

THE BIGGEST LIE



Satan's Most Enduring Hoax

Melinda McCutchen

*For Leroy,
the young soldier
who started me on this path.*

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And Jesus said...

***“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill,
and to destroy: I am come that they might have
life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”***

John 10:10

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Part 1

The Lie

Chapter One

Scenarios

Wayne

“He’s not going to roll it back,” the little boy decided. Every night, the two little boys would roll the toy car back and forth across the hospital hallway. Tonight, Wayne started their game, but there was no response from Randy. As Wayne got back in bed, he knew that Randy wasn’t there anymore.

It was just one more blow to the youngster who had already faced too many in his short life. Wayne struggled to get comfortable in the bed at Parkland Burn Center that had been the only constant in his life for the last year – the only constant other than the pain and the fear.

An accident was the reason he was in the hospital bed, but it wasn’t the start of his horrible journey. That began years earlier when his father left their family and moved away. His mother couldn’t deal with this new reality and found release in a bottle. Wayne and Mike, his older brother by nineteen months, took care of each other the best they could. Their mother stayed away more and more and finally just didn’t come home one day.

The neighbors were nice enough to take Wayne and Mike in, and the boys wanted so much to give back to these

people who were being kind to them. They decided to help the neighbors by mowing the family's yard. Unfortunately, no one had ever told these children not to attempt to pour gasoline into a running lawnmower. The resulting explosion was the cause of Wayne's injuries.

"I wish Mike would call," Wayne thought to himself. At least he didn't have to worry about his brother anymore. After the accident, the state stepped in and found his father who came to get Mike and would come for Wayne once he was released. He only had to worry that the doctors were wrong when they said he wouldn't ever walk normally again, much less play football or ride horses. "They're wrong. I'll show them," he vowed to himself.

The doctors were wrong. This broken little boy developed self-discipline and a work ethic not to be believed. Wayne was rewarded with not one, but two college scholarships – one to play football and one to rodeo. He is now a nationally recognized horse trainer and the sheriff of Coke County, Texas. This is a true success story, yes, but it is also a perfect scenario for the biggest lie! Another follows.

Mary

Mary sits at her kitchen table blankly staring into her cup of coffee that had long since become cold. She's trying hard to make sense of why this is happening to her and to the family she loves. She's tried hard all of her life to be a good Christian and to follow her daddy's instruction, "If you can't say something good, don't say anything at all."

Mary begins to count her blessings: a loving husband of over forty years; a grown daughter serving the Lord with her pastor husband and three wonderful sons; a child gifted from God seventeen years after their first and her husband and new baby girl; a lovely home; wonderful friends; and a caring church.

Now was the time Mary had looked forward to. Her daughters were grown and on their own and she could finally travel with her husband. They weren't old, just over sixty.

should have many more years together. But four years earlier, a doctor had changed that with his diagnosis of cancer in her precious husband, Cliff.

They fought hard, but she knew they were losing and now another doctor devastated her world with yet another dire prognosis. She had cancer. “I never smoked nor drank. I ate right. I worked hard. How can I be dying of cancer?” she asked.

Mary and Cliff hung on and exceeded doctors’ expectations. However after eight months in rooms next to each other at the hospital, Cliff lost his fight. One week and one hour later, Mary lost hers. They would never travel again or play with the granddaughters for which they had waited so long. Yet, this courageous couple was an inspiration to so many who knew them during their long fight. They never lost their faith in God or became visibly angry over their circumstances. They fought when they could and stoically accepted when they couldn’t fight any longer. As inspiring as Cliff and Mary were, their story is a scenario for the biggest lie.

Chapter Two

Who and What?

Before we get into what the biggest lie is, let's look at who told it first. Is it man's biggest lie or God's biggest lie? It belongs to neither, although man has perpetrated the lie for thousands of years. More importantly, we know that it is impossible for God to lie, as stated in Numbers 23:19.

“God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? Or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?”

This lie, the biggest lie in history, belongs to the father of all lies, Satan.

Have you figured out what the lie is? Let's examine Wayne's story with a traditional religious outlook. So many would say “What a tragic story.” It is tragic. We would cry for the lonely, scared little boy. We would be angry at his parents for allowing this to happen. Then so many would ask “Why would God do this?” or “Why did God allow this to happen?” The same questions would be asked about Cliff and Mary.

Next, we'd look for how God used it; what good came from these awful situations? We'd point to that good and say

“So, this is why God did that. He did that so that this would happen.” If you have ever said this or something similar, then you, like me and most others, bought into the biggest lie. In fact, I bought into it with the scenarios we’ve already discussed. Wayne has now been my husband for over thirty years. We had only been married a few years – our daughters Morgan and Ashley were two years old and three months old – when my parents, Cliff and Mary Barrett, went home to be with the Lord. Satan had me fooled, but God revealed His truth to me. Thank you, Lord.

I’ve come to the conclusion that it is Satan’s plan for people to blame God for his own activities. How Satan must have cackled when he came up with this idea! “I’ll wreak havoc and convince people their God is responsible.” How he convinces us is truly rotten. Many times, he uses scripture. The most scholarly Bible expert presents no challenge to Satan on the Bible. The devil knows God’s Word backwards and forwards so that he can deceive God’s children. God warns us of this in Hosea 4:6.

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”

Satan takes God’s word and twists it and uses it against God’s people. The devil even tried that with Jesus when he tempted Him in Matthew 4:5-6.

“Then the devil taketh Him up into the holy city, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple. And saith unto Him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, ‘He shall give His angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.’”

Satan is quoting Psalm 91! Of course, Jesus saw through the devil and answered back with scripture of his own. One of those talked about how we shouldn’t tempt the Lord. James said in James 1:13:

“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man.”

Jesus knew this and set the devil straight immediately. He recognized Satan and dealt with Him using scripture. What a wonderful example for us.

However, we are most often deceived. Look at how people quote Romans 8:28 when something bad happens.

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.”

That’s the verse so many base the questions asked about the scenarios. We fail to realize what the verse truly means. It doesn’t say that God caused something in this verse. It says that God will cause all things to work together for good for those who love Him. God will take what Satan has thrown our way and turn it around. Simplistically, He makes lemonade from the lemons Satan throws at us.

Jesus refuted this lie best in John 10:10.

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

In other words, the devil only causes destruction and death, but Jesus came so that we can have a good life. To me, this verse is so plainly spoken it could stand alone, but God is gracious and gave us so many more which we’ll discuss in later chapters. Many Christians read John 10:10 to only mean that Jesus provides a way to salvation. It does mean that, but I believe it means so much more. Let’s look at this verse in the Amplified translation.

“The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows).”

Wow! I want that life! You know what else Satan did by using the scripture to tempt Jesus? He revealed that even he knew it was true.

“Thou believed that there is one God, thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.” James 2:19

He knows the Bible is the Word of God. John 1:1 is all about the Word and God.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

Our Bible is the living Word of God. The Apostle Paul relates to us in II Timothy 3:16 that

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

Surely, if Satan believes the Bible is God’s Word and Will, we can plant this knowledge in our own hearts.

Satan also uses us against God through both religion and violence committed in the name of religion. Religion, by itself, is not about a relationship with God. It is a set of rules – a club – for man and set up by man. How many times in history have wars been fought in the name of religion? How many people have died? From the crusades of the middle ages to today’s holy war or “jihad”, people kill those who hold different beliefs or stand for something on which they disagree. I understand the Koran advocates violence against those it calls the infidels – Christians and Jews. What I had trouble understanding is how Christian people who believe in the Bible

could kill in the name of religion. It specifically states “Thou shalt not kill.” Of course, the original language could be more accurately interpreted “Thou shalt not murder.” However, even if you could get past that verse, look at the Holocaust. Did Hitler’s army just not care about the fact we are supposed to bless the Jewish people? If we bless them, we are blessed: if we curse them, we are cursed. It begins to make sense when you think of Satan’s lie. These people who kill in the name of religion are allowing Satan to use them. I believe some knew this, but I think most did not. I am convinced they were totally blinded to the truth behind their actions.

Chapter Three

Is there any truth to the lie?

Was there ever a time when God punished people on the earth? Did He ever send bad things to happen? Yes. You don't need to look any further than the story of Noah in Genesis to know that.

Is this a contradiction? No. God gave the first man, Adam, a blessing. He very plainly let Adam know what His will was.

“ So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”
Genesis 1:27-28

What does this verse tell us? First, we are created in God's image. That means we all bear a strong family resemblance to our Creator. Second, we were blessed. Finally, God made the earth for us to take care of, but also for it to serve us. We were to go beyond the Garden of Eden and, with our

descendents, make the entire world into a wonderful place. He gave us all power over everything (not just some things, but everything in the earth).

Satan crept into the Garden of Eden to tell the lie for the very first time. His discussion with Eve was the first time Satan pulled the wool over human eyes. He called God a liar. He said that God was keeping good things from Adam and Eve by not allowing them to eat from the Tree of Good and Evil. We know now how untrue that statement really was.

Can you imagine the difference today if Eve had been like most women and been afraid of that stupid snake? Of course, Adam played his part. Since when do husbands listen like he did?

We know that with disobedience, our power transferred to Satan and we became cursed.

“¹⁴And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. ¹⁵And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. ¹⁶Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. ¹⁷And unto Adam he said, Because thou has hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; ¹⁸Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; ¹⁹In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

Not only were we cursed, but snakes are now one of the most hated and frightening creatures. Women, thanks to

Eve, were destined for painful deliveries and second class citizenship. The earth and Adam weren't spared. Men were destined for lives of hard labor and the earth began to produce weeds and thorns. But worse than all of this is that from that point, death entered the world.

Even when God told Noah to build the ark, He was a just God. Everyone in the world at that time except Noah was despicable. However, Noah was good and worthy of rescue. His greatest virtue was his obedience to God's instruction. [On a side note: Isn't it interesting that all people are direct descendants of Noah?]

There's a recurring theme in the Old Testament – God blesses man, man messes up, man is warned, and man either repents or is punished. It was a very black and white world. It wasn't that God sat on His throne just looking for ways to hurt people. He is a very just God who can't look upon sin. When I read the Old Testament, I find myself wondering how these people were so stupid as to continually repeat this pattern. But, we must remember they had no scripture and written instruction at all prior to Moses. They didn't have access to the blessing again until Abraham, and even then they lived under the law and had to count on animal sacrifices for their redemption.

God had a plan though for His people to regain the original blessing. God loves us and since we kept getting it wrong under the old covenant, He was about to implement a new covenant described in Romans 8:3.

“The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent His own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin’s control over us by giving His Son as a sacrifice for our sins.”^{NTL}

Part II

The Truth

“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:32

Chapter Four

God Loves Us and God Is Love

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

For God so what? Did He want to steal from us, kill us, or destroy us? No. He loves us and wants us to live with Him forever in heaven. Are you saying to yourself “He didn’t mean me. Look at everything I’ve done.” He did mean you. The truth that God wants everyone to spend eternity in heaven is illustrated in the following passages.

“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” 1 Timothy 2:4

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” II Peter 3:9

“Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn

from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Ezekiel 33:11

As little children, we sang "Jesus Loves Me". Did that become a real part of not just our "head" knowledge, but also our "heart" knowledge? What did we do with this knowledge? Did we take it for granted? Did we return that love by sharing an intimate relationship with Him, or did we go through the "traditional" motions because it was expected and we knew it was the "right" thing to do?

I know what I did. I heard the message, accepted God's gift of salvation at a very early age, was taught He was my father and promptly started treating Him like "a father". My idea was "What we don't talk about, doesn't hurt me." I knew I couldn't hide my actions from Him, but it wasn't a problem if we didn't talk about it. I never realized at that time or for many years after that just because we didn't discuss it didn't mean my actions didn't hurt Him. There's a concept. We have the ability to hurt God's feelings. Think about it. When someone you love disappoints you or, in the case of children, disobeys you, aren't you hurt?

Jesus tells of God's love for us in a way parents can understand in Matthew 7:7-11.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

"Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?"

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

One night, Wayne and I were watching a program about the book "The Secret". This philosophy works on many of the

same principles and laws we find in the Bible. However, there's a gaping hole in this philosophy – God. I told Wayne that I couldn't even begin to imagine facing life and all its ins and outs without being able to discuss everything with God. "Which job do I take?" Ask God. "Who's telling the truth?" Ask God. "Should I accept Joe Blow as a client?" Ask God. He promises that "if we will draw near to Him, He will draw near to us." I can't imagine a more important relationship to develop. I'm not saying Wayne and my daughters, Morgan and Ashley, are not important. They are extremely important to me. I would lay down my life for any of them. However, Jesus already laid down His life for me. God loves us. He's there to listen to us, to comfort us and to guide us.

Throughout the Bible, there are verses talking about God's love for us. I love Isaiah 41:13 where God says

"For I am the Lord, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, 'do not fear; I will help you.'"

What a wonderful promise this is. When you were little, did something ever scare you so badly you curled up in a hiding place? Did your Daddy come to find you and ease your fears? This verse promises the same thing for us from God. It doesn't matter if you're five or fifty, He's always our Daddy.

Just as we wish for our children, God wants great things for us.

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." 3 John
2

We don't even have to worry about our sibling getting a better gift than we do. Peter tells us in Acts 10:34

"...Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons."

Will God reject us if we mess up? Not according to the promise God made to us in Joshua 1:5,

“So I will be with you: I will not fail you, nor forsake you.”

Lamentations 3:22-23 promises His love and mercies are forever.

“²²The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is His faithfulness; ²³His mercies begin afresh each morning.

The apostle James tells us in James 1:17

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

God’s love shines out of every page through his promises of mercy, salvation, healing, etc. John spoke of God’s love in the 4th chapter of 1 John when he said

“He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is Love.”
1 John 4:8

“And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.” 1 John 4:16

“ We love him, because He first loved us.” 1 John 4:19

One day during a conversation with the Lord, He showed me 1 Corinthians 13 in a completely new light.

“¹Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass,

or a tinkling cymbal. ²And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. ³And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. ⁴Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. ⁵Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; ⁶Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; ⁷Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.”

In the King James version, “love” is translated as “charity”. God said to replace both of these with Him. Let’s read these eight verses that way.

“¹Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not God, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. ²And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not God, I am nothing. ³And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not God, it profiteth me nothing. ⁴God suffereth long, and is kind; God envieth not; God vaunteth not Himself, is not puffed up. ⁵Doth not behave Himself unseemly, seeketh not His own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; ⁶Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; ⁷Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.”

What a wonderful description of our Lord. I enjoy listening to others pray aloud because so often, it’s straight from the Holy Spirit. I also find it interesting what people call God. To me, He’s always been Lord. To others, He’s Father God, Almighty God or Heavenly Father, etc. The Bible gives at least fourteen names for our Creator.

1. I Am.
2. El – Almighty God
3. Elohim – My Creator
4. El Shaddai – My God of More Than Enough
5. Adonai – The One to Whom I Belong
6. Jehovah – My Forever God
7. Jehovah-Jireh – My Provider in All Areas
8. Jehovah-Rapha – My Healer
9. Jehovah-Nissi – My Deliverer
10. Jehovah-Mekaddishkem – My Purifier
11. Jehovah-Shalom – My Peace
12. Jehovah-Tsidkenu – My Righteousness
13. Jehovah-Shammah – My Faithful God
14. Jehovah-Ro'I – My Shepherd

These names all certainly show that God loves us. He created us. He loves us. We belong to Him. He provides more than we could ever need. He heals us. He delivers us. He wraps His peace around us. He provided a way to make us righteous. He is always faithful to us, just like a shepherd to the sheep. See, He loves us.

King David in Psalm 145 has many descriptions of our Lord – all of them glorious. He also describes so perfectly the relationship I'm striving for with our Father in Heaven.

¹I will exalt you, my God and King, and praise your name forever and ever.

²I will praise you every day; yes, I will praise you forever.

³Great is the Lord! He is most worthy of praise! No one can measure his greatness.

⁴Let each generation tell its children of your mighty acts; let them proclaim your power.

⁵I will meditate on your majestic, glorious splendor and your wonderful miracles.

⁶Your awe-inspiring deeds will be on every tongue; I will proclaim your greatness.

⁷Everyone will share the story of your wonderful goodness; they will sing with joy about your righteousness.

⁸The Lord is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love.

⁹The Lord is good to everyone. He showers compassion on all his creation.

¹⁰All of your works will thank you, Lord, and your faithful followers will praise you.

¹¹They will speak of the glory of your kingdom; they will give examples of your power.

¹²They will tell about your mighty deeds and about the majesty and glory of your reign.

¹³For your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. You rule throughout all generations. The Lord always keeps his promises; he is gracious in all he does.

¹⁴The Lord helps the fallen and lifts those bent beneath their loads.

¹⁵The eyes of all look to you in hope; you give them their food as they need it.

¹⁶When you open your hand, you satisfy the hunger and thirst of every living thing.

¹⁷The Lord is righteous in everything he does; he is filled with kindness.

¹⁸The Lord is close to all who call on him, yes, to all who call on him in truth.

¹⁹He grants the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cries for help and rescues them.

²⁰The Lord protects all those who love him, but he destroys the wicked.

²¹I will praise the Lord, and may everyone on earth bless his holy name forever and ever. ^{NLT}

We know through His Word how God sees Himself. Did you also know there are many descriptions of how God sees us and what He considers us. The descriptions below come from the epistles - Romans, 1st and 2nd Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1st and 2nd Thessalonians,

1st and 2nd Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1st and 2nd Peter, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John, and Jude. There are many more descriptions in other areas of the Bible. All of the descriptions speak to God's love for us.

Romans:

We are beloved and He wishes us peace and grace.
– Romans 1:7;

We are comforted by faith. – Romans 1:12;

We are children of God, heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ – Romans 8:17;

We are more than conquerors – Romans 8:37.

1 Corinthians:

We are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able to admonish one another, sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints – 1 Corinthians 1:2;

We were given God's grace by Jesus – 1 Corinthians 1:4;

We are enriched by Jesus in all things, in all utterance and knowledge – 1 Corinthians 1:5;

Christ's testimony is confirmed in us – 1 Corinthians 1:6;

We don't lack any gift while we wait for Jesus' return – 1 Corinthians 1:7;

We are blameless in the day of Jesus – 1 Corinthians 1:8;

We are called into fellowship with Jesus - 1 Corinthians 1:9;

The preaching of the cross is the power of God to us - 1 Corinthians 1:18;

We have the spirit of God within us so we may know the things God freely gave us 1 Corinthians 2:12;

We have the mind of Christ - 1 Corinthians 2:16;

We are the temple of God and therefore holy - 1 Corinthians 3:16-17;

All things are ours because we are Jesus' and He's

God's - 1 Corinthians 3:22-23;
We shall judge the world - 1 Corinthians 6:2;
We shall judge angels - 1 Corinthians 6:3.

2 Corinthians:

We are a sweet savour of Christ - 2 Corinthians 2:15;
We are the savour of life unto life - 2 Corinthians 2:16;
We are of sincerity when in God's sight we speak in Christ - 2 Corinthians 2:17;
We are the epistle of Christ written with God's Spirit - 2 Corinthians 3:3;
We are changed into the same image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord - 2 Corinthians 3:18;
We have a spirit of faith - 2 Corinthians 4:13;
We shall be raised up by Jesus - 2 Corinthians 4:14;
God has given us the earnest of the spirit, so we are confident that when we no longer need our earthly body, we'll be with the Lord - 2 Corinthians 5:5-8;
We're a new creature in Jesus - 2 Corinthians 5:17;
We're ambassadors for Christ - 2 Corinthians 5:20;
We are made righteous in God's sight through Jesus - 2 Corinthians 5:21;
We are His sons and daughters and He is our Father - 2 Corinthians 6:18;
Our weapons are spiritual and mighty through God and we have the authority to pull down strongholds - 2 Corinthians 10:4;
We are strong because we have the power of God living in us. 2 Corinthians 13:4.

Galations:

It is God's will for us to be saved – Galations 1:4;
We are children of Abraham – Galations 3:7;
We are entitled to Abraham's blessing – Galations 3:9, 14, 29;
We are children of God through our faith in Jesus – Galations 3:26;

We are one in Christ, not Jew, Gentile, male or female.
– Galations 3:28;
We are children of promise (Abraham's) – Galations 4:
28.

Ephesians:

We have all the spiritual blessings in the heavenlies
– Ephesians 1:3;

We are holy and without blame before God in love
– Ephesians 1:4;

We have all wisdom and prudence – Ephesians 1:8;

We are sealed with the Holy Spirit; promise of salvation
– Ephesians 1:13;

We have wisdom, revelation and knowledge of God
– Ephesians 1:17;

We have access to God's power, the same power that
raised Jesus from the dead – Ephesians 1:19-20;

We, as Christ's body and filled with Him, are above all
demonic forces – Ephesians 1: 20-23;

God loves us – Ephesians 2:4;

We are created in Jesus to do God's good works
– Ephesians 2:10;

We have boldness and access to God through Jesus
– Ephesians 3:12;

Our inner man is strengthened by the Spirit – Ephesians
3:16;

Christ lives in our hearts by faith, We are rooted and
grounded in love – Ephesians 3:17;

Jesus loves us and we are filled with the fullness of God
– Ephesians 3:19;

God, our Father, lives in us. – Ephesians 4:6;

We are each given grace – Ephesians 4:7;

We are sealed to the end by the Holy Spirit – Ephesians
4:30;

God has forgiven us – Ephesians 4:32;

and We are light in the Lord and need to walk as
children of light – Ephesians 5:8.

Philippians

We shine as lights in the world. – Philippians 2:15

We have God's righteousness through our faith in Jesus.

– Philippians 3:9

We are dearly beloved, longed for, His joy and crown.

– Philippians 4:1

The god of peace is with us. – Philippians 4:9

God shall take care of all of our needs. – Philippians 4:

19

Colossians

We can be filled with knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. – Colossians 1:9

We can be fruitful in every good work and strengthened with all might. – Colossians 1:10-11

We are partakers of the saints' inheritance in light.

– Colossians 1:12

We have been delivered from darkness and translated in Jesus' kingdom. – Colossians 1:13

Thanks to Jesus, God sees us as holy, unblameable and unproveable. – Colossians 1:22

God wishes our hearts to be comforted. – Colossians 2:

11

As followers of Jesus, we no longer are restricted by the old law. – Colossians 2:20

1 Thessalonians

We are elected of God by God. – 1 Thessalonians 1:4

We are in glory and joy and in the presence of Jesus when He comes. – 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20

We are called to holiness. – 1 Thessalonians 4:7

God wants us to lack for nothing. – 1 Thessalonians 4:

12

We are children of the light and day. – 1 Thessalonians

5:5

2 Timothy

We have a spirit of power, love and sound mind. - 2 Timothy 1:7

We will be delivered from all evil and preserved in heaven. – 2 Timothy 4:18

Hebrews

We are a little lower than angels, crowned with glory and honor and put in charge over the things God has made. – Hebrews 2:7

We are brethren of Jesus. – Hebrews 2:11

We can come boldly before God's throne to obtain mercy and grace to help in times of need. – Hebrews 4:16

God won't forget our works of love. – Hebrews 6:10

Okay, we have looked at how God sees Himself and how He sees us. You may be wondering how this can be of help to us when we live in such a high-stress world. I will admit that I come from a long line of world-class worriers. For many, many years, I ranked up there with the best (more accurately, worst) worriers. Then God gave me a verse that I use, if not on a daily basis, at least on a weekly basis.

“Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7

When I say I “use a verse,” I'm simply reminding God of a specific promise He gave us in the scripture. I will never forget the first time I reminded God of this scripture.

It was one of those truly hectic times where I was short on time and cash flow. Our oldest daughter Morgan had moved back home and was in desperate need of a vehicle. Our youngest daughter Ashley had just lost her roommate and could not afford the rent on her house without one. I was a realtor and

let's just say, I really needed to sell something. I got a call and had to run into town to show a house one Tuesday afternoon.

As I crossed our cattleguard, I began telling the Lord everything I needed at that time. The prayer went something like this:

“Lord, You say not to worry about anything, but to pray about everything. I’m to tell you what I need and thank you for all you’ve done. Well, I need Hal (Morgan’s employer and my business partner) to let Morgan use one of his vehicles until we can find the right one that she can afford. I need for Ashley’s landlord to let her out of her lease without it costing me any more money. And, I need to sell something. Thank you for everything you’ve done and I know are doing to bless our family.”

I didn’t have long to wait. I got a contract on the house I showed that afternoon. Hal sent Morgan home with his Expedition and we found her the truck “of her dreams” that same week – and she could afford it! Ashley talked to her landlord who told her that if she could find an acceptable renter to move in as she moved out, he wouldn’t charge her any penalties. Ash ran down to the nearest hardware store to buy a “For Rent” sign and the guy that sold her the sign rented the house that day! Every single thing I had prayed about as I went into town was taken care of in the most perfect way – better than I could have imagined. God is faithful. He wants the best for us and we are told in Luke 12:32:

“Fear not little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

Really look at that verse. We give God pleasure. There has been a lot of hoopla lately about Tim Tebow. Even if you don’t agree with his style of quarterbacking, you should be able to admit that he’s an amazing young man of God. I was talking to God about Tim one day and asking what He thinks about our sporting events. Like normal, He totally awed me with His

go to His kids' game and cheer them on. I asked Him how He handled having children on both teams. He said that He enabled them to play their best. What an awesome answer!!! Our daddy loves us!

However none of this means anything without our Savior, Jesus Christ. If you don't already know Him, read on.

Chapter Five

Jesus – The Way, The Truth, and the Life

As always, Jesus himself said it best. In John 14:6 He proclaimed,

“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

Jesus is the New Covenant. The only way God provided for us to receive our own personal “ticket to heaven” is by receiving the gift of salvation through Jesus. And it truly is a gift, you can’t earn it with good works or buy it with money or anything else. We are told in Ephesians 2:7-9 just that.

“⁷That in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

The only way to receive it is to accept it as a gift. But, I’m getting ahead of myself.

Even those who don’t believe Jesus is the way to

must admit that he was one of the first VIPs (very important person). The world's system of time is based upon his birth. The years before his birth are known as the B.C. years – Before Christ. His birthday is celebrated by Christmas (notice the root of that word is Christ) and his resurrection is celebrated by the holiday known as Easter!

Perhaps, the best proof that He is the promised messiah or savior is the fact that He fulfilled every single one of the sixty-plus prophecies in the Old Testament written about the promised messiah.

Who exactly is Jesus? There are two verses in Matthew telling us who Jesus is that I particularly love. The first is when the angel appeared to Joseph explaining Mary's pregnancy in Matthew 1: 20-23.

“²⁰But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. ²¹And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shall call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. ²²Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, ²³Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”

How cool is that? “God with us.” I bet I read that scripture umpteen times before I picked up on that part of it. Now, I have trouble seeing any other part.

The second verse that really speaks to me is when God himself announced his approval following Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist in Matthew 3:17.

“And lo a voice from heaven, saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

God also proclaimed His approval during the

transfiguration when Jesus went up on a mountain with Peter, James and John.

“While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.’” Matthew 17:5

These verses appear to contradict themselves. One says Jesus is “God, with us”, and the others say Jesus is God’s son. Which are right? They all are. This is where “The Trinity of God, the Father; God, the Son; and God, the Holy Spirit” comes in. The Trinity is all God, but in three separate entities with different purposes. God the Father is pretty clear. He’s the Almighty, the great I Am, the Lord of Heaven’s Armies, the creator of everything in Heaven and on earth. He’s God. Jesus is God on earth, sent as God’s son to die on the cross as man’s substitute. He was the only person ever to never sin. Once he died for us and rose again, he now sits at the right hand of God, the Father, and intercedes for us.

I view him as my savior, of course, but also as my advocate (lawyer) who pleads my case before God, the Father. When he left to go to Heaven, he promised us a comforter and that is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is that still, small voice that nudges me and whispers to me, and warns me, and comforts me. He is with me all the time. We’ll discover more about the Holy Spirit later. First, let’s look at the reason for Jesus’ sacrifice and what it means to us as sinners.

We’ve already discussed why God sent Jesus in John 3:16. Now, let’s look at the purpose for which He was sent. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, *that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*” It’s only one of many describing Jesus’ purpose for coming to this world. When I was in junior high, I was taught the “Romans Road”. This combination of scriptures is an excellent tool for witnessing. It shows that everyone, no matter how hard they try to be or do good, has sinned.

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” Romans 3:23

When my girls were little, we always had to watch “Growing Pains”. The star of that show was Kirk Cameron. He is now a Christian with a television show all about witnessing to people. He’ll go up to folks on the street and ask them if they’re a sinner. A lot of the time people say no. They think they’re pretty good. Then he asks them a few questions. “Have you ever stolen, cheated, lied (even a white lie), looked at someone with lust, taken the Lord’s name in vain?” Most of the time, the people admit to at least one of those sins. If you sin, the price is death.

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 6:23

Fortunately for us, God had a plan. God sent Jesus to die on the cross as a substitute for our eternal death. In other words, we have done bad things in our life and we should be punished for them. However, Jesus came and took all the bad things that everyone has done (ever did, ever will do) to the cross and was punished in our place. He paid the price for us. You can see in the old covenant that blood was required for redemption. In the new covenant, Jesus’ blood is the only blood that can purchase our redemption.

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

Then there are clear instructions on how we can be saved.

“⁹That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart man

believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Romans 10:9-10

There is also the promise that we will be saved if we only ask.

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Romans 10:13

Jesus talks about how we have salvation in John 5:24. He starts out with a pair of “Verilys”. As someone once said, “When you see that, you know you need to listen up.”

“Verily, Verily, I say unto you, ‘He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.’ John 5:24

Jesus also describes his position as intercessor for those who claim him in Matthew 11:27:

“All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.”

The apostle John explains in 1 John 5:13 how by believing in Jesus, we can KNOW that we’ll go to heaven.

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

Our salvation and right to spend eternity with the Lord in heaven is the most important reason for us to be thankful to and for Jesus. By believing in Him, we don’t have to go to

We get wonderful new heavenly bodies and we'll experience such perfect splendor (I know that sounds corny, but how can you describe something so indescribably wonderful?). Also, the alternative is not acceptable. I personally don't wish hell on my worst enemy. I also can't imagine the never ending torment so awful that you will want to die and can't. We don't even have to worry that the rules will change because we are told in Hebrews 13:8:

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."

If you haven't already accepted Jesus Christ as your own personal savior, that's where we need to start. As these verses say, it's as easy as praying (and meaning) this prayer. Because of the "Confess with your mouth part," say it outloud.

Dear Lord,

I know I'm a sinner. I also know that without you, I'll die and go to hell. So right now, I ask you to come into my heart and be my savior. I believe you came to die on the cross for our sins and that you were raised again. Thank you Lord for your precious gift to me.

In Jesus name, Amen.

If you prayed that prayer, then "yippee"! You are now a part of Jesus' team and thanks to him, we win!

So far, we've talked about how Jesus is our "Way" to heaven. His sacrifice provided so much more than our salvation. His sacrifice provided for our healing, deliverance, and prosperity in every area of our lives. He truly is "The Way, The Truth, and the Life!"

Part III
The
Authority

Chapter Six

Why Didn't I Learn This In Sunday School? The Authority We Have As Believers

I believe if you're reading this book right now, it was ordained by God. I know that it never would have been written without the Holy Spirit's urgings, ideas, and words. In fact, if it weren't for the Lord, I never would have gained the knowledge and revelation discussed here. Hence, the reason for this book.

I grew up in a Christian family. I went to the Baptist Church since before I can remember. I was saved in Vacation Bible School when I was four years old. I can remember sitting on the front row in a classroom when a light bulb went on in my head. Jesus is the way to heaven and everything good. It seemed so simple, because it is.

I went to Sunday School, church camp, and church at both Southern Baptist Churches and Independent Fundamental Baptist Churches. I learned a lot. I memorized the order of the books of the Bible. I learned about the Roman's Road. However, my education for the most part stopped with being born again. A few years ago, Jesus showed me that there is so much more to a relationship with Him. I'm not saying I have reached the top, but at least now I'm climbing.

Therefore, this book is proof of my obedience and a

for me to share the miracles and revelations I have witnessed. I want other Christians like me to know what their life can be like if they just press in a little closer. More than all of this though, is my great desire to get the word out that if you haven't accepted Jesus as your personal Savior, you will spend an eternity in a very real Hell.

I've already done my best to explain through scripture just why Jesus is the only way to heaven; that the Bible is the true Word and Will of God and how satan has tried over the ages to pervert the glorious Word of God. I've also delved into the world around us that we can't usually see. This final chapter is all about God's promises to us and what He really meant for our life on earth to be. Here, you'll find scriptures defining our authority as heirs in Christ – why we are healed, why our lives should be prosperous in all areas, why there's no reason to be afraid or "stressed out". This is about my journey and what I'm learning and my way to help others learn how awesome our God truly is.

Jesus actually told us what to pray for in "The Lord's Prayer". He said "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." So many people recite this prayer without ever thinking about what they're saying. I know. For most of my life, I was one of those people. Others consider the words they're repeating, but only in an abstract way. "Gee, that would be wonderful. I wish it could happen," many might say. The tremendous thing is that it can happen if we believe. Just as Jesus taught us to pray, He also is our example of how we're to live our life. Let's look at a snapshot of Jesus' activities on the earth found in Acts 10:38.

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."

Jesus was good to others. He was a servant. He healed others. Notice how this verse says He healed "all that were oppressed of the devil"? Many believe Jesus healed people of

illnesses and infirmities. They also believe He cast out demons. They are right. He did both, and so can we. Jesus told us this in John 14:12-14.

“¹²Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. ¹³And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.”

Let’s go back to John 10:10 and see how satan may try to destroy our lives.

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

Our health, finances, happiness, peace, joy and relationships are all targets of satan. Judging by Jesus’ words, the devil is at the root of all illnesses and infirmities, poverty, dysfunctional relationships, etc.

With that being the case, we now know that we have the power and authority over all this as well. Jesus with His sacrifice has given us the power – the same power that resurrected Him from death.

“¹⁹I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God’s power for us who believe Him. This is the same mighty power ²⁰that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him in the place of honor at God’s right hand in the heavenly realms.”

Ephesians 1:19-20

How do we use this power? How do we follow Jesus’ example? We wouldn’t (hopefully) get behind the wheel of a car without knowing how to drive it or the laws of the road.

Even after learning this, you must have the keys to actually drive. We also need the keys to God's Kingdom.

Chapter Seven

Keys to the Kingdom

Love

The first “Key to the Kingdom” is love. Jesus tells us in Matthew 22:37-40

“³⁷Jesus said unto him, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. ³⁸This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. ⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.’”

God and love are intertwined. Remember what John told us in I John 4:8.

“He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love.”

A common misconception is that love is an emotion and out of our control. Love is a choice. Even if you don’t “feel” the love, act that way and the feeling will come. This concept doesn’t just apply to love, but it is applicable in every area.

Everything we do in life evolves from a choice we

make. Our mind is at the beginning. From it, come our emotions. Therefore, change your mind and your emotions will follow. How do we change our mind? First, we make the conscious choice. Second, we change who or what we're watching or listening to that contradicts that choice. Finally, we speak and act in accordance with the choice we've made.

One of the reasons we are instructed to love people is to show that we believe and follow Jesus.

³⁴A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. ³⁵By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John 13:34-35

Grace

Another "Key to the Kingdom" is grace. Grace is defined as favor and mercy. I've heard it said that every good gift that God gives us through Jesus is grace. This includes our salvation, our healings – in fact, all of our blessings. Divine grace is the free and undeserved love and favor of God toward man as a sinner, especially as exhibited in the plan of redemption through Jesus Christ.

⁸For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:8-9

Grace is not a word that we use or hear every day. I've learned that this "key" is the bridge between love and forgiveness. In our world today, you don't expect to get anything for nothing. People say that if something sounds too good to be true, then it probably is. Not when there's grace. None of us can pay for our salvation, our most precious gift. Our salvation is given to us by grace and we receive it through grace. To walk with Christ as a joint heir (through grace – freely given), we need to be able to extend grace to others at no cost to them. We show grace to others in numerous ways. We love

not loved in return. We help when we are not paid or helped in return. We forgive when others refuse to forgive us.

Forgiveness

God places a huge value on forgiveness, the next “Key to the Kingdom”. He forgave us and He expects us to forgive others. Jesus tells us this in Mark 11:25-26.

“²⁵And when you stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. ²⁶But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.”

When I first began a closer walk with God, the Holy Spirit revealed to me that the good things I do aren’t me – they are Jesus working through me. Interesting, but what He said next was earth shattering to me. The bad others do to me is them allowing the devil to use them. That knowledge, when remembered, makes it so much easier to forgive people that have hurt and betrayed us.

Obedience

Everything we’ve discussed and will discuss hinges on the next “Key to the Kingdom” – obedience. We’ve already heard what Jesus told us in John 14:12-24 – that we would do even greater things than He had done. So many people have stopped with verse 14. But He had one more thing to say on the subject in verse 15.

“¹⁵If ye love me, keep my commandments.”

What are we doing when we keep His commandments? We are being obedient. How can we know what God wants us to do? We know through His Word – the Bible. We can also know several other ways. Sometimes, He’ll put a person or situation in our path and we’ll know that God is speaking to us through them. I like it best when we hear directly from God.

you talk to God, He'll talk to you. In the tenth chapter of John, Jesus tells a story. When He explains it later, He describes Himself as a shepherd and we who believe in Him as His sheep. He says His sheep know His voice. It may be an audible voice, but not usually. If you're unsure that the voice you're hearing is God, check what you've heard against scripture. You're on the right track if it lines up with the written Word of God.

I believe the first time I knew God told me to do something specific and I heard Him was one Sunday at lunch. Morgan, Wayne and I had run into Burger King to get a quick bite before a cutting. Cuttings are competitions held for horses raised with instincts and abilities perfect for working with cattle. The rider and his mount have two and a half minutes to walk into a herd of cattle held at the end of an arena by four other riders, cut one cow out of the herd and keep it from rejoining the herd. They'll do this two or three times during the two and a half minutes. The kicker is that once you have the cow separated, you have to put your reins down and let the horse move on his own to hold the cow away from the herd. You can't pick up your reins until the cow is defeated and stops moving or turns away from the herd. Just as we were finishing our lunch, an extended family came in and sat down across the room from us. They didn't look unusual in any way. I noticed them and then I heard God tell me to give them money. I was already a little self-conscience because we were in full cutting regalia – boots, spurs and hats. The only thing we didn't have on yet were our chaps. I immediately asked God if He was sure. He let me know He was. This was my first time to do anything like this and I was quite nervous. As we got up to leave, I got some money (I think it was \$20) out of my pocket. I walked to their table and put the money down. I quickly babbled "I don't know why, but God told me to give you this." I didn't wait for a response, but made a bee-line for the door.

The next big instruction from God had to do with our horses. Each year, our broodmares have babies. Some we'll sell that year, some we'll keep for a year or two and some we'll keep for a long time. Wayne came in one day to discuss which

ones we'd do what with. We decided which ones to sell and I started praying about the best way to market these colts. God then dropped a bomb shell. He told me that we needed to give them away. I asked Him if He realized how much money was involved here. He said to trust Him. As you can see, I have a tendency to ask God really stupid questions sometimes. Being the little control freak that I was, I started that day to find the right recipient. I couldn't do it. People for years have paid really good money for our babies. We've had people drive clear across the country to get them at \$5,000+ each. And now, I couldn't give them away? I found out that night why "I" couldn't do it. God had His own recipient in mind and they called me that very night. It was someone I hadn't talked to in years, but those colts ended up blessing several families.

God's next bomb shell instruction was a couple of years ago. Because Wayne had so many horses in training that had to go to the same shows, we had to buy a new pickup and a bigger trailer. We did and that left us with a really nice 3 horse aluminum trailer that we no longer needed. I posted it for sale on our web site and was just about to start placing ads when God said "Don't sell it." That made no sense to me, but I didn't place any ads. I need to stop and say how thankful I am for a husband that doesn't throw a fit or think I'm crazy when I tell Him "Honey, God said." Back to the story. What God knew then that I didn't know yet was that Jarrett would propose to Morgan and that trailer was the perfect size for them. I'm so glad I heard Him, I listened to Him and we obeyed Him.

His next set of instructions were a little more in my comfort zone, but not much. He wanted me to write this book. I've been a writer for over twenty years through the local newspaper and regional and national horse publications. For several years before He revealed this plan for me, He had given me what I thought were several book titles. I'd get the title and write it in my notebook, but I had no idea what to do with it. Once I had several, God revealed his plan. They weren't all book titles. The first was a book title and the rest were the first few titles of the chapters in this book. I submitted. I sat

down to write and that first chapter came to me easily, but was hard to hear. I still can't read it aloud without crying. Through this process, I would write and then God would stop me and have me study and then He'd have me write again. It's been wonderful for me to experience God leading me to the verses and stories He wants included. I finally found out why God had me go through all the epistles and list all the things in which He considers us. That's the thing. God wants us to trust Him enough to do what He asks without our knowing His whole plan. I think we would often be completely overwhelmed if He threw everything at us at one time.

Did I mention that God gives us more than one assignment at a time? Early in 2009 after I was well into the book process, God surprised me yet again. For this one, we went way, way beyond my comfort zone. He began by placing a real burden on my heart for the people in our town. I knew it would include going door-to-door. I then found out that I was supposed to write a short booklet to distribute. The door-to-door thing was disconcerting, but by this time, I knew God would write the booklet. He then told me I needed to take a gift of some kind. I thought cookies. I'm not a baker, but I thought of the Girl Scouts when I heard door-to-door. No, I was wrong. God said bread. I quibbled. You've got to understand, I'm the lady who will cook a huge Thanksgiving meal and buy Brown 'N Serve rolls to go with it! I'd never baked a loaf of homemade bread in my life. So I thought, "That must not be what God said. I bet I can't even find a good recipe." In the first recipe book I opened there was not only a recipe for one loaf of bread, but one for making six loaves at a time. Between this and the verse about "the bread of life" God had given me, I knew I had my confirmation. I hate to admit that my next thought was "Oh phooey!" Actually, my reaction was probably a little stronger than that. I made a test batch and used my family as guinea pigs. To all of our surprise, it was really good – looked good and tasted good. No more procrastination. The booklet was written and the bread was a go. I made a map of our town showing all the homes, baked the bread, wrapped it up, loaded

it in the truck and started off to town. By the time I got there, God had told me where to start. As I knocked on that first door, I was ready to faint. The Burger King thing had been scary, but this was my hometown. I knew most of these people. Would they laugh at me? Would they call friends and gossip about me? Would I make somebody sick? Would I offend them so badly they wouldn't use me as their realtor or not vote for Wayne in the next election? God was so good. The first door I knocked on belonged to an old ranch lady that I didn't know had moved into town. She was so kind and even sent me a thank you note. That was a perfect start. The feeling I get delivering the bread is indescribably wonderful. I'm about halfway through our community now and none of my fears have been realized. At the end of this book, I've included the booklet and the recipe. If God leads you, feel free to use either or both.

Of course, if we're not talking to God, we're not giving Him a chance to talk to us. I think we have our best conversations in the bathroom. With all of the irons I have in the fire, getting ready in my bathroom is about the only time I have no distractions. God's a gentleman. He won't force Himself on you and He won't beg for your attention or shout. I often will just ask Him questions like "why this" or "why that". It still amazes me that He loves me enough to answer my questions. I remember when my girls were little. I heard "Why Mommy?" so many times a day. I hate to admit that sometimes this irritated me. I'm so glad God's God and not an earthly Father. I'm pretty sure I would have heard "Because I said so!" by now if He had been. Prayer is such an important part of our walk with God. We are told to "Pray without ceasing" in 1 Thessalonians 5:17. When we are obedient to God, He is generous beyond measure to us.

"For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Psalms 84:11

Faith

Another “Key to the Kingdom” is faith. Just as the love we have for our children is a good analogy for God’s love for us, I have a rather unusual analogy of how we need to put our faith in God.

I mentioned earlier that Wayne trains horses. That really doesn’t describe his relationship with these animals. They trust him. They know beyond a shadow of a doubt that he will not allow them to get in a position to be hurt. Their trust in Wayne actually overrides their natural instincts of fear and flight. All animals on earth fall into one of two categories. When confronted with danger, their natural instinct is to run away or to stand and fight. Horses are flight animals. This instinct is what has allowed them to survive all these years and it is strong within them. Yet the horses Wayne works with trust him more than they fear whatever he asks of them. That is how we need to be with God. When we trust Him enough to be obedient to Him rather than listening to our fear or doubts, we will always be better for it. Hebrews 11:6 says:

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”

What exactly is faith? The Bible tells us in Hebrews 11:1.

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

I never want to call a Bible verse “gobbledygook”, but this one is hard for me to understand. Let’s break it down. Faith is believing what you can’t physically see, feel, hear, etc. It requires something more from us than the evidence we obtain from our physical senses.

We don’t have to start from scratch though. God gave each of us the same amount of faith when He created us. Paul

tells of this in his letter to the Romans.

“ . . . according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”

Now, we have a measure of faith. How do we make that grow? Paul also gives us the instructions for this in Romans 10: 17.

“So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.”

Just as our voice is important, we know now that our ears are as well. We need to listen to the scriptural promises of God as much as we possibly can.

What doors are opened by our faith? Jesus give us a glimpse of this in Matthew 17:20

“ . . . for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.”

This same story is also told in the Gospel of Mark

“²²And Jesus answering saith unto them, ‘Have faith in God. ²³For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. ²⁴Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” Mark 11: 22-24

This passage is awesome. It tells you what to do to remove the mountains in our own lives. You have to use your voice and you have to believe. What mountains do you have

in your life that you need speak to and believe that they are no longer going to be a problem for you?

We always need to tell God what's bothering us. He cares how we feel. King David was God's friend. They shared a very close relationship and David shared with us what happened when he told God about his problems.

"I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." Psalms 34:4

Faith is the opposite of fear. I once heard a preacher use a scale in his description of how faith and fear increase and decrease in exact proportion to each other. As your faith grows, fear shrinks. Unfortunately, if we allow fear to take hold and grow, our faith will shrink. It's wonderful that God gives us the instructions on how to increase our faith. He also tells us in 1 John 4:18:

"There is no fear in love; but perfect (complete) love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect (complete) in love."

So love casts out fear. Where does fear come from? Paul answers that question in 2 Timothy 1:7:

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

So now we know, fear is a spirit that, if not from God, must come from satan. Through our authority as joint heirs with Jesus, we have the power to bind and cast out this spirit of fear. We need to replace fear with what God has given us – power, love and a sound mind.

Several years ago, satan crept with his spirit of fear into an area of my life that is not only very important to me, but one in which I've always been fairly confident of my abilities. It began without me realizing what was happening. I'd start to

ride a horse and all of sudden horrible images of what might happen would run through my head. Would he run off? Would he buck? Would he fall down with me under him or worse, would I be tangled to him and unable to get free? Whenever anyone gets on a horse, any or all of these things can happen. However, I am an experienced rider who knows how to handle crisis situations. I also have one of the best trainers (Wayne) anywhere who would never allow me to get on a horse he thought would be a problem.

As the fear within me grew, I continued to keep riding but I was a bundle of nerves. The nerves would transmit to the horse and they'd start acting up. I'd try to tell myself to relax. I knew what I was doing, but it did no good. Eventually, I would only ride my security blanket – our roan stallion Pocos Denim Genes, better known as Roany. At this point, I was dealing with the problem in the natural – under my power. When God revealed to me what was actually going on it made me mad – mad at myself for not realizing this earlier and mad at Satan for his chicanery. I meditated on the verse in 2nd Timothy – no spirit of fear: only power, love and a sound mind.

Gradually, I began to ride other horses but only at home in a safe environment. My victory came in a bittersweet set of circumstances. Wayne had a little stallion in training for almost a year and a half. When Norm (Starred N Freckled) arrived on our ranch at the age of two, he basically came out of the trailer on his hind feet squealing at the mares with no manners at all. Wayne put him in his program and won his first cutting check in under a year. Norm proved to be steady, consistent and reliable, but not flashy. To win the big checks, a cutter needs to be flashy. We knew that Norm's owner was about to decide to sell him and that he would be leaving our barn. Wayne had one more show coming up with Norm and if I was ever going to show him, it would have to be then. I'd ridden Norm just a couple of times in the pen at home and wasn't sure until the day of the show if I would have the courage and faith to go into the ring. God was good and I did it.

As I entered the area with the cattle, I recited to myself

the 2nd Timothy verse. “God didn’t give me a spirit of fear: but of power, and of love, and of . . .” Oh no! I couldn’t remember the last one when I needed it the most. Just as I was getting the cow I’d chosen up to the front and center, God provided the last phrase – sound mind. The video from that day shows me mouthing the words “sound mind” over and over again throughout the two and half minutes. Norm and I placed pretty well and would have won the class if I had totally trusted him. I got two points knocked off for picking up my hand. I trusted God, but not quite enough to believe 100% that the horse would stop without my assistance every time. I didn’t get a check that day, but I did get my victory! Praise the Lord! I still feel the fear trying to creep in when I first get on a horse after not riding for awhile, but I just quote “my verse” and go right on. Satan cannot stand up to a believer using his authority with God’s own words in Jesus’ name.

Wonderful promises from God are all throughout the Bible. The following one tells us what we need to do to gain intimacy with our Father.

“⁷Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners: and purify your hearts, ye double minded.” James 4:7-8

Here, we are instructed to give our lives to God. If we tell the devil “no” or to leave us in Jesus’ name, he’ll run away. If we want a closer relationship with God and work toward that, God will more than meet us half way. We are cautioned about sin and doubt in our lives. If we doubt, our faith is clouded. We are told in James 1:5-8 how doubt is seen by God.

“⁵If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and He will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. ⁶But when you ask Him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷Such

*people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.
⁸Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they
are unstable in everything they do.” ^{NLT}*

We also must never forget that once we accept Jesus as our savior, we're not alone. We don't have to fight any battles by ourselves anymore. Jesus promised this.

“ . . . With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.” Matthew 19:26

Chapter Eight

Kingdom Laws

If you talk to any scientist, they will tell you of various laws in nature, such as gravity. These laws are not aimed at any one person or group – human, animal or object. They apply to all things. There are laws in God’s Kingdom that also apply to everyone – believers and non-believers alike. The two laws we’ll discuss in this book affect every area of our lives.

Sowing and Reaping

“Do not be deceived. God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.” Galations 6:7

This verse is not just about farming or gardening. Seeds come in many forms. They can be verses we believe on and recite. A seed can be something we say, to ourselves or to others. Our actions can be seeds. Finally, money we give can also be a seed.

Verses as Seeds

When we have a concern, question, or even when we’re wanting something special, the best (God’s way) of getting

our answer or obtaining our goal is to find a verse in the Bible that addresses our issue. Then by reading, thinking about and reciting the verse, you plant it in your heart. Just as different forms of plant and tree seeds grow at different rates and are harvested at different times, depending on the type of seed and care given, so are the seeds of scripture you plant in your heart. The main thing is not to lose patience and hope before you get your harvest. In other words – don't give up! We're told just that in Galatians 6:9.

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest, if we do not give up.”

Also, don't forget to thank God for our harvest. Do this at the time of planting, after your harvest comes in, and many times in between.

So many of the examples used in this book deal with our horses, as does this one. My mare, Miss Piggy, was with me at a ranch rodeo in the fall of 2011. I had tied her to our trailer so that I could go to the concession stand. Wayne was in the arena and others were nearby. We have now hauled this mare to many events and places. She had never gotten scared and “set back” when tied. In fact, not much ever bothers this mare. To Wayne and others watching, nothing visible attacked my mare. They said it appeared “she lost her mind” and pulled back violently before jumping into the side of the trailer. When she hit the trailer, she hit the aluminum loop through which she was tied with her eye. Thankfully, the loop broke at the top and the bottom. That loop is designed not to break. If it hadn't broken, her eye would have been put out. As it was, she had a 1/2” hole over 1/2” deep at the top inside corner of her eye and a bad cut under her eye. Amazingly she let me doctor her with no opposition.

That night, I asked God what had happened to cause her to act so out of character. I was not prepared for His answer. He showed me what I can only describe as three hounds of hell come running and jump on my mare's hips. I had seen very

few visions up to this point, and was floored with this one. However, it perfectly fit what had occurred. Also, I believe an angel stepped in to make sure that loop broke so she wouldn't lose the eye. I prayed for her healing that night and again the next morning.

At that time, the Holy Spirit stepped in and led me to John 15:7 as my seed to plant.

“If you abide in Me, and My Word abides in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.”

I sowed that verse and what I asked was that my mare's eye would heal, leaving no scar and no impaired vision. Every morning for two weeks I spoke that verse with my request and thanked Him for granting my request. He did grant my request. You have to be persistent, but mostly you have to BELIEVE!

I've now planted this “verse seed” many times. One harvest is visible on the front cover of this book.

Our county has come through one of the hardest years it has ever faced. They may not know where you're talking about if you say Coke County, Texas. They often will know if you remind them of the awful Wildcat Fire and then tell them, you're that county. They may also recognize the town of Robert Lee because of the little city almost running out of water. For Robert Lee and Coke County, 2011 delivered the perfect storm. It actually began in the last quarter of 2010 with almost no rainfall in that quarter. We ended 2011 by posting just over 9” of rain for the entire year. It was just over 10” for the 5 quarters beginning in October of 2010. Our average yearly rainfall is around 25”.

So, we had really dry conditions. We had fires that ended up burning approximately 40% of our land. Most ranchers had to sell most, if not all, of their livestock. Firefighters used the water in Robert Lee's water reserves to fight the fire and moved up the date when residents would turn on the tap and nothing would come out. Thankfully, the citizens banded together and along with government agencies are in the process of building

pipeline to Bronte to provide Robert Lee with enough water to survive until reserves can be replenished.

Personally, I've cut down to just the core of my mare band - and Wayne was wanting more cuts. I began planting John 15:7 in this way - by asking for a supernatural carpet of green grass to grow up over our entire property. I began praying this the first of January 2012. The photo on the front cover was taken on February 13, 2012, between our house and the barn. Let me explain that I didn't plant this grass and I didn't water this grass. I was attempting to take the cover photo inside and was not pleased with the lighting when I looked out my window and realized that God had not only answered my prayer, but also provided the perfect back drop for the picture. *(Because of the vertical format of the cover and the horizontal angle of the original picture, the grass at the very top and the very bottom of the cover was copied from the actual grass in the picture.)* Praise the Lord, my harvest is coming in!

Words as Seeds

Spoken words actually are a part of both laws we are discussing. Let's look at them as seeds planted. How about gossip? Is that something you want planted in your life? What about an adult allowing a child to overhear negative comments about that child? What harvest will that produce in that child's life? Words of encouragement, support and kindness always produce a better harvest than those that are negative.

My parents both died of cancer when I was 24 years old. Both of my grandmothers had cancer and my sister is a breast cancer survivor. For many years before I knew the truth about the effect of words, I would say "It's not if I get cancer, but when." I was playing right into Satan's hands with those words. I was making his job of killing me that much easier. Once I realized the truth, I immediately broke every curse that I and others had spoken over me by the blood of Jesus and in His name. What words have you spoken that forecast your future? What words have others spoken about you? Take the time now to break those statements that condemn you. Once you've

broken the curse of the “statements of doom and gloom,” speak statements of life and goodness over you and others.

Actions as Seeds

You do a favor for a friend. Will that produce a harvest? You help someone with their groceries. Yet, another seed planted. All of our actions are seeds. What type of harvest do you want to receive. Our harvest always depends upon our seed. Therefore, we need to carefully watch what seeds we are planting.

The old golden rule which states “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you,” is one way of stating the consequences of our words and actions. The world knows this Biblical law of sowing and reaping as “karma” or “what goes around, comes around”.

Financial Seeds

So many are turned away from church or ministries because of the organizations’ appeals for donations. That is so sad. What they don’t realize is that when they give, that’s a seed that will produce a harvest. By not giving, they are missing out on God’s blessings in their lives. Giving your tithes and offerings is also one way of showing your obedience to God.

My favorite passage on tithing is in the third chapter of Malachi.

“Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do, says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies, I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won’t have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put Me to the test!” Malachi 3:10 ^{NLT}

This is the only verse I’ve found in the Bible where God asks us to test Him. Many stop at verse 10 – but God’s promise in verse 11 is amazing.

“And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he

shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts."

There are a couple of schools of thought on these verses by different Bible scholars. The first group believes that tithing is only part of the old law and not mentioned in the New Testament. I agree with the second group, based upon what Jesus said in Luke 6:38.

"Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

My other reason for believing we should still tithe is because of Jesus' statement in Matthew 5:17-18.

"¹⁷Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. ¹⁸For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

I can personally proclaim God's glory in this area. Wayne and I learned that the first 10% of our gross income belongs to God. This should be given where God leads you or where you are spiritually fed. Offerings include money you give above the 10% tithe. Wayne and I struggled financially for years, but no wonder, we were effectively robbing God. We still struggle occasionally if fear creeps in and I fail to trust God like I know to do. Even those who do tithe, sometimes miss out on their harvest. There are several things that can block our blessing. One reason may be shown in the following passage.

"⁶But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly: and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. ⁷Every man according as he purposeth in his

so let him give, not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to make all grace abound toward you: that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.” II Corinthians 9:6-8

What motives are in our hearts when we give? Is there fear that if you give, there won't be enough left to meet your obligations? I know that feeling. My pastor, Russ Frasier, recently related two stories that I would like to share with you. The first involves a man who was doubtful that he could tithe and still have money left at the end of the month. His pastor asked him if he would tithe if the pastor promised to pay any bills left over. The man hurriedly said yes. The pastor then asked him why would he trust an ordinary human man more than he would trust God. Makes you think.

The second story Pastor Russ told was about a man in one of his previous churches. This man, a new Christian and just a working man – not rich or even comfortable, came in one day and asked all about tithing. Pastor Russ explained it and the man said he thought he'd give it a try. Pastor Russ let the conversation go to the back of his mind and after a few months, the man came in and said the blessings were so wonderful that he was up to giving 50% of his income. The next time he talked to Pastor Russ, he was giving 90% of his income and his bills were all paid and he was even riding a new Harley. This example proves that you can't outgive God.

The Power of Speech

Does what we say really matter? Oh, yeah! Because this is so important, we're going to start at the beginning and look at it in detail. In Genesis 1:3, we are told

“And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.”

God spoke the world into creation. Now let's go to

Genesis 1:26-27.

“²⁶And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air; and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. ²⁷So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created he them.”

That tells us that we are made in God’s image and that we have the power over what’s in this world. The words God spoke built the universe and, being made in God’s image, the words we speak have power. God’s words create and restore and resurrect.

“ . . . God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.” Romans 4:17

This “speaking thing” worked for me before I even knew about it! We live in west central Texas where hail storms, lightning and tornados are not uncommon occurrences. When storms would roll in and hail would start falling, I would sit by the window and whisper “no hail” over and over. With horses out in the pasture, I didn’t want them to be injured. As I would speak, the hail would slow and stop. We never had big hail when I did that. I had no clue what I was actually doing. Then I heard Gloria Copeland and Billie Brim talk about speaking to storms and I realized what had actually happened. I became more bold. When a storm would blow in, Wayne and I would say (with authority) “No hail, no lightning, and no tornados on our property in Jesus’ name.” We’ve done this for years now, and others may get the damaging elements, but all we get is the rain.

The Christmas after our youngest daughter graduated from high school, I wrote the girls a book about all we had learned and experienced. It included a section on speaking to storms. One night that spring, a storm blew up and was

right for Morgan. By the time she woke up, it was already hailing heavily with baseball size chunks of ice. Ashley saw the emergency alerts on television and called to warn her sister that a tornado was headed right for her. Morgan had already spoken to the hail, but she immediately commanded the tornado to turn. They commented on the next day's weather report how that tornado had made a strange right turn just before it reached the outskirts of the town Morgan was living in! She hadn't spoken to the hail before it started and called us upset about the damage she thought had happened to our pickup and new 5 horse trailer parked at her house. Because of something I had learned during a situation with my dog, Macy, which is related later in this book, we knew what to do. When she went outside the next morning, there was no damage on any of our property!

Wayne and I had purchased a new truck and the night of our hometown ranch rodeo, I had run out to the house in this new truck to get something we needed. After leaving the house, I pulled up to the stop sign on the highway. Cars were pulled over on the side of the road and I wondered why, but I was in a hurry and went ahead and pulled out on the highway to head back to town. I quickly found out why they were stopped. I drove right into a bad hail storm with my brand new truck! I immediately began speaking to that storm and it was like you turned a switch off. It stopped that fast - no slowing down, no smaller sizes. It just stopped - immediately! Praise the Lord! I didn't have one dent on my new pickup!

Sometime later, Morgan met a young man who had purchased land about 15 miles north of us. They began dating and were planning on being married. Our family and several others were at his home one evening for dinner when a bad storm blew up and it began hailing. Morgan and I excused ourselves and went to speak to the storm. It didn't stop. I have to admit, I was confused. None of our vehicles had any damage, but I went to God that night with questions on why it hadn't stopped. He explained that I had no authority over that young man's home. That thought had never occurred to me. In order

authority. He and Morgan are now married and there's been no more hail on their property either.

Let's go back to Romans 4:17 and God calling things which be not as though they were. Since we know that we're made in God's image and are to do even great works than Jesus, this verse applies to us. We have the authority to create with the words we speak. What a responsibility! We are cautioned throughout the Bible to watch what we say.

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof." Proverbs 18:21

"²³Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. ²⁴Put away from thee a froward mouth and perverse lips put far from thee." Proverbs 4:23-24

"Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips." Psalms 141:3

Words play a part in three of the seven things God hates as seen in Proverbs 6:16-19.

"¹⁶These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto Him: ¹⁷a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, ¹⁹a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."

If God has a problem with something, we should steer clear of it.

"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate." Proverbs 8:13

Our words can curse us and others, but they also can

a blessing. What we say helps determine what we plant in our heart.

“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he. . .” Proverbs 23:7

God also promises to hear us. With that in mind, there are many times I wish I’d used a filter between my brain and mouth. But how great is it that all we have to do to be heard by our Creator is to speak!

“As I live, says the Lord, just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you.” Numbers 14:28 ^{NLT}

Jesus knew how important our words are. Let’s look at His words in Mark 11:22-23.

“²²And Jesus answering saith unto them, ‘Have faith in God. ²³For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.’”

If we want to move mountains, speak to them and believe that what you say is going to happen **will** happen!



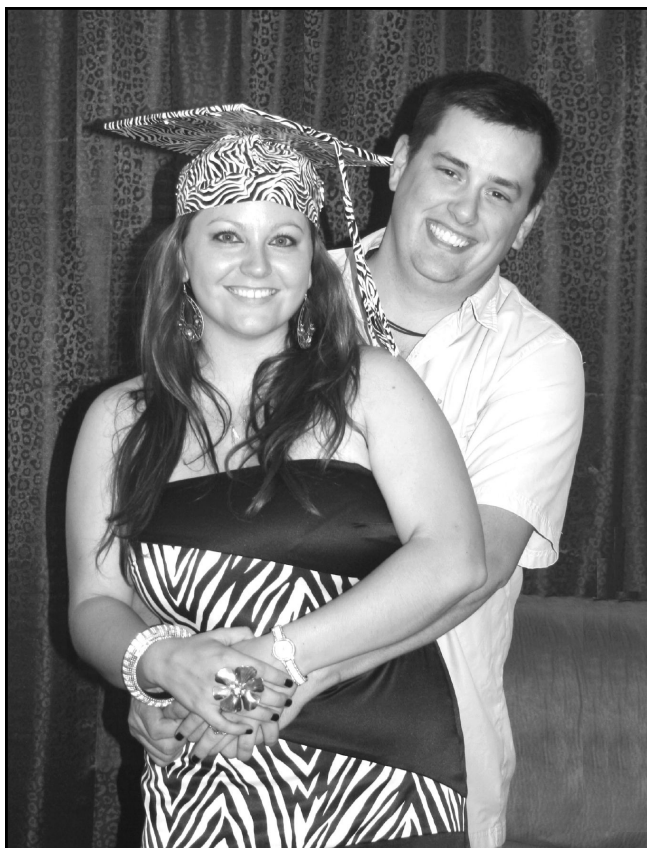
Clifford & Mary Barrett



Wayne & Melinda McCutchen



Morgan & Jarrett Webb



Ashley McCutchen & Reese Braswell



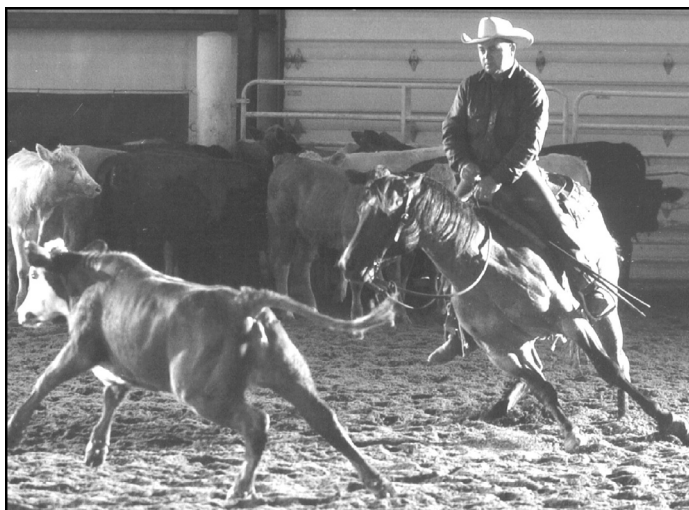
Macy



Miss Piggy's eye after injury.
The hole in the inside top is completely undetectable.
The only thing visible is the tiny scar where her eye
was ripped on the bottom.



Pearl



**Wayne & Roany (aka Pocos Denim Genes)
competing at a cutting.**



Preacher Russ Frasier

Chapter Nine

The World We Can't See

“You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil – the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God.” Ephesians 2:2 NLT

Demons vs. Angels and Us

If satan deceived us about God's goodness, what else is going on of which we're not aware? We've already determined that satan is responsible for everything bad. You only have to watch the news to know that he's incredibly busy these days. How does he accomplish all the chaos? The Bible tells us in Ephesians 6:12 exactly who we're fighting.

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenlies.”

We are being harassed by the same devil and his army

of demons that Jesus fought during his time on earth. Who is satan and why does he hate us so much? Did you know he was originally an angel named Lucifer? God talks about who he was, what he's done, and what he has to look forward to beginning in verse 12 of the 14th chapter of Isaiah.

“¹²How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! ¹³For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: ¹⁴I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. ¹⁵Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. ¹⁶They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; ¹⁷That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners? ¹⁸All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. ¹⁹But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcass trodden under feet. ²⁰Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people: the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned.”

Jesus tells of witnessing the fall of Lucifer in Luke 10: 18.

“And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”

We now know who satan is. He was an angel above angels. The problem was he wanted to be an angel above God. God cast him out of heaven and then proceeded to make man in God's own image. In Psalms 8:5 in the King James version, it says “For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels,

and hast crowned him with glory and honor.”I always thought that God (the Trinity) was at the top, then the angels, and then us. But after further research, where it says “angels” in the King James was actually translated differently than the original Hebrew of Elohim, which means “God, (singular and plural) or as we can say, the Godhead”. So look at that verse as “For thou hast made him a little lower than the Trinity, and hast crowned him with glory (God’s glory) and honor.” Once you know this, it makes more sense when we are told that angels are our ministering servants.

“Therefore, angels are only servants – spirits sent to care for people who will inherit salvation.” Hebrews 1:14.

So, not only does satan hate God for punishing him, he also hates us because we were and are made in God’s image. Every time satan sees one of us, he sees God. We are so fortunate that God knew the plan for His Son, Jesus, before the earth was formed, but satan did not. I truly believe that satan would have done everything within his power to stop the crucifixion if he had any inkling of what it meant at the time.

The previous passage in Isaiah tells us much more than who satan was. It tells his past, present and future. He was an angel kicked out of heaven. He is our tormenter who makes our world a wilderness and destroys cities. He will be stripped of all power and cast forever into the pit.

We’ve already seen satan twice personally appear in the scriptures: when he tempted Eve and when he tempted Jesus. He also appears again the evening of the Last Supper. Instead of trying to stop the crucifixion, he’s plotting to make it come to pass. This is told in Luke 22:3-4.

“³Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. ⁴And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray Him unto them.”

In an earlier chapter, we looked at Hitler's actions. I believe that just as satan entered into Judas, he also entered Hitler and those who followed him. How many people of history did Satan use in this way? How many people today?

If you have a hard time believing there is a world around us filled with demons and angels that you can't see, I understand. We are taught to only trust in what we can physically see, taste, touch, smell, and hear. For those with special gifts of discernment, they often see this other world. For the rest of us, it's an unexpected and amazing miracle when God lifts the veil that separates these worlds.

The following story tells of one of those times when God answered a preacher's prayer to see what had actually been occurring when he led a man to pray the sinner's prayer and enter into the Kingdom. To effectively relate this story, I will include the actual transcript from the interview instead of a paraphrase of this awesome statement. I will, however, lay the background. The man in the hospital is the father of my husband's best friend, a friend closer than any brother. This father had been raised in the church, but didn't know if he was going to heaven. Paul Sr. was pretty straight-laced. The preacher who came to see him is "Preacher Russ", the man God has appointed to reach the lost, the left-out and those to whom "regular" churches might look down their noses at. He has several tattoos including eyes tattooed on the back of his head. A lot of people call him the "Biker Preacher". Now, the story...

In 2010, I went to visit Paul Sr. at the hospital, at Hendricks in Abilene. Paul, his son, had asked me ever since I'd been his pastor for about the last three years that someday he wanted me to visit with his dad. He said he was an old hardheaded oilfield man and didn't know if he knew the Lord or not. I told Paul someday it would come up where it could happen. So, Paul had called me and said that his dad was in the hospital and he didn't know if he would make it and wanted me to go visit him. I said I'd go.

The very next day I drove up to Abilene, went to

Hendricks. I prayed all the way up there and called different ones in the church to be praying that Paul Sr. - that everything would go good. Got to Hendricks, went in the hospital, went up to his room and as soon as I went into his room - that's the first time I'd seen him. His daughter and her husband were sitting in the room. The main thing that I'd been praying was that Paul's heart would be ready, that it would be tender. I know it's so hard when you visit someone like that. I want their heart prepared by the Lord before I go.

So when I got there to the room, Paul was lying in the bed. His daughter and son-in-law were on the other side of the bed on their computers - laptops. I got in there and introduced myself to Paul and as soon I did and we started shaking hands, I could see that his heart was tender. His eyes were kind of wet. We talked about his condition. He said he wasn't doing good. I asked him if he thought he was gonna get out of the hospital and he said he didn't think so. He said "This may be it." So I just went straight into it. I said "Paul, you know I'm a preacher and I'm here and I want to ask you if you know Jesus Christ as your savior. Are you ready to make that journey that you're fixing to make?" His eyes teared up and he said "No, I don't think so. I might have known the Lord when I was a kid, but there's been a whole lot of things happen since then and I just don't think there's anything." I said "Well, if you know you're dying, would you like to make it right?" He said "I would." I said "It's real easy."

I took his hand like we were shaking hands and knelt beside his bed. I prayed for him, prayed that the Lord would speak to his heart and that Paul would accept Jesus Christ as his savior. I talked about grace - no matter what he'd done or where he'd been that if he would commit his life to the Lord, He'd take him. I opened my eyes and asked Paul if he wanted to pray that prayer and he said "I do". I said "Would you ask him?" He said "Yeah Lord, I want you to take over my life. I want to give my life to you." I said "That's all it takes Paul." We talked for a minute and then I prayed a prayer of thanks. Tears were streaming down his face and he was smiling and

that was about it. I was only in there for about 10 minutes, but I felt... it's so hard for me to do from the way I used to be. I told him "Paul, you know I love you in the Lord. The Lord's given me a love for you and I know you're not used to hearing a grown man tell you that, but I want you to know that and to get used to it." He said "I know it and I love you for coming over here." And I left.

I went back down out of the hospital, got in my truck and it'd only been about 10 minutes. It was an awesome feeling. I couldn't believe that after everything that Paul had told me and what different ones had said about him. Man, this guy was so tender hearted, tears streaming down his face. I just praised the Lord that he was ready when I got there. I was driving home and praising the Lord and I said "Lord, that is the most awesome thing. I wish I could see what happens really when all that goes on." And it was like the Lord granted my prayer. It was almost like (the apostle) Paul prayed in the Bible. I don't know whether it was in the body or out of the body. I don't know if it was a dream. I don't know how it happened, but before I ever got to Bronte - driving home on 277, the Lord just gave me a picture of all of it.

From me leaving San Angelo, He showed me how there were angels preparing the way for me to get from San Angelo to Abilene - making sure I didn't have any car trouble, making sure no phone calls came, making sure that I made it. He showed me that there were angels even in the truck with me. When I got out of the truck at Hendricks, there they were with me. They were kind of like guardians and they were big angels and they had swords. I don't remember seeing wings, but they were big - bigger than me.

I remember as we were walking in the parking lot to the hospital, I saw up over Hendricks a big dark angelic-like being, but he was demonic. You could see the evil, you could see the countenance. He was slumped over and seemed angry. There were other little demon angels with him. These two angels with me were looking at him as we walked. They stayed with me as we walked into the hospital. Before the Lord showed me this, I

had no idea of any of it. I was just a normal preacher making a normal hospital visit and hoping it turned out well.

As we got into the hospital, the two angels with me seemed relieved that we had got into the hospital under that demon's radar. I just knew - I didn't ask them - that this demon was in charge of the hospital - depression, death, hurt, anger is what he produced there. It was like he was over it. We got into the hospital and there were some people standing there in the foyer and I went up and pressed the button to go up to the floor. I thought it was odd before when I wasn't in the spirit that I got on the elevator and that nobody else got on. The Lord showed me that it was because it was full of angels. They were just right there - it was like that elevator was packed.

This is the thing that really humbled me because these angels were - I don't know - kind of humble around me. Again, I didn't ask "Why are you guys acting like that?" I just knew that the reason they were so humble is because this was a Christian that gets to go - they knew me as Preacher - this is a preacher and he gets to go tell him about the Lord and that's our assignment. We've got to guard him. They were amazed and they were humbled to be around me because I was bringing the gospel. I was bringing the good news. I didn't ask, I just knew that. It was kind of neat, but it was kind of humbling too.

We rode up and when we got out of the elevator... from the moment we got out of the elevator, we walked down a short hall and then back down a long hall to Paul's room. There were angels lined up on the walls. They weren't as big as the angels who were with me and you could tell that they kind of answered to these angels because they stood at attention and I don't remember if it was there or not that they had their swords out or whether they had their swords at attention. It seems like they did, but I can't remember right now. But these two angels were walking with me and there were angels behind me, but the walls were just lined with angels - almost like when a cop's been hurt - they were standing guard all the way down the hall. And so as we walked, we went to the room and when we went into the room, all the angels in the room had their swords out.

As we went into the room, the two big angels with me pulled their swords out. We went into the room and there was Paul. There weren't any demons, just angels in this room, plus the family that was there. They didn't say anything. They didn't do anything, but I could see the recognition of authority that the angels in the room had to us and I didn't have to ask but in their look they were telling these two that everything was good. I just heard that in my head that everything was good.

I visited with Paul and these angels were standing there. When I grabbed Paul's hand to pray with him, all the angels in the room - especially the two beside me, knelt. They put their swords on the floor with the points on the floor and they were holding them by the hasp and they knelt while we prayed. When we got through praying, the angels stood up and raised their swords to heaven like a salute. It just overwhelmed me because they were awed. They had completed their assignment and everything was good.

When I went out of the room, those angels weren't in the hall anymore. These two went with me all the way down until I got in my truck and that's the last I remember of them. The thing that struck me was their humility over a human being able to share the gospel with someone. Those angels that were in the room, they were wary like they were looking for trouble. The two with me never seemed uneasy after we got in the hospital. They held authority - but not over me. That was what was weird. They held authority with the other angels, but with me, they were humble. That's mind-blowing, that we Christians have that opportunity when we don't realize it.

If this story doesn't make you say "Praise the Lord", I don't know what will! However, we have our own angel story. In early fall of 2011 (I know this book is not chronological), our good stallion Roany passed away suddenly. He wasn't sick and was in show shape. Wayne has been using him for clinics that summer. Wayne saw him in his pen probably 10 minutes before he died and he was fine. Wayne left to get a drink and went back and he was gone. You could tell that he went down

and then never moved again. The soft dirt was not disturbed at all. This was a huge loss to us. Roany had been in our family for twelve of his fourteen years - for the most part. After much prayer, God showed me this was an unfair attack of the devil.

Wayne has a toy daschund named Pearl. She is never still unless she's asleep. When out in the pasture, she runs huge circles around us and the horses. I bet she covers 3 miles to our 1 mile. Not long after Roany died, we noticed Pearl spending hours quietly staring at the wall in the front stud stall of the barn. She'd just sit and stare - sometimes up at the corner and sometimes in the middle. These stalls haven't been used for around 3 years, not since Wayne agreed to run for sheriff and quit training for the public. The stall was designed to house stallions. Because of this, they have double walls - the outer metal wall and an inner sheet of iron about 4 inches inside of the outer wall. This is so if a stud kicks at a horse on the outside of the barn, his foot won't go through to the outside.

When we first saw Pearl doing this, we assumed that we had a varmint or a snake taking up residence in the space between the two walls. We attacked "this problem" in the natural. We cleaned out between the two walls and got a light and made sure there was nothing there. Pearl continued to stare at the wall the entire time we are anywhere near the barn. One evening, a friend came by while we were out there. She asked when the angel had come. We had no clue what she was talking about. She said that there was an angel standing guard in the front stud stall. "See, even your dog knows he's there." I wish we could see him, but God hasn't allowed that yet. Although we can't see him, we still speak to him and thank him and God for him being there. God showed me that he was assigned after the attack on Roany.

These stories show that there definitely is a world around us that most of us can't see. If we can't see Satan and his demons, can we still fight him? Yes, we can. Jesus is our example. He showed us the way.

Let's look in Matthew Chapter 8 at one of the times

“²⁸And when He was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. ²⁹And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time? ³⁰And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding. ³¹So the devils besought Him saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. ³²And He said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. ³³And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. ³⁴And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw Him, they besought Him that He would depart out of their coasts.”

We can learn much from this one story. The demons knew who Jesus was. Many people during the time He walked the earth through present day haven't been able to figure that out, but the demons knew. They also revealed that there is an order to events. They wanted to know if Jesus was going to torment them before it was time. If there's a "before it was time", then it follows that there is also "the right time". Now, for the greatest bit of truth that this passage reveals: Jesus could and did cast the demons out of the men and put them where HE wanted them to go. Jesus had authority over these demons. We do too, thanks to Jesus. He tells us this Himself in the following passage. He also tells us why we have been given His authority – so that God may be glorified.

“¹²Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father. ¹³And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be

glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. ¹⁵If ye love me keep my commandments.” John 14:12-15

Not only can we cast these demons out, but as we obey Jesus’ command to take the gospel to the world, this is one of the signs that will manifest. The following passage of scripture is often called “The Great Commission”.

“¹⁵And He said unto them, ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. ¹⁷And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues, ¹⁸They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.’” Mark 16:15-18

These instructions from our Savior are crystal clear. As Christians, it is our responsibility to do these things in Jesus’ name. We have the power and authority over satan and his power as described in Colossians 2:20.

“You have died with Christ, and He has set you free from the spiritual powers of this world.”

Before I ever knew through scripture about our authority, I was told about it. Back in 1993, I had a very close friend who went to work for a cutting horse trainer in Gainesville, Texas. She called me one day very excited. She told me she’d been to a Bible study and that they had taught her that if she would verbally tell the devil to leave her alone in Jesus’s name, that he had to listen and obey her. She had done this and said it really worked! Honestly, if she hadn’t been someone I really trusted at the time, I would have thought she was nuts. Instead, I tried it and got the same good results. I’ve been doing it on a regular basis since that time. Many of those intervening years, I didn’t have a close relationship with God. I would forget to

take authority and my life would become, let's just say, chaotic. Then, I would remember and speak those "magical" words and life would level out. Even when I wasn't anywhere as close to God as He would have liked, He was faithful to fulfill his promises.

In Matthew 16:19 and again in Matthew 18:18, Jesus promises to give us the keys to the kingdom.

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

In a later chapter, we'll discuss in greater detail just what God put in place for us and how God intends us to use this authority.

We have the Holy Spirit inside us to help guide us, but around us God has given us angels.

"Therefore, angels are only servants – spirits sent to care for people who will inherit salvation." Hebrews 1:14.

I discovered this authority only through God. I guess I'd probably read these scriptures before, but I hadn't snapped on what they truly meant. The following story is what I call my "Macy miracle". See if you don't agree.

It was Memorial Day weekend 2007. Ashley and I had gone to my nephew's wedding in Plano, while Morgan stayed here to help Wayne fulfill a prior commitment to put on a cutting horse demonstration at a church event.

Our family has several dogs, but the Jack Russell named Macy chose me to be her person. When Ashley and I got home, Macy was fine. She was running and playing and acting perfectly normal. But within thirty minutes of our arrival, she began to lose control of her limbs and less than five

minutes after that she was bleeding profusely from her mouth. We couldn't imagine what was wrong with her, but we knew she was in serious trouble. We put her in the kennel and after only a couple of minutes, she died. Maybe some people don't know what death looks like, but we live on a ranch and it's more common than we would ever want. We both know when an animal has died.

Wayne told me to go on in the house and he got the shovel and walked over to where we have buried those equine and canine members of our family that are no longer with us. I went into the dining room where I could see both the kennel and Wayne. As Wayne began to dig the grave, he could also see the kennel clearly.

I was standing at that window crying out to God. "Lord, please help my little dog. What can I do?" All of a sudden, a very authoritative voice in my head told me "You know what to do." I answered "You're right. I do know what to do."

Even though with my conscious mind, I had no clue what to do! I found myself saying "Demons, get away from my little dog right now in Jesus' name. And angels, I command you in the name of Jesus to repair the damage they've just done."

As the last word came out of my astonished mouth, Macy's head came up, she stood up and began jumping on the door of the kennel wanting out. Needless to say, Wayne's head popped up and his mouth fell open. I went running out of the house.

When I let Macy out of the kennel, the only evidence that anything had ever been wrong was the large pool of blood on the kennel floor and the blood drying on Macy's coat. I told Wayne about the prayer that appeared to have come out of nowhere and he, too, was amazed. I now know that God and the Holy Spirit taught me a very important principle that day. It's now a couple of years since that weekend, and Macy is asleep at my feet as I write this.

Now I know that through the mighty name of Jesus I can stop the devil and his demons in their tracks and I could also command those ministering spirits called angels to help

me. I hate to say I've even done this when I couldn't find my cell phone, etc.

A few years ago, I commanded the angels in Jesus' name to help me find my favorite filly. All of the other horses came up to the barn this morning without "Miss Piggy" (AQHA knows her as Playboys Majesty). She is such a pet that I knew immediately something was wrong. We let our horses run on 320 acres. This is an area ½ mile wide by 1 mile long and covered over most of it with trees and brush.

I saddled a gelding, called Wayne to tell him what had happened and began to look for her. I prayed that she would be okay when I found her, that she had just fallen asleep and didn't wake up when the other horses decided to check in with us. I hoped that was the case, but I knew it probably wasn't. I felt certain she was trapped in wire or had died.

I searched the east half of the place with no luck. Then I remembered that I didn't have to look by myself. As I crossed to the west half, I once again called on the angels in Jesus' name. I hadn't gone over 150 yards after that when I found her. She was trapped in an approximately 20 foot section of an old cross fence that we didn't even know was still there. It was hidden by brush. I again called Wayne and told him where we were and he came with a halter and wire cutters. Other than being hungry, thirsty, a little scratched up and quite swollen from not being able to walk around for hours, my little mare was fine. God is faithful and I praise Him for everything!

I would say that these abilities or promises fall under the category of supernatural weapons. This is spoken of in II Corinthians 10:3.

"We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments."

What might these weapons be? The answer is found in the 6th chapter of Ephesians, beginning in verse 13.

“¹³Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; ¹⁵And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. ¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

I know from experience that the greatest weapons of all time against satan and his armies are Jesus’ name and His blood. Paul told in Philippians 2:9-11 about the name of Jesus.

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: ¹⁰That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; ¹¹And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Jesus told us in John 16:23 that what we ask God for in His name will be given to us.

“And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it to you.”

The first time I was aware of dealing with angels and demons was the attack on my dog Macy. That wasn’t the first attack on me. Demons tried to kill me on a trip years ago that all began with a huge blessing from God . . .

In the early nineties, I was the owner/publisher of the official publication of the American Cutting Horse Association. One night as I worked to make the deadline, we received a call. Wayne and I had tried for over three years to buy a stallion

named Old Dominion. We had offered way more money than we should have, and still couldn't come to any agreement with his owners.

The phone rang as I typed away and I answered somewhat preoccupied. The man on the other end of the line soon had my full attention when he asked if we still wanted Dominion. I immediately said "yes" and began a rundown in my mind of when I could go get him, if Wayne could go with me and of course, where was I going to find the money now?

I told the man I had to get the magazine out and it would be a few days before I could drive the five hours to get him. He explained that I hadn't understood him. He told me they were giving us Dominion, but only if I would come right then to get him. Did I mention that it was 9 pm on a Sunday night and that Wayne was on duty with the Sheriff's Department until the following Wednesday?

I told the man that we would find a way and agreed to meet him at a truck stop in Denton, Texas, at 2 am. First problem – not enough diesel to get me to Abilene and everything in our town was closed. We called a friendly farmer who loaned us enough fuel to get me to Abilene. Second problem – not enough cash in the house for the trip. This was before debit cards and we don't use credit cards. Another call to a friend who stashed his "play" money in his sock drawer and I was on my way.

I met the man and loaded Dominion in our trailer. After getting his papers, I headed to Gainesville to crash with another friend. Before we knew we would get Dominion, Wayne and I had made arrangements to lease another stallion. I had planned to pick him up in Gainesville a week or so later. After a very short night, I made a call, loaded Dominion, and went to pick up the second stallion. Stallions, by nature, don't like other stallions, but I had a four horse trailer and could separate them.

So far, this is a blessed trip. Wayne and I had hopes for our life with Dominion, but God had plans to use Dominion to truly bless us. The devil must have known those plans, because he started a trip that only God could save us from.

It began with a flat tire on the trailer during a torrential

rain storm on a detoured section of the highway. To change the tire, I had to unload both studs and tie them to the fence. As I struggled with the tire, a farmer saw my predicament and came to help. It was raining so hard you could barely see, but soon we had the spare on. I thanked the farmer, loaded the studs and got back in my truck. I was soaked to the skin and the only dry clothing I had left were my pajamas. I debated what to do, but finally the pjs won out. Thankfully, they were modest since I had to fuel up in Weatherford before I could get back home. A few strange looks later, the studs and I were back on the road.

The rain hadn't let up all afternoon and now, it was also pitch black outside. When I pulled off the interstate in Abilene to get on our highway, I went through water that covered the fenders on the trailer. About thirty-five miles before I reached home, I came to a hill going down steeply into a sharp left curve. As I started down the hill, the gooseneck trailer started to swerve sideways into the oncoming lane. I was meeting a semi. It all happened so fast, but to me it was in slow motion. The trailer was almost perpendicular to the truck. I knew not to hit my brakes. All of sudden, I heard Wayne's voice in my head. "Drop it into granny gear." I did and everything straightened up and slowed down just as the semi went by. Wayne wasn't in the truck with me and he didn't save me. God did. I wish I had known to give Him the glory back then.

We finally made it home and God, through Old Dominion, enabled us to buy a ranch and pay for it in just eight years. Dominion was a joy. He was our friend. He helped us raise our girls. He and Wayne chased wild cattle and were very successful in the show ring. Due to age and arthritis, we had to put Dominion down several years ago and he's buried in our yard. I wish we'd known about healing back then, too. I had no knowledge of what I was fighting that day and no way to battle it. I praise God for allowing me to survive this attack.

Not long after the "Macy Miracle," satan again hit me with a huge attack. Since I can remember, I've dreamed about a house. For years, it was the same house. I would wander around alone in this house and look through cabinets, closets

hidden rooms. Then the dream changed from that big house to a really huge house. Through numerous dreams, I explored that one too. I'd never seen either of these houses in real life, but I could give guided tours after so many years of dreams.

I had no idea what to make of these dreams until one night after I'd made the decision to walk completely with Jesus and truly put Him first in my life. A few months after my decision, I dreamed again. This time the dream was different. It began the same, except I was back in the first house. Before I could begin exploring, a man dressed in 60s style clothing came into the room with me. He said he'd been with me since I was little and that he was my friend. Then a man came in dressed in clothes from the 70s and told me he had been with me since I was a teenager. I'd never seen these men before, yet I knew them. I somehow recognized them and thought they were a part of me. In my dream, I finally realized that they were demons who had been feeding me lies since I was little and making me believe they were my own thoughts and feelings.

As I came to this realization, the house changed to one room with windows in the center of the house. The men dropped their human appearance for the ugly shapes they actually were. As I ran to shut the windows to keep them out, I knew that they meant to kill me. I thought "This is a dream. Wake UP!" Then I realized I was awake and fighting for my life. They were shutting off my airway. I couldn't breathe. I fought to get out "Jesus". As His name came out of my mouth, they left me.

I had awakened Wayne with my fight for survival. He asked if I was okay. I told him no and explained what had happened. We both thanked the Lord for His grace to deliver me in this. Then I got up and wrote everything down. I was at a loss at the time. It was like I didn't know me anymore. I had lived all those years believing those awful thoughts, etc., were mine. Now to find out, I'd been a pawn for a couple of demons was disconcerting to say the least. Don't get me wrong, I was glad they were gone. Through prayer, I've come to understand what happened. Since that night, I haven't had the dream again.

deliverance. Thank you, Jesus.

The next attack came from outside and I needed both Jesus' name and His blood to fight the demons that came for me. Wayne has been with the Sheriff's Department for over twenty years. Most nights, he was gone for part of the night. After the girls grew up, that meant I was home with the dogs by myself. Fear of being home alone has never bothered me. We live several miles from town with no neighbors closer than a couple of miles. It's never been an issue with me until one night not long ago.

It was good dark outside, but still relatively early. I was about to start supper when the dogs started acting strange. They went from door to door and window to window whining. I suddenly felt a heavy, dark oppression come upon me. It was terror and dread and an awful sense of doom. Wayne and I had anointed each window and door of our home with oil and pled the blood of Jesus over our home. When this awful feeling hit, I was both scared and yet aware of the barriers in place. I began praising Jesus through song and scripture. I also called Wayne to pray and ask him to come home if he could. I knew that there were hundreds of demons trying to come inside. The dogs were now scared, howling, trembling little messes. I kept praying and praising and the feeling finally began to lift. The dogs calmed down and when Wayne got there, supper was ready. The feeling of terror I experienced that night is one like I haven't felt before or since. Praise Jesus that He was with me and that I knew what to do when they came. Remember Hosea 4:6.

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

I had obtained the knowledge of weapons to use and God gave me the presence of mind to use them. I had planted the following scripture in my heart.

"And they overcame him (satan) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Revelations 12:11

Awhile back, Wayne and I were discussing a book by an influential Christian pastor. This man came from a life of drugs and violence before God saved him. Wayne said it was interesting that so many of the people God used in a huge way were either recovering addicts or victims of some kind. I didn't have a clue other than maybe it helped them to relate to others. I prayed about it and was shown that satan knew their potential and tried to destroy them before they could fulfill God's purpose for their lives.

We've now seen who God is and how He feels about us. We know who satan is and how he is totally dedicated to our destruction. Now it's time to discuss the awesome plans that God has for us to live in His Kingdom on this earth . . . right now.

Chapter Ten

God's Promises to Us

We learned in Chapter 4 how much God loves us and how He sees us. The verse that shows this to me more than any other is probably 3 John 2.

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”

We learn in 2 Peter 1:3-4, what God has given us, how we receive it, why He gave it, and the result of our acceptance.

“³By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. ⁴And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires.”^{NLT}

We know through John 10:10, the verse on which this

book is based, that Jesus came not only to give us life, but to give us an abundant life. Every promise given by God can only be received if we have faith. Jesus tells us himself in Matthew 9:29.

“Then touched he their eyes, saying, “According to your faith, be it unto you.”

Many promises cover numerous situations. The one I use most often is John 15:7.

“If you abide in Me, and My Word abides in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.”

I used it when my mare was attacked, for grass to grow, water to come to our land, and to straighten and heal one of our gelding's feet and legs. Here are a few more.

“And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing ye shall receive.” Matthew 21:22

“Jesus said unto him, ‘If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.’” Mark 9:23

“¹Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. ²Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: ³Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; ⁴Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies; ⁵Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.” Psalm 103:1-5

Others deal specifically with our healing and protection. I know that God heals. I know it with my head, my heart, and through experience.

Back in the early 1990s, Wayne began losing weight rapidly with major stomach problems. AIDs hadn't been around too long, but we were definitely aware of the disease then. Wayne was hesitant to go to the doctor because he was

afraid he had that terrible disease. A few months earlier, a young man had tried to commit suicide by slitting his wrists. Wayne was the first one on the scene and he grabbed the man's wrists with his bare hands to try to slow the bleeding. Wayne shod a lot of horses back then to bring in extra money and his hands always had numerous cuts on them. He finally had no choice but to see a doctor and was thrilled when his diagnosis was ulcerative colitis. That is a serious disease, but wasn't the death sentence AIDS was at that time. Wayne was treated with medication for a little while and then he was fine for years without any medication.

In early 2007, he wasn't feeling well. We went to the doctor and he was given a prescription for antibiotics. One of Wayne's favorite treats is eating peanut butter with a spoon straight from the jar. While we were waiting on the prescription to be filled, I bought Wayne a large jar of peanut butter. That night, he put away half the jar and the next night he was in the emergency room with unbelievable stomach pain. They did a CAT scan thinking he had a tear or something. He didn't. They tested for everything and couldn't find anything to explain his condition. These doctors knew he had been diagnosed with UC years earlier, but none of the medications for that were causing a dent in the symptoms that he was presenting.

This went on for over a week with Wayne getting weaker and weaker by the day. After about twelve days, people who came to visit him were getting the word out to others in the county that it didn't look like Wayne would survive.

I don't remember being afraid, but our girls were. I fasted and prayed and called in the big gun. This wasn't a doctor. Wayne had the best doctors available and they admitted to being helpless. This "big gun" was a pastor anointed with the gift of healing. He and his wife came the next day, laid hands on Wayne and prayed. Wayne felt warmth and electricity running through his body as they prayed for his healing.

Two days later, after fifteen days in the hospital, Wayne was released and rapidly recovering. Great praise went up to God for this healing miracle. When we got home, recalls were

ordered for certain brands and lot numbers of peanut butter. The jar I bought Wayne was on that list and the antibiotics he started taking right before he ate the peanut butter skewed the test results. I KNOW God heals! You may ask if it's God will to heal everyone. I believe it is based upon Acts 10:38.

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing ALL that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him."

That verse doesn't say that God anointed Jesus to go around healing some - but ALL!!!! If Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever as the Bible states, than He's still healing! Below are verses on healing and protection.

"²⁰My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. ²¹Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. ²²For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh." Proverbs 4:20-22

"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:5

"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people." Matthew 4:23

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16

¹ Those who live in the shelter of the Most High

- ² *This I declare about the LORD:
He alone is my refuge, my place of safety;
he is my God, and I trust him.*
- ³ *For he will rescue you from every trap
and protect you from deadly disease.*
- ⁴ *He will cover you with his feathers.
He will shelter you with his wings.
His faithful promises are your armor and protection.*
- ⁵ *Do not be afraid of the terrors of the night,
nor the arrow that flies in the day.*
- ⁶ *Do not dread the disease that stalks in darkness,
nor the disaster that strikes at midday.*
- ⁷ *Though a thousand fall at your side,
though ten thousand are dying around you,
these evils will not touch you.*
- ⁸ *Just open your eyes,
and see how the wicked are punished.*
- ⁹ *If you make the LORD your refuge,
if you make the Most High your shelter,*
- ¹⁰ *no evil will conquer you;
no plague will come near your home.*
- ¹¹ *For he will order his angels
to protect you wherever you go.*
- ¹² *They will hold you up with their hands
so you won't even hurt your foot on a stone.*
- ¹³ *You will trample upon lions and cobras;
you will crush fierce lions and serpents under your feet!*
- ¹⁴ *The LORD says, "I will rescue those who love me.
I will protect those who trust in my name.*
- ¹⁵ *When they call on me, I will answer;
I will be with them in trouble.
I will rescue and honor them.*
- ¹⁶ *I will reward them with a long life
and give them my salvation."* Psalm 91 ^{NLT}

*"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper;
and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou*

shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.” Isaiah 54:17

I thought I had pretty much finished this book by Wednesday morning, July 14, 2010. I was ready to leave for work that morning. When I walked out of the house, Wayne’s little toy daschund Pearl was barking in front of the barn. I knew from past experience that the bark I was hearing meant she had found a snake or treed a cat.

I went ahead and got my truck out of the yard and pulled around to the front of the barn. I turned the truck off so that if she had found a rattlesnake, I could hear it.

She was sitting there barking at what appeared to be an empty piece of ground by the yard fence. All the ground in front of the barn is a white road material used in our area called caliche. Everything, unless it’s white, is visible on that ground.

I fussed at her for causing a fuss over nothing, but before I left I saw that my mares had pushed on the fence right there where she was looking. I got out of my truck to fix the fence before Wayne could see it. I walked over to the fence and straightened everything out.

When I went to get back in my truck, Pearl began barking at the original spot where I had just been fixing the fence. This time when I looked at the spot, there was a three foot rattlesnake coiled up there. You could see in the white powder that I had stepped all around him. I immediately got my gun out of my truck and shot him in the neck right behind his head. I saw the flesh fly when the bullet hit him and he dropped like a stone.

There was a stick nearby and I started to use it to pick up the snake for disposal. I changed my mind and decided to put my gun up and get a manure fork out of the barn. When I reached down to scoop him up, he raised up and looked me right in the eye. Needless to say, I dropped the fork and ran to get my gun back out, all the time wondering how he had survived a shot that almost severed his head. I emptied my revolver into him this time and . . . he slithered away into some brush across the

fence. I put the gun and manure fork away and got back in my truck. I praised God that I wasn't bitten after stepping on and all around this snake while fixing the fence. I also was asking God if that was a real snake or something else.

That afternoon, I was doing my daily Bible reading while I emailed pages of the newspaper to our printer in San Angelo. I start out the first of each year with certain chapters of the Bible to be read each day. This was included in my scheduled reading for July 14th.

“ Behold, ‘I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy and nothing shall by any means hurt you.’” Luke 10:19

I was stunned. As I sat there and prayed at my desk, God brought an incident to mind which had occurred a couple of days before. I was cleaning out the bunkhouse for expected guests, when I saw what I thought was a dust bunny on the side of a barnwood tv cabinet. I grabbed it between my thumb and finger and quickly realized I had picked up a huge scorpion. I dropped it without being stung and stepped on it. I really didn't think much about it other than saying a quick prayer of thanks.

But that Wednesday afternoon after reading Luke 10:19, I thought about it. For me, Luke 10:19 had taken on a personal message, especially since this all happened when it was my scheduled reading. God got his message through. Through Him, I have power over the devil and all the creepy crawlies! Fear has no place when God puts His power on display!

To put the final touch on this story . . . Later the evening of the snake, I hopped in the bathtub. When I looked down at my legs, I called out for Wayne. About three inches below my left knee was a rattlesnake bite. I never knew it when it happened or felt it all day long. It didn't hurt and it didn't swell. There were just two red puncture wounds.

Chapter Eleven

Prayer and Praise

Prayer

I want all of what God has for me. The apostle Paul wanted what God had for the people at Ephesus. He prayed two prayers for the Ephesian people, one in chapter 1 and another in chapter 3. I have personalized those prayers as follows:

“God, the glorious Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, please give me spiritual wisdom and insight so that I may grow in my knowledge of you. I pray that my heart will be flooded with light so that I can understand the confident hope He has given to those he called – His holy people who are His rich and glorious inheritance. I pray that I will understand the incredible greatness of Your power for us who believe You. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him in the place of honor at God’s right hand in the heavenlies. Now, He is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else – not only in this world but also in the world to come. You have put all things under the authority of Christ and have made Him head over all things for the benefit of the church. And the church is His body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with

Himself.” Ephesians 1:17-23 (personalized)

“Father, Creator of everything in heaven and on earth, I pray that from Your glorious, unlimited resources You will empower me with inner strength through Your Spirit. Then Christ will make His home in my heart as I trust in Him. My roots will grow down into Your love and keep me strong. And may I have the power to understand, as all Your people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep Your love is. May I experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then I will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from You. Now all glory to You, who are able, through Your mighty power at work within me, to accomplish infinitely more than I might ask or think. Glory to Him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Ephesians 3:14-21 (personalized)

I believe the results of praying these prayers for yourself will open up a whole new and more intimate relationship with God. As you begin or continue your journey with our Lord, beware of anything in your life or heart that may block your blessing. Search your heart for any unforgiveness, pride, and unrepented sin. Look at your life for any associations that are not pleasing to God. We need to avoid at all cost any association (business and friendship, not witnessing) with wicked people. Avoid them, even if we think our association will produce a gain.

For years now, every morning I’ve prayed a version of the prayer below. I’ve added one thing this last year - a piece based on “The Lord’s Prayer - because of a teaching I heard by Larry Lea. The John 15:7 part changes as my harvests come in.

Dear Lord,

I put on my helmet of salvation, my breastplate of righteousness. I gird my loins with your truth. My feet are shod with the gospel of the preparation of peace and health. I

have my shield of faith and my sword of the spirit of the Word of God.

I come to you right now with praise and thanksgiving. Praise for who you are - the creator of everything, El Shaddai, the almighty God. You are my God in whom I trust. You are my righteousness. You are my salvation. You are my sanctification. You are my joy and love. You are my Jehovah Jirah and my Jehovah Shalom.

My Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done in my life, in my family, in my church and ministry and in my state and nation.

Lord, I thank you. Most of all for Jesus. I thank you for Wayne and our marriage, our girls, Jarrett and Reese, our home, our ranch, our animals, our vehicles and trailers, our finances and prosperity, our ministry, our businesses, Wayne's Sheriffs Department, all of the gifts and talents you've given us and everything we own, because it all comes from you.

Jesus, please give me your heart today to love, your eyes to see and your ears to hear. Please keep my feet firmly planted on your path. Jesus, you said in John 15:7 that if I abide in you and your word abides in me that I can ask what I will and it shall be done. I ask for ... and I thank you for what you've done, what you're doing and what you will do.

Dear Lord, I plead the blood of Jesus and pray a hedge of protection around and over Wayne and I - our health, our safety and our marriage. I plead the blood of Jesus and pray a hedge of protection around and over Morgan and Jarrett and Ashley and Reese - their health, their safety and their marriages. I plead the blood of Jesus and pray a hedge of protection around and over our home - everything in it, everything used to construct it, our electrical system, our wiring, our plumbing, our heating, our septic and our sewer, our appliances and our air conditioners. I plead the blood of Jesus and pray a hedge of protection around and over our ranch - every square inch of this property, our grass, our oak trees, our fences, our water system, our well, our pumps, our tank, our timer, our pump tech, our lines and anything electrical. I plead the blood of Jesus and

pray a hedge of protection around and over our animals - our cats, our dogs, our horses, Dually (Morgan's horse that's here). I plead the blood of Jesus and pray a hedge of protection around and over our vehicle and trailers, our finances and prosperity, my newspaper, my book, our ministry, Wayne's Sheriff's Department, Michael and the prison project.

I then pray for family members and their needs.

I pray for Russ and Leigh and our church, Israel and Jerusalem. Lord, please bless Your people and Your land with peace, prosperity and safety. I pray for Christians around the world who are being persecuted. Please give them comfort and peace, protect them and wrap them in your love. I pray for everyone in our nation and our military, our military leaders, elected officials, and those in power. Please give us all wisdom and repentant hearts that cry out for You so that we may humble ourselves, turn from our wicked ways, and You will heal our land.

Let's look at how Jesus told us to pray in Matthew 6, beginning in verse 9.

"After this manner therefore pray ye: 'Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen'"

Let's break that down and look at it carefully beginning with who we are praying to. *Our Father in Heaven* - Why is He our Father? We can claim Him as our Father because we have accepted Jesus as our Saviour and are now joint heirs with Jesus. We are told of this relationship in Romans 8:17.

"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may

be also glorified together.”

Now, we know why we call Him Father. Next, *“Hallowed be thy name.”* Why is that phrase important? What does it mean. The definition of hallowed is: to make holy or sacred - to sanctify. So basically, with this phrase, we are praising God. Why would Jesus have us praise God at the very beginning of the prayer? This question is answered in Psalms 100:4.

“Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: Be thankful unto Him, and bless His name.”

Onto *“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”* This goes back to the “Authority of the Believer” chapter. Because of the authority we’ve been given as joint-heirs with Christ and our seat with Christ at the right hand of the Father, we have the authority to stop the forces of satan in their tracks and manifest God’s kingdom on earth. We are told in Revelation 12:11

“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; “

The next phrase in the prayer, *“Give us this day our daily bread,”* talks about God as our Jehovah Jireh, our provider in all areas. Jesus said we shouldn’t worry about what we will eat, drink, wear, etc. His exact wording comes to us in Matthew 6, verses 25 through 32.

“Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: For they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns: Yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than

they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature (who can grow taller just by thinking of it)? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."

The next phrase in the prayer "*Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*" Other translations use the word trespass - "*Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who have trespassed against us.*" This phrase is all about forgiveness. Remember, Jesus told us in Mark 11: 25-26

"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: That your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses, But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:" God is our protector - our Jehovah Nissi - our deliverer. If we walk with the understanding of Psalm 91, we know that we are sheltered, that we are under his protection, under his wings. He is our God and we trust Him.

"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever." This last phrase is a sermon all in itself. God's kingdom - He created everything we are, we see, we hear, we taste, we touch - EVERYTHING! This is His kingdom! He has the POWER! We, as joint-heirs with Christ, also have this power! The Glory!!!! We are crowned with and clothed in His glory! We are told this in Psalm 8:5.

"For thou hast made him a little lower than Elohim,

and hast crowned him with glory (God's glory) and honor."

Forever - that last word has so much to say.

"Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever," according to Hebrews 13:8. In Revelation 1:8, we are told "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

Jesus ends this prayer with "*Amen*". We've used this word as a prayer ending and as a word of agreement for a long time, but what does it actually mean? It means "So be it." That is such a wonderful word now to me. When I pray, I end with "So be it". You could think of it as "and it shall be done". This brings to mind what God tells us to do in Romans 4:17 "*and calleth those things which be not as though they were*". Speak through prayer what we will and then end with amen - so be it! Awesome!!!

Praise

We also need to praise Him. We know from the Psalms that God inhabits the praise of His people. If you need to draw closer to God, praise Him. If you are resisting satan and his demons, praise God and they will run away. A great song of praise is found in Psalm 145.

*"¹ I will exalt you, my God and King,
and praise your name forever and ever.*

*² I will praise you every day;
yes, I will praise you forever.*

*³ Great is the LORD! He is most worthy of praise!
No one can measure his greatness.*

*⁴ Let each generation tell its children of your mighty acts;
let them proclaim your power.*

*⁵ I will meditate on your majestic, glorious splendor
and your wonderful miracles.*

⁶ Your awe-inspiring deeds will be on every tongue;

I will proclaim your greatness.

*⁷ Everyone will share the story of your wonderful goodness;
they will sing with joy about your righteousness.*

*⁸ The LORD is merciful and compassionate,
slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love.*

*⁹ The LORD is good to everyone.
He showers compassion on all his creation.*

*¹⁰ All of your works will thank you, LORD,
and your faithful followers will praise you.*

*¹¹ They will speak of the glory of your kingdom;
they will give examples of your power.*

*¹² They will tell about your mighty deeds
and about the majesty and glory of your reign.*

*¹³ For your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.
You rule throughout all generations.*

*The LORD always keeps his promises;
he is gracious in all he does.^[1]*

*¹⁴ The LORD helps the fallen
and lifts those bent beneath their loads.*

*¹⁵ The eyes of all look to you in hope;
you give them their food as they need it.*

*¹⁶ When you open your hand,
you satisfy the hunger and thirst of every living thing.*

*¹⁷ The LORD is righteous in everything he does;
he is filled with kindness.*

*¹⁸ The LORD is close to all who call on him,
yes, to all who call on him in truth.*

*¹⁹ He grants the desires of those who fear him;
he hears their cries for help and rescues them.*

*²⁰ The LORD protects all those who love him,
but he destroys the wicked.*

*²¹ I will praise the LORD,
and may everyone on earth bless his holy name
forever and ever.” Psalm 145 ^{NLT}*

Epilogue

As I was wrapping this book up and thought I was totally done except for the cover and formatting, God spoke to me and showed me so much more that He wanted included. Several of the stories have been inserted into the part of this book to which they relate. The others follow.

Following Hal's election as County Treasurer in November 2010, it was time for Wayne and I to finish the sale transaction for the newspaper. It was finalized on January 1, 2011.

In November 2010, a company providing transmission lines for a large wind turbine project had to run a HUGE legal notice - over 30 pages. This provided Hal with a really nice payment of several thousand dollars. Because of this, he was able to finance the accounts receivable into the note Wayne and I signed for the newspaper. This allowed us a financial cushion so we weren't strapped with huge medical bills because of back surgery Wayne had on January 20, 2011.

Someone used to looking for God's hand could see It in this situation with no problem. However, Hal is cynical to say the least. I'd been his business partner in publications since the late 1980s and he was raised very similarly to me in the Baptist church. For the last several years, he's been a very faithful member of the local Methodist church.

A few weeks after Wayne's surgery, Hal came to me

and told me how God had arranged all of the events which had transpired since he decided to run for County Treasurer. It thrilled my soul to see that he could see God's hand at work.

With Morgan moving away with Jarrett, I was back at the newspaper full time as editor and had been for the whole of 2010. In 2011, I was now editor, publisher, owner, janitor, etc. I was also still in real estate. I began pulling back from real estate, but I had a large ranch listed through November 2011. It belonged to good friends and I wanted to handle that sale through its conclusion. It also meant a pretty good paycheck. The sale of the ranch closed in October 2011. I knew that God was heading Wayne and I toward a ministry, He just hadn't revealed what it would be. As I sat down to write the tithe check on that big sale, God stopped me. He then revealed our ministry. In His Name Ministries was born in the late fall of 2011 and that last real estate tithe check and all tithe money from the newspaper was the first funding for it. Its purpose is to bless and provide for the practical needs of the people of Bronte and Coke County. By Christmas 2011, we had already been able to bless three families in Bronte with utility payments and monetary provision.

But there was more He had in store for this ministry. A year or so ago, I was praying for God to connect me with a publisher for this book. As I was praying, He very plainly told me "You are a publisher." I answered "Yes, of newspapers and magazines." Basically, God's statement to me then was "And your point?" I knew then that I was supposed to publish this book. He had to build my faith remarkably to get me to actually start that process. I've made the calls, gotten the specifics and here I am - a publisher of a book.

The week everything finally came together - what God wanted on the covers, how much to print, etc., was an amazing week. I was still struggling with whether or not to keep my real estate license. I could keep it and become inactive, but that would require me getting some educational hours and getting everything into the state within the next couple of weeks. As

me out of real estate.” Instead, it came out “God led me out of real estate.” I was surprised and called another friend to get their thoughts. This friend said that God had allowed me to be in real estate “for a season”. As she said that, an incoming text dinged in my ear. When we finished our conversation, I looked at that text. It said “God had you in real estate “for a season”. I had my answer. God had led me out of real estate and I wasn’t to keep my license. Logically, this made no sense, but I obeyed. I’ve come to trust Him enough not to question Him, even if things don’t make sense in the natural. I know He has my back and a better plan for me than I can even imagine.

The last thing came on the last day of that week. I had been having trouble sleeping for a couple of weeks. You’ve got to understand that I’m normally the type of person who goes to sleep before their head ever touches the pillow and doesn’t move until the alarm clock rings. This was completely unusual for me. As I went to sleep on that Thursday night, I could feel darkness creeping in. I immediately said “I plead the blood of Jesus over me right now in Jesus’ name.” I also asked Him to only let me dream dreams from Him and that if I did dream that I would remember the dream the next morning. I didn’t sleep that well and I did dream. I dreamed of airplanes crashing down - jetliners and personal planes - all crashed on the ground with their tails broken off. I couldn’t see any people and I wasn’t sad the way you would imagine as I watched the destruction. I tried to figure out the next morning what God wanted to convey to me. I didn’t think this was a future actual occurrence, but I didn’t really have a clue. I talked with a friend about it and they agreed to pray. As I was getting ready to cover a groundbreaking ceremony for the paper, I felt a compulsion to call my cousin Carrla. We had been very close as children and had lost touch for many years. Amazingly, God had also been working in her life during the last few years the same way He had been in mine. I listened to God and called Carrla. I related the dream and that I had no idea what it meant or why I was supposed to call her. She laughed. God has given her the gift to interpret dreams. She said the planes that I saw crashing were

Satan had assigned to stop this book and how they had lost the battle and been destroyed. I had no idea she had this gift. But immediately, I knew in my spirit that she was correct with her interpretation because of the peace I felt.

God showed me that the first 500 copies of the book I ordered were like one single pea in a huge pot of peas. How exciting!

A couple of weeks later, a lady called with a question about real estate. I told her I was no longer a realtor and she asked what I was now doing in addition to the newspaper. I explained that I had written a book that was about to go to the printer. Then, words started tumbling out that I had not realized I was going to say. "God has led me into a publishing company. I'm looking for additional authors." WOW! I didn't know that. Later on that day at a wedding, I again told someone that I was building a publishing company. Prior to the first conversation, I knew God told me I was a publisher. I really thought He meant the newspaper, maybe another magazine, and this book. I had no idea He was developing a publishing company with a stable of authors under the banner of In His Name Ministries. I can't wait to see who He brings into my life!

The one thing I know for sure is that I haven't discovered or learned all there is about the Bible. Each time I read a passage of scripture, God shows me something new. I can tell you that walking with the Lord is exciting and that I look forward to the glorious life He has planned for me here and also in heaven. I pray that by reading this book, God will speak to you and that we can fulfill the purpose He has for us. May God bless and keep you.

Bread Recipe

The recipe is very simple. I've tweaked it a little by substituting milk for some of the water. Here's my take on it.

5 pounds flour
2 cups sugar
1 pkg yeast
7 tsp salt
1 small can of Crisco (16 oz)
3 cups warm milk
2 1/2 c warm water

Mix flour, salt and sugar. Cut in shortening. Dissolve yeast in water/milk and add to flour. Knead well and place in a large bowl. Let rise overnight. Makes 6 small loaves. Place in oiled pans and let rise until double in bulk. If using glass pans, bake at 340 for 45 minutes. If using metal pans, bake at 350 for 45 minutes.

If you don't want to make 6 loaves at a time, you can apply the following:

3 loaves

8 1/2 cups flour
1 cup sugar
1/2 pkg yeast
heaping tablespoon salt
2 cups Crisco
1 3/4 warm milk
1 cup warm water

2 loaves

6 cups flour
3/4 cup sugar
1/3 pkg yeast
2 1/2 tsp salt
1 1/3 cup Crisco
1 1/3 cup warm milk
2/3 cup warm water

Bread Booklet

Front Cover

Jesus – Our Bread of Life

“And Jesus said unto them, ‘I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.’” John 6:35

Page 2

God Loves You!

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

“Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask for bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, begin evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” Matthew 7:9-11

Page 3

“For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not, I will help thee.” Isaiah 41:13

“The faithful love of the Lord never ends! His mercies never cease. Great is His faithfulness, His mercies begin fresh every morning.” Lamentations 3:22-23 ^{NLT}

Page 4

God is Love!

“He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.” 1 John 4:8

“And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God,

and God in him.” 1 John 4:16

Page 5

God Wants the Best For You!

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” 3 John 2

“Every good gift and ever perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” James 1:17

Page 6

Don't Worry! We Can Depend on Him for Everything!

“Don't worry about anything, instead pray about everything!

Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7 ^{NLT}

Page 7

God is Our Answer ...

Healing:

“But He (Jesus) was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.”

Isaiah 53:5

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” James 5:16

Page 8

God is Our Answer for Protection!

“This I declare about the Lord: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; He is my God and I trust Him. For He will rescue me from every trap and protect me from deadly

disease.” Psalm 91:2-3 ^{NLT}

God is Our Answer for Prosperity!

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I (Jesus) am come that they may have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” John 10:10

Page 9

God is Our Answer for Salvation!

“I (Jesus) am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” John 14:6

“That in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”
Ephesians 2:7-9

Page 10

God is Our Answer for Salvation!

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”
Romans 3:23

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 6:23

“But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5-8

Page 11

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Romans 10:9-10

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Romans 10:13

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” 1 John 5:13

Page 12

Will You Accept God's Gift

If so, pray this prayer aloud ...

“Dear Lord, I know I'm a sinner. I also know that without you, I'll die and go to hell. So right now, I ask you to come into my heart and be my saviour. I believe you came to die on the cross for our sins and that you were raised again. Thank you Lord for your precious gift to me. In Jesus' Name, Amen.”

Now, as a Child of God, His blessings are open to you.

Page 13

How Do I Live as a Child of God?

“If you abide in Me and My Word abides in you, you shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you.” John 15:^{7NLT}

We Don't Fight Each Other

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenlies.” Ephesians 6:12

God = Good; Satan = Bad

The good we do is Jesus working through us. The bad people do is Satan working through them.

Page 14

Faith is Important!

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he

that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a
rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”
Hebrews 11:6

Forgiveness is Important!

“And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against
any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you
your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your
Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.” Mark 11:
25-26

Page 15

What We Say is Important!

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue and they that
love it shall eat the fruit thereof.” Proverbs 18-21

***Just like the law of gravity, there is another law that
operates all the time: sowing and reaping. You may call
it “Karma” or “what goes around, comes around.”***

“Do not be deceived. God is not mocked. For whatsoever a
man sows, that he will also reap.” Galations 6:7

Back Cover

“By His divine power, God has given us everything we need
for living a Godly life. We have received all of this by coming
to know Him, the One who called us to Himself by means of
His marvelous glory and excellence. And because of His glory
and excellence, He has given us great and precious promises.

These are the promises that enable you to share His divine
nature, and escape the world’s corruption caused by human
desires.”

2 Peter 1:3-4

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In Jesus’ Name

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Mary sits at her kitchen table blankly staring into
her cup of coffee that had long since become cold.
She's trying hard to make sense of why this is
happening to her and to the family she loves.
She's tried hard all of her life to be a good
Christian and now ... she's dying.

Why do bad things happen to good people?



Since the beginning of time, people have
been deceived by Satan. This book
discusses his first lie, the same lie
that people believe today!