

12.31.19

More Than... [intro]

More Than... In Biblical Assurances and Stronghold Strategies

Romans 8:31-39

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? 36 As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Psalm 37: 23 – 26

The steps of a man are established by the LORD, when he delights in his way; 24 though he fall, he will not be cast headlong, for the LORD upholds his hand. 25 I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not

seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging for bread. He is ever lending generously, and his children become a blessing.

Hebrews 12:4

Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. 4 In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. 5 And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?

James 4:7

He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us. But he gives more grace. Therefore, it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

2 Corinthians 12:9

My grace is sufficient for "you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Psalm 27

The LORD is my light and my salvation; who should I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom will I be afraid? 2 When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall. 3 Though an army encamp against me, my heart will not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident. 4 One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in his temple. For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will lift me high upon a rock. 6 And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the LORD. Teach me your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies. 12 Give me not up to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and they breathe out violence. 13 I believe that I will look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living! 14 Wait for the LORD; be strong and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!

Isaiah 54:13-17

All your children will be taught by the LORD, and great will be the peace of your children. 14 In righteousness you will be established; you will be far from oppression, for you will not fear; and from terror, for it will not come near you. 15 If anyone stirs up strife, "it is not from me; whoever stirs up strife with you will fall because of you. 16 Behold, I have

created the smith who blows the fire of coals and produces a weapon for its purpose. I have also created the ravager to destroy; 17 no weapon that is fashioned against you will succeed, and you will refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of God and their vindication from me, declares the LORD.

Deuteronomy 28:13-14

And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail, and you will only go up and not down, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, being careful to do them, 14 and if you do not turn aside from any of the words that I command you today, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

Psalms 18:1-3

I love you, O LORD, my strength. 2 The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. 3 I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies.

Philippians 4:12-13

I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Job 13:13-19

Let me have silence, and I will speak, and let come on me what may. 14 Why should I take my flesh in my teeth and put my life in my hand? 15 Though he slay me, I will hope in him; yet I will argue my ways to his face. 16 This will be my salvation, that the godless will not come before him. 17 Keep listening to my words, and let my declaration be in your ears. 18 Behold, I have prepared my case; I know that I will be in the right. 19 Who is there who will contend with me? For then I would be silent and die.

1 Peter 5:6-11

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, 7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. 8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. 10 And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. 11 To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Hebrews 12:12-14

Therefore, lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, 13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be

put out of joint but rather be healed. 14 Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

Ephesians 4:14-21

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, 16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 and so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. 20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Psalms 91

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. 2 I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." 3 For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence. 4 He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler. 5 You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day, 6 nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday. 7 A thousand may fall at your

side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. 8 You will only look with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked. 9 Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place (the Most-High), who is my refuge—10 no evil will be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent. 11 For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. 12 On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone. 13 You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot. 14 Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name. 15 When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him. 16 With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.

More Than... Through Him Who Loved Us

One of the most common and well-known scripture from the bible is **John 3:16**. You all could recite it I'm sure. One of the lines from that well-known passage is also one of the most powerful assurances of security and conquest ever given to humanity... "for God so loved us, that whosoever believes in Him (God), will not perish but have everlasting life." I guess it's fair to ask (as believers in God, and followers of Christ), given such profound and predictable assurances... Why do we ever doubt or fear for our personal safety or ultimate outcomes? If we say it's because we just don't trust God, because of shaky faith then aren't we revealing ourselves to be a bit fraudulent or at the very least, confessing a contradiction? Neither is good. If however, if we say we doubt Him because we don't fully trust ourselves, at least we

have preserved some integrity, been honest (with self and others) and have opened the door for the Holy Spirit to increase our faith in Him - certainly making us strong candidates for teachable situations and circumstances where we can learn to fully trust in Him and Him alone. The scripture does in fact, tells us "lean not on your own understanding, but acknowledge Him in all your ways and he will direct your paths."

Without reading into it something that does not belong, it is safe to say this particular Proverb insinuates that our willful dependence on God gives us access to the guidance essential to navigating to our life. So, it seems that the most certain path to becoming **more than a conqueror in life, love, and the hereafter** would be to follow the advice of the wise man and other biblical insights just like it. Here are a few of the obvious ones:

2 Corinthians 2:14-17

But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. 15 For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, 16 to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? 17 For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.

1 John 5:4-5

For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

1 Corinthians 1:20-31

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. 22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. 30 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31 so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.

2 Timothy 1:6-7

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, 7 for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

More Than... In Life, Love, and the Hereafter

Attitudes

[attitude]; a settled way of thinking or feeling about someone or something, a disposition or mindset impacting subsequent behavior

Key Words: Apathy - Anger - Doubt - Despair - Fear

Behaviors

[behavior]; the way in which one acts or conducts oneself, recurring responses toward others and self, an established pattern or habit of action or reaction

Key Words: Hurtful - Hostile - Learned - Passive - Aggressive

Cultures

[culture]; the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group - the attitudes and behavior characteristic of a particular social group - modern popular culture transmitted via the mass media and aimed particularly at younger people

Key Words: Illusion - Delusion - Influence - Insecurity - Identity

Demons

[demon]; an evil spirit or devil, thought to possess or oppress a person - a cruel, evil, or destructive person or thing - an evil force or foe, a dark or oppressive presence - the constant torment of failed past or the face of troubled and traumatic past experiences

Key Words: Tragedy - Triumph - Oppression - Possession - Curses

Emotion

[emotion]; a natural instinctive state of mind deriving from one's circumstances, mood, or relationships with others – instinctive, protective, or intuitive feeling as distinguished from reasoning or factual knowledge

Key Words: Instinct - Instability - Sentiment - Sensation - Passion

1.5.20

Essentials for Becoming More Than: Three Heart-Felt Spirit-Led Mind-Sets

What I'm about to tell you should become our *Heart-Felt, Spirit-Led, Mind-Set*. Absorb that for a moment.

(ONE)

To Be More Than - Never Be Less Than

Because Jesus loves you and I, we are not LESSER THAN in ANYTHING. Because Jesus loves you and I, we are MORE THAN, in EVERYTHING.

This statement is 100% true because in Christ we find our security, identity, and ability. Find yourself in Jesus, and do not lose yourself in either the anti-christ sentiment or malicious strategies of this world. THEY ARE LESSER THAN the overcoming and conquering power that God has designed for our lives. In Christ who loves us we are MORE THAN and not LESSER THAN. That is precisely why Paul the great apostle of the New Testament, wrote these words to the church at Rome... [and yes, they are for us as well].

"No, In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."

Does any of this sound any less or lesser than anything other than being more than an overcomer, a victorious conqueror? Of course not, because it is not. Here are some key scriptural foundations for this point.

2 Corinthians 2:14-17

But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. 15 For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, 16 to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? 17 For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.

1 John 5:4-5

For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

(TWO)

To Be More Than - Two Are Better Than One

Not much more needed to say after that. The scripture has consistently placed an importance of two as opposed to one in the context of spiritual battles, spiritual agreement, spiritual strength and safety. As the narrator said, Jesus called His disciples and sent them out two by two and gave them authority over evil and dark spirits (Mark 6:7-8). The wisdom of Solomon (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12) says,

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. 10 For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! 11 Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? 12 And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him-a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

In this journey to becoming "More Than" it is essential to have an encourager, a prayer partner, a confidant', a mentor, or even just someone to trust with your honesty and to spiritually have your back. **To be "More Than" you need "More Than."** Make sense?

(THREE)

To Be More Than - Conquering Won't Always Look Like Winning

To get this we need to set it up with these two passages written again by Paul the Apostle (one of the originators of the "More Than" way of life).

1 Corinthians 1:24-28

But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God's weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength.

26 Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world's eyes or powerful or wealthy when God called you. 27 Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame

those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. 28 God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud. 8 Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. 9 Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. 10 That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

One last example. Do you remember story of the Roman crucifixion of Jesus led by the hypocritical outcry and fraudulent claims of the religious Jew? There is this moment of hopelessness and loss when Jesus cries out "*it is finished*" and releases his last gasp of air. Even though we know now in biblical hindsight that this was actually *a conquering moment* it certainly didn't look or feel like one. It looked and felt more like Satan and the Pharisees had won and Jesus had lost. It's right there we find our teachable and revelation moment. We must learn to live and walk by faith, not necessarily by what we see or feel. To be **More Than**, we must learn that Conquering doesn't always look like winning.

1.12.20

More Than... In Life, Love, and the Hereafter

ABCDE... To be **MORE THAN In Life, in Love, and the Hereafter, never be less than.** We can never settle for being less than we can be - or less than God intended that we be. To be **MORE THAN in life, in love and the hereafter two will always be better than one** and it will take the help and support of a prayer partner, a trusted friend, a good brother or sister in Christ. To be **MORE THAN in life, in love and the hereafter conquering won't always look like winning** but being more than a conqueror through Christ who loved us will always make us a winner!

More than... In life, in love, and the hereafter just about covers it all. To approach something of this magnitude with any sense of clarity and personal connection we have to define and process these very real obstacles to becoming **MORE THAN Conquerors in life love and hereafter.** They are simply **ABCDE!** Each letter represents the name of a critical and functional component of our life our love and our hereafter.

A = Attitude

B = Behavior

C = Culture

D = Demonic

E = Emotion

We will use a Sunday gathering for each one of these to define them with both a broad and narrow context, and as both obstacles and opportunities **in life, love, and the hereafter.** We will also identify a glossary of key words for each that can

personally connect us to each one as we own and learn to use in becoming **MORE THAN... In Life, In Love, and In the Hereafter.**

Attitude

[attitude quotes]

"Stop worrying about the world ending today. It's already tomorrow in Australia."

Charles M. Schulz

"The greatest day in your life and mine is when we take total responsibility for our attitudes. That's the day we truly grow up." John C. Maxwell

"Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms - to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way." Viktor E. Frankl

"A bad attitude is like a flat tire. You can't go anywhere until you change it." -

Anonymous

[attitude defined]

[attitude]; a settled way of thinking or feeling about someone or something, a disposition or mindset impacting subsequent approach and behavior towards life, love, and the hereafter.

[attitude]; a psychological construct, a mental and emotional entity that inheres in, or characterizes a person. Attitudes are complex and are an acquired state through experiences past and present (physical spiritual, emotional). It is an individual's predisposed state of mind regarding a value and it is precipitated through a responsive expression towards a person, place, thing, or event (the attitude object) which in turn influences the individual's thought and action.

[key attitude words]: Apathy/Passionate - Anger/Joy - Doubt/Belief - Despair/Hope - Pride/Humility

[biblical truth]:

Ephesians 4:17-32

Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. 18 They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. 19 They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. 20 But that is not the way you learned Christ!— 21 assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, 22 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be made new in the attitude of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. 25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of

another. 26 Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and give no opportunity to the devil. 28 Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. 29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

[attitude content]

I guess we all have figured out by now that attitudes are important. For followers and believers' in Jesus - attitudes are a game-changer. For our context (more than), Paul listed **three virtues** that are available to our attitude to become **MORE THAN in Life Love and the Hereafter.**

The first - **BE HUMBLE.** In Greek culture, humility was thought of as a vice or weakness, to be practiced only by slaves or anyone considered by culture or class as lesser than. But Paul stated that Christians should be completely humble in their day to day lives. This is the opposite of pride. On the other hand Christians should not promote false humility, but should recognize who they are in God's program.

Romans 12:3

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

This virtue is listed first because of Paul's consistent emphasis on unity (pride destroys unity - humility builds unity) and to counteract their struggle with past pride, and to motivate and facilitate obedience and dependence on God. Christ was the supreme example of that kind of humility.

Philippians 2:5-8

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

The second - **BE GENTLE**. The evidence of a right attitude in a Christian believer is to be gentleness or "meek" (prautētos).

1 Peter 3:13-17

**Now who is there to harm you if you are zealous for what is good?
14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, 15 but in your hearts**

honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, 16 having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. 17 For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

This is the opposite of being abrasive, rude, and harsh. The expectation here is - keeping one's emotions under control (chill). Gentle or Meek - not soft or weak. Not looking for weakness or passivity here. Reach for balance - between one who is angry all the time and one who is never angry - somewhere between the "anger ball and the "sponge-ball." Anyone who is controlled by God can be angry at the right time but never angry at the wrong time. Moses had the reputation for being a gentle or meek man (Numbers 12:3). But, he got angry when Israel sinned against God (Exodus 32). Jesus was both gentle and humble in heart (Matthew 11:29). But, He became angry because the Priests rented the temple space as a public E-Bay for thieves (Matt. 21:12-13).

The third - **BE PATIENT**. patience (makrothymias). Patience is the never give up, wait a little longer, persevering spirit of peace that gives us the attitude needed to become **MORE THAN** and not lesser than in times of frustration, difficulty, and adversity.

James 5:8-11

Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about

it, until it receives the early and the late rains. 8 You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. 9 Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. 10 As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

It is the faith and focus that trusts and believes and does not doubt and pout. This patience does not quickly and hastily retaliate or abandon God's plans and promises. Patience is evidence that we are becoming MORE THAN in Life, Love, and the Hereafter.

Colossians 3:12-14

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Paul gives these us these three attitudes (humility - gentleness - patience) to listen to, to learn from, and to love with. They are available to use to become the new us - MORE THAN and NEVER LESS THAN. These are available to unite the two of us to become better than just one of us, and to bring confidence and certainty to the fact

that conquering doesn't always look like winning. For us to become more humble, abandoning self-pride and arrogance, to embrace gentleness and reject being rude, harsh and abrasive, and finally to understand that patience is a complete virtue. Patience is capable of leading us into an attitude that always gives us hope, help and the MORE THAN advantage in life, love, and the hereafter. Paul is saying... **bear with one another in love and make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.** In our character and conduct reflect this new attitude. Be MORE THAN. Use your new attitude in your character and conduct to "protect this house" guard and represent what God made in creating the "one new man."

Ephesians 2:13-16

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 15 by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

They are to keep this unity "through the bond" which consists of "peace." This attitude will mean that Christians will listen to, learn from, and love each other even in frustration, difficulty, and adversity.

The teachable moment for you and I becomes when we have been begun to be made new in the attitude of our minds; no longer futile in our thinking, darkened in

our understanding, and ignorant of God's truth. These are not commands and demands - these are attitudes needed to love, serve and lead as MORE THAN in Life, Love, and the Hereafter.

Romans 6:6

We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

1.19.20

More Than... In Life, Love, and the Hereafter

[intro]

ABCDE... To be **MORE THAN In life, love, and the hereafter - Never be Less**

Than. We can never settle for being less than we can be - or less than God intended

that we be. To be **MORE THAN in life, love and the hereafter - Two Are be Better**

Than One. It will take the help and support of a prayer partner, a trusted friend, a

good brother or sister in Christ. To be **MORE THAN in life, love and the hereafter**

- Conquering Won't Always Look Like Winning.

This is significant. To unpack something this significant with any real sense of clarity

and personal connection we have to define and then process the opportunities,

obstacles, and outcomes to becoming **MORE THAN Conquerors in life love and**

hereafter. Not to be cute (I was going for memorable), but I put this process in

simple terms. **ABCDE** - each letter represents the name of a critical component that

has shaped or influenced our life our love and our hereafter.

A = Attitude

B = Behavior

C = Culture

D = Demonic

E = Emotion.

Behavior

[behavior quotes and facts]

How do you change your behavior? Change what you worship. Timothy Keller

No one is born with greed, prejudice, bigotry, patriotism and hatred; these are all learned behavior patterns. Jacque Fresco

Christ changes men, who then change their environment. The world would shape human behavior, but Christ can change human nature. Ezra Taft Benson

There is never a right way to behave the wrong way. Anonymous

A study on human behavior has revealed that 90 percent of the population can be classified into four basic personality types: optimistic, pessimistic, trusting and envious. However, the latter of the four types, envious, is the most common, with 30 percent compared to 20 percent for each of the other groups. Psychology Today

[behavior defined]: the way in which one acts or conducts oneself, recurring responses toward others and self, an established pattern or habit of action or reaction

[behavior key words]: Hurtful/Helpful - Hostile/Peaceful - Learned/Revealed - Passive/Aggressive - Mean/Kind - Good/Evil -

[biblical truth]:

2 Timothy 1:6-7

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, 7 for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

Deuteronomy 28:13-14

And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail, and you will only go up and not down, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, being careful to do them, 14 and if you do not turn aside from any of the words that I command you today, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

[behavior content]:

Right Thoughts - Right Heart - Right Behavior. It is in these simplistic yet profound truths of God's word that we get the revelation (discovery) and insight (answers) to our behavior. Although many would like it to be, our behavior is no mystery. It may be complicated, complex, and confusing but it is not a mystery. We know what we know about what we have thought - said - done. We know that when our thoughts are right, that our heart is right. And when know that when our heart is right our behavior is right. That is not a mystery. It is acknowledging ownership and taking responsibility for who we are and what we do. Are there complications, complexities and confusion to this kind of reality? Yes, without a doubt. However, none of this unique to you and I - this stuff goes all the way back to the garden - to

Adam and Eve. And in one of the most honest and God-breathed inspirations of the entire Bible, Paul the Apostle of Jesus wrote these words...

Romans 7:15-21

For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. 16 Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. 17 So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. 18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. 19 For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. 20 Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me 21 So I find it to be a law - that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.

Does that clear things up - LOL? This is not the place in scripture or life where we settle for LESS THAN in our behavior just because it demands we be MORE THAN. It is also not the place where we disengage, give in, or give up only because we don't understand. That is not the point Paul was making or place he was creating. His inspiration and messaging were directed towards a place of honest acknowledgement to a point of very real and present struggle with our behavior. It is a natural and spiritual reality that our behavior is directly impacted every moment of every day by the desires of both good and evil -they both show up for work every day. But... that is not the place God intended we stay - that would be accepting LESS THAN and not reaching for MORE THAN.

Right Thoughts

Philippians 4:8-9

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. 9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Right Heart

1 John 3:19-22

By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; 20 for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. 21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; 22 and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. 23 And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. 24 Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

Right Behavior

Romans 12:9-21

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.

10 Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. 11 Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve

the Lord. 12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. 13 Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show

hospitality. 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. 17 Repay no one evil for

evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved,

never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."

20 To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his

head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

[behavior close]:

Here is the revelation/proclamation that God gave me to share with you in regard to becoming MORE THAN in our BEHAVIOR. This is the closer. You can leave here and use this - its real.

"With relentless resistance I am going to over-take what I have allowed myself to become - to be taken-over by who God has intended me to be. To honor God and the people I love with what I think, say and do I am going to trust His process - embrace the grind - and endure the struggle."

To BE MORE THAN Jesus Said...

trust His process... if anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. (Mark 8:34)

embrace the grind... work while it is day, because the night is coming, and no one will be able to work. (John 9:4)

endure the struggle... But he that endures to the end will be saved. (Matthew 24:13)

1.26.20

More Than... In Life, Love, and the Hereafter

[intro/recap]:

ABCDE... To be MORE THAN In life, love, and the hereafter - Never be Less Than. We can never settle for being less than we can be - or less than God intended that we be. To be MORE THAN in life, love and the hereafter - Two Are be Better Than One. It will take the help and support of a prayer partner, a trusted friend, a good brother or sister in Christ. To be MORE THAN in life, love and the hereafter - Conquering Won't Always Look Like Winning.

Culture

[quotes about culture]

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force.

- Karl Marx

A nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people.

- Mahatma Gandhi

Is adult entertainment killing our children? or is killing our children entertaining our adults?

- Marilyn Manson

Whoever controls the media, the images, controls the culture. Alan Ginsberg
Our culture runs on coffee and gasoline, the first often tasting like the second.

- Edward Abbey

[culture defined]

[culture]: the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group - the attitudes and behavior characteristic of a particular social group - modern popular culture transmitted via the mass media and aimed particularly at younger people.

[culture 2]: an umbrella term encompassing the social behavior and norms found in human societies, as influenced and constructed by the knowledge, beliefs, arts, laws, customs, capabilities and habits of the individuals in these societies and or communities.

[culture key words]: Illusion - Delusion - Influence - Isolation - Community - Insecurity - Identity

[biblical truth and culture]:

Psalm 12:1-8,

Save, O LORD, for the godly one is gone; for the faithful have vanished from among the children of man. 2 Everyone utters lies to his neighbor; with flattering lips and a double heart they speak. 3 May the LORD cut off all flattering lips, the tongue that makes great boasts, 4 those who

say, "With our tongue we will prevail, our lips are with us; who is master over us?" 5 "Because the poor are plundered, because the needy groan, I will now arise," says the LORD; "I will place him in the safety for which he longs." 6 The words of the LORD are pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times. 7 You, O LORD, will keep them; you will guard us from this generation forever.

In 2016, Oxford dictionaries choice for "word of the year" was post-truth. I know it's two words. But... it is what they call a compound modifier. A word made up of two words that work together to function like one adjective. When you connect words with the hyphen, you make it clear to readers that the words work together as a singular meaning. Anyway, Oxford revealed the word had shown a 2000% lexicon increase in usage during the year. The word was used overwhelmingly to describe the American culture as a 'post-truth' culture. Meaning simply this; US culture/society were now less influenced by objective facts than they were appeals to their emotion. Data supported a greater tolerance and connection to dishonest, inaccurate claims. Trending was a digital menu of surreal and virtual experiences engineered to stimulate preferred emotion and feeling. Ironically, the same culture who coined the hashtag "just bein' real" became the first American culture to consume and fund a multi-billion dollar industry of reality avoidance and factual irrelevance. The criteria for truth established merely by its ability to make one feel good about how one felt. To accommodate a cultural appetite of that magnitude emotive truth had to casually and comfortably become the new normal. Of course we know that is a certain contradiction to Biblical truth and it is not MORE THAN - it is LESS THAN.

2 Timothy 4:3-5

For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

Romans 1:21-25

For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, 25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

In these two instructional warnings the writer (Paul) describes a culture who has settled for less-than the truth and not demanded more-than a lie. The results are painfully predictable. Jesus gives clear example of exchanging the truth of God for the traditions of man in a very direct exchange with the original "LESS-THAN" culture.

Matthew 15:1-9

**Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said,
2 "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do**

not wash their hands when they eat.” 3 Jesus answered, **“And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? 4 For God commanded, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ 5 But you say, ‘If anyone tells his father or his mother, ‘What you would have gained from me is given to God,’ 6 he need not honor his father.’ So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God. 7 You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: 8 “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; 9 in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”**

[culture - context]

So where does this place us in this struggle to be MORE THAN and never LESS THAN? First, we need to know that we are in a good place because we are in Him who loves us. So no matter what kind of culture we find ourselves surrounded by we are not overwhelmed and overcome - we are always MORE THAN a LESS THAN culture. Secondly, we must know with all certainty that any culture that does not acknowledge God, or allow its people to freely worship God as its ultimate truth and moral authority cannot rightly and justly govern its people to become MORE THAN. History has tried that and each time became LESS THAN.

Finally, In a media-dominant culture we have many voices that are continuously streamed to us through various platforms; TV, radio, Internet, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, email and text message - all telling us who we are, and what to believe. We have the voices of family, friends, communities and colleagues - telling us who

we are, and what to believe. And sometimes we even have the voice of Satan (more on him next week) tempting us to distrust and disbelieve God's word - to doubt that God has our best interests and outcomes at heart. Why would God? How could a God? What kind of God? Where was God? If there truly was a God, wouldn't that God? All of this LESSER-THAN narrative creates the anxiety and expectation of the post-truth culture of agnostics [people who believe that nothing is known or can be known of the existence or nature of God or of anything beyond material phenomena]. Mostly bitter, broken, bound and alone (even with access to others). Being in the darkness of disbelief and traveling the path of aloneness is always painful and definitively LESSER THAN. To navigate through and away from this, to become MORE THAN in spite of a LESSER-THAN culture, we listen for one voice. Jesus said...

John 10:27-29

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

When we Get it, we are MORE THAN and never LESS-THAN and that is Good.

[culture - takeaways]

To Be More Than in Our Culture We Know Who God Is

Revelation 21:5-7

And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." 6 And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. 7 The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

To Be More Than in Our Culture We Know Who We Are - In Him

Psalm 100:3-5

Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. 4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! 5 For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

To Be More Than in Our Culture - Truth is Our Culture, Culture is Not Our Truth

1 Peter 2:9-10

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 10 Once you

were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

2.2.20

Demonic

[intro/recap]:

ABCDE... To be MORE THAN In life, love, and the hereafter - **Never be Less Than.**

We can never settle for being less than we can be - or less than God intended that

we be. To be MORE THAN in life, love and the hereafter - **Two Are be Better Than**

One. It will take the help and support of a prayer partner, a trusted friend, a good

brother or sister in Christ. To be MORE THAN in life, love and the hereafter -

Conquering Won't Always Look Like Winning.

We are going to be MORE THAN in facing the demonic forces of evil and haunting

demons of our past. To engage ourselves in this offensive against the strategic and

merciless attempts of Satan and the demonic forces that come with him will lead us

to seek refuge and power from the only force greater - **THE POWER OF GOD'S**

HOLY SPIRIT, MANIFEST IN AND THROUGH THE RESURRECTED AND LIVING

SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.

Spiritual power is far more important than earthly power - WRITE IT DOWN. It

cannot be manufactured, it can only come from the kind of relationship that Jesus

had with His Father - God. This teaching can be life-changing for anyone who is

ready to move forward in spiritual warfare against the demonic forces that have for

so long tried to destroy our lives and the lives of those we love. It is time to become

MORE THAN...

[first thoughts/revelation]

Demonic attacks are conceived in a spiritually evil realm - but can become physically or emotionally manifested. A demonic attack or oppression must be as the scripture says, must be wrestled with in that spiritual realm. Wrestling against demonic forces that have manifested themselves physically or emotionally cannot always be overcome by treating and beating our bodies and minds. The reality is that could be anything - name it. Although what can be seen seems rather obvious, if it is a demonic force, it is not. As it is launched or sent from the spiritual realm a demonic force cannot be seen until it is actually manifested. For people who are aware or woke to those type things they sometimes can be sensed or discerned - that is usually good. But even with that, the demonic reality just is not always recognized or acknowledged for what it is - real.

On the other hand, physical and emotional manifestations such as poor choices, addiction, chronic-compulsive, disease, illness, tragedy, trauma, crisis/disaster, human break-down are not ALL the result of demonic forces or schemes and memes from the devils workshop. Not every human condition can be assessed by or blamed on darkness, devils and demons.

The last thought before we begin is this. In an Anti-Christ climate and cultivation such as ours here in the West (void of a biblical world-view), demonic forces and attacks are comfortably assimilated into the mainstream through all platforms - it's on!

Job 1

The Lord said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it. And the Lord said to Satan, have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?"

[Essential MORE THAN Bundle - WORD vs. Demonic]

Philippians 2:9-10

Therefore, God elevated him (Christ) to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

Mark 16:17

In My name they (believers) will cast out demons.

Ephesians 6:11-12

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:14-18

Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. 14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, 18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication.

James 4:7-8

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

John 10:27-29

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

Romans 8:37-39

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height

nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[quotes on the demonic]

There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about demons and devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight. - C.S. Lewis

If I got rid of my demons, I'd lose my angels. - Tennessee Williams

In this world, there is only one demon whose blood flowing in its veins has the power to turn humans into demons. – Muzan Kibutsuji (Demon Slayer)

The love of power is the demon of mankind. - Friedrich Nietzsche

I know the type of demons they have to fight and I am going to help them fight, because it's the only way I can keep them from getting to my family. - Michael Irvin

Just beat my record for most consecutive days without dying. - Bill Murray

[demonic defined]

[demonic]: an evil spirit or devil, thought to possess or oppress a person - a cruel, evil, or destructive person or thing - an evil force or foe, a dark oppressive or tormenting presence

[demons]: the constant torment of failed past or the face of troubled and traumatic past experiences - a source or agent of evil, harm, distress, or ruin - the demons of drug and alcohol addiction, confronting the demons of his childhood

[demonic key words]: Tragedy/Triumph - Manifestation - Oppression - Possession - Curses - Torment - Authority - Deliverance - Resistance

[biblical truth and the demonic]

Matthew 16:13-19

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" 14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter replied, "YOU ARE THE CHRIST THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD." 17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind

on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

I love the Message translation of verse 19.

A YES ON EARTH IS A YES IN HEAVEN - A NO ON EARTH IS A NO IN HEAVEN

This truth is a definite weapon against any demonic force that comes against us. Jesus says, in effect, that the powers of hell will 'not overcome' the person who in faith proclaims HIM as the Son of the Living God (verse 16). As the church Jesus we are MORE THAN, armed with the keys (access) to His kingdom, we can move against the gates of hell and set free the captive, the burdened, and the broken.

The demonic forces of evil will try to come against Christ His Church (us). But Jesus, said, the 'gates of Hades' will not be able to withstand the force and power of the church of Jesus Christ. The indication here from Jesus was not that Peter was the foundation for His church - but rather Jesus, the authority and power as the churches one true foundation. In Christ, we become the Petra (rock) that He will use to build His church. This authority and power allows the church of Jesus to go on the offensive against any demonic force, assured of being MORE THAN conquerors against the gates (defenses) of our enemy.

We have the amazing privilege and experience of seeing people liberated through the preaching of the good news of the kingdom - the word of truth. We have the joy of seeing people becoming MORE THAN addiction, oppression, depression, anxiety, and every kind of evil, illness, and disease. We can approach challenges and

difficulty with confidence, without fear of demonic influence or attack, knowing that we access and pair with remarkable spiritual authority and power. We are MORE THAN and never LESS-THAN, through Christ who loved us.

[demonic outcomes and takeaways]

[outcomes]

Let me tell you a personal story...

On three successive mornings starting January 27th, I was awakened precisely at 2:30 am to what felt like to me was movement and a presence in my room just to the left-side of my bed. I sat straight up each time looked at the clock, and used my phone light to illuminate the darkness towards the small sofa to my left. The presence that I felt was not good or comforting, it was frightening and unsettling. Each time, I could hear a quiet male voice speak to me - it seemed to be coming from close by my bedside. Very quickly, I knew what the presence was (demonic), I knew why it was happening (fear, mockery, and intimidation). I also knew that it was very real (it happened), but that it was not true (every word was a purposeful demonic lie). Here is what was said...

Monday 2:30 am - demonic lie #1

You've had a voice. You've had your time and influence, but not anymore - it's over. I'm going to silence you.

Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people. Acts 18:9-10

Tuesday 2:30 am - demonic lie #2

Reunion won't fight against me, I'm going to make them fight against themselves. I'm going to divide you.

For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility - Ephesians 2:14

Wednesday 2:30 am - demonic lie #3

If you think you had heart trouble before, just wait. I'm going to disable you.

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. - 1 Peter 2:24

[takeaways]

TO BECOME MORE THAN conquerors against the demonic attack and activity of our spiritual enemy - we proclaim the power of Jesus Name against evil, disease, fear and doubt.

Mark 16:16-18

Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.

16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does

not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover.

TO WALK in agreement and unity with other believers against the powers and principalities of darkness.

Matthew 18:19-20

Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.

TO ACT in faith and assurance that demonic forces of evil cannot overtake or overcome you as a believer in Christ Jesus - no matter what the circumstances.

Isaiah 54:14-17

In righteousness you will be established; you will be far from oppression, for you will not fear; and from terror, for it will not come near you. 15 If anyone stirs up strife, it is not from me; whoever stirs up strife with you will fall because of you. 16 Behold, I have created the smith who blows the fire of coals and produces a weapon for its purpose. I have also created the ravager to destroy; 17 no weapon that is fashioned against you will succeed, and you will refute every tongue

that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their vindication from me, declares the LORD.

TO EXPERIENCE the revelation knowledge that any demonic presence, power, or plan against you is under the command and authority of our resurrected Savior - Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:16-23

I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

TO VALUE the church as the conquering body of Jesus Christ against Satan and his demons.

1 John 4:1-4

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. 4 Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

2.9.20

[biblical truth - weapons and warfare]

2 Corinthians 10:4

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds."

3 Weapons for Demonic Warfare

[Written Word - Spoken Word - Faith Word]

Matthew 4:1-11 [written word]

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." 4 But he answered, "It is written, 'Man will not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple 6 and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.' 7 Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You will not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, "All

these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” 10 Then Jesus said to him, “**Be gone, Satan! For it is written, ‘You will worship the Lord your God and him only will you serve.’** 11 Then the devil left him, and immediately, angels came and were ministering to him.

This is of course Matthew’s re-tell of spiritual warfare exchange between Jesus and the demonic forces of Satan. Jesus reveals that the **WRITTEN WORD** is a definite weapon against any demonic force that comes against us. The devil hates and fears God’s Word because it is a two-edged weapon of warfare that can cut him apart. GOD’S WORD is unmovable and unchangeable. It is a solid foundation for your faith and an anchor for your soul. You can trust it, you can stand on it, and you can believe it with your whole heart because God (by covenant) honors His Word! No matter what you are experiencing in the natural, agree with the Word and confess it over your health, your finances, your family, your business, your ministry, and every area of battle and difficulty of your life. HERE IS HOW IT WORKS...

IT IS WRITTEN: And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).

IT IS WRITTEN: He will call on me, and I will answer him (Psalm 91:15).

IT IS WRITTEN: The one who sows righteousness reaps a sure reward (Proverbs 11:18).

IT IS WRITTEN: If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? (Matthew 6:30).

IT IS WRITTEN: I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you (Luke 10:19).

IT IS WRITTEN: No harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent (Psalm 91:10).

IT IS WRITTEN: The righteous person may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all (Psalm 34:19).

IT IS WRITTEN: And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up (James 5:15).

IT IS WRITTEN: Cast your cares on the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken (Psalm 55:22).

IT IS WRITTEN: The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them (Psalm 34:7).

IT IS WRITTEN: Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this (Psalm 37:5).

IT IS WRITTEN: We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed (2 Corinthians 4:8–9).

Matthew 16:15-19 [spoken word]

Jesus said to them (disciples), "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter replied, "YOU ARE THE CHRIST THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD." 17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter [petros, Grk; strong rock], and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

As the church Jesus we are MORE THAN, armed and dangerous having been given the keys (access to His kingdom, and authority to proclaim the gospel of Christ) we can move in strength against demonic forces. This another weapon of warfare against the demonic forces of evil.

Don't be fooled into disbelief, and certainly don't become blinded to the truth about evil intentions. The demonic forces of evil will try to come against Christ His Church (us). But Jesus, said, "the 'gates of Hades' will not be able to withstand the force and power of the church of Jesus Christ." He says clearly, that the powers of hell will 'not overcome' His people. His people? Those who in faith proclaim HIM as the Son of the Living God, verse 16).

The indication (verse 18), from Jesus was not that Peter was the foundation for His church, but rather Himself - Christ Jesus. Jesus the authority and power as the churches one true foundation. In Christ, as did Peter, we become the Petros (rock/force) that He will use to build His church. This authority and power allows the Church of Jesus to go on the offensive demonic forces. Here is how that works according to Jesus in verse 19. I love the Message translation of that verse, **"A YES ON EARTH IS A YES IN HEAVEN - A NO ON EARTH IS A NO IN HEAVEN."**

In Christ when we say YES to Him our word is sent-sealed-saved in Heaven. Conversely, when we say NO to the demonic attacks and forces of evil, our word is also sent-sealed-saved in heaven. This a significant piece to the authority given to us as people of God and the Church of Jesus Christ. Our authority to SPEAK (bind and loose) between heaven and earth is a weapon that comes from **our submission to, and acknowledgement of** God's authority.

James 4:7

Submit to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Because of this **SPOKEN WORD** authority, we have the amazing privilege and possibility of seeing people liberated through the presence of God and the preaching and proclaiming of the good news of the kingdom - the word of truth. We have the joy of seeing people becoming MORE THAN their addiction, oppression, depression, anxiety and every kind of evil, illness, and disease. We can approach challenges and difficulty with confidence, without fear of demonic influence or attack, knowing that when we speak in unity with God's ways and will - we access and activate the remarkable spiritual authority and power of Christ.

Matthew 17:14-20 [faith word]

And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he suffers severe seizures; he often falls into the fire and often into the water. So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him." Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long will I bear with you? Bring him here to Me." And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour. "Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.

Interesting that when the disciples asked Jesus why they were not able to cast out the demonic forces over the boy, Jesus had a simple answer: "Because of your unbelief." Wow... He then goes on to re-enforce this statement by saying that faith as a grain of mustard seed can remove mountains. This brings us to the tip of the spear: when dealing with demonic forces and evil manifestations against us, **FAITH IS A REQUIRED WEAPON.**

The scripture teaches us clearly that unbelief is poisonous - definitely less-than. Unbelief, in contrast to faith, is the agreement with the **spirit of the age (zietgiest)**. It is the tolerance and acceptance of demonic ways and thinking rather than THE ways and thinking of Christ. Anyone who is in agreement or negotiations with the

demonic forces of darkness is going to have a difficult time resisting or overcoming. Definitely not MORE THAN. Faith is belief and agreement with the Word of God. It is not dictated by the senses or feelings (more on that next week). In God's mind, faith and belief is substance and evidence (Hebrews 11:1) - Right?

While God's power operates through belief and faith, Satan thrives on fear. In becoming MORE THAN - fear has got to go. Demonic forces smell fear like sharks smell blood, and only makes them more aggressive. To be MORE THAN - we must approach demonic force with assurance and confidence in the power and authority of the name of Jesus. We know He has given us authority to "trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you" (Luke 10:19). No demon is going to be able to attach itself to you. No curse is going to come upon you (Proverbs 26:2). We are More Than and we have nothing to fear from demonic. You are covered in the blood of Jesus. You are a child of God. Jesus has already "disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. (Colossians 2:15).

[takeaways]:

TO BECOME MORE THAN conquerors against the demonic attack and activity of our spiritual enemy - we proclaim the power of Jesus Name against evil, disease, fear and doubt.

Mark 16:16-18

Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.

16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does

not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover.

TO WALK in agreement and unity with other believers against the powers and principalities of darkness.

Matthew 18:19-20

Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.

TO ACT in faith and assurance that demonic forces of evil cannot overtake or overcome you as a believer in Christ Jesus - no matter what the circumstances.

Isaiah 54:14-17

In righteousness you will be established; you will be far from oppression, for you will not fear; and from terror, for it will not come near you. 15 If anyone stirs up strife, it is not from me; whoever stirs up strife with you will fall because of you. 16 Behold, I have created the smith who blows the fire of coals and produces a weapon for its purpose. I have also created the ravager to destroy; 17 no weapon that is fashioned against you will succeed, and you will refute every tongue

that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their vindication from me, declares the LORD.

TO EXPERIENCE the revelation knowledge that any demonic presence, power, or plan against you is under the command and authority of our resurrected Savior - Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:16-21

I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

TO VALUE the church as the conquering body of Jesus Christ against Satan and his demons.

Ephesians 1:22-23

And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

2.16.20

More Than... In Life, Love, and the Hereafter

Emotions

When God created us in His image, that image included our emotions. So that we can become MORE-THAN and NEVER LESS-THAN, God gives us all things to enjoy, mature and healthy emotions bring meaning and purpose to our lives through all we have been given. The significance of you and I becoming MORE THAN in our Emotions is this. First, emotions are like breathing air - inhale, exhale. They are the fluid ever present current within us: they define our inner world and give us a running commentary on the outer world. Even our awareness of life starts with emotions. Our emotions are so present and persistent that our spiritual growth and our life's well-being demand of us a stronger understanding of emotions. They are closer to us than our skin, than the air we breathe. Emotions are as constant and present as the weather surrounding us. We need to understand and manage them. Emotions unchecked and rampant they are a wrecking ball and a cruel task-master - harnessed and re-directed they are a catalyst for courage and conquest. No, it's even MORE THAN that!!! We can learn to use the emotions and feelings we have, processing them in the way God has desired us to - or they can betray us and derail us. But God has a process and purpose for our emotions and what we feel so that we are becoming and overcoming, so that we are MORE THAN in our Emotions and never settling for LESSER-THAN He has intended. We can start this process with the words of Jesus, and the words of Paul His apostle...

Matthew 6:33

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

1 Timothy 6:17

As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be arrogant, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.

Next we embrace the reality that we are instructed in scripture to enjoy and become MORE-THAN in all of life - productive in our work, loving with our mates, patient with our children, wise with our good health, generous with our material blessings, and of course centered and anchored by our love for God. Without emotions, becoming MORE-THAN would NOT be probable or possible.

Ecclesiastes 9:10

Whatever you do, do well. For when you go to the grave, there will be no work or planning or knowledge or wisdom.

Mark 12:30

Love the Lord Your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength.

There are many things that we do know about our emotions. God's Word is generous in wisdom and the Holy Spirit is available to continually reveal truth to us about what we feel and how to use and not to use these feelings in ways that lead

us to becoming MORE-THAN. Here are four essential facts that can get us moving away from being LESSER-THAN.

[Emotions Fact One]:

Our Emotions Respond and React to Our Physical Circumstances

We are made to enjoy God. We enjoy our families and our friends. We enjoy the opportunities God gives us to use our abilities to serve and love others. Life has purpose and fulfillment. Our spiritual life grows, matures and deepens as we learn to appreciate and multiply God's blessings - that is being MORE-THAN with our emotions and certainly keeps us potentially from being LESS-THAN.

When life is good and everything is working out—when we move into a new home, when our kids achieve, finish college and find a good job, when they marry the right woman or man, when we have a good report from the doctor, when we actually have money left over at the end of the month—these outcomes make us happy and directly reflect favorable and

Job 1:20-22

Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head and fell on the ground and worshiped. 21 And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." 22 In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

Psalms 40:5

Lord my God, you have done many amazing things! You have made great plans for us—too many to list. I could talk on and on about them, because there are too many to count.

[Emotions Fact 2]:

Our Emotions Respond and React to Our Spiritual Circumstances

When we feel overwhelmed with shame or guilt and find forgiveness by trusting in Jesus Christ, he or she feels cleansed and free. We often see this happen in women who have carried the guilt and pain of abortion for years; they tell us they have found emotional and spiritual healing through Christ's forgiveness, particularly within the context of a support group for abortion recovery. After immorality has destroyed their self-worth, I've seen women renounce their unhealthy lifestyles and find joy in obedience to the Lord.

Philippians 1:18-21

What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice, 19 for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, 20 as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

[Emotions Fact 3]:

Our Emotions Can Become Our Lesser-Than Outcome

If our emotions become a runaway train that we can't control or re-direct, more than likely we will weaponize what we are feeling against not only ourselves, but also against the people we love the most. We become then as they say... "One of those hurting people who hurt other people." We are toxic - we are LESS-THAN.

Ephesians 4:26

If you are angry, don't sin by nursing your grudge. Don't let the sun go down with you still angry—get over it quickly; don't give an opportunity for the devil.

Job 40:11

Watch out! Don't let your anger at others lead you into scoffing at God! Don't let your suffering embitter you towards the only one who can deliver you.

Psalms 37:8

Stop your anger! Turn off your wrath. Don't fret and worry—it only leads to harm.

Ezekiel 36:26

And I will give you a new heart—I will give you new and right desires—and put a new spirit within you. I will take out your stony hearts of sin and give you new hearts of love.

[Emotions Fact 4]:

Our Emotions Can Become Our More-Than Outcome

If our emotions are filtered and re-directed through truth, logic and reason, we can become energized, empowered and educated by what we are feeling. This lifts our spirit and provides us with hope even when our emotions reflect difficult and harsh circumstances. When our emotion is paired with truth and purpose we can become an unstoppable force for the goodness and greatness of God - we become MORE-THAN.

Proverbs 12:5, 15:28

A good man's mind is filled with honest thoughts; an evil man's mind is crammed with lies.

A good man thinks before he speaks; the evil man pours out his evil words without a thought.

Job 17:9

The righteous will move onward and forward; those with pure hearts will become stronger and stronger.

Psalms 18:24

And so the Lord has paid me with his blessings, for I have done what is right, and I am pure of heart. This he knows, for he watches my every step.

[emotions defined]: a natural instinctive state of mind, deriving or determined from one's circumstances, mood, or relationships with others; instinctive, protective, or intuitive feeling as distinguished from reasoning or factual knowledge, overwhelming feelings

[University Psychology Majors Were Asked - What are Emotions?]:

1. Having strong feelings about someone or something.
2. A sensory reaction to a situation, place, person, or thing.
3. Becoming extremely offended over online conversations to the point of all caps.
4. Over dramatizing little problems. AKA "a dramatizer"
5. An odd state of confusion, usually resulting in either some form of mania or depression.
6. A terrible disease that has plagued mankind since the beginning of time.

[emoji phenomenon]: Originally, emojis were created as symbolic representation of emotions. Similar to punctuation, emojis are used to express emotion - irony or humor - and to substitute body language and tone of voice in text and social-media based communication. Amazingly we have grown a culture nearly incapable of navigating human relationships in real-time and in reality. Ironically, we continue to proclaim a desire to have honest conversations about life, faith, hate, hope, poverty, power, justice, success and failure. Yet, those conversations never really happen - they instead are replaced with rapid fire impulses and interpretations from our safer and lesser-than "emojicon lexicon." We don't want human dialogue we want only for someone acknowledge and feed how we feel without consequence - so we send out an emoji sad face - angry face - confused face -

crying face - fear face - it's all good face - worried face - hurt face - sick face - you're an idiot face - etc., etc...

Sadly, we are so lost in our feelings of how we feel about how we feel about ourselves that it misleads and dominates most digital communication and social media interaction. So, we have embraced the emoji - emoji. Is it harmless and helpful? Is it helping people get in touch with their true emotions and think twice about what they tweet or post? Or, is it one more step towards us to becoming LESSER-THAN what God created - lost in an actual fact free "feelings dominant world." A world void of absolute truths, filled with unrealistic reasoning and personally preferred logic. Is this us conquering or being conquered?

Is this us being MORE THAN or us becoming LESS THAN?

Are we looking at the face of what I describe as a new and dominant emo-centric global language? Check this article out...

The world can sigh with relief - a set of 72 new emojis is coming soon, among which are the (much needed) avocado, selfie and face palm. New additions to the Unicode Standard - the character coding system that supports emoji rendering on different platforms - always generate a surge of joy on social media. It seems that we can never get enough of those funny icons. And the latest research shows that the appeal of emojis goes well beyond younger users alone - in fact, more than 80% of adults in the UK now use them in their text messages, while a whopping 40% admit to having created a message composed entirely of emojis.

- Social Media Today