

Espousal Newsletters

By Jim Golden — Article Nine — The Spirit of Man!

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. Eph 2:1-2

There is a lot of talk about the spirit of witchcraft or Jezebel going around these days. Yet, all evil spiritual activity can be traced back to one source, Satan. His influential entrance into the realm of mankind can be tracked back to one location, the garden. The opening Scriptures declare that it is this spirit who is now at work in those who are *disobedient*.

Many assume that by simply "being born again" they are set free from this spirit's activity in their lives. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is true that we are set free from the spirit's domination, but not its manipulation. His thoughts have become our thoughts and his ways our ways. God makes it very clear to us that our ways are not His ways nor our thoughts His thoughts. Fortunately the work of sanctification turns that around for us. (Romans 12)

To gain a better perspective of what this spirit's method of operation is, let's look at the definition of witchcraft.

Witchcraft: bewitching attraction or charm; enchantment; irresistible influence; fascination. (Webster's unabridged dictionary)

Witchcraft: 1. black magic; sorcery. 2. a magical or irresistible influence, attraction, or charm. (The American Heritage Dictionary)

Sorcery: The use of supernatural power over others through the assistance of evil spirits. (The American Heritage Dictionary)

Books on the top seller list such as, "How to Win Friends and Influence Enemies" might be candidates that encourage the subtle yet manipulative power spoken of in the above definitions. I am not suggesting that Christians are practicing the black arts, but that the enemy's tactics are charming and *almost* irresistible. Neither am I suggesting that the author of "How to Win Friends and Influence Enemies" means to encourage sorcery or the practice of witchcraft.

I say *almost* because without the protection that our friendships in Christ provide us, Satan would continue to deceive the very elect. Most people desire to influence or persuade others to their way of thinking. Only the most self-deceived among us would fail to recognize this fallen human trait. It is this definition, and the ensuing application (manipulation), that I want to

specifically address in this writing.

Satan's desire is to make his students like their teacher. His ingredients for success is to make us believe that he isn't involved in the recipe. He wants us to think that this is just the way we are.

Think about this, man was enticed in the garden to take from God the power that God had over his life; and that enticing spirit has been manipulating and controlling humanity ever since. Separated from God's ability to lead and guide them, mankind began to reproduce after the new fallen species they had become.

After centuries, this way of thinking and treating each other has become a way of life. I know that in my life, as a Christian, I didn't learn to truly turn the power of my life back over to God for quite some time. To this day, He is still dealing with me concerning this issue. Yet, we can be assured He will have His way with those who love Him and are called according to His purpose.

For over ten years my wife and I have not been able to figure out why we have never entered into the realms of financial security promised in the Scripture. Recently the stress caught up with me in what felt like a week long heart-attack. The pain grew each day and became so tormenting that I burst out into great travail in the Spirit for hours. Though I thought I might be entering into a form of intercession for an old friend of mine who had suffered with physical heart problems, I later realized that that was only part of what was going on.

After another day or two, some relief came to me. While in bed, the Lord spoke to me and said, "Remember the footprints in the sand poem?" I responded, "yes." Then the Lord said, "There should never be more than one set of footprints in the sand when you truly entrust your life to me." Suddenly, I realized why God had been withholding financial blessing from us. It wasn't about money, but what money gives you—power!

Money gives you control over your life. With it you don't have to be utterly dependent on God for everything. Don't get me wrong, God does want to bless His children financially, but in His way and in His time. God is a jealous God and will guard jealously the ones He has purchased with His Son's blood. Oh, the mercy and patience of God. Lord don't allow me to grow so rich that I forget your name or so poor that I curse it. If I had won the lottery I might have never gotten to know God with the level of intimacy He has brought me into.

Money isn't always the issue that God wants to get at. For some this power or control over their lives shows itself in a different way. They feel that they must always defend their actions because being wrong would jeopardize their reputation. They fear what others think about them more than what God thinks.

The manifestations of this spirit of witchcraft are as numerous as there are people. Yet, two things are always associated with its presence no matter how subtle their manifestation are. The first is some type of underlying fear, and the second is some type of desire to be in control. Fear instead of faith goes

hand in hand with this desire to have control over our lives and the lives of others. We are afraid, as Christians, that God can't or won't really care for us like He said He would. Or, we don't truly believe that God will "never leave us or forsake us." This fear of missing out on the best motivated Eve and Adam in the garden.

Fear is still giving place to the spirit of witchcraft in the Church today. He finds a comfortable home right in the presence of the redeemed community disguised as personality peculiarities. For example, a person who is under this spirit's guidance might claim to be a perfectionist. The truth is they don't want to yield one iota of power over their lives if the outcome could affect the outcome of the way they think things should be done. Most of the time, they seem very charming; but through their unknown association with the enemy, they have become the masters of manipulation.

To those who fall into this category, I say that the enemy's only stronghold in your life is his ability to avoid detection. Once you can disassociate yourself from his influence and see yourself as the new creature you truly are in God, the "jig" will be up for him very quickly. The key is your friendships in God. People who will love you enough to confront you will probably be the doorway into freedom for you.

Another example of this controlling spirit's activity comes through that which seems to be good and acceptable. Ministry, causes, and visions are often prime targets for his activity. He feeds on things like these in order to divert suspicion from himself. Often these will replace sincere human relationships, and genuine love is always lost in the shuffle. The Church, which was meant to be a place where the river of God flows freely and the revelation of God's love produces pure and sincere devotion and worship, are swallowed up by the beast of organized religion.

Things often look good on the surface for quite a while, but sooner or later they will fall apart if God's priorities are not ours.

When the Lord met me at my conversion, I was a drug addict among other things. I know all about addiction. The closest thing I've experienced to being addicted to narcotics since I have become a Christian is the feeling I get when I am ministering under the anointing. Seeing blind eyes opened and knowing that it was your hand that God moved through can become a stronger addiction than any chemical on earth.

The insecure minister will never want to sacrifice the attention or control he experiences when ministering in this fashion. His only hope is divine intervention. If he wants to move on in the plan of God, he must cry out to see the face of God in his life and not just God's hand.

Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you

evildoers!

Mat 7:22-23

The bonfires that will consume the wood, hay and stubble of our life's work will burn high for many who are achievement oriented instead of love oriented. The only reason we have the "process" is because of the "product." God is vastly more concerned with one lost sinner or suffering saint than He is with building a mega-ministry.

It is not my desire to make any of my readers feel condemned in any way. It is my desire to protect the glorious creature you truly are in Christ and destroy the work of the enemy.

God is doing something new on planet earth and, if we listen closely, we will hear his heart beat. He is raising up a generation of saints in whom Jesus can be Jesus. In order for that to take place, there will be a time for judgment to begin and it will begin in the House of God.

God is trying to deliver those leaders in His Church from any power they are still holding on to so that they may truly receive the power He wants to unleash on the earth. We are about to see the anointed Bride of Christ rise up in the earth and the focus is going to be on her and her heavenly lover, Jesus!

Many who have labored hard to build large ministries or churches will be asked by God to stand to the side and trust Him in a way they never have before. Anyone who thinks they are so important that God can't do what He wants to do without them are in for a rude awakening in the days ahead.

After experiencing this last heart episode and two prior ones I was adequately reminded of the frailty of human life. During two of the episodes the pain was so excruciating I thought my chest was going to explode. Then I found an unexpected cry coming from my voice. I say my voice because it came from my mouth, yet the thoughts or the words were never in my mind. From deep within me, over and over again, came a cry that sounded like the cry of a lost, desperate child. "Abba, Abba, Abba," over and over again was all that was said.

These events came at a time when, from my perspective, everything was going well. Yet, inside of me, Jesus was being starved for true fellowship with His Father. (Romans 8:15)

In the last issue, I wrote about true worshipers versus the "Samaritan" worshiper. The word *seek* implies that the one seeking has some form of need. While I can't Scripturally conceive of God as having any need at all, Jesus said that the Father is actually *seeking* true worshipers. (John 4:23)

Recently the Lord spoke to me that these are Holy days that He is setting before His Church. They are days of critical decision and of rapid change. Whenever we see God move in the Bible, He always moves suddenly. But, He always gives His children adequate notice so that none should be left

behind. The question is, "Do we have ears to hear?" If you feel like your ministry or church is so large that it is like a huge sea going tanker, not easily turned, I pray that you would ask God to show you how to turn it into a speed boat.

I have set the first step before you, the asking. You must be willing to lay everything on the altar. Just like Abraham was willing to lay Isaac on the altar. Church agendas, five year budget plans, building expansion, new church plantings, every form of outreach or crusade, nothing can be held as more sacred than hearing God and obeying Him.

Abraham was persuaded that God would raise Isaac from the dead in order to fulfill His promise. We call Abraham the father of the faith. The question that lies before us is one that Jesus posed before He ascended. "Will I find faith on the earth when I return?" Faith is that ability that an intimate relationship with God gives us to break the power of control and fear over our lives and put our *fate* into the hands of the One who is worthy to receive all power!

Editor's Note:

Foot Washing!

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean.

And you are clean, though not every one of you." For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean. When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you."

John 13:6-15

I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. In our daily walk as Christians the most noble effort we can make is to try and be like Jesus or to follow His example. Jesus' entire life was a graphical demonstration of what God's glorious salvation would produce within the physical bodies of those followers who would obtain His salvation. From the moment He was born, Jesus' life was dedicated to being a revelation. First of God's love for His wayward children. Second, of God's absolute authority over all the works of the Devil. Third, of the incredible transforming power of the

marvelous life of Jesus Christ infilling His followers.

In John 14 Jesus says that anyone who has faith in Him will do the things that He has been doing... I have always equated this closely with the works Jesus specifically mentions in chapter 14. Yet, many of us find these miraculous works absolutely beyond our scope of faith.

I don't believe we are required to do anything without faith. I do believe we are required to do everything that is within our power to do. When Jesus washes His disciple's feet He is doing two things. He is forgiving them for sins they are about to commit in their denial and betrayal of Him and He is removing those sins from them.

Jesus has not commanded all of us to work astounding miracles, but He has commanded us all to walk in boundless love and forgiveness.