

Who Will You Believe?
Gary Post - November 4/5, 2017

I. Ties That Fail to Bind

The danger is not in what we know, but in what we don't.

II. Two Realities: Elisha and the Chariots of Fire (II Kings 6:18-23)

A. Two realities: One visible and one invisible

B. Prayer releases power in the spiritual world to overcome obstacles in the physical world

C. Angels, horses and chariots of fire

"Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?" Hebrews 1:14

III. Lessons from Elisha for Living in Our World

A. **Lesson 1:** We are soldiers in the middle of a cosmic conflict between God and Satan

"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places." Eph. 6:12

B. **Lesson 2:** The natural man—apart from Christ—has been blinded by Satan and is oblivious to both the nature of the conflict and the spiritual forces operating around him

"But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised [or discerned]." I Cor. 2:14

Satan's modern-day strategies of deception:

- The New "Spirituality:" "Being one with all that is."
- Secularism: Rejection of God and supernatural in favor of a rational, "scientific" explanation for the physical world
- Post-modernism: No meaning and purpose in life or absolute truth; morality is determined individually.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6

"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." Judges 21:25

The most dangerous deception of our time is that if we believe something sincerely enough, that alone makes it true—makes it become reality, and therefore, that we can make our own rules, write our own ending to our life's story—and be our own God.

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"Sanctify them [make them holy] in the truth. Your Word is truth."

John 17:17

C. **Lesson 3:** God has given us the Holy Spirit to enable us to understand spiritual truth

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words." I Cor. 2:12-13

"Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words." Romans. 8:26

D. **Lesson 4:** The prayer of faith is the weapon God has given us to remove spiritual blindness, stop Satan's evil schemes, protect other Christians and change the course of human events in the natural world.

"For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." II Cor. 10:3-5

"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should." Ephesians 6:18-20 (NIV)

"Your prayers will never do anything except release God's power for God's purposes. On the other hand, your prayers will always release God's power for God's purposes."

Jennifer Kennedy Dean, Live a Praying Life

E. **Lesson 5:** The Church is the "Body of Christ"—the physical representation of Christ on earth—and the force God has commanded to engage the Enemy and advance His Kingdom

"I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been found in heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven." Matt. 16:18-19

“His [God’s] intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to His eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Eph. 3:10-11 (NIV)

IV. What We Can Do

- A. We can pray that God will open the eyes of those around us to spiritual truth

“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.” John 6:44

- B. We can be deliberate about our friendships with people who do not yet know Christ as Savior

“More people have been brought into the church by the kindness of real Christian love than by all the theological arguments in the world.”
Theologian William Barclay

- C. We can know and speak God’s Word as the only authentic source of truth and reality

‘All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.’
II Timothy 3:16-17

Spend time daily reading the Bible writing down what you learn
Share Jesus’ explanation of who He is and what He came to do

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. 19 And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.” John 3:16-19

- D. We can be prepared to give an answer by learning to defend God’s truth AS REALITY

“But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.”
I Peter 3:15

Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson: 1978 Nobel Prize in Physics
“The best data we have [concerning the origin of the universe] are exactly what I would have predicted, had I nothing to go on but the five books of Moses, the Psalms and the Bible as a whole.....If theism and the Judeo-Christian view are true, then we have reason to expect

evidence of a finite universe. We now have evidence of a finite universe. Therefore, we have a reason to think that theism and the Judeo-Christian view of creation may be true.”

Dr. Arno Penzias, Nobel Prize Winning Physicist

Reality about the origin of the universe in God’s Words

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.” Psalm 19:1-4 (NIV)

Recommended Reading

God’s Not Dead: Evidence for God in an Age of Uncertainty
Rice Brooks

Live a Praying Life Jennifer Kennedy Dean

The Truth War: Fighting for Certainty in an Age of Deception
John MacArthur

Quotes

“All truth therefore starts with what is true of God: who He is, what His mind knows, what His holiness entails, what His will approves, and so on. In other words, all truth is determined and properly explained by the being of God. Therefore, every notion of His nonexistence is by definition untrue. That is precisely what the Bible teaches: ‘The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ Psalm 14:1; 53:1).’ John MacArthur, The Truth War

“Faith involves reasoning, remembering, and researching or study. Faith is hard work. We have to do our part to understand what God is promising, grasp the conditions of those promises, review the evidence of His faithfulness in the past, and hold on to our convictions about this regardless of our mercurial feelings.”

Rice Brooks, God’s Not Dead

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. Psalm 119:13-16