

# JMBC

2020 Theme

Kingdom Citizens Engaged in Spiritual

Warfare Equipped for Victory

Ephesians 6:11

## BIBLE STUDY

## SPIRITUAL WARFARE



### July Emphasis War on Dysfunctional Families

#### SCRIPTURES

July 5 - Luke 2:41-52  
July 12 - Genesis 37:1-4  
July 19 - Genesis 50:20  
July 26 - I Corinthians 13:4-8

#### Thought

Kingdom Citizen living in dysfunctional family environments must pray and show love to conquer adverse situations. We must work to save our families at all cost.

#### Key Words

Responsibility, accountability, love, functional dysfunction

### August Emphasis Community Warfare

#### SCRIPTURES

August 2 - Exodus 12:3-13  
August 9 - Matthew 5:13-16  
August 16 - Hebrews 10:24-25  
August 23 - Isaiah 1:17  
August 30 - Hebrews 13:1-2 ESV

#### Thought

Kingdom Citizens whose communities are experiencing warfare must embrace and help meet the needs in our community by showing and sharing the love of Jesus thereby preserving the common-unity. Our goal must include seeking to serve others with an unselfish heart

#### Key Words

Sharing, caring, compassion, service

### September Emphasis Emotional Warfare

#### SCRIPTURES

September 6 - Luke 17:15-19  
September 13 - Exodus 14:13-14  
September 20 - 2 Corinthians 12:9  
September 27 - Psalm 30: 8-12

#### Thought

Kingdom Citizens engaged in emotional warfare trust God to help them stabilize their lives through, faith, grace, and healing.

#### Key Words

Faith, praise, worship, grace

**Week of June 29– July 5, 2020**

# **KINGDOM CITIZENS ENGAGED IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE EQUIPPED FOR VICTORY**

## **JULY EMPHASIS: WAR ON DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES**

**THOUGHT:** Kingdom Citizens living in dysfunctional family environments must pray and show love to conquer adverse situations. We must work to save our families at all cost.

**WORDS:** Responsibility, Accountability, Love, Functional Dysfunction

## **LESSON TWENTY-SEVEN: PARENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING THE FAMILY TOGETHER**

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

1. Which parent in your family keeps everyone together?
2. Do you consider your family to be dysfunctional?
3. What are some of the things that can cause dysfunction in a family?

**TEXT: LUKE 2:41-52**

## **THE HEART OF THE LESSON: DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES ARE EASY PREY FOR THE ENEMY.**

**Introduction:** Luke, the Physician, begins the second chapter giving an account of the birth of Jesus. Jesus' parents, Mary and Joseph, faced some very unusual situations in their individual lives. This family seemed to be dysfunctional from the very beginning simply because of the circumstances surrounding the birth of their son. We must understand that all families have some degree of dysfunction; however, dysfunction shouldn't stop us from doing great things for God. Parents have the responsibility of providing stability, and when they don't, it opens the door for the enemy to attack. If parents are dysfunctional, it affects the family on so many levels and causes the family to be dysfunctional. As a matter of fact, dysfunction isn't new. Dysfunction started with Adam and Eve, Jacob and Esau, David and Solomon, and even Jesus emerged from a people who turned their backs on God. All families face challenges, but all families also have strengths and areas where they can grow. Truly strong families have spiritual wellness (prayer), believe in a greater power, and have shared beliefs. Families play a major role in our identities. It is vital in this day and time that we pray and show love in all situations. We must know that the Word of God gives us instructions as families on how to combat dysfunction in this time of spiritual warfare.

### **1. PARENTS HAVE A GODLY RESPONSIBILITY. (V 42 NLT)**

In these verses, Jesus, who was considered to be almost an adult, didn't spend a lot of time with His family. However, they still had the responsibility of making sure He did as He was required. In spite of who He was, Mary and Joseph still made sure that Jesus

followed their rules. As parents, do you require your children to follow rules or do you let them do as they please? Do you pray with them? Do you discipline them? In verse 42 it says, ***“When Jesus was twelve years old, they attended the festival as usual.”*** Notice the verse says **“they”** which indicates it was a family affair. It wasn’t just Mary and Joseph; it was the entire family. Oftentimes the dysfunction in our families is because we allow our children to make adult decisions, and we allow them to do as they please. That’s what causes the dysfunction. This yearly festival was customary and was required of all males, both young and old. So what do you require of your family? We must understand that we are our children’s first teachers. It’s our Godly responsibility to teach them right from wrong, to train them, and to instruct them. We must also realize that our children learn from our examples, and our godly responsibility as parents is to set good examples. We are to protect and discipline our children and to always be watchful.

**2. PARENTS HAVE A GODLY RESPONSIBILITY. (V42 NLT)** Jesus’ parents didn’t notice that He wasn’t with them at first. Both of them made an assumption because they were preoccupied with other things. As a result, Jesus was off doing what He wanted to do, and no one noticed He wasn’t there. Verses 43-46 say, ***“After the celebration was over, they started home to Nazareth, but Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents didn’t miss him at first.”*** A part of keeping families together is holding everyone accountable and knowing what’s going on with each and every member of your family. Communication and prayer are essential and so is discipline. Dysfunction happens when parents become so preoccupied with life’s distractions that they lose sight of what’s going on within their family. The father is the head, yet the mother plays a role and together they hold the family unit intact. Being preoccupied and not paying attention will cause you to miss some very critical issues and to not notice when something is outside of the norm. If issues within the family are allowed to go on unattended, the consequences could be severe.

**3. FORGIVENESS, LOVE, AND OBEDIENCE ARE KEYS TO KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER. (V48 NLT)** Even though Joseph and Mary didn’t understand the actions of Jesus, verse 48 says, ***“His parents didn’t know what to think. “Son,” his mother said to him, “why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been frantic, searching for you everywhere.”*** How would you have handled this situation? The truth is there will be times when we won’t understand the actions of our loved ones. They may not understand that their actions not only affect them, but they also affect everyone around them. Nonetheless, being able to forgive and to love in spite of the situation is crucial. Because of their love, Jesus was obedient and lived under their authority even though He knew who His Heavenly Father was. The love was his mother and father knowing the truth about who He was and continuing to raise him. The dysfunction in our families is that we are missing emotionally, spiritually, or physically from our families. However, through prayer and strong family ties, we can work through the dysfunction and realize that a dysfunctional family is any family with more than one person in it.

**LORD, HELP US TO BE AWARE OF OUR RESPONSIBILITY  
AS GODLY FAMILIES!**

**Week of July 6– July 12, 2020**

# **KINGDOM CITIZENS ENGAGED IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE EQUIPPED FOR VICTORY**

## **JULY EMPHASIS: WAR ON DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES**

**THOUGHT:** Kingdom Citizens living in dysfunctional family environments must pray and show love to conquer adverse situations. We must work to save our families at all cost.

**WORDS:** Responsibility, Accountability, Love, Functional Dysfunction

## **LESSON TWENTY-EIGHT: DYSFUNCTION BECAUSE OF FAVORITISM**

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

1. Have you ever noticed dysfunction in your family?
2. Can having favorites in your family cause dysfunction?
3. Is it possible to have functional dysfunction?

**TEXT: GENESIS 37:1-4**

## **THE HEART OF THE LESSON: FAMILIES FIGHTING THROUGH FAVORITISM AND FUNCTIONAL DYSFUNCTION**

**Introduction:** Life is made up of families with all kinds of dysfunction. Our lesson today comes from the book of Genesis, the book of beginnings. Moses, the most likely author of this book, writes with a purpose in mind. The purpose is to record God's creation of the world and His desire to have a people set apart to worship Him. Even though God knew His people were flawed and dysfunctional, He had a plan for restoration and reconciliation. God knew that if His creation would reach out to Him and connect with His plan, they would be able to live as functional families with dysfunction. It is important that families take the responsibility as Godly people to love through hurt, to live through disappointment, and to be like their spiritual father, God in the Spirit. In this war on favoritism in the family, everyone must be accountable to each other as we grow together as the family of God. We don't get to choose our family, and there is no perfect family. We will have disagreements with each other, but we should be strong and work through the issues that we face. Family will always be a part of us, and they make us who we are because we are bonded by blood. Families consist of people who love and care about each other mutually. People who come from dysfunctional families are not destined for a dysfunctional life.

### **1. KINGDOM FAMILIES MUST LEARN HOW TO BLEND IN SPITE OF THE DIFFERENCES THEY MAY HAVE. (VV 1-2 NLT)**

*1. "So Jacob settled in the land of Canaan where his father had lived as a foreigner", this is the account of Jacob and his family." 2. "When Joseph was seventeen years old, he often tended his father's flocks with his half-brothers, the sons of his father's*

*wives Bilhah and Zilpah. But Joseph reported to his father some of the bad things that his brothers were doing.*” This is a prime example of what happens in many families today and why Satan is able to come in and divide. Jacob had moved to Canaan where his father lived as a foreigner so the circumstance was already not the best for the family. When Joseph was seventeen years old, he was doing what he knew to do which was attending the flocks, but he was really working for his half-brothers. That must have been an awkward situation to be in for sure. It was a difficult dysfunctional situation for Joseph to find himself in at that age. Not only that, the text says **“Joseph brought a bad report of them to his father.” (NKJV)** It seemed that the brothers were not treating Joseph fairly so he told his father about it. The question here is... Have you ever been in a situation like Joseph where you were not being treated fairly? If so, who did you tell? We are supposed to take all things to God in prayer, but it appears that Joseph did the right thing. Another question to consider is... Did Jacob make the right decision in his actions to show favoritism?

**2. KINGDOM FAMILIES SHOULD NOT SHOW FAVORITISM, BUT INSTEAD THEY SHOULD SHOW FAIRNESS TOWARDS EVERYONE. (V3 NLT)**

3. *“Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other children because Joseph had been born to him in his old age. So one day Jacob had a special gift made for Joseph—a beautiful robe.”* According to the text, it appears as if Joseph was Jacob’s favorite child for a specific reason. However, when it comes to our children no matter what, we must treat them all fairly! We may not be able to treat them all the same because of their personalities, their growth, their position, or their quality of perspective. The family should be treated fairly! Even though Jacob had his reason for placing Joseph as his favorite, it was not fair! Consider this; do you get special treatment in your family? Do you notice someone else in your family getting special treatment? Does favoritism in your family cause dysfunction? Many times in our lives, we use excuses to justify what we do, right or wrong. We must take responsibility and be accountable for our actions. It is proven in our text that favoritism in the family will cause dysfunction, and it could even be functional dysfunction.... Nevertheless, it’s dysfunction!!

**3. KINGDOM FAMILIES STRIVE TO KEEP STRIFE OUT OF THEIR FAMILIES. (V4 NLT)** *“But his brothers hated Joseph because their father loved him more than the rest of them. They couldn’t say a word to him.”* It is plain that the favoritism of this father brought strife into the family. When there is this kind of strife, it causes other types of negative emotions. We find jealousy, envy, hatred, division, harshness, and all kinds of satanic and evil emotions that perpetuate dysfunction and even lead to depression in families. Even though the gift and the thought of it were beautiful, it got overshadowed by the drama it caused. The father exposed his inner feelings of favoritism! The son, Joseph exposed his feelings of rejection and ridicule! The other sons exposed their feelings of jealousy and envy! This dynamic text gives us great inspiration that in the midst of dysfunction, we can be functional and survive. We can succeed and soar as Kingdom Citizens in the King’s family!

**KINGDOM FAMILIES MUST DISPLAY LOVE AND FAIRNESS TOWARDS THE ENTIRE FAMILY! EVEN WITH OUR DYSFUNCTIONS WE CAN STILL WORK TOGETHER IN LOVE AND UNITY!**

**Week of July 13– July 19 , 2020**

# **KINGDOM CITIZENS ENGAGED IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE EQUIPPED FOR VICTORY**

## **JULY EMPHASIS: WAR ON DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES**

**THOUGHT:** Kingdom Citizens living in dysfunctional family environments must pray and show love to conquer adverse situations. We must work to save our families at all cost.

**WORDS:** Responsibility, Accountability, Love, Functional Dysfunction

**LESSON TWENTY-NINE:** "GOD USES DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES TO SAVE HIS PEOPLE"

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

1. Do you believe a bad situation can work out for your good?
2. Have you ever experienced a bad situation working for good?
3. Will a perspective of things change the outcome?

**TEXT: GENESIS 50:20**

## **THE HEART OF THE LESSON: "KINGDOM FAMILIES LIVING THROUGH HURT AND DYSFUNCTION."**

**Introduction:** Genesis is written with the presuppositions that God exist and that he has revealed Himself in word and deed to Israel's ancestors and us today. The book does not argue for the existence of God; it simply asserts that everything exist because of God. Moses is the most likely author of this book since "*Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians*" (**Acts 7:22**) His literary skills would have enabled him to collect Israel's reactions and records and to compose the work. Genesis is the book of beginnings; it provides a dramatic account of the origins of mankind and God's universe, the intrusion of sin into the world, the catastrophic effects of its curse on the race, and the beginnings of Gods plan to bless the nations through His seed. The subject matter of the theology in Genesis is certainly God's work in establishing Israel as the means of blessing the families of the earth. Surely we are the inheritance of that awesome blessing. As we approach this awesome text for this lesson we find these descendants of our forefathers of the faith namely Jacob dealing with another dysfunctional situation in the family. Here we find Joseph in yet another disturbing situation where he's faced with a dilemma whether to retaliate and render evil for evil or to display God's grace and forgiveness. Joseph is dealing with and has dealt with many dysfunctional family situations. This content of scripture begins in verse 14 of this 50<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis. Here Jacob has died and all his sons have returned to Egypt from the burial. Sometimes in families they face dysfunction before and after a funeral. In the text Joseph brothers are afraid that Joseph would now repay them for their evil with evil. These brothers knew they did him wrong and plotted to get Joseph to forgive their wrong and even used their fathers name to support their scheme. It tells us in the scripture (**Gen 50: 16-18 NLT**)<sup>16</sup> "*So they sent this message to Joseph; "Before your father died, he instructed us<sup>17</sup> to say to you; Please forgive your*

*brothers for the great wrong they did to you. For their sin in treating you so cruelly. “So we, the servants of the God of your father, beg you to forgive our sin.” When Joseph received the message he broke down and wept.<sup>18</sup> Then his brothers came and threw themselves down before Joseph. “Look we are your slaves! “They said.* Here is an awesome lesson on both sides of the family. The brothers were humble enough to seek forgiveness and Joseph was graceful and forgiving enough to forgive and move forward in the healing process. We must always be ready for reconciliation, open to humble ourselves and gracious enough to forgive and receive forgiveness.

**1. KINGDOM DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES FINDING GOOD IN SOMEONE’S EVIL INTENTIONS. (V20 NLT)** God brought something good from Joseph’s brother’s evil deeds, Potiphar’s wife false accusations, the cup bearer’s neglect, and seven years of famine. These experiences in Joseph’s life taught him that God brings good from evil for those who trust him. The text says **(Gen 50:20 NLT)** *“You intended to harm me”* There are times in all of our lives when people intentionally aim to harm us in different ways; physically, mentally, spiritually etc. However we must be of good cheer because God is with us!

**2. KINGDOM DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES EXPERIENCEING GOD’S FAVOR WHILE GOING THROUGH TOUGH SITUATIONS ARE BLESSED (V20 NLT)** Even while Joseph was experiencing betrayal by his brothers, false accusations by Potiphar’s wife, and the other situations in his life Joseph still saw the hand of God working in his favor. In our lives we also will face betrayal, people making false accusations against us, and many other things. We can be assured that God is working in our favor. The text says **(V20 NLT)** *“But God intended it all for good.”* When our trust and total reliance is in God even in dysfunctional family situations we can rely on God’s word! **(Romans 8:28 KJV)** says *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose”* We should find consolation and comfort in knowing that even in our bad it is working out for good because of the favor of God in our lives.

**3. KINGDOM DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES CONNECTING WITH GOD, IN ORDER TO BE INSTRUMENTAL IN WINNING OTHERS TO CHRIST.**

It’s amazing how God can take people with all kinds of dysfunctions, disabilities and drama to draw all kinds of people to himself! God is always working in our lives to bring us and others to Himself. What we need to take note of is while all those situations were going on in Joseph’s life, God was only using him! The text says **(Gen 50: 20c NLT)** *“He bought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people”* Perhaps in our lives as we go through the dysfunctions, disorders and drama of life, God is only carrying us through, so he can draw us and others to Himself.

**KINGDOM FAMILIES MUST KNOW THAT GOD IS ALWAYS WORKING EVERY SITUATION FOR OUR GOOD, NO MATTER HOW IT MAY SEEM IN THE MOMENT!**

**Week of July 20– July 26, 2020**

# **KINGDOM CITIZENS ENGAGED IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE EQUIPPED FOR VICTORY**

## **JULY EMPHASIS: WAR ON DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES**

**THOUGHT:** Kingdom Citizens living in dysfunctional family environments must pray and show love to conquer adverse situations. We must work to save our families at all cost.

**WORDS:** Responsibility, Accountability, Love, Functional Dysfunction

**LESSON THIRTY:** "LOVE CAN CONQUER ALL DYSFUNCTION!"

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

1. Have you ever considered the characteristics of Love?
2. Have you ever encountered a dysfunctional love affair?
3. Is it possible for a family to survive with dysfunctional love?

**TEXT: 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-8**

## **THE HEART OF THE LESSON: KINGDOM FAMILIES FINDING A WAY TO PROGRESS WITH LOVE IN THE MIDST OF DYSFUNCTIONAL LOVE RELATIONSHIPS!**

**Introduction:** This letter was written by Paul to the church in Corinth probably around A.D 55, during Paul's extended ministry in Ephesus, Paul sent this letter in response to information received from several sources concerning the conditions existing in the church and in response to a letter from the Corinthian Church asking for counsel. The purpose Paul wrote this letter was to identify problems in the Corinthian church, to offer solutions, and to teach the believers how to live for Christ in a corrupt society. First Corinthians is mainly concerned with the local church and if anyone thinks that their church has problems and its share of ruffraff and woe, they just need to look at Paul's letters to the Corinthians, to put their problems in perspective. As we consider this text for this week's lesson we are to consider this chapter on love and its power as the greatest tool in spiritual warfare. Our society confuses love and lust. Unlike lust God's kind of love is directed outward towards others not inward towards ourselves...It is UNSELFISH!!!!God's kind of loves goes against our natural inclinations. It is impossible to have this love unless God helps us set aside our own natural desires so that we can love and not expect anything in return. The more we become like Christ the more love we will show others.

### **1. KINGDOM FAMILIES LOVING THROUGH THE DYSFUNCTIONS, DISAPPOINTMENTS, AND DRAMA THAT CAUSE HURT IN LIFE. (V4-5 NLT)**

**"LOVE IS THE ANSWER!"** The scripture that we opened this lesson with gives us a positive and negative description of love. Unfortunately many people have the wrong perception of love. God describes himself in the Bible as the very essence of love. The Bible says **(1 John 4: 7-8)** "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love." Therefore without God, we will never be

able to truly love or express love to anyone not even God or ourselves. The text says **(1 Cor 13:4-5 NLT)** <sup>4</sup>*“Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud. <sup>5</sup>Or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged.”* Let’s consider the following statements concerning love.

1. Love is willing to wait
2. Love does not envy other!
3. Love is considerate!
4. Love does not always brag on self!
5. Love does not always speak in a harsh tone!
6. Love does not try to always get its own way!
7. Love is not irritated by others wrong, but know that God is the only perfect one.
8. Love does not count and remember the times it is right!

## **2. KINGDOM FAMILIES KNOW HOW TO PREVAIL THROUGH DYSFUNCTION, AND DELIGHT THEMSELVES IN GOD’S TRUTH. (VV 6-7)**

Kingdom families in these last and evil days must learn how to delight themselves in the Lord. We must learn and teach the generations that loving God, and knowing that God loves us is crucial, as we strive to prevail in these trying times. The Bible says **(Psalm 37: 4 NIV)** *“Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart”* David in this Psalm is admonishing us to not be concerned about those evil doers. He is teaching us to stay focused on God, find pleasure in God, and know that your joy is in the Lord. When we do this our reward is God’s gift of the desires of our heart in the will of God we will always rejoice in the Lord when our hearts are truly hooked on the Holy LORD OF HOSTS!!! The text says **(1 Cor. 13: 6-7 NLT)** <sup>6</sup>*“It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. <sup>7</sup>Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.”* Love is truly a powerful weapon in the spiritual warfare! It does not matter what your dysfunction is or the dilemma you’re in, God loves you and wants to heal you where you hurt therefore Let’s rejoice in the truth, love and never give up never lose faith, always put our hope in Christ, and endure to the end.

## **3. KINGDOM FAMILIES KNOW THAT GOD’S LOVE NEVER FAILS AND IT PREVAILS OVER EVERYTHING! (V8)**

The text says **(1Cor 13: 8 NLT)** *“Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will become useless, but love will last forever!”* Paul in the text is not demeaning speaking in tongues or prophecy, but revealing to us that love in action is what God requires. Love is the key to dealing with dysfunctions, disappointments, discouragement, dilemmas, darkness, death, drama and everything else we can name!

**KINGDOM FAMILIES MUST KNOW THAT BECAUSE OF THE FAVOR OF  
GOD AND THE LOVE OF GOD IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES WE HAVE A  
BUT GOD!!!**

**Week of July 27– August 2, 2020**

# **KINGDOM CITIZENS ENGAGED IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE EQUIPPED FOR VICTORY**

## **AUGUST EMPHASIS: COMMUNITY WARFARE**

**THOUGHT:** Kingdom Citizens whose communities are experiencing warfare must embrace and help meet the needs in our community by showing and sharing the love of Jesus, thereby, preserving the common-unity. Our goal must include seeking to serve others with an unselfish heart.

**WORDS:** Sharing, Caring, Compassion, Service

## **LESSON THRITY-ONE: GOD WORKING IN THE COMMUNITY**

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

1. How committed are you to actively make a difference in your community?
2. Do you know that being involved in the community is not a suggestion from God?
3. Do you know understand that our communities will get better when we help them to get better?

**TEXT: EXODUS 12:3-13**

## **THE HEART OF THE LESSON: KINGDOM WOMEN AT THE CROSS**

**Introduction:** In this lesson, we see how God’s anger and wrath does not cloud His ability to show love and compassion for His people. He has a conversation with Moses and Aaron about helping Israel focus on the coming of the Messiah and the deliverance of His people from spiritual death. Moses warns Pharaoh that the firstborn of each house would die; he then tells the Israelites how to escape that plague. The feast of unleavened bread, or Passover, becomes a memorial to the Lord’s deliverance of Israel from bondage in Egypt. God is teaching us a lesson of continued responsibility to our community despite the crisis we sometimes face.

**1. KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST KNOW THAT IN A CRISI GOD IS SAYING TO US THAT OUR FAMILY IS NOT THE ONLY FAMILY THAT MATTERS; CARING MEANS SHARING! (VV 3-4)** First of all, God tells Moses to address the whole community. Tell everybody! **(V3 A NIV)** In this way, Moses doesn’t get caught up thinking his family is the only one that matters. God also reminds him not to be greedy; only take what your family needs. **(V4 MSG)** says, *“If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor, having taken into account the number of people there are.”* As we are in this time of great trouble dealing with the Coronavirus, people tend to get more than they really need, not caring about the needs of others. This is prime time for warfare. This becomes an opportunity for us to exemplify Christ. Although God is preparing to execute a plague on Egypt, He still takes the time to show compassion and love for His family and community. God knows that things needed to change. Israel’s deliverance from Egypt is so significant

that God tells Israel to re-do their calendar. The new year would begin with the month of their redemption from Egypt. As God rebuilt Israel, the message is clear for us today. Sometimes God has to take us through some stuff for us to understand the real meaning of preserving the common-unity.

## **2. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THAT SUCCESS IN FAMILY AND COMMUNITY WARFARE IS BASED UPON OUR OBEDIENCE IN FOLLOWING GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS. (VV 5-11)**

Most times when we are faced with situations that are too much for us to handle *like change*, we feel the need to take charge and fix it on our own. The result doesn't always come out the way we thought it would. In fact, we can sometimes make things worse. Here we see God giving explicit instructions on a meal called the **Passover Feast** which was used to speak to the hearts of the community and assure them that they would be safe if they were obedient. In **(VV 5-11 NIV)**, God tells Israel how to prepare the meal, what kind of animal and what gender to use, how long to spend with the animal, what day and time the community was to slaughter the animal, how to smear the blood, how to eat the meat with certain herbs over a fire (the entire animal), what clothes to wear while consuming it, how long to eat, and what to do with the leftovers. Kingdom Citizens, it seems like a lot of instructions, but people's lives depended on their willingness to obey. Additionally, God used certain elements of the Passover Feast to remind the Israelites of where they came from and the pains and sorrows of warfare. We must learn that truly obedience is better than sacrifice.

## **3. KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST KNOW THAT BECAUSE OF OUR OBEDIENCE, WE CAN BE ASSURED OF GOD'S PROTECTION. (VV 12-13)**

We know that Israel was that community experiencing warfare so much that it displeased God's heart, and the plan was set in motion by God to get Egypt's attention. **(VV 12-13 MSG)** say, *"I will go through the land of Egypt on this night and strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, whether human or animal, and bring judgement on all the gods of Egypt."* Then the Scripture makes a final declaration, *"I am God."* When we focus on the problem more than the "Problem Solver", we unconsciously give power to that situation which can ultimately be our god. But thanks be to God that when He recognizes the blood, He will pass over us and protect us from His wrath. Kingdom Citizens must continue to serve others with an unselfish heart, share the love of God, and be community-minded.

**NO ONE CARES HOW MUCH YOU KNOW UNTIL  
THEY KNOW HOW MUCH YOU CARE!**

**Week of August 3– August 9, 2020**

# **KINGDOM CITIZENS ENGAGED IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE EQUIPPED FOR VICTORY**

## **AUGUST EMPHASIS: COMMUNITY WARFARE**

**THOUGHT:** Kingdom Citizens whose communities are experiencing warfare must embrace and help meet the needs in our community by showing and sharing the love of Jesus, thereby, preserving the common-unity. Our goal must include seeking to serve others with an unselfish heart.

**WORDS:** Sharing, Caring, Compassion, Service

## **LESSON THIRTY-TWO: IMPACTING OUR COMMUNITY WITH OUR LIFESTYLE AND SERVICE**

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

1. Do you know that somebody is always watching you?
2. Do you understand that living for and representing Christ is not easy, but is very important?
3. Do you know that to live for Christ is to serve Christ and others?

**TEXT: MATTHEW 5: 13-16**

## **THE HEART OF THE LESSON: KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THAT WE ARE GOD'S REPRESENTATIVES, AND HE HAS GIVEN US EVERYTHING WE NEED TO BE DIRECT REFLECTIONS OF HIM TO OTHERS.**

**Introduction:** This is the first of four familiar chapters in the **Book of Matthew (5-8)** known as the **Sermon on the Mount**. Christ is making early preparations for Calvary. He is taking a serious look at some prerequisites and qualities His disciples have and need in order to be effective evangelists based on how they live before others. He uses the words, “salt” and “light”, to help them understand that there was a certain expectation from Him. The salt was an example of penetration and preservation, and the light was an example of exposure and hope from darkness. Although at that time, the prophets were the salt for Canaan land, and the apostles were the salt for the whole earth, God is saying today that all Christians must be salt and light for the whole world.

### **1. KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST KNOW THAT WE ARE DISCIPLES, FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST, AND WE MUST DISPLAY CHRIST'S QUALITIES.**

(1) If you have ever questioned your duties and responsibilities as a Christian, this lesson will help you understand what's expected of you by Christ. **(V13 MSG)** says, *“Let me tell you why you are here. You're here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You've lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage.”* Jesus uses salt because in His day it was a precious and valued commodity. Roman soldiers were paid with salt. It was also used to preserve meats, and we as Christian should have a preserving influence

on our spiritual culture. Salt also adds flavor, and we as Christians ought to be flavorful people making the earth purer and a more palatable place. Here's the downside to salt. Salt can sometimes lose its flavor and become good for nothing. It must keep its saltiness in order to maintain its value. Sometimes as Christians, we lose our saltiness, and we become unable to remain precious and maintain value. We become unable to preserve and unable to add flavor. We become good for nothing. God's Word is all the salt we need to remain in a place of effective discipling because God's Word will forever be precious, valuable, preserving, and flavorful. Remember that it is not only our lives that depend on it, but other lives depend on it as well.

**2. KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST KNOW THAT WE ARE DISCIPLES, FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST, AND WE MUST DISPLAY CHRIST'S QUALITIES.**

(2)

**(VV 14-15 MSG)** say, *“Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I have put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand-shine!* Jesus is telling us that we are not just light-receivers, but we are also light-givers. We must have a greater concern than for only ourselves. We cannot live only to ourselves; we must have someone to shine to, and we must do it with love. Charles Spurgeon said, “If we are the light of the world and burn dimly, then dim is the world's light.” The purpose of light is to illuminate and to expose what is there. If it is hidden, like un-salty salt, it is of no use. Yes, it is important that our lights shine all the time, but church is not the place it's needed the most. Most times when a person get in trouble for something minor, the judge gives him or her community service as a punishment, but God expects us to perform community service. To the Kingdom Citizen, it is not a punishment, but rather it should be a pleasure. Serve God; serve others!

**3. KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST KNOW THAT BECAUSE GOD ALLOWS US TO BE SALT AND LIGHT, ALL THE GLORY BELONGS TO HIM.**

**(V16 NIV)** lets us know that the object of our shining is not that men may see how good we are, nor even see us at all, but it is so that they may see grace in us and God in us, and cry, “What a Father these people must have!” Kingdom Citizens must know that man cannot honor us more than God can. When we get to the point where we truly understand what ministry is all about, then we'll know it is not about us, but rather it is an opportunity for us to be used by God.

**WHEN WE FAIL TO SHINE FOR OUR COMMUNITY,  
WE DESTROY OURSELVES!**

**Week of August 10– August 16, 2020**

# **KINGDOM CITIZENS ENGAGED IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE EQUIPPED FOR VICTORY**

## **AUGUST EMPHASIS: COMMUNITY WARFARE**

**THOUGHT:** Kingdom Citizens whose communities are experiencing warfare must embrace and help meet the needs in our community by showing and sharing the love of Jesus, thereby, preserving the common-unity. Our goal must include seeking to serve others with an unselfish heart.

**WORDS:** Sharing, Caring, Compassion, Service

## **LESSON THIRTY-THREE: MAKE THE CHURCH A PRIORITY**

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

1. How do you deal with your moments of discouragement?
2. Do you know self-worth and loneliness are major causes of discouragement?
3. Do you know that inviting someone to church is an opportunity to change his or her condition?

**TEXT: HEBREWS 10:24-25**

## **THE HEART OF THE LESSON: KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST KNOW THAT GOD NEVER INTENDED FOR THE CHURCH TO BE A LAST RESORT; IT IS OUR DUTY TO MAKE THE CHURCH A PRIORITY AGAIN. WE DON'T HAVE LONG!**

**Introduction:** Paul, believed to be the writer of this book, deals with the powerful role the Christian community and fellowship play in encouraging Christians to grow and persevere in their faith. God has created and designed us to need one another. A plant grows strong and healthy because it is in good soil, and God designed us too, in such a way. We will only grow spiritually strong and healthy within the soil of a close-knit group of Christians. We must continually strive to be that Christian community that propels us forward in our holiness, ministries, and walks with Christ. Church is relevant.

### **1. KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST KNOW THAT GOD HAS CREATED US TO BE MOTIVATORS OF ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE AND ACTIONS. (V24 NIV)**

says, *“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.”* The **(MSG)** says, *Let’s see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out.* There are many ways that our faith and heart are strengthened through Christian fellowship and relationships. The words used are “consider” and “inventive,” which point to the need of being intentional with our plans of approach. If we are not careful in our approach, fellowship can quickly turn into a simple social gathering and ultimately not be about God. On the other hand, because we are intentional, we might encourage individuals to press on in their walk with the Lord. Again, God has designed us to need community. It allows us to experience life-transforming grace and protects us from the hardening and deceitfulness of sin. This will encourage us toward love and good deeds. To enjoy this transforming grace, we have to have a few Christian friends with whom

we can be extremely honest and vulnerable. Kingdom Citizens understand that no matter how much we motivate others to walk with Jesus, our walks will need a little motivation at times too. It's a community thing!

**2. KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST KNOW THAT WE CAN NEVER GIVE UP ON MEETING TOGETHER TO FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER.**

**(V 25A NIV)** says, *“not giving up on meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing.”* The **(MSG)** says, *“not avoiding worshipping together as some do.”* God has created us to live in community, or to commune with one another. The problem is that we continually move toward isolation and independence because we believe we can do it on our own. Forsaking fellowship is a sure way to give place to discouragement and is an opportunity for Satan to deceive us into thinking that we don't need to get together. He uses our fears, insecurities and the distractions of our busy lives to lure us into living independently. The reality is that a Christian who lives in isolation will always lack the spiritual health and the vitality of a life lived in community. This community is called the church! Don Whitney says, *“There's an element of worship and Christianity that cannot be experienced in private worship or by watching worship. There are some graces and blessings that God gives only in the “meeting together” with other believers.”* Kingdom Citizens, always remember why we gather; it is to give something to God, to receive something from God, to encourage each other by our shared faith and values, to bless one another, and finally, to work together.

**3. KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST REALIZE THAT WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME BECAUSE THE DAY OF CHRIST'S RETURN IS COMING QUICKER THAN WE KNOW.**

**(V 25B MSG)** says, *“especially as we see the big Day approaching.”* **(NLT)** says, *“especially now that the day of His return is drawing near.”* The immanence of this day is plain and not regarded as a secret. Paul was saying then and now, that Christians ought to live as if the dawning of the day is so near that its arrival is just beyond the horizon. Each successive generation is called upon to live as the generation of the end time if it is to live as a Christian generation. Kingdom Citizens, we don't know when Jesus is coming back, but we do know He's coming back.

**LORD, HELP US TO CONTINUE TO MAKE THE CHURCH A PRIORITY.**

**Week of August 17– August 23, 2020**

# **KINGDOM CITIZENS ENGAGED IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE EQUIPPED FOR VICTORY**

## **AUGUST EMPHASIS: COMMUNITY WARFARE**

**THOUGHT:** Kingdom Citizens whose communities are experiencing warfare must embrace and help meet the needs in our community by showing and sharing the love of Jesus, thereby, preserving the common-unity. Our goal must include seeking to serve others with an unselfish heart.

**WORDS:** Sharing, Caring, Compassion, Service

## **LESSON THIRTY-FOUR: IMPACTING OUR COMMUNITY BY HELPING THE NEEDY**

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

1. Have you ever been in need to the point where help was necessary?
2. How challenging is it for you to place the needs of others above your own?
3. Do you know that church is responsible for meeting certain community needs?

### **TEXT: ISAIAH 1:17**

## **THE HEART OF THE LESSON: KINGDOM CITIZENS SHOULD KNOW THAT THE SUCCESS OF OUR COMMUNITIES WILL DEPEND UPON THE IMPACT THE CHURCH HAS ON IT.**

**Introduction:** In this lesson, we see how God gives Isaiah, more than any other prophet in the Old Testament, a much clearer vision of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. The corruption of Judah's leaders and of the people is revealed in the awful way they treated one another. God is concerned that they seek an honest judgment. Isaiah reminds Judah, as well as us today, that the attitude of our hearts is more important to God than our so-called religious offerings. In other words, if we expect to make a positive impact on our community, our hearts must be in it. God has given us all we need to be effective in our community. The community is at war; are you up for the fight?

**1. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THAT THERE IS A DIFFERENCE IN KNOWING GOD'S PLANS FOR US TO IMPACT OUR COMMUNITY AND ACTUALLY EXECUTING IT.** (V 17A KJV) says, "Learn to do well; seek judgement," and the (MSG) says, "Learn to do good. Work for justice." The difference between "well" and "good" is not a play on words. This is warfare in our community, and we don't have time to play. The word "well" indicates that we are being successful, but not quite reaching the goal. The word "good" reminds us that we are significant, doing what's important, making a difference in ourselves, and trying hard to do what we know is right. In both translations, the word "learn" means to become accustomed to; to practice it. Isaiah is saying that the Lord will teach us to profit, and we should ask Him for wisdom and desire to maintain good works for

necessary uses and to render unto all men acts of beneficence. This kind of attitude in service can only be rendered under the influence of God's grace. Yes, God is concerned about the community, but He has a greater concern for we who are His representatives. This is why the conversation started with the heart. It has long been said that the heart is the window to the soul. In other words, the community should see light in you and not darkness. The expression of this text is in direct comparison to Paul when he was instructing us to put on the whole armor of God. **(Ephesians 6:11)** Our daily prayer should be, Lord, work on me!

**2. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THAT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD WILL HELP US TO BE JUST AND SHOW MERCY TO OTHERS. (V 17B MSG)**

says, *“Work for justice,”* and the **(KJV)** says, *“Seek judgment.”* When we practice righteous judgment or justice toward our fellow man and treat them fairly, we exemplify and validate our secured relationship with God. The words “work for” and “seek” mean to pursue, to search for, to regard or care for as a main object. This is why the text starts out by saying “learn to do good” because we can get caught up in seeking personal gain, bribes, and even public favor. Instead, we are to make it an object of intense interest to do justice. Not only should we treat others right, we are also expected to ensure that they are treated fairly and justly by others. Again, God is saying here, seek judgment, and ask questions; even investigate what is right so that you may do it. The **(KJV)** says, *“relieve the oppressed,”* and the **(MSG)** says, *“help the down and out.”* First of all, we must understand who the oppressed and down and out people are. They are those who are weak, taken advantage of, helpless and in bad condition. Our job is to put them on the straight path to hope and success by showing them the love of God. Community warfare will keep people in a place of not being prosperous, successful, and even in a place of not belonging. Sadly, it is sometimes Christians who make others feel unwanted because we make them feel like we have it all together. That's why God is checking our hearts and motives before He sends us out to work. Kingdom Citizens should know that treating others justly and showing mercy is the perfect example of what God does for us.

**3. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THAT WHEN YOU TRULY CARE FOR OTHERS, YOUR COMPASSION FOR THEM WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEM.**

The leaders and people of Judah wanted to say they loved God by their religious ceremonies, but God cared more about how they treated other people, especially the weak. The **(MSG)** says, *“Stand up for the homeless. Go to the bat for the defenseless.”* God has designed the “man” to be the overall protector and defender of the house. His presence is what makes the family feel safe. His absence can be an opportunity for injustices and afflictions from others. Sadly, our communities are experiencing these moments, and we must remember that we are a part of a community called the church. Kingdom Citizens, when we recognize these conditions in our community, we don't need to ask the question, “What would Jesus do?” The answer would be a profound question, “What did Jesus do for you?”

**LORD, THANK YOU FOR BEING THE PERFECT EXAMPLE OF HOW WE SHOULD TREAT OTHERS, AS WE IMPACT OUR COMMUNITIES**

**Week of August 24– August 30, 2020**

# **KINGDOM CITIZENS ENGAGED IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE EQUIPPED FOR VICTORY**

## **AUGUST EMPHASIS: COMMUNITY WARFARE**

**THOUGHT:** Kingdom Citizens whose communities are experiencing warfare must embrace and help meet the needs in our community by showing and sharing the love of Jesus, thereby, preserving the common-unity. Our goal must include seeking to serve others with an unselfish heart.

**WORDS:** Sharing, Caring, Compassion, Service

## **LESSON THIRTY-FIVE: IMPACTING OUR COMMUNITY BY SHOWING BROTHERLY LOVE**

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

1. Does the love you have cause you to only love and care for certain people?
2. How do you treat visitors and strangers as opposed to your brothers and sisters ?
3. Do you know that if you truly don't know Jesus, you truly don't know love?

**TEXT: HEBREWS 13:1-2**

## **THE HEART OF THE LESSON: KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST KNOW THAT CHRISTIAN (BIBLICAL) LOVE ACCESSES AND ENGAGES THE HOSPITALITY OF OUR MINDS MIND CAUSES US TO LOVE AND CARE BE- YOND JUST THOSE WHO WE KNOW.**

**Introduction:** While the writer of this Book uses the first twelve chapters to deal with doctrine and teaching, this last chapter puts the foundation of Christian faith in perspective, demonstrating that Jesus is superior to everyone and everything else. In essence, the writer is saying it is time now for us to put into action or apply to our lives what has been taught to us. A good question would be, "If the world was to apply these two verses, how would it change the culture around us?" The answer is simple! Believing in Jesus should affect our daily lives and change how we treat other people, both strangers and those closest to us.

**1. KINGDOM CITIZENS, IF POSSIBLE, DON'T ALLOW CIRCUMSTANCES TO CAUSE YOU TO STOP LOVING.** This is the time and place that the foundation of our faith in Christ Jesus will be put to the test. Your mind has to be made up. **(V1 NKJV)** says, "*Let brotherly love continue.*" The **(MSG)** says, "*Stay on good terms with each other, held together by love.*" Although Paul continues to give instructions to the believer about loving one another, we still have the capacity to become slack in this special love we are told to hold for our Christian brothers and sisters. Selfishness can get in the way as well as greed. Sometimes we are hurt in a church and as a result,

we shy away from any close relationships that might cause us more pain. This is why Paul spent so much time teaching and disciplining believers on the blessings of love as well as the challenges that come with loving others. Let's face it Kingdom Citizens, some people can be harder to love than others. If we would just take a moment to reflect on the time when we were not that lovable, it can sometimes give us what we need to press beyond circumstances and love unconditionally. The word "*continue*" is used for two important reasons. First, it is used to remind us that brotherly and sisterly love has been around since the beginning of time. Secondly, and more importantly, Paul uses it to say that the more constant we love one another, the easier it gets. Some people say practice makes perfect, but the reality here is that practice will make permanent. Kingdom Citizens, God is expecting us to be reflections of Jesus to everyone.

**2. KINGDOM CITIZENS SHOULD LOVE AND CARE FOR OTHERS THE WAY GOD LOVES AND CARES FOR US.** The Hebrews fully understood how important it was to continue the mission of loving others. The writer uses the word "*philadelphia*" which translates to brotherly love based on what he experienced between the people. There are other ancient Greek translations for the word love, but none is more important than "agape", which is God's love towards us. This is a love that loves without changing, it is self-giving and expects no repayment, it is so great it can be given to the unlovable and unappealing, and it is love that loves even when it is rejected. It loves and gives because it wants to, and finally, it is a love that loves not based on feeling but about a decision. This is how God loves us! **(V 2A NIV)** says, "*Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers.*" The love of God accesses and engages the hospitality of our minds; therefore, it causes us to show brotherly love even to those we don't know as if we do. It is so easy to show hospitality to our friends and loved ones, but in doing so, we neglect to fulfill the command of hospitality. What good are nice houses, nice cars, big bank accounts, good food, nice clothes, if the only people you share with is family and friends. Kingdom Citizens, there are three things that will help us to fulfill this command: **1. GROW TO BE LIKE JESUS, 2. SEEK TO SERVE, NOT BE SERVED, and 3. DEVELOP A GENUINE INTEREST IN OTHERS.**

**3. KINGDOM CITIZENS, DISOBEDIENCE COULD COST YOU A BLESSING.** **(V 2B MSG)** says, "*Why, some have extended hospitality to angels without ever knowing it!*" The reality is this, when we show hospitality to others, we are really welcoming Jesus and perhaps He is bringing company with Him. The story of Abraham and Sarah in **(Genesis Chapter 18)** is a very good example of what this lesson is all about. During Jesus's life on earth, He chose to identify with poor and destitute people. He lived as one who had no place to call home and His ministry was marked by compassion for the needy. The **(MSG)** says, "*Be ready with a meal or a bed when it's needed.*" Kingdom Citizens, we must remember what Jesus said, "I did not come to be served, but to serve."

**LORD, TEACH ME AND HELP ME TO ENGAGE THE HOSPITALITY OF MY MIND TOWARDS EVERYONE.**

**Week of August 31– September 6, 2020**

# **KINGDOM CITIZENS ENGAGED IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE EQUIPPED FOR VICTORY**

## **SEPTEMBER EMPHASIS: EMOTIONAL WARFARE**

**THOUGHT:** Kingdom Citizens engaged in Emotional Warfare trust God to help them stabilize their lives through faith, grace, and healing.

**WORDS:** Faith, Praise, Worship, Grace

## **LESSON THIRTY-SIX: A FAITH THAT MAKES ONE WHOLE**

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

1. Why do people often take kindness for granted?
2. Why do you think that Jesus singled out the one who turned back?
3. Do you think it matters to God if we say ‘thank you’ for His blessings?

**TEXT: LUKE 17: 15-19**

## **THE HEART OF THE LESSON: TAKE TIME TO ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR BLESSINGS.**

**Introduction:** We live in a time when people expect help of many different kinds without regard to where that resource comes from. Many recently received a stimulus check, others an additional \$600 a week through the CARES Act, and the list goes on. As people we should be thankful to God regardless to the vehicle that delivers the blessing. As Christians, we are often guilty of praying for something, only to forget to say “thank you” when the Lord answers. I heard someone say recently, “I had to face the person in the mirror, and when I did, I did not like some of what I saw.” When you look in the mirror, do you see a thankful person? The text (**Luke 17:11-13 NIV**) says, “*Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. <sup>12</sup> As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance <sup>13</sup> and called out in a loud voice, “Jesus, Master, have pity on us!”* They all had the same problem; they all made the same plea.

### **1. KINGDOM CITIZENS, IS YOUR HEALING CONNECTED TO YOUR THANKSGIVING? (VV 15-16 NIV)**

*“One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.*

As we continue our study in the section, we need to consider some key words: **Samaritan, leprosy, and healed.** A better understanding of each will help us better understand the text. Life is filled with challenges: emotional, spiritual, physical, financial, and relational. In the course of any given day, we are pressed on many

different sides. And like the Psalmist, in our distress, we call to the Lord. The question then is, “What do we do when God comes to our rescue?” Do we keep going, or do we stop, turn, and say, “THANK YOU”? As we consider verses 11-13, we know that these men were outcasts because of their leprosy. What the text does not tell us is how long they were in this condition. How is the response of the one, a model for each of us? What did you do the last time God answered your prayer?

## **2. ARE YOUR EMOTIONAL STRUGGLES CONNECTED TO AN UNGRATEFUL HEART? (VV 17-18 NIV)**

**Jesus asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? <sup>18</sup> Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?”** Jesus asks three very probing questions in these two verses. In verse 16, the one who returned is identified as a Samaritan, and in verse 18, he is called a foreigner. I believe that Jesus is making a point to both the Jews who were there but also to us. Is it possible that there are those who we consider outcasts, and irreligious, who stop more often than the regular churchgoer to tell the Lord “thank you”? Why do we pray so hard when we want something, but take so little time to praise God once we have received an answer to our prayers? This is not a word of condemnation; it is a word for personal reflection.

- STOP! Praise the Lord for answered prayers.
- STOP! Acknowledge that you are powerless without God.
- STOP! Rejoice in God’s goodness and grace to you.

**Were there not ten, yet only one has turned to give God glory.** Will you be the one?

## **3. EMOTIONAL STRENGTH, ENCOURAGEMENT, AND HOPE COME FROM A THANKFUL HEART. (V 19 NIV)**

**Then he said to him, “Rise and go; your faith has made you well.”** This verse is strategic because it gives this Samaritan a foundation for his walk of faith in the future. It also gives us HOPE. Jesus said to him, “... **your faith has made you well.**” I believe as he continued his journey, long after this day was over, he remembered these words: “... **your faith has made you well.**” In our emotional struggles, and we all have them, some to a greater degree than others, ponder this verse and others. We are called to walk by faith (**II Cor. 5:7, Matt. 9:2, 9:22, and 21:21; Mark 2:5 and 7:29; Heb. 11:1-6**). Dr. Tony Evans said, “*The battle to overcome your emotional struggles is a battle for your mind. If you are worrying, stressed out and depressed, it is because you are thinking things that are not true.*” Rather than letting your mind rule your emotions, let your faith take the lead. If we will trust God, He will speak the same words to us that he spoke to this man, **YOUR FAITH HAS MADE YOU WELL.**

**KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST COMMIT THEIR EMOTIONAL STRUGGLES TO THE LORD, BELIEVING THAT THEY ALREADY HAVE THE VICTORY THROUGH THEIR FAITH IN CHRIST.**

**Week of September 7– September 13, 2020**

## **KINGDOM CITIZENS ENGAGED IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE EQUIPPED FOR VICTORY**

### **SEPTEMBER EMPHASIS: EMOTIONAL WARFARE**

**THOUGHT:** Kingdom Citizens engaged in emotional warfare trust God to help them stabilize their lives through faith, grace, and healing.

**WORDS:** Faith, Praise, Worship, Grace

### **LESSON THIRTY-SEVEN: THE LORD WILL FIGHT FOR YOU**

#### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

1. When in a battle, how do you know when to fight and when to stand still?
2. Why are we often attacked when we are weak and vulnerable?
3. How do you control your emotions when your life is in turmoil?

### **TEXT: EXODUS 14:13-14**

### **THE HEART OF THE LESSON: CAN I TRUST THE WORD OF THE LORD?**

**Introduction:** Trust is one of the most important aspects of the Christian life. Trust is the cornerstone of every relationship, and it is the foundation of our faith. BibleDictionary.com defines trust as *reliance on the integrity, strength, ability, surety, etc., of a person or thing; confident expectation*. In life we are called to trust many different people. Parents asks children to trust them, teachers request that students trust them, husbands request wives to trust them, the police urge the public to trust them, and God requires us to trust Him by faith. Trust is a fundamental component of life. As we walk through our text for today, we encounter a snapshot of God’s directive to Moses along these lines. From chapter 3 of Exodus, we observe God calling Moses ever closer to Himself, and in doing so, He calls him to TRUST. I dare say, He is calling us as well. Let’s listen in on this conversation.

#### 1. **A PLAN WITH A PURPOSE (VV 1-4 NIV)**

To better understand our focus verses for the lesson, we need to start at the beginning of this chapter. *Then the Lord said to Moses, “Tell the Israelites to turn back and encamp near Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea. They are to encamp by the sea, directly opposite Baal Zephon. Pharaoh will think, ‘The Israelites are wandering around the land in confusion, hemmed in by the desert.’ And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will pursue them. But I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord.” So, the Israelites did this.* In our lives and in every situation, **God has a purpose and a plan.** Don’t allow yourself to get stuck because you are in an unfamiliar place, frightened and unnerved. God knows where we are emotionally, spiritually, financially, relationally, and mentally. TRUST Him in the process even when you don’t see any progress.

## **2. KINGDOM CITIZENS SHOULD EXPECT GOD TO DELIVER THEM. (V13)**

*Moses answered the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again.”* Moses begins by challenging the people to do two things: 1.) Do not be afraid and 2.) Stand firm. The Christian life is such an interesting venture; we are always working in concert with God and what He is doing. As we walk by faith, God does not always take the most direct route, and He does not take the most comfortable one. However, our faith says, “God is in charge, and He knows what He is doing.” **Job 23:10** declares, *“But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold.”* Therefore, regardless to where you are today, DO NOT FEAR! Fear distorts the truth, and it causes us to believe a lie. Standing firm is one of the hardest things you will ever do in a crisis, and the children of Israel at this moment in history are in the middle of a crisis. Nevertheless, the Word of the Lord is DO NOT FEAR. As our young people would say today, “I GOT THIS!” There are also two promises in this verse: YOU WILL SEE DELIVERANCE and YOU WILL NEVER SEE THESE EGYPTIANS AGAIN. God will keep His Word.

## **3. KINGDOM CITIZENS, LET GOD BE GOD IN YOUR SITUATION. (V 14 NIV)**

*“The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.”* In life we face many battles. They come from every direction possible. Some battles are outward, and others happen on the inside. The current battle comes from a familiar enemy attacking from the outside. After Pharaoh released the children of Israel, he decided he wanted them back; he was not sure how his economy would survive without the slave labor, so he pursued them to force them back. Even after the ten plagues God sent on Egypt, Pharaoh still thought his conflict was with Moses and the Israelites. So God set up a situation where Pharaoh would be defeated, and Israel would be encouraged. When fear and trepidation attack on every side, we need to listen to the voice of the Lord. On this day, God said through Moses, *“The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.”* If God is fighting for us, we must follow His instructions. God did not say to Moses “What do you think I should do?” God told Moses what He was about to do. In every battle, there is man’s part and there is God’s part. Man’s part is to STAND STILL; God’s part is I WILL FIGHT FOR YOU. Often it is difficult for us to stand still in the face of opposition. Our emotions get the best of us. However, if we embrace the words of Jehoshaphat in II Chron. 20:12 (NIV), we will be victorious. He said, *“For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.”* Following God is not always easy, but it is always fruitful and always the right thing to do. TAKE SOME TIME TODAY TO REFLECT ON THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.

**KINGDOM CITIZENS, GIVE GOD YOUR EMOTIONAL BATTLES. LET HIM HANDLE THE BRUISES, THE SCARS, AND THE DEEP HURT. IF HE DEFENDED ISRAEL AGAINST PHARAOH’S ARMY, HE CAN TAKE CARE OF YOUR SITUATION.**

**Week of September 14– September 20, 2020**

# **KINGDOM CITIZENS ENGAGED IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE EQUIPPED FOR VICTORY**

## **SEPTEMBER EMPHASIS: EMOTIONAL WARFARE**

**THOUGHT:** Kingdom Citizens engaged in emotional warfare trust God to help them stabilize their lives through faith, grace, and healing.

**WORDS:** Faith, Praise, Worship, Grace

## **LESSON THIRTY-EIGHT: GOD'S GRACE IS SUFFICIENT**

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

1. Have you had a time when you lacked basic necessities?
2. How did experiencing lack of necessities shape the way you think and operate?
3. How does having all you need impact your thinking and your actions?

### **TEXT: 2 CORINTHIANS 12:9**

## **THE HEART OF THE LESSON: KINGDOM CITIZENS, OUR FAITH MUST EXCEED OUR TROUBLES.**

**Introduction:** Biblical grace means *blessing or favor from God in terms of our sinful nature*. The context of II Corinthians 12 will be helpful here. Paul is preaching to the Corinthian people. Like many believers today, the Corinthians had a problem with self-reliance and boasting. To go the extra mile and make a point, Paul tells the Corinthians he has nothing to boast about except his weakness because his weakness makes him realize how much he needs to rely on God. He speaks about a thorn in his side that he's asked God to remove, but God won't take away the thing that makes him realize his weakness. Some theologians have speculated as to the nature of this thorn. A few have suggested Paul had a lisp of some sort that made it difficult to preach or possibly epilepsy. Others have pointed to the great persecution he experienced. Either way, because Paul had a number of revelations and visions, that could cause some Christians to be jealous of these epiphanies, the thorn in his side brings him back to earth. Paul tries to help the Corinthians to do the same, to realize that *only God's grace* is sufficient for us, and we should boast in nothing else but God's grace. Like Paul, one of our downfalls is being used greatly by God. God cannot truly get glory through our pride; He receives glory through our humility.

### **1. THE WORD OF THE LORD SUSTAINS US DURING DIFFICULT TIMES.**

**(II Cor. 12:9 NIV) "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you . . .'"**

We often quote this verse when friends and family members are going through difficult times, and it is a good verse, but it can be a hard one. It is much easier; however, to share this verse with others than to live out its truth in our own lives at times. Paul said he asked the Lord three times to remove the thorn, and each time he received the same response. As each of us consider our own emotional health, we must conclude that life's pressures are almost unbearable at times. We must admit that it seems to make more

sense when I was telling my friend than it does now that I have to live through it. Nevertheless, the truth remains the same: The (NLT) says, ***“Each time he said, ‘My grace is all you need.’”*** We will never know the sufficiency of the grace of God until we walk through a tough season with Him. Dr. Tony Evans reminds us, “God is able to turn things around so completely and satisfy you so fully that He will do more than merely bring you out of your emotional bondage. He can even cause you to forget how deep it ever was.” Like Job, many of us know God from just hearing about him, but after much suffering, loneliness and heartache, Job said, “I SEE HIM FOR MYSELF.”

## **2. KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST TRUST THAT THEIR WEAKNESSES ARE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR GOD TO WORK. (V 9B NIV)**

***“For my power is made perfect in weakness.”*** Only in the Christian life is weakness a good thing. God spoke through the prophet Isaiah long ago: ***“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord.*** In reality, we all have weaknesses, and at some point, in our lifetime, we will experience anxiety, stress, and insecurity. I do not want to minimize those who face this battle daily. However, the truth of the matter is that there is a war going on inside each of us, and the battles rage to the point of being out of control at times. Nevertheless, we must come back to truth. God said, ***“My strength is perfected in your weakness.”*** When we become distraught, discouraged and anxious, we must rely on the truth of God’s Word (Read it, recite it, and apply it). We must rely on the indwelling Holy Spirit (Listen to His prompting and follow His leading), and we must allow ourselves to be encouraged by other believers through counseling, praying, and listening. We are called to do life together. We are God’s hands and feet; we are often His mouthpiece, and we are the vessels he uses to bless others. Love one another, forgive one another, and encourage one another.

## **3. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THAT THEIR STATUS MAY NOT CHANGE BUT THEIR ATTITUDE MUST. (V 9C NIV)**

***“Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.”*** I believe that this part of the verse calls us to testify. Paul said, ***“I will boast in my infirmities (weakness).”*** Many are afraid to share what they are going through, what they have been through, and the prognosis for the future because this would display weakness to others. The one thing we do not want others to think is that we are WEAK. Yet, it is through our weakness that God receives glory. Might I say, GREAT GLORY! If you and I want the power of God to operate in our lives, then we must be broken. None of us want to be broken, but like Mary in John 12, the fragrance of our lives cannot spill forth until the container is broken. The Scripture says, ***“Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus’ feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.”*** Are you willing to say “Lord, You have all of me, warts and all for Your glory”?

**KINGDOM CITIZENS, LET GOD USE YOUR INADEQUACIES.  
HE CAN BRING GOOD OUT OF THE RAGS OF OUR LIVES.**

**Week of September 21– September 27, 2020**

# **KINGDOM CITIZENS ENGAGED IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE EQUIPPED FOR VICTORY**

## **SEPTEMBER EMPHASIS: EMOTIONAL WARFARE**

**THOUGHT:** Kingdom Citizens engaged in emotional warfare trust God to help them stabilize their lives through faith, grace, and healing.

**WORDS:** Faith, Praise, Worship, Grace

**LESSON THIRTY-NINE: EMOTIONAL PAIN IS REAL; IT TOUCHES US AT THE CORE OF OUR BEING**

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

1. Have you ever experienced a strong, emotional battle?
2. During times of emotional turmoil, where have you turned for help?
3. Other than the Lord, who do you confide in during emotional struggles?

**TEXT: PSALM 30:8-12**

## **THE HEART OF THE LESSON: KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THAT PAIN HAS PURPOSE.**

**Introduction:** We have come to the Book of Psalms. Many refer to the Psalms as ‘the hymn book of the Old Testament.’ Like a good hymnal, the Book of Psalms deals with every imaginable emotion – joy, fear, anger, loneliness, hurt, depression, etc. The Psalms give us a wealth of material to draw from. Like life, all the Psalms are not happy ones; they reach into the recesses of our souls. The words of Psalm 30 lead us to call out to God, but they also call us back to God. Over and over again, the Psalmist used active verbs: call, return, favor, cry, gain, etc. His words are filled with emotions; his pleas, prayers and petitions are strong; they come from a heart of anguish. Yet in the middle of all of this, these are his words: **Verse 5** *“For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.”* As the people of God, in the worst seasons of our lives, we must hold fast to the truth that God is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations.

### **1. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THAT WE ALL EXPERIENCE PAIN, HURT AND DISAPPOINTMENT. (V 8-9 NIV)**

*“To you, Lord, I called; to the Lord I cried for mercy: “What is gained if I am silenced, if I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it proclaim your faithfulness?”* Prayer is the unfailing resource of God's people. The writer says, *“To You, Lord, I call.”* If we are driven to our wit's end, we may still go to the mercy seat. When an earthquake makes our mountain tremble, the throne of grace still stands firm,

and we may come to it. Let us never forget to pray, and let us never doubt the success of prayer. The hand which wounds can heal; let us turn to Him who afflicts us, and we will entreat Him to help us. Prayer is better solace than Cain's building a city or Saul's seeking for music. Laughter and fleshly amusements are a sorry prescription for a mind distracted and despairing; prayer will succeed where all else fails. In your distress, have you prayed about it? The song says, "I prayed about it, and God still answers prayer." The writer also asked God a question. He said, "*What is gained if I am silenced, if I go down to the pit? Will the dust praise you?*" (V9) It appears that the psalmist thinks that if he does not praise God, God will not have any praise. Do you ever feel like you are the only one doing anything for the Lord? If you have, please repent; as He said to Elijah, "*I have 7,000 who have never bowed to the idol, Baal.*" When we are emotionally spent, we tend to make comments that don't really make a lot of sense.

## **2. KINGDOM CITIZENS CAN BEAR THEIR SOULS TO THE LORD. (V 10 NIV)**

*"Hear, Lord, and be merciful to me; LORD, be my help." (NIV) "Hear, O LORD, be gracious and show favor to me; O LORD, be my helper." (AMP)* This verse is a short and comprehensive petition which is available at all seasons; let us use it often. It is the publican's prayer; let it be ours. When God hears our prayer, it is a great act of mercy; our petitions do not merit a reply. "*Lord, be thou my helper.*" This is a compact, expressive, and ever fitting prayer. It is suitable for the Lord's people; it is well becoming to the minister of the gospel when he or she is going to preach, to the sufferer upon the bed of pain and distress, to the toiler in the field of service, to the believer under temptation, and to the man or woman of God under adversity; when God helps, difficulties vanish. He is the help of his people. **Psalm 46:1 (AMP)** says, "*God is our refuge and strength [mighty and impenetrable], A very present and well-proved help in trouble.*" GO TO YOUR HELPER!

## **3. KINGDOM CITIZENS, LET GOD TURN YOUR EMOTIONS FROM SORROW TO JOY. (VV 11-12 NIV)**

*"You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent. LORD my God, I will praise you forever."* For the Psalmist, his sorrow has turned to Joy. He, once again, praises the Lord. Have you gone through a difficult time? Did you lose your joy? Did you have many unanswered questions? But what about now? Can you exalt with the Psalmist? "*You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy.*" God is in the business of bringing us out, over, and through the difficult seasons of life. Make no mistake, the sorrows of life overwhelm us at times, but when we turn to God in repentance and trust, He will turn our mourning into dancing. When the LORD brings us out, take time and testify so that other travelers will be encouraged. **God is a good God! Yes, He is!**

**KINGDOM CITIZENS, WAIT ON THE LORD AND  
BE OF GOOD COURAGE; HE WILL STRENGTHEN YOUR HEART.**

## **QUARTER 3: JULY-AUGUST-SEPTEMBER**

**JULY 5** ----- **PARENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING THE FAMILY TOGETHER**

**JULY 12** ----- **DYSFUNCTION BECAUSE OF FAVORITISM**

**JULY 19** ----- **GOD USES DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES TO SAVE HIS PEOPLE**

**JULY 26** ----- **“LOVE CAN CONQUER ALL DYSFUNCTION!”**

**AUGUST 2** ----- **GOD WORKING IN THE COMMUNITY**

**AUGUST 9** ----- **IMPACTING OUR COMMUNITY WITH OUR LIFESTYLE AND SERVICE**

**AUGUST 16** ----- **MAKE THE CHURCH A PRIORITY**

**AUGUST 23** ----- **IMPACTING OUR COMMUNITY BY HELPING THE NEEDY**

**AUGUST 30** ----- **IMPACTING OUR COMMUNITY BY SHOWING BROTHERLY LOVE**

**SEPTEMBER 6** ----- **A FAITH THAT MAKES ONE WHOLE**

**SEPTEMBER 13** ----- **THE LORD WILL FIGHT FOR YOU**

**SEPTEMBER 20** ----- **GOD’S GRACE IS SUFFICIENT**

**SEPTEMBER 27** ----- **EMOTIONAL PAIN IS REAL; IT TOUCHES US AT THE CORE OF OUR BEING**