A WORD FROM RICK JOYNER

FINANCIAL STRATEGIES
BY CINDY STEWART

THEOLOGY OF NATIONS, PT. 2
BY KARLA PERRY

THE APOSTOLIC GOSPEL
BY MICHAEL FICKESS
The War Chronicles Part III
“Clarity”

In Part II of this series I addressed several major factors about the times we are now in and what we must do to be prepared for them. This includes:

1) We are now into the Second American Revolutionary/Civil War, but we have a promise of victory and a brighter future than our past. Therefore, we must never lose our hope, or the peace and joy that is the result of building on the kingdom that cannot be shaken.

2) We have major battles to fight to get to the victory, and we must take on the seriousness and focus of a war mentality.

3) Lawlessness is increasing, as Jesus prophesied, but the answer to lawlessness is not legalism—it is walking in the truth that can alone set us free, keep us free, and help set others free.

4) The police who keep the peace and order are under unprecedented assault, and we must give them unprecedented support.

5) As Jesus said in Luke 22:36: “But now, whoever has a money belt is to take it along, likewise also a bag, and whoever has no sword is to sell his coat and buy one.” It is now time to get what we need to defend ourselves.

In this month’s message I will address one crucial understanding that we must have if we are going to be a part of the victory that will surely come—we cannot compromise with evil.

Appeasement has never worked against a bully spirit, and that is, overall, what we are up against. It has no intent on anything less than our total and complete submission to its will, or our total and complete destruction if we do not submit to its complete dominance.

“Appeasement has never worked against a bully spirit, and that is, overall, what we are up against. It has no intent on anything less than our total and complete submission to its will, or our total and complete destruction if we do not submit to its complete dominance.”
However, for the cowardly who do submit to a bully spirit it is no guarantee of safety, but rather the opposite. To submit to the spirit that is now manifesting in many places is to become subject to intolerable abuse, very likely the loss of all that you have, and even the life of many.

What we can already observe is that even a small attempt to appease those operating in the bully spirit only emboldens and incites it. History verifies that appeasement never works against such a spirit, but to stand up to it will likely cause it to back off.

To only attack people and places that show weakness and withdraw from those who show strength is the written policy of Marxism. It is actually a basic military strategy to look for a weak point in your enemy’s defenses, but it is also the nature of those who move in a bully spirit to be cowards when faced with strength.

To date, virtually all of the riots and lawlessness breaking out in America have been in cities controlled by the Democratic Party. The result has been that even many of the most loyal in the Democratic Party base are leaving it. Polls won’t show this, but it is happening on a large scale.

The polls have been notoriously wrong for so many election cycles now that one might think that instead of Jesus saying “Do not be deceived” when asked about these times, He could have said, “Don’t believe the polls.” Yet many, and perhaps most, follow them as if they were true. They are not. One of the revelations that should have made the devious nature of polling clear was the Wikileaks exposure of emails to and from the Clinton campaign from pollsters asking the campaign what they wanted the polls to say.

We must keep in mind that the reason the first thing Jesus said about the end of the age was “Don’t be deceived” is because we are entering the times of the worst deception ever. Very few things are presented as they are by the media, and many things are not presented at all if it does not fit their political agenda. Yet, even some Christians and some of our oldest and most experienced leaders talk as if they still do not understand this. Why?

The lack of wise, strong, discerning leadership in the church is as rare as it is in the world. We are told that “judgment will begin at the household of God” (see 1 Peter 4:17). When studies show that the integrity and morality of even evangelical Christians is no longer distinguishable from non-believers, and the Scriptures are so clear that sin is a primary inroad for deception, this should not surprise us. So, who do we look to for guidance in these times?

First, there are some wise, strong, and discerning leaders in government and in the church. These can be even more remarkable for being so resolute and enduring in such times. Even so, The Lord said in John 10 that His sheep would know His voice and “follow Him because they know His voice” (see John 10:4). It becomes more critical every day that God’s people know His voice, and as He went on to say in this text in John 10:5, “A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.”

Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers are all ministries that He gave to equip His people, but we are not called to follow any of them, but rather The Shepherd, The Lord Himself. We receive the ministry and equipping that comes through His ministries, and we can expect Him to also use them to speak through at times. Even so, as we are told in Hebrews 1:1-2: “God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son.”
We must mature beyond just hearing the words of The Lord and learn to know the voice of The Word, Himself. Nowhere in the Scriptures do we see the ministry of the pastor, or any other ministry, taking the place of every believer’s responsibility of following The Lord Himself.

As Daniel wrote concerning these times in Daniel 11:32-35:

“The people who know their God will display strength and take action.

“Those who have insight among the people will give understanding to the many; yet they will fall by sword and by flame, by captivity and by plunder for many days.

“Now when they fall they will be granted a little help, and many will join with them in hypocrisy.

“Some of those who have insight will fall, in order to refine, purge and make them pure until the end time; because it is still to come at the appointed time.”

If this kind of word troubles and disconcerts us, then we need to be troubled and disconcerted before it’s too late. As the Apostle Paul Himself asserted to the Corinthians, there is no other foundation that can be laid that will stand the tests in this life except for a relationship with Jesus Himself (see I Corinthians 3:11). Everything said about the end of this age, even the time that is called “the beginning of the birth pangs,” indicates that this is even more crucial as we get closer to the end of the age.

Regardless of how long we have been believers but have neglected this, there is still time for us to do this. As we are exhorted in II Peter 3:8: “But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.” This can be applied a number of ways, but one that is needed for many of God’s people now is that even if we have wasted many years, The Lord can make it up in a day if we will repent and turn to Him in faith, which is also translated, “faithfulness.” As we are warned and encouraged in Psalm 32:6-10:

“Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him.

“You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah.

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you.

“Do not be as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding, whose trappings include bit and bridle to hold them in check, otherwise they will not come near to you.

“Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but he who trusts in the Lord, lovingkindness shall surround him.”

Do not wait until the floods overtake you to find The Lord and begin to follow Him as we should. If you have fallen short in doing this, repent and begin today to find Him. If you have been faithful, excel even more. This is not just so we can endure the times, but because it is our basic calling as disciples, and He deserves our most devoted faithfulness.

In His Service,

Rick Joyner

I Corinthians 15:58
Financial Strategies

BY CINDY STEWART

We believe everyone carries a part in moving the kingdom of God forward. During this time of social distancing, our Apostolic Center felt led to seek the Lord for financial strategies for our community as well as our nation.

The following are the prophetic strategies we received from the Lord.

TRUMP RECEIVES WISDOM

The Lord is imparting the wisdom of Solomon to President Trump.

One of our team members shared what the Lord spoke to him:

I hear God responding to President Trump in the same way He spoke to Solomon. Because this was in your heart and you have not asked riches or wealth or honor or the life of your enemies, nor have you asked for long life—but have asked wisdom and knowledge for yourself, that you may lead my people over whom I have placed you, wisdom and knowledge are granted to you; and I will give this nation riches and wealth and honor, such as none of the leaders have had who were before you, nor shall any after you have the like.

Just as the Queen of Sheba heard about the wisdom and wealth and came to inquire for herself, so shall other nations be intrigued by the quick restoration of our economy. These visiting
leaders will behold the wisdom given by God and experience the glory of the Lord.

This impartation will open the doors to a great awakening and shaking in their nation through a move of the Spirit. It will also bring restoration to their economy. Economic supply comes where there is obedience in the Lord’s Word and direction.

In a vision, I saw President Trump waving as he walked up the steps of Air Force One, bold and confident. He will circle the world with reconciliation in his hands.

President Trump will build an alliance among the nations. The word “alliance” means that relationships are mutually beneficial. This alliance will bring economic strength across the globe between nations.

Nations will be attracted to your radiant light and kings to the sunrise-glory of your new day (Isaiah 60:3).

This abundance seems to confirm what God said about keeping His covenant with us, even during the pandemic. Obedience to His covenant becomes a blessing that overflows to the nations.

Your surplus could meet their need, and their abundance may one day meet your need. This equal sharing of abundance will mean a fair balance (II Corinthians 8:14 TPT).

REOPENING OF AMERICA

As the governors across America open their states, we are to trust God in this process. The Lord said, “even at the smallest gap will be like a flood of recovery.”

Like this season in Israel, we will see America bloom in ways she never has before.

I will send victory from the sky like rain; the earth will open to receive it and will blossom with freedom and justice. I, the Lord, will make this happen (Isaiah 45:8 GNT).

INVESTING IN AMERICA

We are now in a season to recalibrate the way we invest our money.

There were three areas of investment revealed to us.

“In Israel, there has been supernatural levels of rain, and the rainy season has been longer than ever in their history. As a result, the Sea of Galilee has gotten so high that it’s almost overflowing its banks . . . Like this season in Israel, we will see America bloom in ways she never has before.”
1. We are to build multiple streams of income. During this pandemic, we have witnessed very creative ways of providing alternate sources of income. For example, we have seen distilleries turn their alcohol into hand sanitizer, and restaurants are taking their food supply and selling like a grocery store. People are making masks to sell. We are a creative people, with many ideas to create additional income.

   Divide your merchandise into seven or eight shares, since you don't know what disaster may come on the earth (Ecclesiastes 11:2 CJSB).

2. There are 30.2 million small businesses in this country, which comprise a whopping 99.9% of all United States businesses. (https://www.fundera.com/blog/small-business-employment-and-growth-statistics)

   During this pandemic, we have had our eyes opened to the importance of the small businesses around us. We will see a big shift in our nation to invest in these small businesses.

   It is a time to be generous in your donations, tips, and giving. Do not hold back.

3. We are to invest in those who are in need, whether it is our neighbor or a ministry. God will bless and prosper us if we obey His command in this, even though it is a challenge to do so because of what we are going through.

4. Manufacturing will return to America, producing quality goods, making America less dependent on China.

   In 2015, the Lord gave me a word about that China will be dominant, but they will not hold their reign for long. America will take back its rightful place—within ten years.

5. Trump has made a way for a new breed of leaders to take the government mountain.

   AMERICA—KNOWN AS A HOUSE OF PRAYER

   As one of our team members was driving, they saw a building with the letters “M/I” and a big American Flag proudly flying over the building. They heard the Lord speaking to them: “My house will be a house of prayer.”

   “In this hour, the Lord is exposing the places the enemy has taken over in America so we can establish America as a nation of prayer for the Lord, binding the enemy or moving him out.”

In Matthew 21, the Lord cleaned house exposing the thieves and robbers. In this hour, the Lord is exposing the places the enemy has taken over in America so we can establish America as a nation of prayer for the Lord, binding the enemy or moving him out.

TURN-AROUND SEASON

We are seeing an incredible turning in our nation. We have experienced life-altering changes these last months, and there is a realignment of our lives.

   Just as Joshua prepared Israel to cross over to a new land, we are crossing over into the new. Obedience and staying close to the Lord will keep us on the right track.

   You'll see clearly the route to take. You've never been on this road before (Joshua 3:4 MSG).

CINDY’S desire is to help people find their passions and connect them to their life purpose. In her book, God’s Dream for Your Life, you will learn how to live a super-abundant life. She is an Executive Coach, Pastor, and Speaker and teaches Life Mapping: Body, Soul, and Spirit.

You can contact Cindy, invite her for speaking engagements, or order her books and classes on her website www.cindy stewart.com or email: cindy@cindy-stewart.com
The Power of the Apostolic Gospel in Times of Crisis

BY MICHAEL FICKESS

We stand on the brink of the greatest move of God the world has ever known. Previous moves of God and restorations of truth have all been designed to bring us to this very moment—when the biblical promises of a “greater glory” and a massive harvest will finally crash upon the nations as a vast wave (see Revelation 7:9; Haggai 2:9). But why do so few in the body of Christ really believe these promises anymore? It may be that we have forgotten the full scope and power of the gospel.

The evidence of the curse of the fall is more evident today than ever before. In the last year, we have faced a global pandemic, an economic crisis, increasing lawlessness, and a radical leftist blitz to eradicate our national history and identity. It is easy to become fatigued with these unfolding crises because our current problems are complex and interwoven. For example, the leftist lurch we are facing now has been decades in the making: radical leftists gradually hijacked the media, many of our government institutions, our higher education system, and much of our entertainment industry. Now that we have reached a point of full crisis, we find that many families, churches, and small businesses have been stressed to the breaking point. It is overwhelming to even begin to comprehend the problems we are facing right now—much less solve them on a broad level. However, there is one simple root that explains every challenge we are facing right now: the curse of the fall. It is the ultimate challenge we must overcome in order to see the greater promises fulfilled.

THE CURSE OF THE FALL IN INDIVIDUALS

The curse of the fall is a river of death that was released with the first bite Adam and Eve took from the Tree of Knowledge. This river of death is what has poisoned us seemingly beyond repair. For example, spiritual darkness, oppression, and separation from God is the power of death working in our spirits. Thoughts of hatred, bitterness, fear, lust, and resentment is the power of death working in our minds. Feelings of despair, loneliness, rejection, and shame is the power of death working in our emotions. Sickness, fatigue, hunger, and aging are the power of death working in our bodies—long before we actually die. In previous moves of God, truth has been restored that applies the power of the cross to people in order to bring redemption to every part of the individual believer. This restoration has been progressively restored in past moves of God. For instance, the Evangelical movement has always been focused on bringing life to our spirits by restoring relationship with God through repentance and forgiveness. The Pentecostal movement built on this foundation by focusing on restoring the gifts of the Spirit, including the power to release physical healing and deliverance from oppression in hearts and minds. These major movements, along with every authentic move of God that came like birth pangs throughout the last century, had the same purpose—to release the River of Life that flows from the cross of Jesus Christ to bring redemption and restoration to everything that is broken in the individual.

THE CURSE OF THE FALL IN NATIONS

Just as every previous move of God finds its source of life in the person of Jesus Christ and the power of His
cross, the next move of God will demonstrate the power of the cross on a much greater level. We will not forsake the lessons learned from previous moves of God: we will continue to preach salvation, healing, and deliverance for every individual in need of Christ. But now we will see a great expansion as a new movement begins to take shape that discerns how the curse of the fall has impacted nations. The current corruption in our government, lawlessness in our society, and heightened racial divisions are what it looks like when the “river of death” that flows from Eden begins to impact society on a broad scale. If we study history, we can see how this “river of death” can come suddenly and change a nation nearly overnight—as you can see from a study of past events in Soviet Russia, Communist China, South Africa, or Haiti. Just as Christ warned in Matthew 24, major world events such as wars, famines, racial division, and lawlessness may come upon the world suddenly as “birth pains.” What a major crisis often reveals is simply that the river of death that was opened up in Eden has now reached its full expression in society. However, the answer remains the same: just as Christ can miraculously save, heal, and deliver an individual who was lost to sin and death, so He may miraculously save, heal, and deliver a nation who was lost to sin and death. Isaiah prophesies that deliverance on an international scale is exactly what will be unfolding in the last days:

In the last days, the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.

Many peoples will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.” The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

He will judge between many nations and will settle disputes between many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks” (see Isaiah 2:2-4 NIV).

Notice that this Scripture gives a remedy for the major problems we are facing today. Instead of lawlessness, the “law will go out of Zion,” which means a resurgence of Judeo-Christian values in many nations around the world. Instead of racial division, disputes will be settled in a lasting manner. Weapons of strife will be exchanged for plowshares and pruning hooks, which speak of different nations and people working together to gather a great global harvest. Of course, the question remains: how do we get from where we are today to this biblical promise of nations who “walk in the light of the Lord?” (see Isaiah 2:5) The answer is the same for the redemption of a nation as it is for the redemption of an individual—we must allow the River of Life that flows from Christ and His cross to flow into all of the places where the river of death has left its mark.

While the scale of deliverance we will see unfolding in nations in the near future will far surpass any move of God in history, we can still find clues in the past that will help us to unlock this glorious future sooner. Now is not the time to lock our doors and tremble in panic: Now is the time to crack open our history books and begin studying how previous moves of God changed nations, so that we can boldly apply the power of the cross to our own culture in the 21st century. So many are disturbed and disillusioned because they are entirely focused on the river of death right now. However, the overcoming vision we need to transform society comes only through a consistent gaze on Christ and the power of His cross. Once we recapture that consistent gaze and reclaim the ultimate message, we can finally finish the work that the apostles began in the first century.

MICHAEL FICKESS is devoted to calling believers to pursue a more intimate relationship with God through authentic community, effective prayer, revelational knowledge of Scripture, and hunger for the “deep things” of God. Michael currently serves on Morningstar Fellowship’s intercession leadership team and as a teacher at the Comenius School for Creative Leadership, Morningstar’s K-12 school. He and his wife, Rachelle, live in Charlotte, North Carolina, and have two children, Samuel and Ari. Michael’s works include Enoch’s Blessing, Paths of Ever-Increasing Glory, and The Great Acceleration.
government is God’s idea. When God called Abraham, He told him “I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you” (see Genesis 17:6). God repeated this over Sarah, “I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her” (see Genesis 17:16). Again God declares this over Jacob when He commissions him as Israel, “And God said to him, ‘I am God Almighty; be fruitful and increase in number. A nation and a community of nations will come from you, and kings shall come forth from you” (Genesis 35:11 NIV).

If nations with kings were God’s intention, what about Saul?

The Lord said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them.

Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day—in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also.

Now then, listen to their voice; however, you shall solemnly warn them and tell them of the procedure of the king who will reign over them” (I Samuel 8:7-9).

Why were the people rejecting God by wanting a king? Samuel proceeds to list the ways that this king will be a burden to them. People have interpreted this passage as evidence that government is not God’s intention. However, we do not create doctrine against government based on this passage because it was God’s response to a particular instance of the people demanding a king rather than God’s response to kings in general.

Kings were God’s plan, but Saul was not. The problem was not with the institution, but with the individual. Saul was anointed to rule because the people demanded a king. Otherwise, we would see this prophecy fulfilled for the first time in David. Saul was an Ishmael. David was God’s Isaac. We do not look at Ishmael for God’s intended prophetic fulfillment, we look at Isaac. We do not look at God’s response to Saul as God’s thoughts about kings and governments of nations, we look at David.

David is in the lineage of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. From David’s line comes Jesus. Isaiah writes of Jesus, “for a child shall be born to us, a son will be given to us, and the government will rest on His shoulders” (see Isaiah 9:6). God promised that the “throne of David will be established before the Lord forever” (see I Kings 2:45).
Paul writes, “Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God” (Romans 13:1).

Saul could not have gained his authority without God establishing him. David submits to that authority, to the one who throws spears at him, even though he is rightly anointed as king. God brings Saul right into David’s grasp, and David laments that he cut Saul’s garment. When Saul is killed, David grieves his loss, rather than rejoicing that he is now to assume his kingship.

God’s word never returns void. He did not promise Abraham nations and kings only to do away with them when Jesus comes with His kingdom. Jesus commissioned us to disciple nations, and this commissioning is in the context of the entire narrative of Scripture. John writes in Revelation that, “the leaves of the tree [are] for the healing of the nations” (see Revelation 22:2). God designed us to have healthy nations. Abraham is in the hall of faith awaiting the fulfillment of God’s promise. We partner with Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob when we disciple nations and bring the healing that Jesus gained on the cross to each and every one of them.

Nations will change. They will come and go. Many nations we have today did not exist in Bible times, and many that did do not exist today. But we do know that God intends for nations to exist in a form that its people are subject to the leader or leaders of that nation. When we stray away from this form, we stray away from the truth.

In America, we live in the tension between two political perspectives. We are either leaning towards big government or we lean back the other way towards limited government. The constant tug of war keeps us from diving into the dangerous ditch on either side. It is just as important that we avoid the ditch of anarchy as it is to fall into the ditch of tyranny. We are a nation of the people, by the people, but it is the people united under a Constitution that includes each important part of the government. Sometimes we infer that government of the people is each person, or the people disunited with our various agendas. But it is a whole ship operating together as a unit. If any one-part gains too much power, the whole system is in jeopardy. Even the people having too much power can sink the ship.

“...If we do not have a theology for what a great nation looks like, we will not know where we are or where we are going. If our theology does not inform our politics, our thoughts will be informed by other groups that claim to represent our desires.”

When we see abuses of power, we tend to over-correct our course. We throw ourselves into a different error from the one we were avoiding. We watch Christians seek to strong arm the government to change culture, and we argue that we do not need to concern ourselves with matters of government because Jesus did not use political power. Consequently, we fall into another error. God does have a role for government, it just is not that one.

We do not use governmental power to transform a nation, but a transformed nation will have a transformed government. There is a difference between the church trying to disciple the nation through political power, and the government being discipled with truth as part of discipling the nation. We err when we believe that we must finagle the government to be an arm of the church. We also err when we think God’s truth does not extend to our government.

KARLA PERRY, worldview revitalizer and author of Back to the Future: Rebuilding America’s Stability and her new release The Reformation of America, is an avid writer with a penetrating and thought-provoking style. Karla helps people develop healthy worldviews through biblical Kingdom-based thinking. She earned her bachelor’s degree from Old Dominion University where she majored in English and minored in American History. Karla is a co-founder of The Serve Initiative; a think tank and task force organization designed to equip and empower believers for the work of reformation. Karla lives with her husband, Joseph, in Virginia Beach, VA where they pastored for eleven years. You can find more of Karla’s work at www.karlaperry.com
It’s been my observation that many resources have been developed concerning the individual spheres of Spirit, Skill, and Self-Mastery, but there is little talked about or written about the holistic, harmonious nature of fulfillment and accomplishment that arises when these three circles are developed in concert with each other. This threefold area of life development helps in many ways. It allows you to have a specific track of development for each circle. It helps you not to neglect one or more of the circles in the long term. And it can provide encouragement, perspective, and support when you’re gaining ground in one or more of the circles but perhaps having difficulty in another.

**THE CIRCLE OF SPIRIT**

The supremacy of the Spirit Circle places it at the top within the 3 Circle icon. I have positioned this circle at the highest point and used the image of the eternal flame to underscore the truth that you and I are more than flesh and blood. We are spiritual beings, infused in a mortal body. The goal is to grow and develop our personal spiritual life and adeptness through awareness of spiritual principles, honest personal spiritual evaluation, and meaningful implementation. This is the embodiment of the Spirit Circle. This circle contains the seedbed of truth, hope, compassion, peace, joy, and inspiration. This circle can only be developed as you connect with the divine qualities of God.

I challenge you not to be apprehensive when we discuss an ongoing spiritual relationship with God. I trust you’ll find universal, transcendent truths that deeply resonate within your core being naturally. It’s as though they had been there all along, waiting to be awakened. Growth in the Spirit Circle is foundational to your development within the Circles of Skill and Self-Mastery. Without this key component, even some of life’s biggest accomplishments can seem hollow, unfulfilling, and unsustainable.

**THE CIRCLE OF SKILLS**

Learning and breathing should end at the same time. The lifelong pursuit of ever-deepening skill is something that requires identification, focus, training, and experience. These abilities come from application,
education, repetition, and practice. Someone once said “an expert knows more and more about less and less.” Determining which skills need to be developed and how to apply them is a focus of the Skill Circle section. When you ignite your passion and chart your course, the unique, indispensable skills needed will come into focus.

When you are young, you learn skills because you are under the authority of a parent or teacher. As you grow and mature, you need to initiate your own self-study and self-management to learn skills. The purposeful identification and development of key skills is at the core of the Skill Circle.

THE CIRCLE OF SELF-MASTERY

Self-Mastery is the discipline of understanding and consistently managing your personal actions, impulses, and emotions in all you do. It allows you to “feel comfortable in your own skin.” It requires increasing self-awareness and self-management. In order to effectively impact and influence others as well as our environment, we must first have self-mastery.

Personal Self-Mastery is expressed in the areas of personality, inward character, and interactions with others. It includes the set of qualities that make a person distinctive, especially concerning the qualities of mind, feeling, and persona. As we grow in personal self-mastery, we can navigate interpersonal relationships with growing ease. Our ability to evaluate, influence, and persuade individuals and groups takes on new dimensions.

I’ll cover each of these Circles in depth over the next few months, but start considering today what areas you are strong in and which areas you have opportunity for growth.

In His service,

Dave Yarnes
Executive Vice President, MorningStar Ministries

Be Strong & Courageous—An Encouragement For Parents

BY SANDY WOODS
Principal, Comenius School for Creative Leadership (CSCL)

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9).

These words to Joshua from the Lord ring in my ears. Joshua is about to lead over a million people into a land he has never set foot in, to battle unknown enemies, to take territory and settle in it. Our entire education system now stands in a similar situation—we’ve not been here before; the landscape has changed, the mood is uncertain at best, and there are unidentified adversaries to conquer. In less than six months, schooling has switched from in person to online/remote learning; the home has become the classroom; fear has dominated conversations concerning the future. Plans for the opening of schools in the Fall range from in person as in the past to a hybrid of online school and in-person education depending on the day or to fully remote instruction. And as if the variety of plans is not enough, fear, anxiety, and anger abound as educators, parents, and taxpayers debate the best way to proceed.

Now is the time for believers to hear clearly from the Lord on how to educate their children. “Have I
not commanded you?” Parents are responsible for their children. They are the first teachers of their sons and daughters. It is up to parents to find the schools and the church which align with their beliefs so that the message that children hear is consistent. Parents and grandparents, what is the Lord asking of you?

“Be strong and courageous.” No matter how or where the Lord is asking you to educate your children, it is up to you to show strength. How terrible for children to sense fear in their parents, teachers, and other adults around them. In years to come, they are going to look back and tell stories of life during the Covid-19 pandemic. Hopefully, their memories will be of how well their parents, their teachers, and their pastors led them. We want their tales to be of how we took decisive action, of how we rejected nonsensical ideas and rebellious attitudes in society, and of how we stood for God’s truth and flourished in a time of unrest. We want to equip them with a biblical worldview so they will be able to navigate well the challenges that come their way, now and in the future. We want them to know how to inspire others to follow them as they follow Christ (see I Corinthians 11:1).

Whether you homeschool your children, enroll them in a Christian school, or send them to the local public school, it is important that the children are exactly where the Lord directs. He knows the plans He has for each one, “plans to prosper [them] and not to harm [them], plans to give [them] hope and a future” (see Jeremiah 29:11). Hope is the foundation for staying the course in spite of difficulty. Hope allows us to overcome challenges of all types. Hope is a key factor in maintaining our identity in Christ when trials come our way.

Parents and teachers must not only be hope-filled, but also must teach children to be hopeful and not anxious or fearful in order to thrive in the days ahead. First and foremost, we must be good examples of trusting the Lord.

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twenty years ago, two MorningStar University students launched Uptown Worship Nights in Charlotte. The location they chose was Independence Square at the corner of Trade and Tryon, just in front of the Bank of America building – the center of commerce in Charlotte. One year before The Declaration of Independence was written, The Mecklenburg Declaration was delivered at Independence Square, proclaiming independence from British tyranny. When this happened, a well of liberty was opened. Over the years, Uptown Worship has continued with the help of a coalition of churches, groups, and ministries.

In 2019, the Ambassador Program was launched by the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department. It was an initiative to equip citizens to be ambassadors for the city and to respond in times of crisis. Forty MorningStar representatives, along with one hundred fifty other citizens, trained in de-escalation techniques and protest response. The goal was to be prepared for the Republican National Convention, which was scheduled to take place in Charlotte. Even though the RNC did not take place in Charlotte, the Ambassador Program training would be put to good use.

MorningStar teams were scheduled to begin leading worship at the Uptown Worship Nights when the George Floyd protests started. On the first night of protests, when they got violent, Robert Rummage, MorningStar Pastor of Intercession, and other volunteers were there wearing Ambassador tee shirts, responding to the situation.

In the days that followed, MorningStar team members volunteered and went to Uptown Charlotte several more times to help during the unrest. Sometimes the protest became violent. Once team members had to brave their way through clouds of tear gas to return to their cars.

In this volatile atmosphere, the teams continually released Jesus through prayer and presence. They were encouraged that many community leaders, churches, and Christian groups were there, organizing together to find ways to offer hope and solutions.

The lockdown restrictions have been loosened, and the MorningStar teams are once again able to participate in the Uptown Worship Nights, offering support to another team on the second Saturday of each month and leading worship on the fourth Saturday of each month.

People are attracted to the worship and the message of Jesus as a source of justice, hope, and healing. Many are open to the gospel. Four to six people pray to receive Jesus each time the teams go, with many more asking for prayer and ministry.

The public proclamation of the gospel is happening in hundreds of cities nationwide, with worship, public prayer, and proclamation. For example, in Minneapolis the Friends in the Civil Righteousness movement has seen baptisms happen at the site of the George Floyd Memorial.
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The MorningStar Fellowship of Churches (MFC) was founded with the purpose of providing a place for strengthening, equipping, covering and fellowship of local churches. Among the leadership counsel of MFC and within the MFC network, there is a rich strength of grace, wisdom, and experience available to assist the MFC affiliates.

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