

Losing the War...

Chapter 14

The Fascination with Fear; The Failure of Ignorance

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

—II Timothy 1:7

Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee. . . .

—Joshua 1:9b

Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them (pagan nations or practices): for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

—Deuteronomy 31:6

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

—Hosea 4:6

As previously mentioned, in our book *Entertaining Spirits Unaware: The End-Time Occult Invasion*, we examined the **Nine Forbidden Practices** of the occult which are listed in Deuteronomy 18:9-12. New Age occultism, witchcraft, and Satanism depend on nothing more than a second-rate counterfeit of the truth of God's Word. They are a key part in Satan's warfare against us. Experience dictates that once we understand the basis for these sometimes veiled and mysterious belief systems, the uneasiness, paranoia, and fear generated around them dissipates. The light of truth overpowers the darkness—information over ignorance, Praise the Lord! We are then able to go about our business of carrying on powerful, effective Warfare in the spirit realm, and also can more confidently act, witness, and minister in the natural.

While we are dealing with the subject of fear once again, it is important to see how it is being used as a tool to deceive and even destroy many lives in our culture. There are two aspects to this. First, countless millions are prey for Satan as he injects fright, paranoia, and phobias into their lives. The second point is what we want to address here. There are millions around us who undoubtedly love being frightened. Americans and Canadians, in particular, spend hundreds of millions of dollars each year being entertained with themes rife with terror, death, and unhealthy suspense. We seem to know no limits in craving to feel the rush of adrenaline associated with being scared, and pay those who produce it very well.

There is generally a lackadaisical attitude about violence and occult-based supernaturalism in our world that is unparalleled since the Dark Ages. Things that would have given our forefathers outright heart attacks have now become normalized. Not only have we become calloused and desensitized about death and the respect for human life, but our appetite to be fearfully entertained has also drawn us. It is as if Satan himself has convinced us to love fear. You know, that is exactly what has hap-

pened. He has followed this with a general fixation on the paranormal that is setting the stage for the masses to accept and even crave every supernatural act the Antichrist will someday soon perform.

When Evil Becomes Good

As we have mentioned, having a healthy fear or reverence for God is good, while fearing Satan is faithless and plays right into his hands. What we see in our culture today is the general pronouncement that just about every theme mankind has historically shunned is now accepted. We have truly fallen into the snare of fear, which the Evil One has baited, promoted, and set with cunning accuracy. How strange that creatures created by God in His own image could be so ready and willing to walk into the perverted trap of adoring fear. Fear defeats us and disables the purposes of God in our lives. As we've stated previously, fear is the antithesis of faith, so it's a given that the Devil would want humanity to crave being frightened of what he has inspired. Using literature, folklore, superstition, and now the modern electronic media, Satan has used fear associated with supernaturalism and the occult to infiltrate and captivate millions worldwide.

The Emotion of Fear

Do you realize that fear was the first emotion that Satan used in the heart of man to turn him away from God? Adam was in the Garden, heard God's voice, and was afraid (Genesis 3:10). Fear is a tremendous emotion. Fear causes people to act irrationally, while a proclivity or craving for fear opposes the very basis of Scripture. We know that many Christians may bristle at this statement because they have developed an appetite for science fiction, horror novels, television, and motion pictures. Still, we question how a knowledgeable Bible believer could miss this. If you have a penchant for the macabre, we suggest a thorough read-

ing of the latter part of II Corinthians 6, followed by a time of soul-searching and prayerful repentance.

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

—II Corinthians 6:14–18

The Progression of Fear

Fear has escalating properties built into it. As our culture becomes more desensitized by and about fear, evil, horror, the supernatural, pornography, death, and the respect for human life, we will watch in dismay as the people of the world grow increasingly violent. Unrest will continue to rise and the underwriting tone of it all will be an elusive quest for satisfaction of these unholy and unhealthy desires that have been given such status by Satan. Surely this will be one of the “fixes” that Antichrist will offer to the craving but unsuspecting masses. It is obvious that there is a mass desensitization occurring as the spirit of fear becomes commonplace to the youngest of children. As they are filled with fear at an early age, kids automatically need more stimulation to get their adrenaline pumping as they become accustomed to fear. When we were kids, we watched *The Werewolf* and *Frankenstein*. The werewolf was nothing more than a man with a beard wearing a stocking cap over his head. That was the werewolf . . . and in the 1950s, we

were afraid. Now, the youngest of children seem emotionally and spiritually anesthetized concerning fear. Today, young people snicker at what **used** to make us fearful. Forty-five years ago very few had made the connection of how a progression of evil and an addiction to fear was about to sweep the world. Fewer still could have predicted the magnitude of how this addiction would negatively affect society—including the church. Not surprisingly, the same phenomenon happens to those who use pornography. Yesterday’s kicks just aren’t enough for tomorrow. Fear today has a dramatically different element than the fear sold years ago, because today’s fear is created almost exclusively through using themes based in the supernatural. For example, take the character Freddie Kruger, from the movie series, *Nightmare on Elm Street*. You don’t just kill Freddie Kruger, because he comes back again and again. Therefore, no matter what the outcome of the movie or TV show, the thought projected is that Freddie lives on.

Getting 'Em Young

Children today are getting heavy doses of fear, perhaps more so than any generation before. Concerning just general survival, previous generations have certainly experienced harder and more treacherous day-to-day lives than we do. Our modern age and its advances in technology, medicine, communication, and transportation alleviate many life-threatening problems that were everyday disasters in days gone by. But in our culture, the past three to four generations have developed deep ties—addictions—with the feelings associated with fear. Fear makes money, gets attention, and thus people make the decision that they desire to be scared—and scared good! Now it’s taking more and more fear to get them high. And because kids and their parents are making the choice to participate as recipients of fear, something else is happening. Kids today are getting involved in occultism, witchcraft, and demonism at an astounding rate. The incidents

are surely higher than ever before. Why? Because that is the ultimate fear trip. Through a constant and favorable bombardment of supernaturalism over the past few decades, many teens and young adults have become desensitized to occultic supernatural activities. For entire generations, the occult has been favorably presented in many different forms since childhood. Though thankfully not everyone who develops an affinity toward the paranormal delves heavily into it, the numbers claiming the occult as their belief system are very troubling. To many, it now seems normal to move from being a mere vicarious viewer to an active participant. This is what has produced kids like Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, whose satanic nightmare ended in a blaze of gunfire at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. One of the exhilarations being experienced by those dabbling in the occult kingdom is a false invincibility. It is this skewed view of reality which leaves victims depending on false assumptions. Instead of the real love, joy, and sense of completion that one feels when they surrender to Christ, tens of thousands today have only the perverted hope of some resemblance of satanic power in death. This is a sure and solemn sign that Jesus must be coming very, very soon.

The Crash of Our Culture

The desensitization and even estrangement from reality that takes place from large doses of fear through the childhood and adolescent years is partially the reason our culture has digressed to where it is today. Sadly, without a moral shake-up, one wonders just how cold and calculating we might become tomorrow. We wonder how many saints of God may be living below the spiritual poverty level because Satan has worked his ways on them in earlier times and has replaced the joy of the Lord with another type of otherworldly fascination. It happened with Lot—a righteous man—at Sodom. It can and is happening with many of us today.

Remember what we said earlier in the book concerning joy? If you were Satan, wouldn't you do everything possible to drain the opposition of perhaps the most vital nutrient to their spiritual strength, replacing it with a counterfeit? We know that most people wouldn't equate their addiction to fear, sci-fi, or horror as a "joy," but it has either replaced real joy or serves as a substitute in many lives. As we pointed out before, a person possessing the joy of the Lord is usually going to be a dangerous witnessing instrument against the Devil. However, it's hard to imagine a Christian really feeling driven to tell someone about the love of Jesus just after watching any number of horrific programs or movies that are out today. Think back to the last time that you watched a TV show or movie that capitalized on violence, horror, or the occult. Imagine how you felt afterward and now ask yourself these questions:

- Did I feel like studying the Bible?
- Did I feel like worshiping the Lord?
- Did I want to go and witness for Jesus?

If you answered "no" to these questions, can you see how Satan is stifling many of God's people and bringing division into Christian homes through fear addictions today?

How wonderful to know that the power and blood of Jesus can indeed deliver people from their all unsavory activities and free them from the mistakes of the past, but often it is not without a struggle. Sometimes the scars run very deep from a childhood of fear-inducing conditioning, whether from television, movies, or real-life circumstances and events. If anyone thinks the church is immune to this phenomenon of fear and its side effects, Eric remembers an experience that personalizes this point.

Occult Fear and Generational Spirits

Several years ago in western Canada, Eric was presenting his

Take A Stand! Seminar series in a local church. At the close of the evening and after the invitation given for those needing to come forward for prayer, Eric had the opportunity to pray and counsel with a young church member, twenty years of age or so. This young lady, professing to be a Christian, had become addicted to violence and fright. She craved it, desired it, and just like any addiction, had to have it—right or wrong. She told Eric, “I know it’s wrong, but I love being scared and I want God to take it away from me.” Eric assured her that God did not want her frightened, nor drawn to fear. This girl’s problem had escalated to the place that when she attempted to read the Bible, she only wanted to read Old Testament passages that described war and death! For several minutes, she and Eric knelt at the altar of that little church and as Eric prayed, God began to move. Leading her in a prayer of repentance, but still sensing that there was more to be dealt with, Eric asked her if she had ever been involved with the occult either casually or avidly. The girl began to sob uncontrollably as she described her family’s involvement in occultic séances. During these séances years earlier, she had regularly witnessed objects levitate, among other occult practices. Though she indicated that she had not been an active participant, she did recount how she would cower in a corner from fear during these séances. Armed with this insight, Eric led her to renounce all ties with the occult, and after a few minutes of prayer, he sensed that God was finished, at least for the time being.

The next night the girl came to the seminar, sat on the front row, and came to Eric afterward exclaiming, “Wow, last night I read the book of Psalms for the first time!” She indicated that since the night before, she had experienced no desire to continue the practice that had bound her for so long. Praise the Lord! She wrote a few weeks later and reported that she was continuing in her newfound freedom in Jesus. Eric wrote her back, rejoiced with her, but added a warning. She was on her way to being free, but there was still work to do. Often saints declare

victory in the war after only the first battle. We know that Satan does not give up easily and he may come back, accusing, reminding us of the past, and trying to lure us back into it. However, as Eric counseled her, if she is persistent in her faith and diligent in her walk with God, she **can** overcome. What victory we have in Jesus’ name! What it takes is an unyielding attitude of surrender.

You’ll notice that this young lady’s entrapment by satanic forces came from the fear she experienced by merely being subjected to witness occult séances—not from participation. Though only a viewer, as she grew older, her life reflected the fear Satan’s forces had planted in her years before. The element of this that the church today seems to have trouble swallowing is that though she had received Christ and had lived as a Christian, she had not come to the place where she was free in this area. Does this reflect a weakness in Christ’s power to deliver? Of course not. An inventory of your life as a believer would most likely indicate how you have grown in Him and progressed in freedom yourself. This girl simply had not come to a place of actually dealing with **or realizing the need to deal with the root cause of her fear** before that night in church.

The possibility certainly exists that her family’s tie to the occult may have increased the potential of her being bound by the enemy in some way as well. Scripture and experience teaches us that the sins of our fathers can and sometimes do visit themselves upon future generations (Exodus 20:5, 34:7; Numbers 14:18; Deuteronomy 5:9)—even if the latter may have had no physical contact whatsoever with the former. God knows our needs and though we often want something from Him in our own timing, He may have other plans for His purposes to come to fruition in us. God has a marvelous way of positioning us in the right place and at the right time to effectively deal with issues in our lives. The key to this is our willingness to do what He has directed, when He directs. But perhaps more important is being

able to hear what He is directing us to do in the first place, which is dependent on the choice we make to fellowship with Him daily. Again though, the key to victory is always being humble, teachable, and ready to submit to the Lord when He shows us how to deal with areas of trial and struggle. Otherwise, we'll only deepen the prospective hole that the Devil wishes us to dig for ourselves, and delay or even destroy the progressive deliverance God has planned for us.

Your Freedom May Be a Choice

There are indeed some who will read this book that have been oppressed by spirits who gained a foothold through incidental or purposeful occult involvement. However, chances are there'll be many more who have opened the doors of Hell because they allowed a habit of amusement through science fiction and horror to wrap its way around their hearts. Many times church goers have vehemently disagreed with these authors on this issue, but the fact remains that one of Satan's life-choking gateways into Christian lives has been through the "angel of light" of ungodly, dark entertainment.

If we expect to walk in victory, we must be aware that Satan takes these aspects of Spiritual Warfare very seriously. In our book *Entertaining Spirits Unaware*, we examined some "Doorways to the Devil" that Christians are either aloof about or purposely choose to be ignorant of. One thing we can be assured of is this: we are destined to lose in Spiritual Warfare unless we take inventory of and deal with the seemingly harmless things we have allowed to infiltrate our lives and homes. Harry Potter, Pokémon, John Edwards' "Crossing Over" and Miss Cleo may be the rage that "everybody's doing" and seem "so harmless." But how can we expect God to bless us, our homes and our families if we continually insist on being entertained by books, movies, music and the like which are working in concert directly *against* the written word and will of God?

We can ill afford to discount the enemy's willingness to drag us into his clutches in whatever way he can. And though we may name Jesus as our Savior, it is Satan's destructive desire to continue to operate through the access he may have enjoyed to our lives before meeting Christ. Remember that the story above is one of a Canadian teenager who claimed to be a born-again believer in Christ who, until she met Eric Barger, was a victim of satanic power dating back to her childhood. There is a message here.

Regardless of how many steps it may take, Jesus came to deliver us **COMPLETELY!** Here, once more, we ring the alert bell of Hosea 4:6, that God's people are indeed destroyed because of their lack of knowledge. The Greek word translated "salvation" exclusively in the New Testament is *soteria* (*so-tay-ree'-ah*). *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* translates this word "deliver," "health," "salvation," "save," "saving." Truly, salvation is a work of deliverance, giving health (spiritual, emotional, mental, physical) and the once-granted and ongoing act of redemption. Perhaps you've heard the old statement, "I was saved, I am being saved, I will be saved." How true this is as we walk, learn, and trust deeper each day in God's love and protection. The same is true of our deliverance as well. It is a process as we gain more freedom from the forces and intrusion of evil. Scripture could accurately read, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be **delivered**" (Romans 10:13).

Our salvation, redemption, healing, and deliverance are truly a process. But there must be cooperation with the Lord if we are to realize our ultimate freedom in Him. Through a lack of understanding or a willful choice of disobedience, we can most definitely interfere with the fullness and completion of what God intends for His children here on earth. In saying this, we are in no way inferring that just because there is evidence that Satan may be attempting to or has intruded in an individual's life, that this is

always a sign of demon possession or that, in the case of a Christian, his or her eternal salvation itself may be in jeopardy. Satanic attacks on our lives are not a symbol of God's rejection or disapproval of us, nor are they necessarily evidence that there is sin present, as some have taught. For the most part, satanic attacks are just part of the territory of living as a Christian. But resisting God's desire to see us set free for any reason, is to work in opposition to the Holy Spirit. It is to believe the lie of the enemy, that as believers we can either enjoy whatever vicarious pleasures we see fit, without consequence; or conversely that we can never be free, so why bother trying.

Along these same lines, David remembers an occasion while ministering in a church when yet another teenage girl, bound by the Devil, approached the altar.

Shaking, she said, "Mr. Benoit, I can't be saved."

David answered, "What do you mean, you can't be saved?"

She said, "I can't be saved."

She started to slowly pull up her long, black dress. As she inched her dress up, she revealed a demonic symbol of a dragon tattooed on her calf.

She said, "Mr. Benoit, that's my pact with the Devil, and I can't get my soul back. He's got my soul."

Wrong! At that very instant, he did **not** own her soul any more or less, just because she may have made some sort of pact with him! Over the course of the next few moments, David ministered the truth from God's Word to her, which culminated in the girl praying to receive Jesus as her Savior. No "pact with Satan" or demonic tattoo can stop the love and power of God! Amen!

Who Owns You?

It is interesting to note how often we have run across people who believe that they can never be free because of some past event or experience in their life. This is a common scenario and

nothing short of the intimidation of Satan. Look at it logically. Before a person is saved, the Devil **already** has their soul. Jesus made that clear when he stated that a person who was not with Him was against Him (Matthew 12:30; Luke 11:23). In these words, Jesus crushed the notion that a person could ride the fence about commitment to him and opposition to evil. His condemnation of attempted neutrality leaps off the pages of Scripture, through time, to us today. In a world so confused by compromise, His words are crystal clear. Like it or not . . . know it or not . . . a person walking without Christ is walking with the Devil—no matter how good or righteous he thinks he might be. So it is with the case in point. You cannot barter that which you do not own. If the Devil already has your soul, he's not going to barter with it. He's already got it. Satan never educates his victims to understand that before they got involved in witchcraft or Satanism, they were already his anyway. He just intimidates people to believe that once they make a pact with him, they are then doomed to fulfill their obligation. Though totally untrue, this is indeed a great tool with which to bind people. In this same vein, it is dangerous and unbiblical to teach people that once they make a pact with the Devil, their soul can never be redeemed. There is no power of hell that cannot be broken by the power of Jesus Christ. None.

Jesus can, will, and does set any captive free who calls on Him! The Devil **cannot** own someone who comes to Christ and invites Him into his or her life by faith. Nor can he ever withhold salvation and deliverance from anyone who calls on the Lord and asks.

Walking in His Lordship

To the believer in Christ, freedom from fear, especially from habits that make us fearful, is an issue of **lordship**. It is about living in the victory God intended for us to experience here and now. In the great Spiritual Warfare passage we paraphrased from above

(Matthew 12:25–37), it is unmistakable that Jesus made no room for His followers to volitionally pick and choose which evil practices or vices they would stand against. This moves in concert with another interesting fact. The New Testament only equates Jesus as “Savior” sixteen times, but it refers to Him as “Lord” on more than four hundred, fifty occasions! Yet countless Christians continue to attempt separating His salvation/deliverance from His **lordship**. Though it is inconsistent with what the apostles taught, this is a view held by many today—the majority of which have probably just never thought it through. If the full measure of His salvation can be attained without the effort and willingness of our surrender, how cheap it must be! If the issue of salvation is all Christianity is about, then one could attempt to hang on to many ideals, habits, and practices that His **lordship** beckons us to cast aside. The real issue then is how we will decide to live and how much of ourselves we are willing to give. Can we expect the full measure of His blessings, protection, and promises to be active in our lives if we resist His call of **lordship**?

Ask yourself this question: Whether it be just a day or perhaps several decades left in your life here on earth, why would you ever want to stand in the way of God’s perfect will, richest blessings, and complete work in your life? The answer lies only in original sin—we want things our way. The remedy lies only in complete surrender to Him.