We are so utterly ordinary, so commonplace, while we profess to know a power the 20th century does not reckon with. But we are harmless and therefore unharmed. We are spiritual pacifists, non-militants, conscientious objectors in this battle to the death with principalities and powers in high places… We are 'sideliners' coaching and criticizing the real wrestlers while content to sit by and leave the enemies of God unchallenged. The world cannot hate us-we are too much like its own. Oh that God would make us dangerous.

Jim Elliot, the young American Christian missionary who was martyred by the Auca Indians in Ecuador in 1955 at the age of 28

I look at the whole religious scene today, and all I see are inventions and ministries of man and flesh. It's mostly powerless. It has no impact on the world. I see more of the world coming into the church and impacting the church rather than the church impacting the world….I see entertainment taking over the house of God, obsession with entertainment in God's house, a hatred of conviction and a hatred of reproof. Nobody wants to hear it anymore.

David Wilkerson, in a sermon *Call to Anguish*

Spiritual Warfare and Deliverance
Prayer Study #553 I
Lesson Nine

A DECLARATION OF WAR

One of the anointed writers of our generation is John Eldredge. I have often quoted from his book, *Waking the*

Dead. I believe this book is a wake-up call for this generation. Eldredge writes, *"The world in which we live is a combat zone, a violent clash of kingdoms, a bitter struggle unto the death. You were born into a world of war, and you will live out all your days in the midst of a great battle, involving all the forces of heaven and hell, played out here on earth*." That is a somber thought, although we should not be frightened by this great battle, but we should run to the battle as true soldiers of the living God.

I am not sure we are going to be able to mobilize the Western World Church, in its current format and state, for war. There is a remnant of vibrant, alive, worship warriors in churches across this land, but the American Church, for the most part, has not declared war against the enemies of God, much less *won* battles against the wicked one. In fact, some of the church seems to be on Team Satan, as they compromise or ignore the Word of God, and promote doctrines of demons.

There are five primary reasons why the Body of Christ in the Western World seems to be losing the fight for souls for the Kingdom and losing the cultural war that comes against the principles of God's Word:

1. **The American and Western World Church is largely spiritually asleep.** Throughout the New Testament we are warned to wake up:

Ephesians 5:14

Awake you who sleep. Arise from the dead. And Christ will give you light.

Romans 13:11

Do this, knowing that this is a critical time. It is already the hour for you to awaken from your sleep [of spiritual complacency]; for our salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed [in Christ.]

Mark 13:35-36

Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming-in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning-lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all: "Watch!"

2. **The American Church, as a whole, is mostly powerless because it has quit preaching the Word-or at least the *full Gospel* of the Word. Instead, pastors substitute the preaching of the Word for "chicken soup" stories, avoid passages that convict members of their lifestyles, and promote entertainment instead of repentance.**

Jeremiah 5:12-13a

They have lied about the LORD, and said, "It is not He. Neither will evil come upon us nor shall we see sword or famine. And the prophets become wind for the word is not in them…

2nd Timothy 4:1-2

I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead and by His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the Word [as an official messenger]; be ready when the time is right and even when it is not [keep your sense of urgency, whether the opportunity seems favorable or unfavorable, whether convenient or inconvenient, whether welcome or unwelcome]; correct [those who err in doctrine of behavior], warn [those who sin], exhort and encourage [those who are growing toward spiritual maturity], with inexhaustible patience and [faithful] teaching.

Jesus, on the other hand, as the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us, values His Word, even more than He values His name:

Psalm 138:2

I will praise You with my whole heart; Before the gods I will sing praises to You. I will worship towards Your holy temple and praise Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; for You have magnified Your word above all Your name.

3. **The American Church has followed, with Madison Square techniques, a worldly, business model, promoting buildings and worldly programs, money and material needs, special liturgical days and Sunday attendance, instead of promoting a Biblical daily walk with Christ, prayer, the fight of faith, and an intimate relationship with Jesus. In other words, the Church has become like the**

world rather than positively influencing the culture and separating from the world and worldliness.

John 17:14

I have given the Your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

John 15:19

If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Galatians 6:14

But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Titus 2:11-12

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age.

1st John 2:15-17

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world-the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life-is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

2nd Peter 1:2-4

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

2nd Corinthians 6:17

Therefore, "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you."

4. **Many in the American Church have fallen for doctrines of demons.**

Matthew 15:9

But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

1st Timothy 4:1

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that, in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons…

Isaiah 5:20

Woe unto them who call evil, good, and good, evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

A. **The main doctrine of demons that I hear today is "There are other ways to get to heaven besides Jesus."**

John 14:6

…I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.

B. **A second doctrine of demons that is very subtlety being preached is "All we need to do to get to heaven is love everybody and do good deeds."**

James 4:4

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is a gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Isaiah 64:6

But we are all an unclean thing. And all of our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; we all fade as a leaf and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

5. **The American church and ministries are made up of superstars and men-pleasers who glorify men instead of glorifying God.**

Romans 7:28a

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing…

Luke 6:26

Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! For so did their fathers to the false prophets.

Galatians 6:14

But God forbid that I should glory, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

Isaiah 42:8

I am the LORD; that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another…

We have become a pampered church, which has substituted entertainment for joy, popularity for conviction, complacency for power, Chicken Soup stories for the Bread of Life. How we need to see His Glory come down! We need to be not just challenged but changed. We need to die to self, die to ego, die to flesh, die to pride. When we truly die to these things, we *will* see the glory of the Lord come down. There will be meetings where no one speaks but everyone sits with a holy hush in the presence of the Lord. No one will want to leave. Many will weep before the Lord and will be filled with joy unspeakable. I know in my heart of hearts that these things will come to pass and that there is a day of joy coming.

We need to stir the Body of Christ in America and cause the genuine believers to go forth in power to change the nations, and it won't be easy because we have become so complacent and compromised by the culture.

Joel 1:12-13 tells us, *The vine*[His presence in our lives] *has dried up, and the fig tree*[Israel, which types the church] *has withered; the pomegranate tree*[the fruit of the spirit], *the palm tree*[blessing and fertility in harvest] *also, and the apple tree*[maybe healing of life]- *all the trees of the field* [believers] *are withered; surely joy has withered away from the sons of men.* Joy has withered away from the sons of men, because we are not waiting in His presence. In His presence is fullness of joy. (Psalm 16:11) The joy of the Lord is our strength (Nehemiah 8:10b).

Since we disrespect and disbelieve His Word, we disrespect and disbelieve Him, the Word who became flesh that dwelt among us(John 1), and, because of our busyness, we see no value in waiting for Him. Therefore, He has removed His presence from us. Hence, we have no joy and are weak.

We must be shake off the heavy bands of religion and tradition. We must wake-up, preach the Word in season and out (2nd Timothy 4:1-4: *I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the Word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*) And we must shun the world and promote relationship with Jesus and change the culture to conform to the Word of God and not the Word conforming to the culture. We must become a nameless, faceless generation that sees only one hero or superstar, the Lord Jesus Christ.

All of the increased warfare we see today is in preparation for the second coming of the Lord.

Revelation 12:12

Therefore rejoice O heavens and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the

devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.

Jesus sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty until the Father says to Him, "Go and get my children." Apparently this will not happen until the enemies of God are defeated.

Psalm 110:1, Matthew 22:44, Mark 12:36, Luke 20:43, Acts 2:35, Hebrews 1:13, and Hebrews 10:13

The LORD [God the Father] said to my Lord [Jesus, God the Son], "Sit at My right hand till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

THREE MAJOR BATTLES WE WILL FIGHT BEFORE JESUS COMES

1. WAR WITH THE AMALEKITES: DEFEATING THE FLESH

EXODUS 17:8-16

Now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said to Joshua, "Choose us some men and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand." So Joshua did as Moses said to him and fought with Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands became heavy, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. And Aaron and

Hur supported his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this for a memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-LORD Is My Banner, for he said, "Because the LORD has sworn; the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation."

This is a very important and interesting passage of scripture. When we learn some of the background information, we can see how important this passage is to us in this present day.

Amalek was descended from Esau. Esau was a worldly man who had no desire for spiritual blessings from God. In fact, Esau in the whole book of Genesis never once mentioned the name of God. Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. This birthright would have allowed him to receive twice as much as a younger son's portion and the position as head of the family. He sold his birthright to feed his flesh nature. He directed his repentance for this act to his father, and not to God, and he sought restitution, not pardon. Thus, he represents the flesh nature, and so, Amalek, as Esau's descendant, also represents the flesh nature.

This was the first time the children of Israel engaged in warfare, and to this day we are still battling the flesh. The flesh nature is constantly in conflict with the Spirit from generation to generation.

The rod of God represents His authority. Moses walked in obedience to the authority of God. As long as he held up the rod, Israel won, not by their own ability for they were not yet experienced fighters, but by being under God's authority.

The stone that Moses sat on represents Christ, the stone which the builders rejected (Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10; and Luke 20:17) but for the believers He is the chief cornerstone (1st Peter 2:6-8).

Aaron and Hur represent the intercessors, who hold up the man of God's arms. Moses' arms are in a position of surrender and of praise. So, as we battle the flesh nature, it is important that we walk in obedience to the Lord and to the man of God. We must realize that everything we do, if we want true victory over the flesh, must first be won in the prayer room. The Lord never compromises with the flesh nature, and we continue to have to battle it from generation to generation. Only the Holy Spirit can give us true victory. Only when the Lord takes us to heaven will we be changed, and the flesh nature will be completely defeated. First Corinthians 15:51-52 tells us; *Behold I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

2. WAR AGAINST THE MIDIANITES: DEFEATING FEAR

JUDGES 6

So it was, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, that he worshiped. He returned to the camp of Israel and said, "Arise, for the LORD has delivered Midian and the whole camp." Then he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet into every man's hand [the Fivefold Ministry offices], *with empty pitchers , and torches inside the pitchers. And he said to them, "Look at me, and do likewise; watch, and when I come to the edge of the camp you shall do as I do: When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me, then you also blow the trumpets on every side of the whole camp, sand say, 'The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!'" So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outpost of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just as they had posted the watch, and they blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers that were in their hands. Then the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers-they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing-and they cried, "The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!" And every man stood in his place all around the camp* [everyone has a part to play and a place in the army of the Lord]*; and the whole army* [of the Midianites] *ran and cried out and fled.*

The opposite of fear is faith, and faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17-*So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*)

The first thing Gideon does is worshiped. Then he declared in faith the victory. The trumpets represent prophetic utterance. The pitchers represent our flesh nature. The torches represent the Holy Spirit. The sword spiritually represents the Word of God. Gideon is not being conceited here by saying "the sword of God and the sword of Gideon." He is affirming his faith in God. The Lord's sword has become his sword or the word of God has become His word.

3. WAR AGAINST MOAB AND AMMON: DEFEATING DISCOURAGEMENT AND IMPOSSIBLE ODDS (or TRUSTING GOD FOR VICTORY IN A CRISIS)

And he [Jahaziel, the prophet] *said, "Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you: 'Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is no yours, but God's. ...You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem! Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord is with you." And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the LORD, worshiping the LORD. Then the Levites of the children of the Kohathites and of the children of the Korahites stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with voices loud and*

high. So they rose early in the morning in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper." And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who could sing to the Lord and who should praise the beauty of holiness as they went out before the army and were saying, "Praise the LORD, for His mercy endures forever." Now when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated.

2nd Chronicles 20: 15-22

One of the most powerful weapons we have in our fight with the enemy is PRAISE. Praise, especially when it is the last thing you feel like doing and when everyone else thinks praise is irrational for the particular situation you are in, moves the hand of God in your behalf.

Jehoshaphat was surrounded by multiple enemies, who were coming to kill the Israelites. He was greatly outnumbered so he did the only thing he should do: He sought the Lord in prayer. The Lord assured the Israelites that the battle was not theirs but His, that they would not need to fight, because He would fight for them. Jehoshaphat and the children of Israel believed in the Lord and His prophet, and so they prospered. Jehoshaphat send Judah first into battle. They were the singers and praisers. Praise always throws the enemy camp into great confusion. If we praised more, we would see greater victories in our

lives over stressful and sometimes almost impossible situations. In the end all the enemies of Israel killed each other, and the Israelites did not have to fight and thus had no casualties. Moab and Ammon were the incestuous sons of Lot produced when he got drunk and had sexual relations with his two daughters. They were half brothers and cousins. Their armies had joined with Mount Seir. In their confusion, the Moabites and Ammonites attacked Mount Seir, instead of the Israelites, and then they turned on each other and destroyed each other's armies.

THE LORD IS CALLING FOR WORSHIP WARRIORS WHO WILL FIGHT ON A NEW LEVEL OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE

JOEL 2:1-2

Joel 2:1-2 is a very controversial passage of scripture. Just who is this army, this "*great people and strong"*? Joel says there "*has not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations."* Some teach that this is a demonic army that God allows to do His judgment on the earth during the time of the Day of the Lord. I give my own interpretation, but know that my interpretation might not be the correct one:

Blow the trumpet [give prophetic utterance] *in Zion* [a place in God where the sold-out ones, the overcomers, the passionately-in-love-with-Jesus, remnant endtime company spiritually will be] *and sound an alarm* [a call for warfare given by the watchmen and genuine spiritual leadership] *in my holy mountain* [again the place spiritually where the

hearts of the remnant company will be] *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 gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, like the morning spread upon the mountains* [We are coming soon to a day of great depression and hopelessness for those who do not know the True God] *a great people and a strong; there has not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generation* [The identity of this people is very controversial. I believe these people represent the remnant company of the Last Days.]

Are you ready to declare war against the kingdom of darkness and the accuser of the brethren? We can win this battle through the power of the Holy Spirit and through warfare prayer and praise and worship. There will always be a counterattack so declaring war is not something to decide to do lightly. You will encounter opposition, but always remember that the more opposition there is, the more you are demolishing enemy strongholds and putting the enemy on the run.

I close this lesson with words from Mordecai to Esther who asked his niece to save the Jewish people by taking a risk and dangerously approaching the King to petition him to save her people: For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?