body is just as important as the emblem of His blood. According to Isaiah 53:4-5, Jesus' sacrifice covered every area of man's existence. He bore spiritual torment for our sins, mental distress for our worry, care, and fear, as well as physical pain for our sickness and disease. The stripes He bore were for our healing. "With His stripes we are healed." God gave everything He had

to redeem mankind from the curse. For us to receive only part of His sacrifice is an insult to Him.

Don't Eat and Drink to Damnation

When we receive communion, we are receiving His body and His blood. Every time we partake, we should examine ourselves closely according to 1 Corinthians 11:28-29. "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." There is much more involved in receiving communion than most Christians realize.

God instructed the Lord's Supper for a reason. When you receive it, you should

be ready to partake of everything Jesus' sacrifice provided—salvation, peace of mind, healing, and total prosperity. In the past, we missed the full meaning of communion by not completely judging ourselves when we partook of it. We have been ready to receive His blood and quick to judge ourselves and repent where sin is concerned. But what about His body? It was broken for us. It was bruised for us. The stripes laid on Jesus' back were for our healing. So at communion, we should judge ourselves where sickness is concerned as well. Jesus purchased our healing at Calvary just as He purchased our salvation.

Judging Sickness and Disease

With this in mind, when we partake of communion we should say, “Lord, it’s not right that I should suffer from sickness and disease. I judge it now as being from Satan, and I reject it. I refuse to receive it any longer. I partake of the sacrifice of Your body, and I receive the healing that You provided in Jesus’ name.”

When you partake of communion, make a point of judging yourself to the fullest extent. Don’t just receive it halfway. Accept everything Jesus’ sacrifice provided. If you don’t examine yourself—if you receive communion just as a religious exercise, you will be eating and drinking unworthily, not discerning the Lord’s body. Paul wrote, “For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep” (1 Cor. 11:30). When the first Passover was instituted, God instructed Moses to kill a lamb, spread its blood over the door, and then roast the lamb and eat all of it. Any that remained was to be burned away. That sacrificial lamb was completely consumed. Jesus, as the Lamb of God, was the supreme sacrifice under the Abrahamic covenant. When you partake of His sacrifice, do not take only part of it. Receive all that Jesus did for you. Consume it completely.

“When you partake of communion make a point of judging yourself to the fullest extent.”

Eating in Faith with Expectation

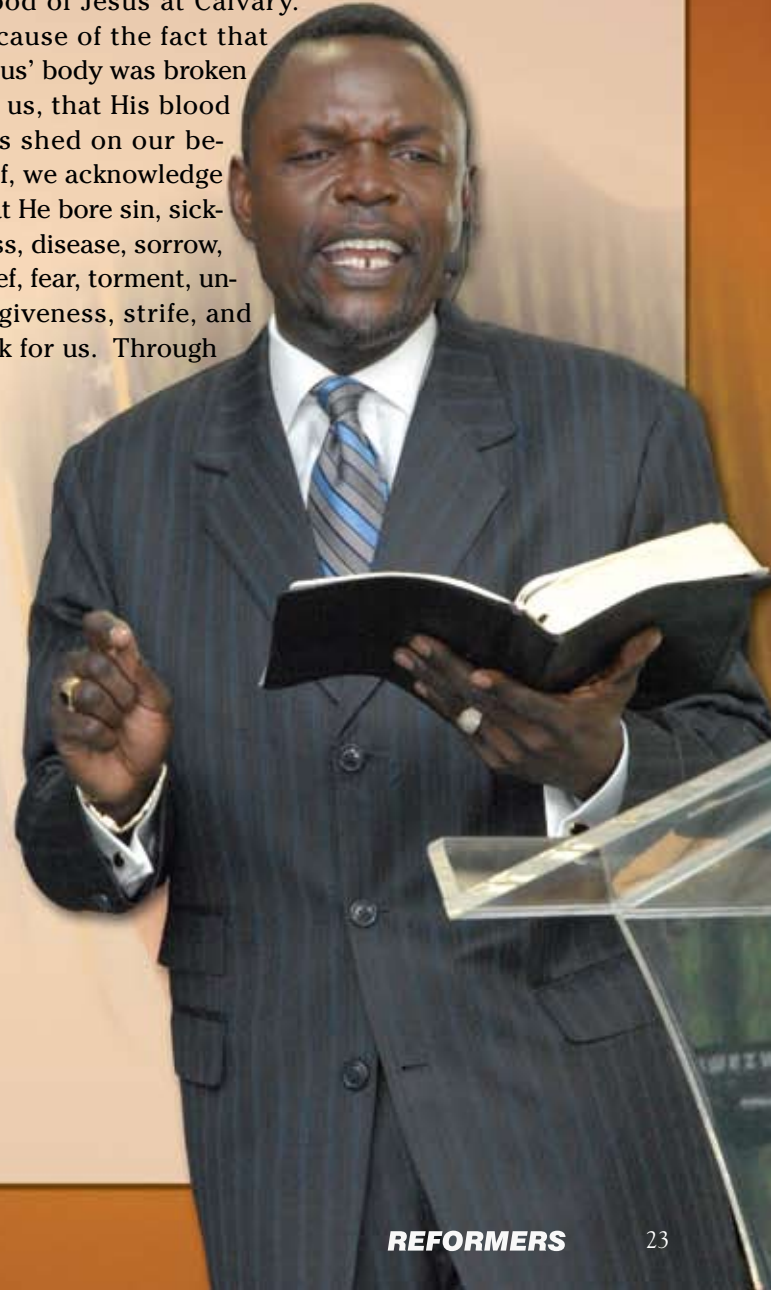
When you receive the Lord’s Supper, partake of it like the children of Israel did, “With your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord’s Passover.” They were ready to go. They ate in faith, ready to receive their deliverance before they ate. No matter what you may be faced with—sin, sickness, drugs, a weight problem, worry, strife, or old habits, you can be delivered through properly receiving the Lord’s Supper. The body and blood of Jesus covers every area of your existence. By discerning His body and judging yourself before Him, you can receive your deliverance. Place yourself before God and receive communion like the children of Israel—ready to receive your deliverance. You don’t have to wait until you go to church to receive communion. Receive it at home. Get up an hour earlier in the morning every now and then. Take the time to put yourself before God over the communion table. It will be time well spent.

Proclamation Before the Breaking of Bread

Before breaking the bread, make this proclamation and declaration. “Father God, in the name of Jesus, we recognize that we have a covenant with You, a covenant that was ratified by the shed blood of Jesus at Calvary. Because of the fact that Jesus’ body was broken for us, that His blood was shed on our behalf, we acknowledge that He bore sin, sickness, disease, sorrow, grief, fear, torment, unforgiveness, strife, and lack for us. Through

His substitutionary sacrifice, we have complete redemption—total deliverance from the works of Satan. As new creations in Christ Jesus, we realize our freedom has been bought and paid for. We are forgiven. We are redeemed. And we give thanks for it all, in Jesus’ name.” After this proclamation, then break the bread and distribute it.

continued on p.24



continued from p. 23

Judging and Examining Yourself in the Light of God's Word

While taking communion, it is very important that you rightly judge and exam-

ine yourself in the light of God's Word. In doing this, you can begin the process by proclaiming the following: "Father, in the name of Jesus, we examine our hearts, we judge ourselves according to the authority of Your Word. In areas where we have missed the mark (strife, unforgiveness, jealousy, envy, hatred, covetousness, fear, worry, unbelief, etc.), we take Jesus as our advocate and

High Priest. We ask forgiveness according to the Word of God (1 John 1:9). Your Word says You are faithful and just to forgive us when we confess our sins, and that You cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Therefore, we do not eat of the

bread nor drink of the cup unworthily (as a religious exercise or a common meal), but we rightly discern the Lord's body. We receive communion together now as the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. We are free from the works of Satan—spirit, soul, and body." Then say this: "The Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread: And when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is My body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me" (1 Cor. 11:23b-24). Then partake of the bread together. Then say this: "After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in My blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come" (1 Cor. 11:25-26). Then partake of the cup together.

The Declaration of Favor and Blessings Over Your Life

After the partaking of the bread and of the cup together, it is important to establish everything in prayer by the proclamation and declaration of God's promise and will over our lives by saying "Father, we give You thanks for all You have provided for us in Christ Jesus. We confess this day that we are the blessed of the Lord. This covenant we entered into at the new birth is a covenant filled with the exceedingly great and precious promises of God, and we are partakers of those promises now. We are healed. We are redeemed. We are delivered from the authority of darkness. We are translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. We are the head and not the tail. We are above and not beneath. We come behind in no good thing. All that we set our hands to prospers, and we praise You, Father, for the newness of life we now enjoy. In Jesus' name. Amen." **R**

Understanding The Communion Table and It's Power

NUGGETS OF WISDOM

- What a leader does not understand, he usually undervalues.
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- The leader who endeavors to help people must first understand them.

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I also believe that He rose again from the dead so that I might be forgiven of my sins and made righteous through faith in Him. I call upon the name of Jesus Christ and confess Him to be the Savior and Lord of my life. Jesus, I choose to follow You and ask that You fill me with the power of the Holy Spirit. I declare that right now, I am free from sin and full of the righteousness of God. I am saved in Jesus name.

Amen

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And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.

—Exodus 33:11

Following the Heart of Your God Given Leader

by Minister Sheila Chang



When Moses went up to the mount to receive the commandments of the Lord, the Lord instructed Moses that if so much as an animal touched the mountain it would die, yet that did not stop Joshua. When Moses went into the tabernacle to commune with his friend God, the Israelites stood in their tent doors and worshipped. No one ventured outside their comfort zone to draw closer

to God. Yet, young Joshua followed Moses into the tabernacle, unafraid of the manifest Presence of Almighty God in a cloudy pillar. Long after Moses departed and went back to the camp, Joshua remained. It was Joshua's relationship with Moses that enabled him to see God in a wholly different way than the children of Israel. Following the heart of a leader is very paramount in making vision a reality in a local church.

Moses and Joshua were not afraid to approach the God who answers by fire, and we who know Christ as Savior

can boldly approach the very throne of God without fear, because of the love of Jesus Christ. Down through the years I have noticed the emotional distance between leadership and those who come to serve. Much of the time this distance is the result of a lack of understanding the heart of the leader. You may ask, how can one know the leader's heart? Only God knows the heart of someone. There is a way for you and I to know the heart of our leadership, and it is very simple.

Knowing the Leader's Heart

Now may the God Who gives the power of patient endurance (steadfastness) and Who supplies encouragement, grant you to live in such mutual harmony and such full sympathy with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, Romans 15:5 AMP

Notice in Romans chapter 15, our heavenly Father is described as the “God Who gives the power of patience endurance... and... supplies encouragement...” This is key to our understanding of how we can follow the heart of our God-given leadership.

FIRST, we need to exercise patience in the initial stage of getting to know the leader's heart. This is essential because the closer the relationship connection, the more glaring the faults, flaws and shortcomings of leaders will become. This is the place where many abandon their efforts when it comes to relating to their leaders. This is also why many leaders prefer the “ivory tower” approach to those who serve in their ministries and churches. It's simple. You can't see someone's flaws or shortcomings if you only see them in the best possible light i.e., on a Sunday morning in the pulpit under the anointing.

The truth is that some pay lip service to the old adage that there is no perfect church and, therefore, no perfect leaders. Yet they

still expect their leaders to walk a “chalk line” in every area of their lives. Patient endurance enables us to stay the course of God-ordained vision, even when we see things that we may not like in the personality of someone in leadership. Now we are not talking about outright sin or immoral behavior on the part of those whom God has anointed to lead His people. Sin issues must be dealt with, and God is the Judge. Also, the bottom line is that we need to learn to cut each other some slack. In other words, we need to be more understanding when it comes to shortcomings and misgivings. Love covers. Envy, jealousy, and accusation feast on exposing the flaws of others. Exposing the flaws of others is the nature of the spirit of Ham who went outside to tell his brothers that their father was drunk and naked.

SECOND, we need to demonstrate the power of encouragement. When we seek to encourage our leaders from a heart of God's love, we will not be so quick to expose their flaws or to look at them with a critical eye. The power of encouragement seeks to uphold and uplift, like Aaron and Hur held up Moses' hands till sunset. They upheld the hands of the one with the rod of God until the job was completed, and victory was assured. Be more willing to pray and intercede on behalf of leaders, especially when you see

areas in need of correction, instead of talking about it to your “siblings” in the body of Christ.

But God--so rich is He in His mercy! Because of and in order to satisfy the great and wonderful and intense love with which He loved us, Even when we were dead (slain) by [our own] shortcomings and trespasses, He made us alive together in fellowship and in union with Christ; [He gave us the very life of Christ Himself Ephesians 2:4,5a AMP

THIRD, the love of God is the essence of any healthy kingdom relationship. God's love is satisfied through sacrificial giving. As God's people, we also express our love by giving our obedience to Him freely with our whole heart. In the same way, we display our love for those whom God has given to us in our sacrificial giving, i.e., giving our time, money, service, encouragement, and prayerful support. All of these sacrifices show those in leadership that we have come to honor them, and to be a true blessing in their lives.

What Does Your Leader Need?

Aaron and Hur discerned that Moses needed two things, a stone and their hands. We understand the stone is symbolic of the Rock that is Christ Jesus, the firm foundation upon which we build. For Moses, the rock was the place where he was able to rest

while the winning battle raged below. This is a key prophetic picture. God has ordained this time in the history of His Church for many to experience true prosperity. We can look at the image of Moses resting comfortably on that rock while Aaron and Hur worked hard to keep his hands upheld as a picture of the comfort that prosperity has brought to many leaders in Christ's body today. Let us not forget that Moses' hand also held the rod of God. Aaron and Hur held his hands, but Moses held the rod which is symbolic of supernatural direction, authority and power. Moses fully intended to stand, but because Aaron and Hur discerned the heart of their leader, they made sure he was able to sit down. God still worked when Moses was seated. Leaders, see the divine picture of Moses sitting with God's rod as a prophetic symbol of your mandate to take your rest, and allow your sons and daughters to hold up your hands. Far too many leaders in the body of Christ have become burned out, stressed out, and worn out because they do not perceive anyone “likeminded” in their midst, as Paul described his spiritual son Timothy. There are leaders in the body of Christ who have been working solo for such a long time, they have begun to imagine they can accomplish the vision of God without helpers. This is far from the truth. We

continued on p.28

continued from p.27

see leaders who are overweight, battling physical ailments and high blood pressure because they are trying to shoulder a responsibility alone, when they have helpers standing by to offer support. Leaders, it's really all right to sit down sometimes. The apostle Paul had helpers to write his letters and carry offerings to the churches, to bring him parchments to read in prison, and his cloak to wear as the need arose. The message here to leaders is that even at your apex, the Lord does not want you to burn out by doing what you do best alone. David was called the "Light of Israel," the symbol of God's wisdom and guidance during his reign. His men recognized his value and anointing, and set their hearts to preserve it

for the nation. Leaders, you are the gift God has placed among His people. Let them hold up your hands.

Hands speak of power. Moses also had the rod of God. We know the rod speaks of direction and correction. God ordained victory for His people, and He made it possible through the position of the leader's hands.

Practical Ways to Discern and Follow the Heart of Your Leader

1. Take notes while he or she is teaching or preaching. What metaphors does he utilize? What personal examples? At what point does he display greater passion, animation? What parts of the message "leap out" at you?

2. Pray fervently for your leader. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas of need, and ask Him to let you see your leader through the eyes of God.

3. Purpose in your heart never to become familiar with your leader. Endeavor by the Spirit of God to stay free of offense, misunderstanding and a critical spirit. Keep your heart pure toward your leader.

4. Ask the Holy Spirit to constantly give you fresh, new ways to be a blessing in their lives.

5. Maintain a listening posture and an attitude of promptness to serve, not to be served.

The apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 11:1 "Pattern yourselves after me [follow my example], as I imitate and follow Christ (the Messiah)." In the next verse Paul goes on to commend the Corinthian believers for "remembering [him] in everything..." This is a key element in following the example of another. They kept their leader in their hearts. The way to know someone else's heart is to keep them in your heart. **R**

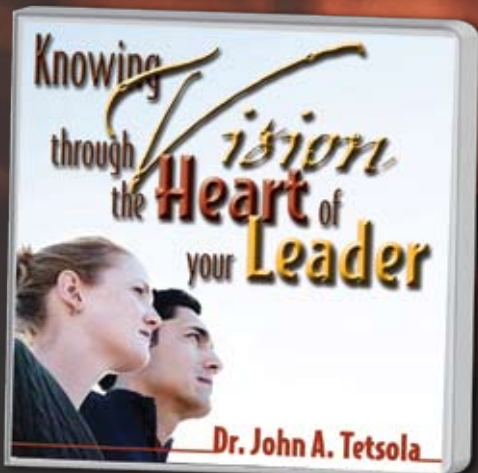


Sheila Chang is a prophetic teacher, psalmist and member of The Leadership team of Ecclesia Church International. To contact her please call (718) 904-8530

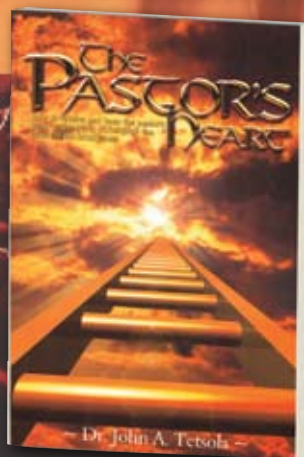
Connecting to the Heart of a Leader

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10 Prayer Points for The Servant of God In Your Life

By Dr. John A. Tetsola

As we move deeper into this season and year, I encourage and challenge you to pray and intercede more seriously for the servant of God or the man of God in your life. For every believer, there are men and women of God that God has brought into our lives at certain seasons and times to take us to our next level. Make a commitment this year that your servant of God or your man of God will not become a statistic of ridicule to the Body of Christ because of his or her lack of integrity. There are ten key areas in the life of a servant of God that we need to consistently pray and intercede for. Please, as you read and review these prayer points, determine to pray for the man of God or the servant of God in your life. If you don't have a man of God in your life, prayerfully find one and then pray for him/her.

- Pray that their weaknesses will not become a stumbling block to others, nor be over magnified in their own minds.

- Pray that their self-portrait will not be damaged during or after seasons of

personal attack or criticism.

- Pray that their trust in God and love for people will not fail.

- Pray that satan would not succeed in convincing them that their life, their message, and their ministry are not making a difference.

- Pray that their passion would remain so hot that they would never become bored with their assignment.

- Pray that the Holy Spirit would quickly expose anyone close to them with a hidden agenda, wrong motives, or a weak character.

- Pray that their financial river would continually increase into abundant overflow.

- Pray that their family would be protected from the many disappointments of ministry.

- Pray that the constant pressures of ministry would be balanced with seasons of rest and relaxation.

- Pray that the joy of the Lord would fill their lives and overcome seasons of weariness.

A Sample Prayer For Your Servant Of God

Below is a sample prayer

for your man or woman of God. As you pray this prayer, insert the name of your leader in the space provided.

Father God in the name of Jesus, I bless and thank You for Your mercy and loving kindness toward us. We praise You Lord God for granting us spiritual shepherds and leaders after Your heart to feed us with knowledge, understanding and judgment. Lord Jesus, I lift up _____ before Your throne and I immerse, hide and saturate him/her in the Blood of Jesus. I pray that You will be a wall of fire round about _____. Heavenly Father, I take authority over every attack, plot, scheme and desire of the enemy against his/her life, family, and ministry, and I destroy them all in Jesus' name. I declare in Your name that _____ is surrounded by a divine hedge of protection and is garrisoned by the Blood of Jesus.

Father God, give _____ divine focus, clarity of vision, renewed supernatural energy, and the zeal of the Lord to accomplish every assignment of God with strength in Jesus' name. Fa-

ther, as they live a life pleasing to You, Your Word says You will give them wisdom, knowledge and joy. Lord God, grant _____ a courageous spirit and Your grace to stand and to rule in the midst of Your enemies in Jesus' name. Holy Spirit, reveal new and divine strategies to _____ now and in the seasons ahead. Lord, I declare growth in _____'s life in every area along with deeper, fuller insight and understanding of the mysteries and secrets in the deep and intimate knowledge of You Lord God. Father, flood his/her heart with light so that he/she knows and understands the hope to which he/she has been called and the richness of Your glorious inheritance. I praise You for enabling _____ to relate to Your people by the Spirit of God, and for access to Your divine knowledge and counsel. Father, I decree and declare that _____ is totally and completely healed, whole, loosed and free of every infirmity, disease, pain and abnormality in Jesus Christ's name. Thank You Lord for answering this prayer in Jesus Christ's name. Amen and amen. **R**



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