8Elisha had more of the Holy Spirit dead, than most Christians have of Him alive.
Steve Wilburn

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 NLV

First Love Ministries, Inc. of Perry, Georgia USA
Prayer Study #537

THE CALLED OUT ONES

God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
1st Corinthians 1:9

This *fellowship of His Son* is the *ekklesia* or *called out ones*. Ekklesia never refers to a building but always to people. The Church is composed of those who are called out of the world -the world system where the kingdom of darkness and the prince of this world and the god of this age, satan, has blinded the unsaved, according to 2nd Corinthians 4:3-4: *But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them) and are called into the body of Christ* (the saved). Christ's glory, besides the fact that He is God, the Lord of Glory, is His dying for our sins and rising again, and, I believe, His blood back shredded by the whips of the Roman tormenters and His bruised body. We bring light to these unsaved ones when we share the *gospel of the glory of Christ.* Jesus says in John 12:32: ***"And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples***

to Myself." Paul wrote in Romans 5:17: *For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one* [Adam], *much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.*

This calling out is so important that Peter emphasizes it: 2nd Peter 1:10-11: *Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

FOR THE SAKE OF THE CALL

I. <u>The Spirit is calling us to a more intense and concentrated warfare</u>.

Blow the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain. Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is near at hand; A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, like the morning spread upon the mountains; a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them and behind them a flame burneth; the land is like the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. Joel 2:1-3

II. <u>There are many wounded soldiers in the Body of Christ.</u>

Come, let us return unto the LORD; for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us; in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight; Then shall

we know, if we follow on to know the Lord; His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. Hosea 6:1-3

Why does the Lord crush us to make us, rend us to heal us, break us to bind us up?

1. **Because He loves us.** *For whom the LORD loveth, He chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.* Hebrews 12:6
2. **Because He wants us to come to Him**. *I will go and return to my place till they acknowledge their offense and seek my face; in their affliction they will seek me.* Hosea 5:15
3. **Because the wages of sin is death, and He does not want you to die in your sins**. *All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not; for I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity, because thy sins were increased.* Jeremiah 30:14
4. **Because of unforgiveness operating in your life**. *And his lord was angry and delivered him to the tormenters, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall My heavenly Father do unto you, if ye from your hearts, forgive not everyone his brother his trespasses.* Matthew 18:34-35
5. **Because you must identify with His sufferings to have a Christ image**. *That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and <u>the fellowship of His sufferings,</u> being made conformable unto His*

death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Philippians 3:10-11 AND *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to test you, as though some strange things happened unto you, but rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.* 1st Peter 4:12-13

6. **Because He does not want us in love with the world.** *Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.* Colossians 3:2 AND *But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly, wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He hath prepared for them a city.* Hebrews 11:16
7. **Because we learn His ways by being afflicted.** *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.* Psalm 119:71 AND *Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept Thy word.* Psalm 119:67

III. Healing comes when we recognize God's personal love for us.

I believe that every act of God in judgment and trials and tribulations-those send from the Lord and not the enemy-is an act of love from a God who is love. The Lord allows us to be broken so that our character can be conformed to the image of Christ. Yet the second part of the equation is that He wants us to also be made whole because He cannot send wounded soldiers into the epic battles of these Last

Days. We are healed by releasing forgiveness towards ourselves and others, by letting go of the past and any bitterness, and by a revelation of the love that the Lord has for us.

What is the balm of Gilead that makes the wounded whole? James 4:5 *Or do you suppose that the Scripture is speaking to no purpose that says: The Spirit Whom He has caused to dwell in us yearns over us, and He yearns for the Spirit [to be welcome] with a jealous love?* AMP

Do you think the Scripture means nothing that says, "The Spirit that God made to live in us wants us for Himself alone"? New Century Version

The proverb has it that "He's a fiercely jealous lover." And what He gives in love is far better than anything else you'll find. The Message

In the Greek the word that conveys the meaning in English of yearn in James 4:5 is epipathen which means intense desire, a craving, a hunger, an ache; a yearning for something or longing or pining for; intense, abnormal, excessive yearning.

Rick Renner, a global Bible teacher and Greek scholar, explains James 4:5 this way: *The Spirit has an all-consuming and passionate desire to have more and more of us. In fact, this desire to possess*

us is so strong that He literally yearns, craves, and pines after us.

IV. <u>As wounded soldiers made whole by God's love who or what are we fighting?</u>

A. The Flesh Nature

But as then he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Galatians 4:29

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. Galatians 5:17

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 1st John 2:16

B. The Demonic Realm

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 1st John 3:8

V. <u>What are the characteristics of a good soldier?</u>

A. The Ability to hear the Commander

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou

art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Revelation 3:15-16

B. Being Focused on the Battle

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

C. Having the Right Weapons

1. The Whole Armor of God

Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Ephesians 6:13

2. The Joy of the Lord

For the joy of the LORD is your strength. Nehemiah 8:10b

I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the LORD; the humble shall hear of it and be glad. Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together. I sought the LORD, and He heard me and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto Him and were radiant, and their faces were not ashamed. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about those who fear Him and delivered them. Psalm 34:1-7

3. The Blood and the Word
   And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore, rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea. For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. Revelation 12:11-12

VI. <u>As the warfare increases, are you willing to abandon it all for the sake of the call?</u>

1. **We must abandon our unforgiveness and bitterness towards others and love each other unconditionally, even when we have been wronged.** *Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love.* 1st John 4:7-8
2. **We must abandon our "Me-centered-I'm #1" attitudes and lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters**. *By this perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whosoever hath this world's good, and seeth his brethren have need, and shutteth up his compassions from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.* 1st John 3:16-18

3. **We must abandon our desire for popularity and our propensity for man pleasing and be willing to be hated for the Gospel sake.** *Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hates you.* 1st John 3:13
4. **We must abandon the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.** *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.* 1st John 2:15-16
5. **We must abandon our idols.** *Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen* 1st John 5:21

For the Sake of the Call

By Steven Curtis Chapman

Nobody stood and applauded them
So they knew from the start
This road would not lead to fame
All they really knew for sure was Jesus had called to them
He said, Come, follow me, and they came
With reckless abandon they came

Empty nets lying there at the water's edge
Told a story that few could believe and none could explain
How some crazy fishermen agreed to go where Jesus led

With no thought for what they would gain
For Jesus had called them by name and they answered

We will abandon it all for the sake of the call
No other reason at all but the sake of the call
Wholly devoted to live and to die for the sake of the call

No turning back for the water cannot help but flow
Once we hear the Savior's call we'll follow wherever he leads
Because of the love He has shown
Because He has called us to go, we will answer

We will abandon it all for the sake of the call
No other reason at all but the sake of the call
Wholly devoted to live and to die

Not for the sake of a creed or a cause
Not for a dream or a promise
Simply because it is Jesus who calls
And if we believe we'll obey.

We will abandon it all for the sake of the call
No other reason at all but the sake of the call
Wholly devoted to live and to die for the sake of the call.