



The Harvester

*Preparing Souls
To Serve The Lord!*

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A New “Awakening”

Brian R. Kenyon

In the mid 1700s/early 1800s there was a mostly Protestant religious movement known as the Great Awakening. It involved a series of simultaneous, uncoordinated (with each other) religious “awakenings,” or revivals. Historians would include some important Restoration Movement revivals such as the Cane Ridge meeting (1801) in this awakening. This first awakening was followed by what is known as the Second Awakening. Both of these grass-roots movements arose in times of crisis, encouraging people to repent of their sins and live a Christian life.

Recently, it dawned on me the appearance of what seems to be a new “awakening.” This is not exactly the same as the denominational flavor of four centuries ago, but it is a “simultaneous” resurgence, in times of moral crisis, of a re-realization that unless Christians make a deliberate stand to counter the devil’s seemingly unobstructed assault on society, all of us may enter a spiritual and societal “Dark Ages” as past history testifies.

These “simultaneous” efforts happening in the brotherhood prove faithful brethren are awake and responding to the onslaught of moral degradation in our culture. All these efforts fight against the evil principles permeating society by implementing the Gospel of Christ, the only lasting solution to the problems! The Texas School of Preaching and the West Freeway School of Evangelism both recently announced their plans to begin in Fall 2022. The HTH School of Evangelism, which has existed for a few years, is becoming increasingly valued and utilized

by many congregations. The inaugural Connect Conference, which emphasized evangelism (and lots of good church leadership tracts), was held earlier this month and is to be an annual event. Many brothers and sisters in Christ are writing blogs, hosting pod casts, and seizing other online opportunities to get the good news of Jesus into as many hearts as possible. Even established works, including the Florida School of Preaching, are fortifying and ramping up efforts to continue sowing the Gospel seed, knowing it will produce fruit (cf. Mt. 13:23).

Paul gives God-breathed insight as to what must happen for the spiritual enemy to be defeated:

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor. 10:3-5)

There is no better way to accomplish this than by training and sending preachers, evangelists, and Gospel messages into the world (Mk. 16:15-16)!

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This new awakening cannot be a “bandwagon” fad! Christians who have stood on the sidelines watching must truly recommit themselves to God and actively stand for the Gospel. By so doing, they will also stand against evil. Below are some things Christians must do (or keep doing) in order to reverse the influence of evil in our present time.

Know We Are At War

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (Eph. 6:10-11). This war is the greatest war because it has been going on longer than any other (since shortly after creation, Gen. 3:1-6); it involves more people than any other (every soul, Ezk. 18:4), it involves higher stakes than any other (human souls, Mt. 16:26); and it involves the most powerful “generals” than any other (God versus the Satan, Josh. 24:15). This war is ultimately not against other humans, though they are involved (cf. 2 Thes. 2:3-12), for Paul declares, “we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12). The devil, also known as Satan, is the real adversary (1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 12:9).

Christians must not pretend everything is okay with allowing immorality to flood their homes, the Lord’s local churches, or the

communities in which they live, without that immorality being opposed. Christians cannot assume immorality will correct itself. We must realize an all-out war is waging over our souls and the souls of others!

Reenlist for Battle

Christians already signed-up for the battle when they put on Christ in baptism (Mt. 28:19-20; Gal. 3:27). To be a disciple of Christ is to be a follower of Christ, which entails imitating Jesus in all He did while on this earth (Mt. 10:24-25; Jn. 8:31-32; 13:34-35 cf. 1 Cor. 11:1). Jesus certainly led the charge in implementing truth (Jn. 18:37), and His disciples must follow His lead (Lk. 6:46). Paul recognized this when he wrote to Timothy:

You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. ⁴No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. (2 Tim. 2:3-4)

One main difference between a worldly army’s “enlistment” (especially in a first century setting) and Christ’s enlistment is that the spiritual army of Jesus is completely voluntary (Mt. 11:28-30). Jesus does not force us to enlist. That voluntary enlistment

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took place for every Christian when he or she was baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3-4; 2 Cor. 5:17-18 cf. 1 Tim. 1:18)!

Christians who have forgotten this aspect of their Christianity must do an “about face” and reenlist their hearts as “good soldiers” of Jesus Christ. God (and His will) must continually be set apart in the heart of every disciple (1 Pet. 3:15). Every part of Christ’s spiritual body is needed to influence with the Gospel every aspect of human existence on earth (1 Cor. 12:12-27). Christians must be resolved to “fight the good fight of faith.”

Get Needed Training

All Christians will not have the same role in the Lord’s army. Everyone cannot be a mom, for example, or a preacher or a cradle roll teacher. Whatever our role, however, we must resolve to be the most Scriptural, most effective, and most Christ-like we can be in it (cf. Col. 3:23-24). No matter the role, Christians must first seek God’s word on what He wills for that function. Satan’s number one weapon is deception (Rev. 12:9; 13:14; 20:3, 8). Christians must not be deceived by worldly definitions of spiritual roles. God’s word addresses the purpose, characteristics, and principles needing implementing to fulfill every spiritual role (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:2-3).

Christians must also keep in mind that roles can change as circumstances change. For example, a young Christian mother will (and should) focus on rearing her children. Once those children are grown, she may have talent and opportunity to help other moms with training their children or she may even desire to evangelize those in her sphere of influence. These new roles will be much more effective when she specifically trains in these areas. Her previous experience will help her greatly in teaching motherhood, so she may need less training for that (though there are always nuggets to newly discover from God’s word). However, she would definitely benefit with more formal training in being an effective evangelist, if that training were available.

In America (and most of the Western world) today, there is ample opportunity to receive sound training in whatever role we take in the Lord’s church. It all begins with learning more of what the Bible teaches. The traditional ways of personally attending a special class, seminar, or lectureship with a local church or a preaching school/Christian college is still available to many. However, with almost

endless online options, even with the Florida School of Preaching, there is no reason why local church members cannot engage in deeper studies of God’s word and practical training to be better equipped to fulfill their much needed roles (2 Tim. 2:15)!

Know the Battle Belongs to the Lord


If the Book of Revelation teaches anything, it teaches that God’s people will always be victorious when they remain faithful to Him (Rev. 2:10; 7:9-10; 19:1-9; 20:11-15; 21:1-22:16). No matter how spiritually violent the adversary gets, God is in control. Satan can only act with God’s permission as was proven in Job’s day, when Satan could only speak when asked and needed the Lord’s permission to inflict the righteous patriarch (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6). This was also true with Peter. Jesus told him, “Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat,” but He did not give the devil permission (Lk. 22:31-32). Sometimes it may seem Satan is un-get-over-able, but rest assured God is in control. We must “submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you” (Jas. 4:7).

Christians today must trust in God’s power to give them victory like those of old:

[W]ho through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. (Heb. 11:33-34)

Those Christians who do not trust in the power of God must repent and “be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:2). Like the Lord promised His people’s victory in the past (Deut. 20:1; 1 Sam. 17:47), He has guaranteed our victory today in Jesus (Rom. 7:24-25; 1 Cor. 15:57; 1 Jn. 5:4; Rev. 15:2)!

Conclusion

Satan is waging war. To borrow a Holocaust saying, “For evil to flourish, it only requires good men to do nothing.” So it is with the spiritual war today! We must be awake (1 Thes. 5:6)! We must know the truth, live the truth, teach the truth, and stand up for the truth in our sphere of influence, knowing that God has the power to stem the tide of evil! If God’s people will not stand, evil will flourish! 

Florida School of Preaching



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Day	Time	Lakeland Classes	Instructor	Credit
Monday	__ 8:30-12:00	Revelation (259)	Bauer	3
	__ 1:00-4:15	Logic (270)	Beals	3
Tuesday	__ 8:30-12:00	Preacher and His Work (107)	Wheeler	3
	__ 1:00-4:15	Computers and Churches (290)	Wheeler	3
Wednesday	__ 8:30-12:00	English I: Grammar (124)	Patterson	3
	__ 1:00-4:15	Holy Spirit (250)	Kenyon	3
Thursday	__ 8:30-12:00	Genesis (264)	Atnip	3
	__ 1:00-4:15	Romans (261)	Brownlow-Dindy	3
Friday	__ 8:30-12:00	Church History (241)	Daugherty	3
	__ 1:00-4:15	First and Second Corinthians (135)	Antemesaris	3
Extension Classes				
Tuesday	__ 7:00-9:30	World Religions (275) (Wesconnett church of Christ, Jacksonville)	Ridgeway	2.5
Thursday	__ 6:00-8:30	First and Second Thessalonians and Galatians (137) (Tenth Street church of Christ, Apopka)	Kenyon	2.5
Thursday	__ 6:30-9:00	Preparation and Delivery of Sermons (203) (Eagle Lake church of Christ, Eagle Lake)	Brownlow-Dindy	2.5
Thursday	__ 6:00-8:30	Christian Evidences (244) (Orange Street church of Christ, Auburndale)	Bauer	2.5