

A Prophetic Cry to Put an End to 'Friendly-Fire' in the Body of Christ

☒ God can—and often does—speak through natural encounters in our everyday lives. So when I saw two U.S. Army soldiers pumping gas in the car next to mine last week—and when my spirit suddenly went on high alert—I knew the Lord was trying to show me something.

See, I used to live a mile outside the gate of Fort Rucker in Ozark, Ala. Interacting with military personnel was part of everyday life. But since I returned to South Florida 10 years ago I haven't seen a single military man (or woman). At least not one in uniform. These men were dressed in their camouflage gear complete with boots. No one else seemed to notice them, but I couldn't take my **spiritual eyes** or ears off them.

As I watched and listened to how they interacted, I was impressed with both the camaraderie and respect they showed one another. I noticed at least one of them had been deployed—risking his life for the security of the nation—and returned home safely from war by the patch on his sleeve. Finally, before they left, I stepped out and thanked them for serving our country. The major's smiling response: "It's our pleasure." Humble.

When I got back in my car, I asked the Lord what that was all about. He said, "What if these soldiers were out in the middle of the battlefield arguing with each other?"

What would happen is this: They would leave themselves open for a blindside from the enemy. Soldiers on the battlefield must have one another's backs. They can't be found arguing over who is the greatest or whether or not the corners on their bunk beds were tucked in tightly enough that morning. In

other words, there's no room for petty arguments over non-essential matters. Lives are on the line. Soldiers in the U.S. Army have to lay aside personal preferences—and personal ambition—for the good of their unit.

Beloved, we are not only the bride of Christ; we are also soldiers in the army of the Lord. We are in a spiritual war. Lives are on the line. Good soldiers—soldiers that are ultimately promoted to higher ranks—are motivated by the mission. Seasoned soldiers in the army of the Lord are devoted to one another in love and honor one another above themselves (Rom. 12:10). Many have taken bullets for their fellow soldiers—bullets they didn't have to take—in the name of executing the battle strategy or keeping a senior officer (or just a fellow soldier) safe. We call them heroes and give them silver stars.

Yet too often soldiers in the army of the Lord are struck with so-called **friendly fire** that they never saw coming. Why is there so much bickering among us? Why is there so much striving for promotion? Why are there so many personal attacks? I'm not talking about calling out error or sin. I am talking about mean-spirited critical, judgmental, personal attacks that hit below the belt. My brethren, this ought not be so. That's not the **spirit of Christ**. And it needs to stop. Now.

Christian ministry isn't a corporate ladder where you step on those around you to get to the top. Christian ministry isn't a forum to call out the faults of your fellow soldiers to prove your own worth. Christian ministry isn't an open invitation for so-called believers to hurl **fiery darts** at one another on the enemy's behalf.

So what is Christian ministry? Well, James said pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world (James 1:27). Christian ministry is

doing what God has called you to do in the right spirit—without following the world's way. Pure Christian ministry demands a self-sacrificing spirit that trusts God to promote you, to vindicate you, or to do whatever else you need done by His grace and in His timing.

I'm reminded of Jesus' **Sermon on the Mount**. Jesus called blessed those who are poor in spirit, those who mourn over sin, those who are meek, those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, those who are merciful, those who are pure in heart, those who are peacemakers, and those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake (Matt. 5:3-10).

The **Beatitudes** portray the core of the character of a mature soldier in the army of the Lord. These core values go against the grain of the world system that pushes us to perform for earthly rewards and recognition. These values encourage us to pursue a relationship with the Father that will cause us to walk in humility, be quick to repent, be kind and gentle, seek first the kingdom of God, show mercy, purify our motives, seek peace with all men and endure the persecution that comes with walking out the **Sermon on the Mount lifestyle**.

If U.S. soldiers—many of whom are not even Christians—can display such integrity of character and devotion to one another's wellbeing, can't we? Selah.

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