

Chuck Pierce: See the Unlocking and Shaking in the Next Three Years

Hear the clock ticking, for the Lord says I have now catapulted you into the three years ahead. And this day the dearest of My Months I say to You I am moving you against gates that have never been moved before. And I am causing those gates that have withstood you in the past to have to come loose so they open in days ahead! I say to you move strategically day by day and month by month until the gate that has held back your **blessing** opens up.

For I say in the 3rd year the War of the Kingdoms will begin and kingdom will rise against kingdom. But I say I have a **Kingdom** now I'm preparing and I will remember this **Kingdom** and the seed and the seed's seed of this **Kingdom**. So I say to you know this I have a **Kingdom** that will triumph.

For I am beginning a highway out of Egypt but I'll redo the highway that you're on. And I say now, the demons that have been trafficking and even creating trafficking throughout the earth, I Am going to unnest their headquarters.

And I'll surprise you with the leaders of this Nation, for I have ways to cause them to bow their knees, and you think they're going one way but you watch Me knock the feet out from under them. And you watch them see Me in a way they've never seen Me before!

You'll hear of shakings from North to West! You'll hear that I have come from Alaska to Maine to shake but it will be the center of this Nation that I now shake saith the Lord. And I will cause that which has been hidden and controlling the forces of this land to shake down!

For I say to you make **favor** with those that even have come into places and you say, but they have evil character. I can cause every Pharaoh in this land and the lands that you're a part of to **favor** you in days ahead!

And even today I call you My Army that is unstoppable. But even as in the natural there have been swarms that have crossed the Atlantic that have shown up in the most unusual places. I call you My Kingdom Swarm and you shall invade the **kingdoms of the earth** and you shall extract that which is needed and you will bring it into **My Kingdom** says the Lord.

And that which the enemy meant to destroy through trafficking I will raise them up as an unstoppable army in the days ahead for that generation will be My Generation says the Lord!

So I say shout that the kingdoms of this earth are becoming My Kingdoms saith the Lord. And decree that the prisoners will be let go and they will come back to My House and this is a season My Altar will be filled!

A new baptism I'll give you and I say to you My very Finger I will place in My People's keeping. And I say when you point your finger demons will flee!

And I say I'm going to open your eyes to those around you and you're going to say they're of a different kingdom. And I will say to you they are Mine bring them in now!

And in this year of honey I will cause a new hunger to arise throughout the lands for My Word saith the Lord. And where you have known My Word in the past you will taste and see My Word in a different way!

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When Going to Church Feels Like a Dreaded Chore

When I was a teenager I had a laundry list of chores, from emptying the dishwasher to vacuuming the floor to dusting the house to washing the car—to laundry.

At first, I enjoyed the chores because it made me feel like I was helping out my mother and I was getting a boost in my allowance for taking on more responsibility. But after the excitement of serving and its rewards wore off, I dreaded my chores. It was drudgery. My mother had to nag me to do them and I did them half-heartedly just to collect my allowance.

Going to **church** shouldn't feel like a dreaded chore, but for more and more people it does. Consider these statistics: There are more than 317 million people in the United States at this moment, according to the U.S. Census. Gallup Research reports roughly 118 million people go to church on Sundays. Type "**I hate going to church**" into Google and you get 103 million results in one-third of a second. That means there are at least 103 million different articles, blog posts, and discussion threads online about how much people hate going to church.

I'm no math wiz, but a quick number crunch yields a negative quotient. In other words, even if you skew the numbers in the

most positive possible light—if you conclude that not all the 103 million results were from the U.S. and not all of them were talking about the **Christian** church—it's still a disturbing number. After all, those 103 million results don't take into account the thousands of comments on those same articles, blog posts and discussion threads.

When the Church is a War Zone

So what's going on here? Why does going to **church** feel like a dreaded chore for so many people? And what can you do if going to church is a laborious experience for you? I'll admit that I've experienced this church-dread syndrome at times in my life. In one case I dreaded going to church because it felt like I was entering a warzone. So many brothers and sisters in Christ were spewing petty gossip about one another and I never knew when I was going to get hit with so-called friendly fire. In another case the church grew cultish. The pastors were so controlling that I couldn't make a move without disapproval, scrutiny or downright rebuke.

Of course, that's not what most people experience—it's an extreme—but unfortunately it's not the only church experiences I've dreaded during my walk with God. I've also dreaded going to churches with back-to-back services where people are ushered in and out like cattle on a tight schedule that essentially locks the **Holy Spirit** out of the service. I've dreaded going to **church** services where the atmosphere was dead and dry and religious. I've dreaded going to church services where cliques ran the show and few could penetrate the hard shell around these chosen ones.

Are We Just Making Excuses?

My point here is not to criticize churches. I'm merely exposing some of the many reasons why people dread going to church. My research into some of those 103 million Google results show scores of other reasons, including: a rote

experience week in and week out; a pressure to perform; untrustworthy leadership; too much manipulation to give; and irrelevant messages. Some of the reasons people view church like a dreaded chore are bona fide and other are excuses, but entire books have been written on the topic of not enjoying the modern church experience.

So where do we go from here? First, let's check our hearts. If you've been going from church to church to church and walk away with a mouthful of criticism every time, it's possible that you're looking at the **church** through filters. Maybe you were hurt in a church a while back and see things in other churches that remind you of that hurt. It could also be possible that you're just looking for a perfect church—and that just doesn't exist.

I believe it's important to fellowship with a community of believers. I believe we should be plugged into a local church—or at least a home group. The local **church** is a place of equipping, healing, exploring natural and **spiritual gifts**, accountability, and so much more. And Hebrews 10:25 says, "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."

Finding the Perfect Church

Of course, it's not always easy to find a church that fits your beliefs, your personality, and your location. So, again, where do we go from here? If going to church every week feels like a dreaded chore, it may be time for you to look for a new church. Going to **church** should equip, inspire and encourage you—not leave you bored, drained or wishing you'd just watched Joyce Meyer on TV that morning.

And if you are in the church hunting process even now, don't judge the church on your first visit—unless, of course,

there's blatant deception or sin your midst. Some of my best friends are people who I didn't like all that much when I first met them. The same goes with a church. So don't make snap judgments. Jesus is all about His church. In fact, He said, "I will build My **church**, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18).

Don't give up. There's a church out there that will refresh you, give you opportunities to serve God with a pure heart, pour out revelation to help you in your daily walk and more. Keep looking because, "Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God" (Psalm 92:13). Amen.

Jennifer LeClaire is news editor at Charisma. She is also the author of several books, including The Spiritual Warrior's Guide to Defeating Jezebel. You can email Jennifer at @ or visit her website here. You can also join Jennifer on Facebook or follow her on Twitter.

Did 2013's Prophetic Words Ring True?

In the days and weeks ahead, **prophetic** voices around the world will release prophecies for 2014. You'll read a handful of them on the "Prophetic Insight" section of *charisma*.

But before we charge ahead to weigh **prophetic** mandates, directives and warnings for 2014, let's take a minute to look back at the **prophetic words** declared over 2013. After all, you

can't always limit God's words to a 12-month timeline. Indeed, it's possible that some 2013 prophecies won't be relevant for years and others will remain relevant for years to come. So, again, before we move on to the next new word, let's review what the Lord said last year and respond according to His Spirit.

The Spiritual Avalanche That Could Kill Millions

About this time last year, evangelist **Steve Hill** had a vision. He saw a massive, majestic mountain covered in glistening snow. It turned out to be an avalanche of heretical teachings, including universal reconciliation, the deification of man, a challenge against the validity of the Word of God including His judgments, and even the lifting of any boundaries, claiming His amazing grace is actually amazing freedom. We've certainly seen a rise in heretical teachings in 2013. But I believe the avalanche has yet to completely fall. Have you girded the loins of your mind for the onslaught in the years ahead?

Be Free of Satan's False Accusations in 2013

Sandie Freed, founder and director of the School of the Prophets and Apostolic Training Center in Bedford, Texas, declared freedom from Satan's false accusations in 2013. She charged us to "step into 2013 with an understanding of who God is and with the revelation that He is not a God that lies." This was less of a **prophetic word** and more of an apostolic decree. Did you heed the call?

'My Hand Is Moving Across Your Nation in a Miraculous Way'

Eileen Fisher, author of *Embracing the Prophetic*, released a prophetic word declaring, "My hand is moving across your nation in a miraculous way." The conclusion of the **prophecy** proclaimed, "You will hear a miraculous report of the Lord. You will dance in the streets and you will sing and you will declare, 'All is well!' I will say until you, sing it

in faith, sing it when you are alone, declare it, decree it, and so it shall be: All shall be well because the well of salvation is going to be poured out fresh over your nation. I am causing places that have been dry to open up to My reign. I will come down and you will hear, 'Let us go to the sanctuary of the Lord our God and be dipped in the well of our own salvation,' says the Lord your God." Did you experience this in your life, family or church?

Return to Antioch

The Lord told Jennifer LeClaire (that's me) to issue a **prophetic** directive. It came to my spirit in three words: "Return to Antioch." In my article, I wrote, "We need to 'return to Antioch.' We need to return to sound doctrine that strengthens the spirits and souls of the disciples, encourages them to contend for the true faith, and refuses to sugar coat the Christian walk. We need to 'return to Antioch' and leave behind the Hollywood Christianity, the pillow prophets, the prosper-me gospel and the other foolish practices that have crept into the 21st century church while we were sleeping. We need to 'return to Antioch' and walk with Christ no matter what it costs us. We need to be found faithful when the Lord returns." I believe this is still true for 2014.

Cry Out for a Youth Awakening

Former *Charisma* editor J. Lee Grady believed God had redemption in mind for 2013. Lee says God told him, "Pray for a great awakening in the younger generation." He offered three Spirit-led prayer points and concluded, "God wants to give America another chance. The prophet Jeremiah pronounced many words of judgment on wayward Israel, yet he prayed this: 'Restore us to You, O Lord, that we may be restored; renew our days as of old' (Lam. 5:21). God loves to answer that prayer! His desire is to restore—and He can orchestrate a great turnaround in our nation if we will humble ourselves and cry to Him with all our hearts." Amen. I believe this **prophetic**

word is still relevant today.

13 Prophecies for 2013

The most-shared 2013 prophecy article on *Charisma* magazine last year was revivalist Matt Sorger's "13 Prophecies for 2013." He shared a number of visions, from stagnant waters being stirred in a fresh way to a prophetic ear to comprehend to a new God-given language to communicate His truths clearly to blueprints for a new wineskin. Sorger encouraged us to pursue these things aggressively as invitations to lay hold of.

Stay tuned in the coming days and weeks as we'll share more **prophetic words**. In the meantime, review these decrees, announcements, insights and directives. Grab what rings with your spirit even as you prepare your heart to receive what God has for you in the new year.

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4 Views of the Influence of Church on Culture

Over the past 15 years the **body of Christ** has made great advances regarding the call of believers to influence every mountain of **culture** for **Christ** for societal reformation (cultural mountains such as religion, family, education, politics, media, arts/entertainment, economics and more).

For too long the local **church** has functioned as a straightjacket limiting the expression of **Christ** to merely spiritual things and the life to come. The results have been catastrophic as the **church** abandoned culture, which has led to propitious moral decay in every cultural mountain!

In response to this unfortunate dualism between the spiritual and natural order many (including me) have called for a theological paradigm shift calling the church back into the kind of engagement that validates, equips and commissions believers into their marketplace vocations in accordance with the cultural mandate of Genesis 1:28.

Consequently, there have been some extremes in various directions as we are all grappling with how to bring the **lordship of Christ** over all creation.

In general, many evangelicals preaching the **kingdom** are in virtual agreement in regards to their goals but have differences regarding the definition of terms, understanding the nature and role of the church, and methodological approaches.

The following are just some of the issues many of us are grappling with:

1. Is the Church the Kingdom of God?

The kingdom of God rules over all (Ps. 24; 145:11-13; Dan. 4:34). Thus, the kingdom of God is the influence or government of God that emanates from the throne of God, which is in heaven. The church is not the kingdom but is the main agent and representative of the kingdom and should function as the salt of the earth and light of the world (Matt. 5:13-16).

In history, many in historic denominations such as the Roman Catholic Church have taught that their corporate church body is the kingdom of God, which led to a dichotomy between the sacred and secular. This also resulted in centralizing power

into the hands of the church leaders, which in the past has resulted in the Roman church having political and economic power even greater than the kings of the earth! With this view, the church is the kingdom of God on earth!

Today, many evangelicals in Catholic paradigm countries take the message of the kingdom and apply it to their own local churches in a way that leads to building their own political and economic empires instead of empowering their marketplace leaders to influence culture. Whenever too much power is centralized into the hands of one entity (including the church) corruption and ego-driven tyranny can soon follow!

2. Is the Church Part of the Religion Mountain?

Many in the movement say the church is one of the cultural mountains we have to influence. However others, such as myself, take a position in which the church, as the main representative of the kingdom, is part of the mountain of the Lord (Is. 2:2-3) that should influence every cultural mountain. The church is not the kingdom but is in the kingdom as its hierarchy. Thus, the church is called to represent and influence the whole earth.

If the church were in the religion mountain then there would be confusion between the nature and mission of the church, between essence and outreach. Thus, it would be strange in my opinion to say our local church is in the religion mountain and then turn around and say we have to reach ourselves! No, I believe the true church is in the kingdom mountain that should influence the religion mountain, which would include nominal Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and every other religion of the world not rooted in Christ. Hence, I do not believe the true church is in the same mountain as Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism.

3. The Microchurch Versus the Nuclear Church

The term *microchurch* generally means an extension of the local

church led by marketplace leaders who connect in their workplaces to make disciples and influence their cultural mountain. In my opinion, the micro church should only function as an extension or arm of the nuclear (local) church but never take the place of the nuclear church.

For example, there could be two or three gathered in the name of Jesus in the halls of political power to do a Bible study, or to band together to enact public policy with a biblical framework. But that does not mean they do not need to belong to a local (nuclear) church for apostolic equipping and pastoral care. Furthermore, Paul traveled with a lot of disciples but never once called his roving band a church (the mobile church concept). No, with his band he always established churches or went to already established local churches to strengthen them, but never called his group of traveling companions a church.

Of course, there may at times be extenuating circumstances in persecuted nations (China, Iran, etc.) in which believers have to find covert ways of banding together for discipleship (in their factories, or businesses, or prison cells) because a typical church gathering would be impractical. But it is very important that we never make the exception the general rule. Let's follow Scripture for our general rule as well as allow for exceptions as the Lord leads.

If we make the microchurch an entity unto itself as the ideal, then we will have marketplace leaders who will call their businesses churches, their employees their congregations, and have them tithe to their businesses! Marketplace leaders need ecclesial fivefold ministers (Eph. 4:11) to equip and shepherd them, and they regularly need to come up for oxygen and hear what the Spirit is saying to and in their local churches!

4. Commissioning Marketplace Leaders With Ecclesiastical Titles

I believe that each of the fivefold ministries will reproduce marketplace (and ecclesial) leaders after their own kind. Thus, an ecclesial apostle could quite possibly reproduce marketplace apostles who will never be in full-time church ministry.

However, I do not think giving politicians and marketplace leaders titles that are understood and used in the nuclear church will do them any good in their callings. Some in our movement commission "apostles of government," "prophets of economics," etc. in which they bestow a fivefold title upon them. I think this is fine if necessary, but only if the marketplace leader is connected relationally to a local church and/or ecclesial apostles who are discipling them, and the commissioned marketplace leaders are also equipping the saints (the criteria found in Eph. 4:12).

In many cases these marketplace leaders don't even see themselves as separate from their local churches because they are so intertwined with the life and leadership of the church. However, if we just theoretically open a door for giving ecclesial titles to marketplace leaders without qualifying it with the criteria of having a nuclear church connection then many of these so-called marketplace apostles and prophets may also fall into the microchurch error of substituting their place of business for a local church and/or set up themselves as equal or superior to all ecclesial ministers, resulting in thinking the local church is irrelevant.

In conclusion, many good people disagree with my conclusions. We have to leave room for more discussion as we grapple with finding solutions regarding the role and nature of the church in culture. Many of the forerunners in the body of Christ regarding evangelism and outreach have come from a parachurch mindset and have not framed their mission with the centrality of the nuclear church.

Of course, much of the blame lies with a dormant and self-

focused nuclear church, which opened the door for nontraditional approaches to ministry. I believe we need to have a balance between the two: We need healthy local churches that are kingdom focused and not building their own empires in the name of the kingdom of God! We need to go from church-centric to kingdom-centric. But being kingdom-centric also means having a strong nuclear church that is the ground and pillar of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15).

Finally, many marketplace leaders I know with the strongest apostolic and prophetic calls upon their lives do not consider themselves disconnected from the local church but only extensions of the local church in their spheres of influence. Local church pastors should disciple these marketplace leaders with a biblical worldview and then defer to these marketplace leaders regarding how to specifically apply scripture to their fields of expertise in culture. This decentralization would give both ecclesial shepherds and marketplace disciples a great working relationship and give us the functional balance we are looking for.

At the end of the day, we may disagree somewhat in terms and methodology, but we all desire His kingdom to come and His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven!

Joseph Mattera is overseeing bishop of Resurrection Church, Christ Covenant Coalition, in Brooklyn, N.Y. You can read more on or connect with him on Facebook or Twitter.

Are You a Female Chauvinist?

Subordination. Submission. Obedience.

These are not words often found in the vocabulary of a modern

woman. In fact, most modern women are taught to reject such ideals. They are equal to men. They are liberated and free from **subordination**.

Yet God's Word commands us to lay aside the modern definition of liberation and embrace His plan and design for our lives, realizing that His plan for **marriage** was one of protection. The man is submitted to God the Father and those in authority over him (his employer, pastor and governing authorities). The woman is submitted to her husband. Children are submitted to their parents.

Chain of command.

And when this authority structure is in proper order, every part is protected. Titus directed the older women to teach the younger women: "[To be] discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Titus 2:5, KJV).

Sadly, today many older women instruct the younger women to embrace their **liberty, freedom** and equality!

However, women's liberation didn't stop at equality. It has run roughshod over men. When you look at movies, sitcoms and commercials, men are fat, lazy, stupid oafs who watch TV and drink beer, while women are skinny, smart, in shape and have found their place in the corporate world.

As my dad says, "The most discriminated person in American right now is the white balding male with a bit of a belly."

The first step to embracing submissive obedience is to reject today's image of the male species. Never before have men been so disrespected as they are now.

I call it **reverse chauvinism!**

We are so blind to the fact that we view them as many men used to view women. Women are viewed to be superior in mind and body while men are have a lesser ability for obtaining

knowledge beyond football and auto mechanics.

God created man in His image; therefore, to look at men through this distorted prism is to view God and His creative work as the same.

The second step to embracing submissive obedience is to reject the world's view of liberation. God didn't liberate woman so she could enjoy an equal position with man. God's design for a woman is not for her to be used and abused by her husband, nor is it to share an equal position with him. His design for her is to joyfully and embrace her position under the man's loving protection.

In this position, she has the ability to possess and share her opinions on household matters—with the understanding that she does not have the right to the last word. She must relinquish that right to the one to whom it was given by right of his position—her husband.

The third step to embracing submissive obedience is to truly view your husband as your authority. No, you are not his child. Your relationship with him is a delicate balance of closest companion and leader/protector/head. It is a perfect balance of companionship and respect, true freedom and submission, friendship and obedience.

I have spent the past several weeks pondering this topic. It counteracts everything we've ever been taught that our position and rights as women should be.

Do I really obey? When he asks me to do something for him, what is my reaction? When he makes a decision I do not agree with, how do I respond? When he corrects the children differently than I would, do I correct him? When he makes a decision without consulting me first, do I feel that my position and authority have been negated in some way? When he puts his foot down on a matter and assumes his authority as the head of the home by telling me what I should do, do I suddenly feel an urge to rebel?

Do my reactions and responses reflect society's norm? Do they mirror how a "modern woman" is portrayed in the media today? Or do they mirror God's design for me? Humility. Subordination. Submission. Obedience. Respect. Honor. Love.

Obedience and submission are not just actions. They are attitudes that fuel our action.

Rosilind Jukic is an American girl married to a Bosnian guy who lives in a small village just outside of Zagreb. They have two crazy boys 3 and under who are as opposite as boys can be. When Rosilind isn't writing, she is dreaming up recipes and searching for ways to organize her home better. You can find her at A Little R & R, where she writes about missions, marriage and family, toddler activities, and her recipes.

Discerning Demonic Strategies Against Your Life

Lately, I've been thinking about what I've been thinking about. In other words, I've been listening closer into the **spiritual realm** to discern the demonic activity trying to come against my mind and trying to come against people in my region.

When I was driving to **church** last week, for example, I suddenly heard thoughts like, "I'm so discouraged." When I got in the car and started driving, I was happy as a lark, listening to classical music and **praying**. But when I crossed the line into Fort Lauderdale, thoughts of discouragement suddenly started bombarding my mind.

Although I've experienced this before, I almost fell for it. I started thinking about discouraging things going on in my life and in the world. By the time I pulled into the **church** parking

lot, I was deflated. And then the **Holy Spirit** broke in and reminded me, "That's not your thought."

I called a friend and asked her if she was sensing discouragement in the spiritual climate, and she offered a confirmation. As a **church**, we prayed against a spirit of discouragement, loneliness and oppression, and we felt something break. The joy of the Lord fell on the congregation, and we had a lovely service.

What Are You Thinking About?

Of course, it's not always something in the city I'm hearing. Sometimes the enemy is targeting my mind with destructive or seductive thoughts. Yes, Satan does put thoughts in our minds. Consider Luke 4:3, where "the devil said" things to Jesus. The devil is a spirit—a fallen angel—who moves in the spirit realm. He doesn't need a body to talk to you any more than God needs a body to talk to you. Just as the devil talked to Jesus, he's still talking to people today.

Lately, I've been thinking about what I've been thinking about. In other words, I've been keener on **discerning** the thoughts that are floating around in my mind and their origin. Did you know that you could go throughout much of your day on autopilot? You can get dressed for work in the morning, drive to the office, drive home, cook dinner and watch television at night while your mind is reasoning through all sorts of thoughts.

We need to start paying attention to what we're thinking about and the origin of those thoughts. We need to be quicker to listen to the inner talk going on in our souls. When we do, we'll start to **discern** the demonic strategies against our lives. For example, you may hear thoughts like, "No one appreciates me." If you reason that thought out in your mind, you'll end up a little angry, maybe resentful and eventually bitter. That thought will eventually drive your behavior

toward the people you feel underappreciate you.

God's Thoughts Versus Satan's Thoughts

Where are your thoughts coming from? God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts (Is. 55:9). Satan's thoughts are lower than God's thoughts. Which way our internal thought life sways depends, in part, on our reasoning. God's thoughts toward us are of peace and not of evil, to give us a future and a hope (Jer. 29:11). Satan's thoughts toward us are of war and not of goodness, to give us a future without hope. Which way our internal thought life leans depends, in part, on our reasoning.

Although our thoughts will never reach the height of God's thoughts—the Creator is all-knowing—our thoughts need not reach the lows of Satan's thoughts. In other words, God gave us the ability to reason and a free will to choose what we think about—whether thoughts of peace and hope or thoughts of evil and hopelessness. So, stop and think about what you're thinking about.

And know this: Many of the negative words we speak and the ungodly actions we take originate from the seed of a thought Satan whispers to our souls. That seed can grow into demon-inspired weeds as our minds reason out the thought. That seed can spark a fire in our souls, so to speak, that fuels more wrong thoughts, wrong words and wrong deeds.

When the enemy plants a **vain imagination** in our minds, we have two choices: cast it down or meditate on it. When we meditate on vain imaginations, we tend to connect demonic dots that create skewed pictures of reality. Believing what we see in our thought life is real, we talk ourselves into taking action based on a wrong perception. That action could be a negative attitude toward people, an angry outburst that hurts someone you love, or a sinful behavior that leads you into bondage. But believe this: It all starts with a thought.

There's a war in your mind whether you discern it or not. I urge you to start discerning what is going on in your mind, will and emotions and to bring your mind into submission to the mind, will and emotions of God by His grace. Paul put it this way: "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled" (2 Cor. 10:3-6). Amen.

Be sure to check out the video below for more of my teaching on this topic.

Jennifer LeClaire is news editor at Charisma. She is also the author of several books, including The Spiritual Warrior's Guide to Defeating Jezebel. You can email Jennifer at @ or visit her website here. You can also join Jennifer on Facebook or follow her on Twitter.

Blessed Is She

"And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord" (Luke 1:45).

Blessed is she ...

The one who paces through the night, pouring out faith and frustrations, believing that, though it seems to have no

heartbeat, her **marriage** will live again.

Blessed is she ...

The one who weeps herself empty over the tattered photo of a **child** who is wandering far from God and far from home, believing for the day his heart will turn toward hope.

Blessed is she ...

The one who logs hours in hospital rooms and doctors' offices, learning the names of conditions and prescriptions she never wanted to know yet still believing in the **One name** that is over them all.

Blessed is she ...

The one who spends money she doesn't have on people she doesn't know, believing her drop in the bucket might just create ripples that echo into **eternity**.

Blessed is she ...

The one who breathes through the pain and hopes against hope and stands in the storm, not because she's strong enough but because she believes He has spoken, and she knows in her marrow that He will perform it.

Blessed is she who sees the promise on the other side of the problem clearly enough to put the muscle of her faith into the fight of her life.

Blessed is she.

***Bo Stern** is a blogger and author of the newly released Beautiful Battlifields. She knows the most beautiful things can come out of the hardest times. Her Goliath came in the form of her husband's terminal illness, a battle they are still fighting with the help of their four children, a veritable army of friends and our extraordinary God. Bo is a teaching pastor at Westside Church in Bend, Ore.*

Satanists Demand Equal Time With Jesus as Antichrist Spirits Rise

It's hardly the abomination of desolation that **Jesus** warned about when He taught about signs of the **end times** (Matt. 24:15). But it's nevertheless a disturbing sign of how hard **antichrist spirits** are pushing to push Jesus out of our minds.

Oklahoma recently decided to allow a Ten Commandments monument on the state Capitol's lawn. This is the type of thing that typically puts radical atheist activists up in arms, with billboards and lawsuits aimed at removing any reminder of God and His Son from the public square.

But the **atheists** haven't launched an attack—at least not yet. Instead, other antichrist spirits are rising up, demanding equal time to celebrate their religions. Indeed, Satanists and Hindus want Oklahoma to erect statues for their false gods.

"A Satanist group has petitioned to have its monument, with an interactive display for children, put up alongside the Ten Commandments. And this week, the Hindu organization applied to have a monkey god statue placed on the Capitol grounds," Reuters reports. "Socially conservative Christian groups fought for years to have the Ten Commandments displayed at the statehouse, and the monument went up in 2012."

Oklahoma City lawyer David Slane put it rightly when he told Reuters the legislature essentially opened a Pandora's box. As it turns out, if the state refuses to allow **Satanists**, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists—and God knows who else—to erect monuments on the property, they are violating the Equal Protection

Clause.

I'd say it's ironic how Satan is using legalism to push his **antichrist** agenda in Oklahoma's government, but it's more strategic than ironic. Oklahoma's governing officials argue that they live in a largely **Christian** state with values and ideals that differ from Satanists. And that's just why the antichrist spirits are circling. You won't find antichrist spirits where Christ isn't being preached, as the goal of the antichrist spirit is to replace Jesus, not merely have a statue next to His.

The antichrist spirit is rapidly rising in this hour, and you can expect to see more manifestations in the months and years ahead. The apostle John warned of this in his first epistle, noting, "Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the **Antichrist** is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour" (1 John 2:18).

And again, "Every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the **Antichrist**, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world" (1 John 4:3). And again, "For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an **antichrist**" (2 John 1:7).

Before the Antichrist, Satan, comes on the scene, we will see more and more **antichrist** spirits rising to push Jesus out of the mainstream. Like John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus' first coming, these demonic forerunners have been voices crying in the wilderness for years, preparing the way for Satan himself with deceiving agendas that target the confused, hurt and lost.

Indeed, the antichrist agenda will become bolder, and it will grow darker in the days again. But like I said last week,

despite the doom and gloom, Jesus is still Lord. Our job is to let our light shine, speak the truth of the gospel in love, and keep our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, so that we can rescue people from the kingdom of darkness and escape the prophesied great falling away among the saints.

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Phoenix Dream Center Opens Program for Foster Youth

Many foster kids entering adulthood have lived in wonderful homes, are quite capable of going to college and are well situated on a career trajectory.

But a sizable number of young people turning 18 have bounced from foster home to foster home—or have lived in an institutional setting for as long as they can remember. They may not finish high school or receive any training about holding a job. Many have no place to go and could end up homeless or imprisoned. They battle unemployment and drug abuse and depend on public assistance to get by.

While foster kids stay in the system until age 21, at 18 they no longer are eligible for state subsidies unless they are engaged in full-time work or are a full-time college student. Thus, around 25,000 adolescents a year “age out” at 18, when they technically can no longer live with a foster family or in

a group home.

In January, Phoenix First Assembly of God, in an effort to bridge that three-year gap to full adulthood, began housing those who age out of the foster care system in a program called Dream Center Living Youth (DCLY).

“Because of circumstances in their lives, these kids often are delayed in their social and emotional growth,” says Sherry Jones, co-director of DCLY with husband Robert D. Jones. “It is incredibly difficult to go through those years of really becoming an adult.”

The Dream Center renovated space for 18 young people for the new program. In a safe, homey environment, former foster youth can finish their high school diplomas, earn General Educational Development certificates, enroll in college, learn vocational skills and prepare for independent living.

DCLY participants are required to take classes at the Dream Center from a wide curriculum list that includes such topics as anger management and addiction recovery. They gain nutritional, financial, technological and spiritual insights.

A \$450 monthly program fee is covered by donations as well as state subsidies. Enrollees are required to open a bank account with a portion of their government aid covering costs. The Dream Center supplies utilities, three daily meals and all basic living essentials, such as laundry detergent, toothpaste, deodorant and toilet paper.

Those in the program must attend Tuesday evening Bible study, Saturday night youth service and Sunday morning worship. Jones says the government doesn't object to religious instruction.

“The Phoenix Dream Center has a good reputation for revitalizing lives,” Jones says. “Faith-based agencies are getting more acclaim as we show that we have a greater success rate than other programs do.”

The Joneses, who have attended Phoenix First Assembly for 20 years, are committed to DCLY. In fact, they gave up their home and moved into a 650-square-foot apartment on the Dream Center site. The couple interacts with enrollees practically every waking hour.

Robert Jones has been a pastor and special education director. Sherry Jones has a master's degree in special education and a doctorate in educational leadership.

Two young married couples—Marshall and Heather Gadd, along with Joe and Monica Robinson—handle day-to-day minor problems for the participants, while the Joneses get more involved in serious counseling situations.

According to Sherry Jones, most of the teens who commit to DCLY are non-Christians, yet it's understood they are going to receive frequent instruction from Scripture.

"You can't just tell them what they have to do," Jones says. "But we can get them thinking in terms of what is appropriate in how to treat others, how to be respectful, how to be successful in life."

Jones says some teens hostile to God upon entry have become Christians and experienced a tremendous turnaround.

"We lose a few, and that hurts," she says. "But we give them parameters for their behavior and structure for their lives that still allows them the independence to grow to adulthood."

Everett Plunkett moved to the Dream Center in the summer because he had no family or friends offer to house him. Plunkett, 18, was in the custody of Child Protective Services from the age of 4 until leaving a group home just before arriving at the Dream Center.

"I'm looking for how to be independent, how to take care of myself and be on my own," he says. "Before I came, I didn't

know God. But God is really not that bad once you get to know Him. I love it here.”

Jones notes institutional living often isn't a nurturing environment for foster kids.

“A lot of them come here and disassociate with their past, they disassociate with their families, they disassociate with God,” she says. “They don't know what they want; they just know they don't want a life like the one they had.”

At the Dream Center, residents experience God's love and acceptance, Jones says.

“We don't focus on their negatives; we don't focus on their past,” she says. “We try to set them up for success.”

The past, for some residents, is traumatic. Sheila Lucero is another 18-year-old DCLY student. When Lucero was 10, her mother became homeless. Lucero's mother agreed to let her daughter move in with a relative of a friend rather than try to make it on the streets with her. For the next three months, Lucero says a young adult male at the residence repeatedly raped her.

In all, Lucero lived in 17 group homes and with four foster families. She served a brief jail sentence because of a knife attack and also spent time hospitalized for cutting herself. She is looking for some stability at the Dream Center.

Lucero finds the staff easy to talk to and has enrolled in community college classes with aspirations of becoming a nurse.

“I am trying to save up money to get my own apartment,” she says. “I need to learn how to live on my own.”

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Why Are So Many Pastors Committing Suicide?

In another **church** tragedy, Pastor **Isaac Hunter**—the son of the spiritual adviser to President Obama—has reportedly taken his own life. Hunter's death is making national headlines because of his megachurch father Pastor Joel Hunter's influence on the White House, his marriage troubles and an undated suicide note found last year, but his death is far from the only pastoral suicide in recent months.

Just days ago, a pastor who was grieving his dead wife reportedly shot himself in front of his mother and son, expressing that he was hearing his dead spouse's voice and footsteps. Pastor Ed Montgomery and his late wife, prophetess Jackie Montgomery, served at the Full Gospel Assemblies International church in Hazel Crest, Ill.

In November, a Georgia pastor killed himself in between Sunday services. Larrinecia Sims Parker, wife of the Rev. Teddy Parker Jr., found the pastor in the driveway of their home with a self-inflicted gunshot wound, Houston County coroner Danny Galpin reports.

Why the sudden rash of pastors committing **suicide**? Suicide is not a new problem among clergy, but three known suicides in less than two months begs a deeper look at the issue.

There is no lack of statistics about pastors and depression, burnout, health, low pay, spirituality, relationships and longevity—and none of them are good. According to the Schaeffer Institute, 70 percent of pastors constantly fight depression, and 71 percent are burned out. Meanwhile, 72 percent of pastors say they only study the Bible when they are

preparing for sermons; 80 percent believe pastoral ministry has negatively affected their families; and 70 percent say they don't have a close friend.

The Schaeffer Institute also reports that 80 percent of seminary and **Bible** school graduates will leave the ministry within five years. It's not clear how many commit suicide, but it is clear that pastors are not immune to it. Psychologists point to several reasons why people commit suicide, from depression to psychosis to stressful life situations. But one thing is certain: Whatever drives someone to take their own life ultimately begins in the mind. Suicidal thoughts precede **suicide**.

"Suicidal thoughts have numerous causes," according to Mayo Clinic. "Most often, suicidal thoughts are the result of feeling like you can't cope when you're faced with what seems to be an overwhelming life situation. If you don't have hope for the future, you may mistakenly think suicide is a solution. You may experience a sort of tunnel vision, where in the middle of a crisis you believe suicide is the only way out."

As it turns out, **suicidal thoughts** are not uncommon. Nearly 8.3 million adults age 18 and older in the United States—that's 3.7 percent—had serious thoughts of suicide in the past year, according to a study called "Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors Among Adults > 18 Years" released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Although some suicides are impulsive, most are planned out. More than 2 million adult Americans made a suicide plan in the past year, and about half that many went through with the plan.

Again, suicide starts with a thought. Indeed, every action we take starts with a thought. As one who struggled with depression for years, I am not trying to oversimplify the solution, but rather merely point out one contributing factor. Many of the harmful actions we take originate from the

seed of a thought Satan whispers to our souls. That seed grows as our minds reason out the benefits of acting on the thought. For those contemplating **suicide**, I believe the seed grows in their minds as they reason themselves out of living because life's circumstances are too overwhelming.

When the enemy plants a vain imagination in our minds, we have two choices: cast it down or meditate on it. When we meditate on vain imaginations, we tend to connect demonic dots that create skewed pictures of reality. Believing what we see in our thought life is real, we talk ourselves into taking action based on a wrong perception. Although there are issues of chemical imbalances, I believe this is what happens with many **suicides**. The enemy plants a seed in the form of a thought that an already distraught soul doesn't discern as a demonic attack on their life.

If we want to win the battle against suicide in the pulpit and the pew, we need to, among many other things, take ahold of Scriptures that instruct us about the battle in our mind. Paul told us, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled" (2 Cor. 10:4-6). No one can take your thoughts captive for you, but you can take your own thoughts captive, and it starts with girding up the loins of your mind (1 Pet. 1:13).

Paul also offered this advice: "Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you" (Phil. 4:8-9). If we do what the Word says—if we meditate on what the Word tells

us to meditate on—the enemy's seeds won't take root in our souls.

If you see your pastor or anyone else struggling with depression or hear them speak disturbing thoughts that aren't in line with the Word of God, pray and ask God what He would have you do. Then do it. Suicide is a leading cause of death in the United States, and the enemy is targeting our spiritual leaders in this hour. Let's rise up and battle against this disturbing trend in the name of Jesus.

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