

Do Not Allow Anything to Take My Place in Your Heart

I am the Lord your God, the One who has brought you out of slavery to sin and set you free to serve Me. Do not worship any god except Me. Do not make idols that look like anything in the sky or on earth or in the ocean under the earth. Don't bow down and worship idols. I am the Lord your God, and I demand all your love. If you reject Me, I will punish your families for three or four generations. But if you love Me and obey My laws, I will be kind to your families for thousands of generations. Seek Me, and you will find Me if you seek Me with all your heart and with all your soul. I will never forsake you or forget the covenant I made with your fathers. You shall love Me with all your heart and with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength.

Deuteronomy 5:4–6; Matthew 12:30

Prayer Declaration

Lord, You are fearsome; You are the one true God, and I will worship and obey You in the ways that You demand. I will trust completely in You with all my heart and will not lean upon my own understanding. I will acknowledge You in all my ways and allow You to direct me on the paths that I take. Then I will walk safely in all my ways, and my foot will not stumble.

From *Daily Declarations for Spiritual Warfare* by John Eckhardt

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Why Megachurch Pastors Keep Falling Into Sexual Immorality

Another megachurch pastor has stepped down after admitting to a long-term affair with a woman who's not his wife.

David Loveless, former lead pastor of Discovery Church in Orlando, Fla., is the third in the area to resign in the wake of immorality in the past six months. He follows Isaac Hunter, former lead pastor at Summit Church, and Sam Hinn, former pastor of the Gathering Place Worship Center in Sanford, Fla.

If those were the only three pastors to rock their churches with sex scandals, it would be hurtful enough. But sexual immorality and idolatry are growing trends in the church—and I imagine they're more prevalent in the pews than they are in the pulpits. The spirit of Jezebel is often behind this immoral trend, tapping into the lust of the flesh with its seductive agenda.

Sadly, the spirit of Jezebel is picking off pastors one by one as they succumb to the evil desires in their own hearts. Too few recognize the sinister workings of Jezebel's covert seduction. They've bought into what I call the "Jezebel deception" and are either tolerating sexual immorality in the church or merely failing to recognize the true Jezebel in operation because they are on a witch hunt for controlling, manipulative women.

What is the Spirit of Jezebel?

Jezebel is essentially a spirit of seduction that woos people into sexual immorality and idolatry. Jezebel comes to kill, steal and destroy by tempting you and then escorting you, willingly, into immorality and idolatry. Revelation 2:20 clearly reveals what the spirit of Jezebel is and its sinister motives. Jesus said, "Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols." We have a responsibility to resist the devil and he will flee. Jezebel is no exception but many continue falling because they don't see the big picture. Jezebel justifies the sins of immorality and idolatry with a false doctrine of grace.

Beyond the three fallen pastors from the area of Orlando, my hometown, let's look at how Jezebel is gaining demonic momentum in the body of Christ. In March, Jack Schaap, former pastor of an Indiana megachurch, was sentenced to 12 years in prison on charges stemming from a sexual relationship he had with a teenage member he was counseling. Bishop Eddie Long was accused of having sex with teenage boys and, after photos leaked and a lawsuit was filed, he reached a settlement with them. Long was later embroiled in other offensive dramas, real estate lawsuits and financial scandals.

The sexual immorality in the Catholic Church continues to make headlines. Michael Fugee resigned in May after sexual abuse allegations. A St. Louis priest was indicted on a child pornography charge in April. A British cardinal apologized for sexual misconduct in March. Of course, everyone is unfortunately familiar with the Catholic pedophilia scandals that the Church is still trying to wade through even as new scandals arise.

A Demonic Idol

Of course, Jezebel isn't only about immorality. It's also about idolatry. I won't go into all the high-profile church financial scandals rooted in greed, which the Bible equates to idolatry (Col. 3:5). You are probably familiar with many of them. But financial improprieties are almost as common, if not nearly as hurtful, as adulterous affairs.

How is Jezebel allowed to continue destroying lives and wreaking havoc in the church? Again, too many mistakenly relegate the Jezebel spirit to control and manipulation. Make no mistake, control and manipulation are merely surface-level traits of this wicked spirit. So while much of the body of Christ wages all-out war against controlling people in the name of Jezebel, the real enemy works behind the scenes—unseen.

Let's face it. Jezebel is a demonic idol in the spiritual warfare world. Many pastors and teachers without a true revelation of this spirit's deeper motives to seduce the saints into immorality and idolatry have picked up on the buzzword in order to draw a crowd—or visitors to their websites. Indeed, incomplete teachings continue to circulate the Internet. Maybe you've seen some of the articles on how to recognize Jezebel, the 10 traits of a Jezebel spirit or even how to defeat Jezebel in 24 hours.

Meanwhile, the real Jezebel spirit is hiding behind this ignorant hype that guards the grander agenda of this ancient evil. Because we're ignorant, we are not effectively waging war against the real Jezebel. We're just whacking at surface-level weeds this spirit throws out as a distraction. The result: Pastors keep falling into sexual immorality and idolatry even while people with strong personalities are falsely labeled Jezebels and ostracized.

Hear me: Pastors and others will keep falling into immorality and idolatry until the church understands the spirit that preys on these sins and refuses to tolerate it any

longer. That means refusing to tolerate the lust in your own heart and refusing to tolerate immorality and idolatry in your church. You can't fight an enemy you can't see. That's what Jezebel is counting on. Take some time to understand your enemy. Pray for your pastor, and avoid the snares of Jezebel in your own life. You may not end up making headlines if you fall into sexual immorality or idolatry, but it's just as devastating to God's heart. 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.

John Bevere: Should You Stay Under Bad Leadership?

Today men and women leave churches so readily if they see something wrong in the leadership. Perhaps it is the way the pastor takes offerings. Maybe it is the way the money is spent.

If they don't like what the pastor preaches, they leave. He is either not approachable, or he is too familiar. This list doesn't end. Rather than face the difficulties and maintain hope, they run to where there appears to be no conflict.

Let's face it: Jesus is the only perfect pastor. So why do we run from difficulties in America instead of facing them and working through them? When we don't hit these conflicts head-on, we usually leave offended. Sometimes we say our prophetic ministry just was not received. We then go from church to

church, looking for a place with flawless leadership.

At the initial writing of this, I had been a member of only two churches in two different states in the past 14 years. I have had more than two—in fact, numerous—opportunities to become offended with the leadership over me (most of which, I might add, stemmed from my own fault or immaturity). I had the chance to become critical and judgmental with leadership, but leaving was not the answer. In the midst of a very trying circumstance, one day the Lord spoke to me through a Scripture verse and said, “This is the way I want you to leave a church: ‘For you shall go out with joy, and be led out with peace’” (Is. 55:12).

Most do not leave this way. They think churches are like cafeterias; they can pick and choose what they like! They feel the freedom to stay as long as there are no problems. But this does not agree at all with what the Bible teaches. You are not the one who chooses where you go to church. God does! The Bible does not say, “God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as *they* please.” Rather it says, “But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as *He* pleased” (1 Cor. 12:18, emphasis added).

Remember that if you’re in the place where God wants you, the devil will try to offend you to get you out. He wants to uproot men and women from the place where God plants them. If he can get you out, he has been successful. If you will not budge, even in the midst of great conflict, you will spoil his plans.

John Bevere is a popular speaker at conferences and churches and the author of the best-sellers *The Bait of Satan* and *The Fear of the Lord*. He is host of *The Messenger TV show* and directs *Messenger International ministry*. This article was excerpted from his popular book *The Bait of Satan*.

The Holy Spirit Will Repair the Broken Gates of Your Life

Raise your praises to Me, for I have strengthened the bars of your gates and made peace in your borders. Through My Spirit I have made the crooked places straight and broken the enemy's bars of iron from your life. I have opened the double doors of your gates so they will not be shut against Me. I will give you the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places, that you may know that I, the Lord, who call you by your name, am your God. I will establish the gates of praise in your life and open the gates of righteousness that you may enter in.

Psalm 147:13; Isaiah 45:1-4; Psalm 118:19

Prayer Declaration

Holy Spirit, establish the gates of praise in my life. Repair the broken gates of my life, and open them before me that I may go in and receive the treasure of the hidden riches of Your secret places. Let all the gates of my life and city be repaired through You, and break the gates of brass and iron that the enemy has used to try to hold me captive. Open the double doors of Your righteousness in my life so that the gates will not be shut.

This article was excerpted from *Daily Declarations* by John Eckhardt.

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Qualifications for Spiritual Warfare

What makes a person successful in spiritual warfare? Some of the qualifications include:

- Endurance (2 Tim. 2:3)—the ability to endure and withstand hardship, adversity or stress. We are to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.
- Hatred (Ps. 139:22)—extreme dislike or antipathy, loathing. In spiritual warfare, we must have a hatred of evil and evil spirits.
- Knowledge (2 Cor. 2:11)—we are not to be ignorant of Satan's devices.
- Persistence (Ps. 18:37)—the ability to go on resolutely or stubbornly in spite of oppression. We must be persistent in dealing with the enemy.
- Separation (2 Tim. 2:14)—to get or keep apart. No man who wars entangles himself with the affairs of this life.

God uses ordinary people to accomplish His purposes. Our ability comes through grace. Every believer is sitting in heavenly places in Christ. Your position in Christ is high

above all principality and power. You must see who you are in Christ. You can do all things through Christ.

It is important to know your authority and engage the enemy in faith. There is no need to fear. Demons are subject to the authority of the believer. Jesus gives us power to tread on serpents and scorpions (Luke 10:19). He promised that nothing will by any means harm us.

Joshua was told to engage the enemy (Deut. 2:24). You will see great victories through engagement. To engage means to bring troops into conflict. There are some believers who fear engagement. They are afraid of backlash. Jesus sent His disciples out to engage the enemy. They were told to heal the sick and cast out devils.

Two important revelations every believer needs are an understanding of power and an understanding of authority. *Power* is the Greek word *dunamis*. *Authority* is the Greek word *exousia*. Authority is the legal right to use power. We have been given authority to use the power supplied by the Holy Spirit.

Authority and power must be used. You use them by faith. This is not based on feeling but on faith. It is based on the Word of God. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. It is important for believers to attend churches that teach on power and authority. It is important to read and study on these subjects. Revelation in these areas will give confidence to pray these prayers.

We have been given the legal right to use the name of Jesus. The name of Jesus is above every name. Authority in the name of Jesus is recognized by the spirit realm. We cast out demons in that name. We bind the works of darkness in that name. We teach and preach in that name.

We receive power through the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). God is able to do exceeding abundantly according to the power

that operates in us. Jesus cast out demons through the power of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:28). We combine the power of the Holy Spirit with the authority of the name of Jesus to rout the enemy. We do not engage the enemy in our own power and authority. We engage the enemy through the power of the Holy Spirit and in the authority of the name of Jesus.

Demons recognize power and authority. They recognize believers who operate in power and authority. The more you exercise power and authority, the more you will develop in these areas. It is important to start. It is also important to make sure your sins are forgiven when engaging the enemy. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). Do not engage the enemy with unconfessed sin in your life. There is power in the blood of Jesus. His blood cleanses us from all sin. Give no place to the devil. You must operate in righteousness.

We are made righteous through faith. We are the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Cor. 5:21). Many believers suffer from feelings of inferiority and low self-esteem because they do not understand righteousness. Righteousness gives us confidence.

Righteousness gives us boldness. Righteousness is the scepter of the kingdom (Heb. 1:8). The righteous are as bold as a lion (Prov. 28:1). God covers our heads in the day of battle (Ps. 140:7). A covering is protection. Covering is based on subjection to God, His Word and the Holy Spirit. Humility and submission are important characteristics of believers who engage in spiritual warfare. These prayers are not for people who are rebellious. It is important to be submitted to proper biblical authority. This includes being submitted to godly leaders who watch for your soul.

John Eckhardt is overseer of Crusaders Ministries in Chicago. Gifted with a strong apostolic call, he has ministered across the U.S. and in more than 80 other countries. He produces a

weekly TV program, Perfecting the Saints, and is the author of more than 20 books, including Ordinary People, Extraordinary Power and the popular Prayers That ... series (Prayers That Rout Demons, Prayers That Break Curses, Prayers That Bring Healing, Prayers That Release Heaven). For more, visit his ministry at . This article was excerpted from his book Prayers That Rout Demons.

MAY 2013: Understanding the Holy Spirit

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Robert Morris explains the truth about the baptism in the Holy Spirit that most charismatics don't even know

Ron Phillips presents an essential guide to understanding the fruit of the Holy Spirit

Bill Hamon offers 21 reasons for speaking in tongues

T.D. Jakes discusses how God is giving His people an extraordinary opportunity to multiply

APRIL 2013: The Spiritual Avalanche That Could Kill Millions



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Find out why more ministries are handing over operations to corporate leaders—and why that's a good thing

PLUS: How to weigh a personal prophecy, no matter who delivers it

R.T. Kendall: How God Uses Jealousy to Prepare Us

Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel was lovely in form, and beautiful. . . . And he [Jacob] loved Rachel more than Leah. . . . When the Lord saw that Leah was not loved, he opened her

womb, but Rachel was barren. . . . When Rachel saw that she was not bearing Jacob any children, she became jealous of her sister. So she said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I'll die!" –Genesis 29:17, 30–31; 30:1

God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform. –William Cowper

Their jealousy, our preparation. That is the underlying theme for this article. In a word: see another person's jealousy of you as God's way to get your attention and prepare you for what lies ahead. Their jealousy is a way of refining and increasing God's anointing on you.

I have wanted a greater anointing on my life and ministry more than anything. Sometimes I think I want it too much.

I am not sure whether it is a spiritual or natural desire. All I know is, I would do anything for an increased anointing of the Holy Spirit on me.

And yet I have learned one thing about this in the last thirty years or more. God's way of increasing and refining my anointing has not been the way I had hoped He would do it. I wanted it to come from prayer—my prayer life and from others laying hands on me. And perhaps it has. I am sure this has had some benefits. But all I know is, the chief phenomenon that has been pervasive in my life over these years has been the way I have been driven to my knees to seek God's face and to practice what I preach, especially regarding total forgiveness.

I wish I could tell you that I have been persecuted by the world. I wish I could give reports that, as a result of our Pilot Light ministry (going to the streets of Westminster and around Victoria in London), I had been threatened by non-Christians, the police, and the government. No. And yet the Pilot Light ministry had brought persecution—from Christians! What we had to do at Westminster Chapel irked so many people.

You will ask: Were some of those people jealous of us? Yes. Those were not bad people; they believed they were governed by a godly jealousy. They thought they were losing their beloved Westminster Chapel and I was taking it away from them. They feared they were losing the chapel they always knew and loved. They didn't like it that we had altered traditions (singing contemporary hymns and giving an altar call) and brought in ways to do things that they hoped would fail—but they didn't fail. What is more, their criticisms shaped me as a person, and the result has been more insight into the Word of God than I have ever known.

Jealousy can be a very useful motivation. Jealousy is often used of God to prepare us for our future as much as anything in the world. He gets our attention by His own jealousy. He uses "their" jealousy—friends, relatives, and enemies; He uses my jealousy. Their jealousy of me can drive me to my knees—to bring me closer to God. Funnily enough, my jealousy of them can also drive me to my knees—to bring me closer to God. When William Cowper wrote the magnificent and profound hymn, "God Moves in a Mysterious Way," I don't know if he had jealousy in mind. But believe me, jealousy can be a powerful force to advance the kingdom of God—whether in increasing the numbers of His people, preparing sovereign vessels for service, or bringing together events that led His Son to the cross.

As I said above, Paul hoped that the Gentiles' turning to Jesus Christ would make Jews jealous and want salvation through Christ too (Rom. 11:11–14).

The point is, God uses jealousy for His own purposes. The sons of Jesse being jealous of their little brother David was part of David's preparation. It helped get him ready for what was coming down the road.

Jealousy is what eventually made Joseph prime minister of Egypt. And the jealousy between Leah and Rachel was no small

force in making Jacob the father of twelve sons. God was behind it all. His kingdom was at stake. He used jealousy to ensure that things happened according to His sovereign will.

Leah and Rachel were sisters, but Jacob was married to both of them. It was not Jacob's choice; he was tricked by Laban, who had promised Jacob his daughter Rachel—but at the last minute gave him Leah.

R.T. Kendall has been the pastor of Westminster Chapel in London for the last 25 years. He now lives in Key Largo, Fla. He is a well-known speaker and the author of Jealousy: The Sin No One Talks About, from which this article was excerpted.

John Eckhardt: Understanding the Office of the Prophet

The highest level in the prophetic realm is the office of the prophet.

And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. —1 Corinthians 12:28

The prophets will have the strongest utterances because they speak by the spirit of prophecy, the gift of prophecy, and also out of the strength of the prophet's office. They have the grace to speak messages that go beyond words of edification, exhortation, and comfort.

Prophets prophesy with more authority than other believers who have not been called to the office of the prophet. Their

prophecies can carry revelation, direction, correction, confirmation, impartation, and activation. They minister to a wider scope of needs than believers who speak by the spirit of prophecy or the simple gift of prophecy.

The breadth and height of the prophetic reach extends far and wide and to the summit or pinnacle of heaven. The depth and length of the prophetic reach is full and comprehensive, complete and thorough.

The Lord desires His church to walk in the breadth, length, depth, and height of the prophetic realm, and He installs men and women in the office of the prophet to make this possible. The prophet has the anointing by grace to minister and speak in higher, wider, and deeper ways.

I believe that prophets should minister under authority and be recognized by the leadership of their local body of Christ because the Lord desires that all things be done decently and in order.

John Eckhardt is overseer of Crusaders Ministries in Chicago. Gifted with a strong apostolic call, he has ministered across the U.S. and in more than 80 other countries. He produces a weekly TV program, *Perfecting the Saints*, and is the author of more than 20 books, including *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Power* and the popular *Prayers That ...* series (*Prayers That Rout Demons, Prayers That Break Curses, Prayers That Bring Healing, Prayers That Release Heaven*) and . For more, visit his ministry at . This article was excerpted from his book *God Still Speaks*.

Why I'm Praying for First Openly Gay NBA Player

And it finally happened.

Sports Illustrated ran a story Monday morning with a headline that reads: "Why NBA center Jason Collins is coming out now." Collins has officially made sports history by becoming the first professional American player to announce his homosexuality to the world. Here's an excerpt from the *Sports Illustrated* article:

"I'm a 34-year-old NBA center. I'm black. And I'm gay.

"I didn't set out to be the first openly gay athlete playing in a major American team sport. But since I am, I'm happy to start the conversation. I wish I wasn't the kid in the classroom raising his hand and saying, 'I'm different.' If I had my way, someone else would have already done this. Nobody has, which is why I'm raising my hand.

"My journey of self-discovery and self-acknowledgement began in my hometown of Los Angeles and has taken me through two state high school championships, the NCAA Final Four and the Elite Eight, and nine playoffs in 12 NBA seasons.

"I've played for six pro teams and have appeared in two NBA Finals. Ever heard of a parlor game called Three Degrees of Jason Collins? If you're in the league, and I haven't been your teammate, I surely have been one of your teammates' teammates. Or one of your teammates' teammates' teammates.

"Now I'm a free agent, literally and figuratively. I've reached that enviable state in life in which I can do pretty much what I want. And what I want is to continue to play basketball. I still love the game, and I still have something to offer. My coaches and teammates recognize that. At the same

time, I want to be genuine and authentic and truthful.

“Why am I coming out now? Well, I started thinking about this in 2011 during the NBA player lockout. I’m a creature of routine. When the regular season ends I immediately dedicate myself to getting game ready for the opener of the next campaign in the fall. But the lockout wreaked havoc on my habits and forced me to confront who I really am and what I really want. With the season delayed, I trained and worked out. But I lacked the distraction that basketball had always provided.”

I am a huge basketball fan, and I admire Collins’ on-the-court skills. Throughout his career, the seven-footer has been a difference-maker for his teams, averaging nearly 4 rebounds per game and adding a few points for good measure. He can take a charge with the best of them and has been dubbed “the pro’s pro.” Indeed, he’s made a much-appreciated contribution to the game of basketball.

Yet as I read Collins’ 33-year struggle over his sexuality, my heart breaks for this basketball giant. In the *Sports Illustrated* article, Collins admits to wrestling with envy and fear. He talks about not sleeping well. He shares about his years of misery and what it was like to “live a lie.” He even opens up about the battle with “insane logic” in the context of suicide.

As I read his article, I found a sincerity in his words, but I was also disturbed. Collins says he feels free now that he’s come out. He says he feels blessed. He says his parents instilled Christian values in him. He says he enjoyed lending a hand when they taught Sunday school. He says he takes the teachings of Jesus seriously.

It’s heartbreaking. Collins, bless his soul, has not made himself free by coming out. Not truly. He just feels relieved because he doesn’t have to wear the “mask” he referenced in

his article anymore. But he's not free at all. He's in bondage to a sin that doesn't line up with the Christian values or the Sunday school teachings he heard as a child. Collins may feel free because he confessed, but he won't truly be free until he repents. I pray that Christian NBA players—and fans—will reach out to him in love and pray for him.

Collins wants to keep his personal life private, but he just opened himself up to all manner of attention for his lifestyle. Some will celebrate his decision. Others will follow him out of the closet. Still others will be confused or hurt. Collins says he doesn't mind if fans heckle him. I hope they don't. Heckling anyone isn't appropriate, much less someone who has struggled his whole life and continues to struggle—very publicly. Collins says he's walked a tough, lonely road. And he will continue walking a tough and lonely road without Jesus, who is the only one who can truly set anyone free from envy, fear, misery, living a lie, suicidal thoughts, homosexuality—or any other sin.

God bless you, Jason. I admire your courage. I know how hard it must have been to take this step. Keep banging the boards! Keep setting those hard picks. Keep being the pro's pro. But, please, consider that acting on gay tendencies is a choice, and repent before it's too late. The freedom you feel from confessing Jesus as Savior and declaring war on homosexual tendencies is far greater than the freedom you feel from coming out as gay to the sports-loving masses.

Jennifer LeClaire is news editor at Charisma. She is also the author of several books, including *Did the Spirit of God Say That?* You can email Jennifer at @ or visit her website here. You can also join Jennifer on Facebook or follow her on Twitter.