

A Call to Battle



**A FIELD MANUAL FOR CHRISTIANS
IN THE ART OF PRAYER AND
SPIRITUAL WARFARE**

Robert E. Gelinas

Foreword by Dr. Donald W. Neace, Ph.D.,
Philosophy and Theology

A Call to Battle

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“Satan dreads nothing but prayer. The church that lost its Christ was full of good works. Activities are multiplied that meditation may be ousted, and organizations are increased that prayer may have no chance. Souls may be lost in good works, as surely as in evil ways. The one concern of the devil is to keep the saints from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray.”

— Samuel Chadwick

“Give me one-hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin, and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen; such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven on earth. God does nothing but in answer to prayer.”

— **John Wesley**

“The man who can get believers to praying would, under God, usher in the greatest revival that the world has ever known.”

— **Leonard Ravenhill**

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by
ROBERT E. GELINAS

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First Edition

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FOREWORD

By Dr. Donald W. Neace

Pastor of Water's Edge Church
Cape Coral, Florida

Dr. Neace has served for more than 47 years of Ordained Ministry. He is a published author, and a newspaper and magazine editor. He holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy in Theology.

There are various levels of authority in every person's life, and each of these levels may involve different people in different positions of authority – i.e., in the home, government, organizations, teams, etc. Everyone is under some form of authority.

Unlike secular authorities, God alone has established, called, and placed specific spiritual authority within His Church. As Christians, we are all joint heirs with Christ and have full access to God's Holy Spirit and his Holy Word. Still, He has chosen to place some in positions of spiritual authority for the sake of order and growth in His Church.

Christians have a great responsibility to God – a responsibility we must guard with our lives. We must guard the authority given by God through his Word from attacks of outward temptation, displays of anger or envy, or “Lording” our authority over others. We must also guard our God-given authority against the inner attacks of self-righteousness, pride, and feelings of

superiority. In my experience, PRIDE is the chief sin that leads to abuse of spiritual authority.

J. I. Packer, in his book, *A Quest for Godliness*, wrote, “Spiritual authority is...a product compounded of conscientious faithfulness to the Bible; vivid perception of God’s reality and greatness; inflexible desire to honor and please Him; deep self-searching and radical self-denial; ...The man of God has authority as he bows to divine authority...”

I believe the underlying guiding principle of divine authority is humble submission to God and His WORD. The book you hold in your hand is a venture of discovery of Biblical truth.

The Bible *is* true and sufficient in its authority as the Word of God. Anything outside of, or in opposition to, the Word of God, is error. Some ministries emphasize the authority of a particular leader to an unhealthy and unbiblical extent – that is abuse.

If we took the time, I am sure we each could site examples of people abusing their spiritual authority; and often, I have wondered, if the authority they claim is more self-appointed rather than God appointed. We must remember and affirm God never asks for your opinion! Anyone who would assume to speak for God when God has not spoken is truly taking the name of the Lord our God in vain.

Jesus taught one of the highest qualifications for those in positions of leadership and authority is humility. Jesus said, “If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all” (Mark 9:35). This is the example of the highest spiritual authority, the example of Jesus when He became the humblest of all and submitted to die in our place. Later the apostle Peter explained, “All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.”

The idea for a field manual created for soldiers in a battle is not new. Such manuals have been written and revised for years as

the weapons of warfare and the landscape of military conflict have often changed. The importance of a field manual to the fighting soldier is incalculable. Learning, studying, memorizing, and implementing the instructions in a military field manual may literally mean the difference between life and death.

In like manner, the idea of the Bible being a guide for Christians is not a new idea.

However, in the religious and secular culture of this era, the idea of warfare is taboo in most pulpits and academic study. In the woke theology of today, the Bible is viewed as simply a book of historical documents subject to critical thinking as to the stories' truth. And the life lessons taught therein are considered out of date and irrelevant as to new, more tolerant, theological thinking – if one is thinking theologically at all. Some think of the Bible as mere “suggestions” on how to live a happy life. Not So!

In *A Call to Battle*, Robert Gelinas raises the flag of Biblical credibility, honesty, and truth.

In this “field manual” you will read about not only the traditional weapons of spiritual warfare, but a practical “how to” in the use of these weapons at the disposal of every Christian. And, make no mistake, there is a very real spiritual war being waged for the hearts and minds of humanity – especially for the hearts and minds of our children.

Robert Gelinas comes to this book with a wealth of experience and biblical study to inform the important instructions in this field manual. He is a man of humble heart and a great desire to see God's church stand strong in this era.

“Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his Anointed...”

— Psalm 2:1-2 (ESV)

Written centuries ago, this Psalm is as relevant today as the day it was first written down.

A Call to Battle will help equip the Christian to stand strong in the face of “raging nations and plotting rulers.” The battle is the Lord’s, and He calls us to be on the winning side. This book will help you in immeasurable ways as we stand for the Word of God and its Truth.

I commend this book to every Christian who wants to know more how to stand in this evil day.

A Call to Battle

ABOUT THE AUTHOR & INTRODUCTION



ROBERT GELINAS

Understandably, you might be wondering: *Who is this guy, and why should I believe anything he has to say – especially about prayer and spiritual warfare?*

Fair question. Please allow me to introduce myself.

First of all, just call me Bob. My legal name is Robert, but my mother, who called me Bobby, only used Robert (and my middle name – Edward) when I was in trouble.

Secondly – it is fair to say, “I’ve been around, lived in a lot of different places, and have seen and experienced quite a lot of unique and useful things in my life that I’m happy to share.”

You see, I was born on a small farm in 1960, in a rural farming town in northeast Arkansas. I have lived in:

- Arkansas (lived in 3 places there, 1960-1964)
- Tennessee (3 places, 1964-1966)
- Alabama (2 places, 1966-1970)

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- Louisiana (2 places, 1970-1972)
- California (1972, for only 4 months)
- Illinois (1972-1973)
- Texas (3 places, 1973-1980)
- Mississippi (1980, for only six months)
- Germany (2 places, 1980-1984)
- Texas (2nd time, 1984-1987)
- Missouri (2 places, 1987-1992)
- Texas (3rd time, 1992-1995)
- Georgia (1995-1999)
- Florida (1999-2000)
- California (2nd time, 2000-2001)
- Georgia (2nd time, 2001-2004)
- Florida (2nd time—3 places, 2004-2011)
- Texas (4th time—4 places, 2011-2018)
- Colorado (2018-2020)
- Florida (3rd time—2 places, 2020 – Present/2023)

Actually, I have not lived in the same physical domicile for more than three and a half years in my entire life. Thus, I have moved, per the tally above, 36 times to date. As I said, I have been around.

My father worked for IBM (I've Been Moved) throughout most of the first decade of my life. I spent the better part of the second decade of my life in San Antonio, TX, but living in multiple houses. I joined the Air Force for eight years, which took me from Texas to Mississippi (Tech School) to Germany (Ramstein Air Base, Headquarters of the US Air Force in Europe) and then back to Texas. And post-military service I have worked in the software industry, working with a variety of startup and early-stage companies, which has taken me all over the country and beyond.

Consequently, as I said, I have seen and experienced quite a lot in my life thus far. Indisputably, I intimately understand a “nomadic” existence pretty well: learning and integrating into new communities, making new friends, and adapting to a whole new life every few years (and in some cases mere months). And I promise you, I can tape up a cardboard box like a pro.

Church-wise, I was originally raised a Roman Catholic from birth, and like most Catholics, was sprinkle-baptized as an infant. Actually, my mother, formerly a Methodist, converted to Catholicism when my parents married due to my father (or at least his family) “technically” being Catholic. However, my father never attended church and was not a religious person of any kind. My parents split up when I was around thirteen; so it was just me, my mom and my sister, all on our own all throughout my high school years and my first years of college.

My mother, a very old-fashioned true southern woman who more than knew her way around a cast-iron skillet and some bacon grease, raised me and my sister as a single-mom, giving us more love and support than we ever could have hoped for. She instilled in me the belief that I could accomplish anything.

I did not really know my father very well until I was eighteen, almost nineteen, and invited him to attend my wedding¹. While my dad still lived with us, he was mostly just the sound of someone taking a shower in the morning and leaving early for work, and then returning home late most evenings and parking himself in front of the TV and not really talking to anyone.

However, my dad and I actually became quite close over the subsequent twenty years, after I got married, prior to losing him in 1998 to cancer. Painfully and surprisingly, both of my parents passed within two weeks of each other – despite them being apart for over 25 years, and ironically, only living about ten minutes apart, as the crow flies. That was a tough year.

¹ Yes, I married young, at 19, and is why I have two adult children and four grandchildren, and am still so young!

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I was saved/born-again at the age of 15, by virtue of some dear Christian friends at school witnessing to me, and as part of an active Campus Life ministry in my high school. The actual anecdote episode of that event I will share with you in much more detail in a later chapter of this book. Nevertheless, following my fully-submersible water baptism into Christ's redemption, this seminal event prompted my exit from Catholicism and an entrance into the vast maze of the Protestant world, which has been a very long and circuitous spiritual journey ever since.

And since I did not grow up in any particular Protestant denomination, I opted to try as many different ones as possible and see which ones were most appealing.

Without any exaggeration, and having a lot to do with my nomadic lifestyle of relocations over the years, I think I can faithfully report that I have visited, and/or attended for a while, most of the major denominations you might ever think of in Christendom – from the “frozen chosen” Southern Baptists to the “dancing in the aisles while speaking in tongues” Pentecostals and quite a few other flavors in between. I have been to strictly structured liturgical churches, free-style formats, open communion, closed communion, some with music/bands, some with organs only, some with music forbidden (didn't care for that!), some short-sermon, some long-sermon wondering if this preacher was ever going to finish talking – you name it. That also includes many high-energy non-denominational independent churches, from the evangelicals to the charismatics.

And even though I never attended a Mormon church service, I did have a few Mormon friends, who liked to often tell me all about their faith. They were nice people. Honestly, you have to give the Mormons credit for their personal witnessing and missionary zeal – they are serious about it. Although, I could never really get past their “additional scripture²” of Joseph Smith. That was a deal-breaker for me.

² Specifically, the Book of Mormon.

I served as treasurer of the Christian school my children attended when they were kids, housed in leased classroom space in an Eastern Orthodox church, and so I got to know more about them at the time. Lovely artwork! I learned even more about Eastern Orthodox Christianity in my many business trips to Ukraine later in life and visiting many of their impressive cathedrals and monasteries. I have attended a mass at St. Peter's in Rome, and climbed to the top of many of the spires and bell-towers of the cathedrals in Germany and Italy.

I found it somewhat amusing on one occasion, when I lived in Germany and visited one of the old³ Lutheran churches (yes, as in the land of Martin Luther!), whose church service was done all in German. I did not speak much German at that time, but I understood almost every word of their Sunday service, as it was a virtual carbon copy of every Catholic mass I had ever sat through as a kid. For I had long-ago memorized the entire Catholic mass and could recite it right along with the priests, pretty much word-for-word.

American Lutherans' services were not that much different from their German brethren (and "sistren"). And the Episcopalians were not too far afield from them.

In general, as an adult, I tended to become involved in church-life wherever I lived, for in several of them, as a lifelong musician, I played with various worship teams – either with my guitar or my drums. I have been a worship leader, a Sunday school teacher, a home ministry and small group leader, a seminar leader and teacher, and have always tried to help wherever I could.

However, early on in my Christian journey, by the time I turned twenty, I became a member of a "megachurch" when that whole "bigger is better" church dynamic was first becoming a thing. I am talking about thousands of members on any given Sunday, a syndicated cable TV network, big stage lights and

³ Old, as in hundreds of years old, the building itself older than the United States.

sound, a fully-robed choir of several dozen people completely spanning the back of the theatrical-sized stage, a large live orchestra (with me on drums), the works. That same church boasts tens of thousands of members today. Who knows, I might have still been there with them to this day, except for the fact that my military service took me off to Europe.

In Europe, and not being able to find a suitable English-speaking church to join, which were few and far between, I actually did the most growing, spiritually speaking, in terms of immersing myself deeply into the Word of God and really learning to pray, which led me to the discovery of who God really was up close and personal, and enjoying the reality of the Holy Spirit and His power working in my life. I will be sharing several illustrations of concepts and personal anecdotes in this book that came from this deeply developmental period of my life, to give you a first-person eye-witness perspective of what I am talking about.

Nevertheless, while I was serving in Europe, I subsequently learned that my old megachurch back home had split. Most of the people I knew personally from that church went with the new split-off group – which was actually only a few hundred people, not thousands. Regardless, when I returned to the United States four years later, I opted to check out the new church at the behest of all the people I still knew who went there.

Unfortunately, the new splinter church turned out to be a megachurch wannabe, with a pastor who, while a nice enough fellow, was absolutely enamored with a couple of well-known televangelists that he wanted to be like when he grew up. The centerpiece of that ministry, and many churches like it back in those days (mid-1980's), was an insidious teaching known as “The Prosperity Doctrine⁴.” When I discovered what was really behind

⁴ The Prosperity Doctrine is not really a pertinent topic to the subject matter of this book; but in a nutshell, if you did not know, it is the false teaching that God wants all Christians to be rich, and if you are not rich, then you must not be a very good Christian – i.e. certainly not from the perspective of giving to your local church (and pastor, of course). That is,

it all, it made me sick to my stomach. Thankfully (for me and my family at least), as my day-job career took off in a big way, it took me away from that church, and my professional and spiritual journey went elsewhere. And for that matter, so did my life in general.

What I mean by “elsewhere” is that what you are about to read comes from someone who has traveled over many mountains and valleys in life, hit lots of potholes along the way, enjoyed many warm sunny days and endured my share of dark storms, received lots of bloody noses and skinned knees, made some good decisions and plenty of bad ones, experienced periods of prodigal living and repentance, am guilty of being really stupid on occasion and have enjoyed a few moments of genuinely inspired creativity, have my share of regrets but thankfully have more moments of thanksgiving, but overall am truly the literal definition of a “sinner saved by grace.”

I have been through the pain of divorce and bankruptcy. I have also been a CEO multiple times of multimillion-dollar companies. I know what the Apostle Paul meant when he said:

“I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.”

— **Philippians 4:12**

And likewise, I can also echo Paul again when he said:

“This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”

— **1 Timothy 1:15**

the way God makes you rich is via a high Return on Investment (ROI) scheme based on your monetary giving levels of giving to the church.

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But through everything, good or bad, I have come to sincerely believe in the wisdom of: “In this life you do not win or lose; you win or *learn*.” And I have done a lot of learning over the last forty years, as hopefully you will come to appreciate and better understand my unique perspective of modern Christianity as you read what I humbly endeavor to share with you here.

To be clear: there have also been enumerable blessings along the way, powerful blessings that you can experience, too, if you open yourself up to God’s active presence in your life.

- Have I witnessed miracles? Yes, many.
- Confronted true evil face to face? Indeed. We shall talk about that at some length.
- Seen the afflicted healed? Absolutely.
- Experienced God’s saving grace, presence, and power working in and through my life to help others? With an eternally thankful heart, yes, more so than I could ever hope to describe, which is still true to this day.

Nevertheless, I must confess, for many years along the way, after attending so many different types of churches around the country, as the years went by, there was a significant period of time in my life when I became thoroughly disgusted with the whole idea of “organized religion” – most of which, I observed, was incredibly inwardly-focused and self-perpetuating, insular, materialistic, needlessly and frustratingly politicized, needlessly petty, lifeless, powerless, and “prayerless”; and quite candidly, I did not wish to have anything more to do with it all ever again.

And so I walked away. Not from God, but from “church.”

I became completely convinced Christianity had truly entered the “Church of Laodicea” period of Church history (**Revelation 3:14-22**), i.e. the complacent, apathetic, neither hot nor cold, lukewarm church that made Jesus want to throw up.

Have you ever felt that way about “church”?

If so, then believe me, I get it.

And if, in fact, you ever *have* felt that way, then the core message within this book has been written especially for you.

Eventually, I am happy to report, I did find a local church that was not fancy by any measure, certainly not a megachurch, but it was honest, sincere, and made up of many loving saints who love the Lord with all their hearts, where I serve to this day. Once again, I play my drums every Sunday with the worship team, and seek to share God’s love, His Word, and His wisdom with everyone I have occasion to do so.

But there was more: I ultimately came to understand and to accept that God did not want me to just sail off into the sunset and simply wait to die and then go be with Him⁵. No, apparently God was not finished with me just yet. He put a special burden on my heart to fulfill a very particular calling, something important that He wanted me to do. Indeed, He made that mission very clear to me.

“You have learned and experienced too much not to share and bear witness. You cannot hide everything I have taken you through under a bushel. It is sorely needed. Make it known.”

Therefore, this book, for me, is an act of obedience to that call. It is my personal testimony of what I have learned from a wide range of life-changing experiences – many of which I still marvel at the memories of to this day. For me, sharing all of this with you is my personal Call to Battle. Hence, my most earnest prayer for you right now is that, in some way, large or small, this Call will become yours too.

⁵ Although, to be honest, that eventuality did not sound too bad.

FIRST THINGS FIRST

A Call to Battle, A Field Manual in the Art of Prayer and Spiritual Warfare.

A Field Manual? Why?

This book was written for two key reasons.

The first reason is because, as you have surely seen for yourself, there is an undeniable genuine hunger in the hearts of many people today, those who deep down inside want to know God is real, not just a religious “brand.” You can have that.

Many people are hungry for a substantive reality in their individual spiritual lives in stark contrast to so much in the world today marketing itself as “organized religion,” i.e. a myriad of well-polished organizations who simply have not delivered in terms of opening a genuine door to a real experience of God’s love, forgiveness and acceptance, and most importantly, enabling people to have an active personal relationship with Him.

So many modern Christian churches of today are very good at putting on very high-quality, high-tech, entertaining stage productions, drawing large crowds, and making people feel like being a member of the audience is all that is needed to check off the “complete” task box in your spiritual life, week after week.



But where is God in all of it?

Where is He during the week when the professional-caliber band is not playing, when everyone is not being emotionally moved by the uplifting music, the colorful arrays of stage lights, the concert sound systems, and the charismatic performances of gifted orators, as everything is livestreamed all around the world – all perfectly choreographed with to-the-second precision to tug on everyone’s heart-strings, collect your offerings, and then get you out the door just in time for the next service (show).

As the Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner laments: “Water, water everywhere, nor any drop to drink.”

People are achingly thirsty for God; but lights, glitter, and surround-sound are not the true path to find Him.

And He eagerly *wants* to be found.

Likewise, that same unsatisfied thirst for God can also be found in any church of any size, from the quaintest little “white-steepled country church in the dell” to any size congregation of any denomination, sectarian stripe, or independent churches – i.e. anywhere “religion⁶” can be found instead of genuine faith in action and the ministry of God’s Holy Spirit made manifest.

Jesus said: “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”

— John 7:37-38

The second reason this book was written is because the true path to successfully finding God, and to enjoy the experience of a genuine relationship with Him and those rivers of living water

⁶ That is, I am defining “religion” in this context as all of those rituals, ceremonies, traditions, and any other actions intended to “earn” God’s approval; rather than sanctuaries of God’s free grace, mercy, love and forgiveness, where He can be worshipped and experienced as a family of Brothers and Sisters in Christ in an intimate and personal way.

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Jesus referred to, really does exist. And that path is found in a much maligned, discredited, and falsely portrayed spiritual realm known as “prayer” – which most people have no real conception of what it really is, what it is really all about, what it is capable of making happen in your life, and most importantly, how to actually do it.

It should therefore come as no surprise to anyone that much of all that maligning, discrediting and false reports regarding the true nature of prayer comes not from flesh and blood opponents, but from the very real forces of darkness loose in this world, evil entities who live in abject fear lest anyone ever deign to discover the awesome power and potential of real prayer and what it has the ability to do to vanquish all the infernal hordes of the devil.

Hence, the “spiritual warfare” side of the discussion.



You know, there was a time in the early Church of Jesus Christ, when His followers, mightily infilled and empowered by the Holy Spirit, were all sent forth to tell whole world the Good News⁷ – i.e. they could be free of all those chains and burdens that kept them from having a genuine relationship with God. They were sent forth to do great works, demonstrating God’s love and mercy, just like Jesus did during His ministry, and even greater works than He did, just as Jesus promised.

That nascent Church was seemingly unstoppable in changing hearts and minds, healing broken and diseased bodies, restoring afflicted souls, and touching lives throughout the known world at the time. It was a glorious time – until the forces of evil struck back with the most sinister of all weapons...religion – Satan’s “If you can’t beat ‘em, join ‘em strategy.”

Personal relationships with God were soon quenched and replaced over time with litanies of empty rituals, ornate facilities,

⁷ “Good News” is the definition of the word “Gospel”

pews for the audience, sacred music from the choirs, and altars and pulpits for charismatic orators and robed officiants – which to this day has been widely applicable to congregations from as small as a mere ten souls to many with well over ten-thousand on any given Sunday.

This book, therefore, is indeed intended to be a functional field manual, in every sense of the martial metaphor of the Army of God – along with a detailed map of how to find your way back to how it all began, and how it was all meant to be: joyously living in intimate communion with God Himself, and standing strong against all of God’s enemies.

If that is what you have been hungry and thirsty for, then read on. You will find this particular field manual quite unique from just about anything else you have ever read.

Admittedly, there are a wealth of books available “about” what many people *call* “prayer” – books discussing at length its history, value, a wealth of reasons to “say prayers,” devotionals, exhortations to pray, and much more. But there are not too many play-by-play “instruction manuals” you can put your hands on these days that actually speak candidly and are brutally honest about really doing it – i.e. the “how” as opposed to just the “why” and “where.”

Oh sure, you definitely need to know the “why,” which is very important, and we will get into that, but even more importantly you need to know the “what” it really is. Without question, there is a lot of confusion in that department.

And as noted, that confusion is on purpose.

Whether you fully realize it or not, we are in the midst of a fierce war that has been raging since the Garden of Eden, against a supremely evil opponent who is hell-bent (pun intended) on keeping all believers from ever knowing what genuine prayer really is, what it is for, how it works, and why it is the greatest threat in existence to our enemy and his goals.

You will find plenty of Christians in the world today who will readily concede that “something called prayer” is important and

should be done. You just do not find very many of them who actually do it in any meaningful way. And basically that is because no one has ever bothered to actually show them exactly how it is done. So that is what we are going to talk about in this book, and answer hard questions like:

- What are the key strategies and tactics of prayer and spiritual warfare?
- What are prayer's various methods and techniques?
- How does private prayer differ from group/team prayer?
- What is the difference between being indwelt by the Holy Spirit or infilled?
- What is the "power of God" spoken about so much in the Bible all about?
- What does it mean to swing the Sword of the Spirit?
- How does one really put on the Armor of God?
- Is spiritual warfare really a thing in the 21st Century?
- Is there a "supernatural" component to the world of prayer and spiritual warfare; or did all that end centuries ago?
- Why does God even *want* us to pray?
- What is the end result of effective prayer?

Many answers await you, if you can accept them.

Therefore, let us start our discussion together, dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, regarding the fine art of prayer and spiritual warfare with an emphasis, first and foremost, on a couple of simple disclaimers and rules of the road.

ALL MUST BE VALIDATED BY THE WORD:

Do not believe a word of this book if it does not comport 100% with clear, verifiable Scripture. Take nothing for granted; check it all against your Bible. There will be nothing discussed in this book that does not come straight from the Word of God.

There may be many verses cited from the Word that you may not be familiar with; or perhaps some verses you have seen before, but not in the context of other verses which provide fresh insights for you. This is hoped for; for it is only when we take to heart the full counsel of God that many mysteries are suddenly revealed to us, much confusion is untangled, and so much more truth finally makes sense.

“All Scripture is given by inspiration from God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

— 2 Timothy 3:16-17

ALL MUST BE VALIDATED BY PRAYER:

Do not attempt to implement a single word of this book in your own life until you prayerfully consider all of this information while praying “in the Spirit” (much more to come on that topic) – that is, specifically, to confirm what you may learn herein with a sense of “peace that surpasses all understanding.”

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

— **Philippians 4:6-7**

A Call to Battle

Admittedly, some of what you are about to read may be disturbing, disconcerting, and parts of it perhaps even a bit frightening. Yet, only the Spirit of God, and Him alone, can assure you beyond any state of emotion that you might potentially feel, i.e. whether or not what you are learning is Biblically and spiritually sound or not – *if* you bother to ask Him to do that for you. But if you do, He will guide you.

So, with these two critical guardrails in mind, let us focus on learning how to impact the world in a dynamic way for God’s glory, transforming ourselves into what God has called us to be and do, supercharging the ministries to which we may serve, even if it is just in a small way, but hopefully in a very big way, such that, ultimately, we allow God to effectively use us to continue to prepare His Church for the imminent coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

In essence, the fine art of prayer and spiritual warfare is just as applicable and critically needed today as it was from the beginning – from God’s first interactions with Adam and Eve, and their sons Cain and Abel; to Enoch who walked with God; to Noah, to Abram/Abraham, Isaac and Jacob/Israel; to Moses and the giving of the Law; to all of the Old Testament kings like David and Solomon, and all the prophets of old; to the appearance of John the Baptist, preparing the way of the Lord; to the birth of Christ Himself, to the first day of Jesus’ ministry, to His death, resurrection and ascension; to the advent of the ministry of the Holy Spirit within the Church beginning on the Day of Pentecost; through the early Apostolic period of birthing the early Christian churches and evangelizing the known world in the first few centuries; through a thousand years of the Dark Ages; through the Reformation period; through the Great Awakening period in the late 18th and early 19th Century; to, indeed, our present day of ever-increasing “birth pangs” (**Matthew chapter 24**) which Jesus told us to diligently look out for until this very day.

Newsflash, Brothers and Sisters: What has often been referred to as “Biblical Times” are still happening.

Biblical Times were not just happening thousands of years ago and then stopped at some point in the distant past. It all started with God creating the heavens and the earth (**Genesis 1:1**) and proclaiming, “Let there be light.” (**Genesis 1:3**) And per the Book of Revelation, right up to chapter 22, it is still going on until Jesus ultimately returns to gather His people to Him, claiming His Bride; judging the living and the dead; to ultimately defeating Satan and his armies; and to establishing Christ’s eternal kingdom, as has been foretold for millennia.

Therefore, as has been wisely noted by the voices of many fellow believers in Christ: By all means, let us eagerly anticipate with great joy and anticipation the possibility that Jesus might be coming back for us this very day; but at the same time, until His arrival actually happens and we go to meet the Lord in the air (**1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**), let us continue to faithfully do what He commissioned us to do, and fulfill our various callings and ministries as though His return might not happen during our lifetime. For no man knows the day or the hour – even if it sure feels like it is getting closer and closer!

Ergo: **Be ready** – while you faithfully continue to serve Him. As Jesus Himself taught:

“Therefore you also *be ready*, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect Him.”

“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?”

“Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. Assuredly, I say unto you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.

“But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour

he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

— Matthew 24:44-51

Prayer and spiritual warfare are not academic or intellectual exercises; they are *spiritual* exercises.

Most importantly, your prayer life is the fulfillment of the evangelist’s (or whoever brought you to Christ) promise to you when you were first saved, that if you accepted Jesus Christ as your “Lord and Savior” and invited Him into your heart, that you could have a “personal relationship” with Him.

That promise is true.

Think about that: a personal relationship is not just hearing about someone via a preacher or a teacher, or like learning about a character in some movie or TV show, or the actors who play them. That kind of “relationship” (if you can really call it that) sounds more like the definition of someone who is a fan or a groupie, not someone who has an actual personal relationship.

A genuine personal relationship does not solely consist of just reading about someone and their exploits in a magazine, online, or a book – even if that book happens to be the Holy Bible. Having a “personal relationship” means exactly what those words have always meant to you in every other context you have understood them to mean for your entire life.

It means God is real – someone you can actually “know.”

It means that you get to literally *talk* to Him and He really *listens*. And if you bother to quiet your mind (i.e. shut up) and learn to listen yourself in the depths of your soul, you will soon discover that He can and will talk back.

Don’t you believe that? If not, why not?

I find it remarkable that so many people have no problem whatsoever believing that the devil can whisper all manner of lies, deceptions and temptations in your ear. But God cannot make

His loving voice known to you? He cares about what is going on in your life. When you hurt, He is there to help.

What's more, as a part of being in His family, He has a divine purpose for you, something very important that He wants you to do in your life, and for you to be a part of something which He is not at all reticent to share that information with you. Plus, He stands ready to thoroughly equip you to do exactly what He needs you to do for Him, according to His will, in order to fulfill your personal mission.

You matter to God. Are you up for that?

So what exactly is prayer?

- Prayer is literally a time of communing (i.e. communicating, spending time with, etc.) one-on-one with God, literally in His presence.
- Prayer enables you, while in God's presence, to actually live and breathe and grow in His strength and wisdom.
- Prayer thus enables God to work through you, often in nothing short of miraculous ways, to touch the world and the people in it who are all around you.

Now when we come to the topic of Spiritual Warfare, this powerful dimension of prayer recognizes that you have a dangerous enemy in this world who not only vehemently hates you and wishes you ill, but is actively doing everything in his power to prevent you from enjoying the previous three descriptions of what prayer is really all about and what it can do, both in you and through you.

Spiritual warfare teaches you how to effectively fight back against the enemy and all of his forces, for both yourself and on behalf of others, and to win those critical spiritual battles on a daily basis.

A Call to Battle

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”

— 1 Peter 5:8

“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 heavenly places.”

— Ephesians 6:12

Are demons and demonic forces real?

Jesus thought so, and had many recorded encounters with them – from Satan himself at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry (**Matthew 4:1-11**), to many instances of casting them out of people afflicted by them (**Mark 1:21-26**, **Mark 5:1-15**, *et al.*).

We also see from Jesus’ example that demonic forces can also physically afflict people, who must be ministered to spiritually before they can receive healing and recover physically (see the story in **Matthew 17:14-21**).

That is not to say that all physical infirmity and/or illnesses or sickness are demonic in nature – but with that said, sometimes they *can* be, and you need to be ready and able to deal with it if that is the case.

I realize that for a lot of people reading this, I may be alluding to a type of spiritual experience that could be utterly foreign to your understanding.

For many folks, “prayer,” at its most simplest and most naïve level, is commonly understood as merely “talking to God.” But looking at it from a practical application perspective, what is often *called* prayer mostly just manifests itself merely as:

- A rote formality performed before meals, or some events as perhaps some kind of religious invocation.

- Something you do in a moment of desperation or fear when you are in trouble (e.g. did not study for a test, facing imminent danger or very bad news, etc.).
- A quasi-punishment (e.g. if you are Catholic, and are told by a priest in confession to go say some number of “Our Fathers” and “Hail Marys” as part of your “penance” for sin, or even in the vain ritual of “Saying a “Rosary”⁸); or any of entire books of printed “prayers”; that religions teach people to recite with little understanding or personal meaning.
- A religious ritual behavior learned as kids without much understanding of why it is even done, akin to a child’s, “Now I lay me down to sleep...”

Prayer is so much more than all of that.

In a very “triune” concept, Prayer is a Person, Place and a Thing: a Person (Jesus Christ, as manifested by the Holy Spirit), and Place (in the presence of God the Father in the Holiest of Holies), and a Thing (living communion and interaction with God).

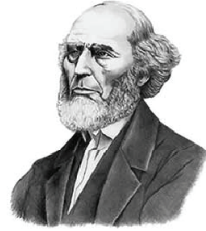
Most Christians do not understand the tangible reality of God’s intimate presence for the simple reason that they have never personally experienced it. They may claim, “God is in our midst,” or individually want to believe they are in His presence in prayer – but how can they really tell?

Allow me to share an entirely different picture of what a genuine experience of a life filled with prayer can be like, and its power to manifest the very real and palpable presence of God.

⁸ Which consists of repeating multiple “Our Fathers” (The Lord’s Prayer) and “Hail Marys” at a 1:10 ratio respectively (hence the one bead, then 10 beads pattern or the “necklace/crucifix”). But please note that Jesus said: “But when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think they will be heard for their many words.” (Matthew 6:7)

An Excerpt from “An Account of Revival in Rome, New York” by Charles G. Finney⁹:

I should say a few words regarding the spirit of prayer which prevailed at Rome during this time. Indeed the whole town was full of prayer. Go where you would, you heard the voice of prayer. If you were walking down the street, and if two or three Christians happened to be together, they were praying. Whenever they met, they prayed. Wherever there was a sinner unconverted, especially if he showed any opposition, you would find some two or three brethren or sisters agreeing to make him a special subject of prayer.



The state of things in the village and in the surrounding area was such that no one could come into the village without feeling awestricken with the impression that God was there in a peculiar and wonderful way. As an example of this I will relate a particular incident.

The sheriff of the county resided in Utica. Consequently, the sheriff, Bryant by name, came to Rome quite frequently. He later told me that he had heard of the state of things at Rome, and he, together with many others in Utica, had laughed a great deal about it.

But one day it was necessary for him to come to Rome. He said that he was glad to have business there, for he wanted to see for himself what things

⁹ One of the preeminent revivalists from the Great Awakening period of the early 1800's; a former lawyer who, after converting to Christianity, is said to have personally led over 500,000 people to Christ – in a time of no mass communication, just travelling from town to town by horseback and preaching the Gospel.

were really like.

He was driving in his one-horse sleigh, without any particular impression in his mind at all, until he crossed what was called the old canal, a place about a mile from the town. He said as soon as he crossed the canal, a strange impression came over him, an awe so deep that he could not shake it. He felt as if God permeated the whole atmosphere. He said this feeling increased the whole way, until he came into the village.

He stopped at Mr. Franklin's hotel, and the stable-man came and took his horse. He observed, he said, that the stable-man looked just like he himself felt – as if he were afraid to speak.

He went into the hotel and found the man there with whom he had business. He said that they were both so obviously shaken, that they could hardly attend to business. He reported that several times in the course of the short time that he was there, he had to rise from the table abruptly and go to the window and look away, trying to divert his attention to keep from weeping.

He saw that everyone else appeared to feel just as he did. Such an awe, such a solemnness, such a state of things he had never had any conception of before.

He quickly concluded his business and returned to Utica – but (as he said later), never to speak lightly of the work in Rome again. And a few weeks later in Utica, he himself became converted.

Read that line again in the next to last paragraph:

“...such a state of things he had never had any conception of before.”

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That particular phrase of “*never had any conception of*” perfectly describes the vast majority of those who call themselves Christians when it comes to the topic of prayer. They may enunciate a lot of religious-sounding words that they call prayers. However, they have no experiential reference point in their lives to anything anywhere close to what Finney was describing.

For far too many souls, “saying a prayer” is not a whole lot different than reciting the Pledge of Allegiance in the morning at school (back in the days when that was still done). As a child you faithfully did it each morning because it was expected, not out of any heartfelt feelings of patriotism.

Have you *ever* experienced what Finney is talking about?

More importantly, do you yourself *know* God?

Or do you just know “about God.” Surely there are multitudes of people in this world today, and those who have lived throughout history, who know a great deal “*about* God” without ever actually having met Him personally.

And yet so many proclaim:

“Sure. I pray for things and talk to God all the time.”

Really? To what end? Talk is cheap, as they say. The real question is, do you actually *commune* with God on a regular basis? Or do you just perform an array of religious ritual behaviors you have been taught, maybe since you were a kid?

Jesus said: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord’, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘*I never knew you*’.”

— Matthew 7:21-23a

Indeed, if you do not fully appreciate the reality of what I am describing here, then my prayer for you right now is that by the time you finish reading this book, that you will come to know that this whole idea of having a “personal relationship” with Jesus is really, really important – of “eternal magnitude” you might say – and then do something about it.

Or, even better, maybe what you are about to learn will help your relationship with God to flourish in marvelous new ways, or perhaps even discover the true depths of its reality for the very first time.

Therefore, if you sincerely want to know a lot more about that personal relationship dynamic with Jesus via the ministry of the Holy Spirit; a relationship that you have free access to, and how to make it an active experiential reality in your daily life; how to employ it to grow in faith, and in God’s wisdom, and in spiritual strength; to discover what God wants you to do as part of His kingdom and how to wield the amazing gifts He has provided you to equip you to be successful in your mission; and to be able to overcome all the resistance of the evil one – then read on.

That is what this book is about.

It is, therefore, also my fervent prayer for you that when you finish this book that you will find occasion to perhaps read it more than once, maybe many times. To make notes in it, underline and/or highlight key insights you might find, and to treat it as the reference book – the practical Field Manual – that it is sincerely intended to be.

And if this book helps you in any way, then I pray you will also share it with others, and help them come to understand its messages and its insights as you grow in the knowledge of God’s Word, and in your ability to be filled with the Spirit, and come to embrace the awesome power of Prayer.

“Let us strip off the last bandage and declare that many of our presidents and teachers do not pray, shed no tears, know no travail. Can they teach what they do not know?”

— Leonard Ravenhill

“Love is kindled in a flame, and ardency is its life. Flame is the air which true Christian experience breathes. It feeds on fire; it can withstand anything, rather than a feeble flame; but when the surrounding atmosphere is frigid or lukewarm, it dies, chilled and starved to its vitals. True prayer must be aflame.”

— E. M. Bounds

“You have not seen the operation of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ as it was designed on the drawing boards of glory. You have seen the *preparation* of the Church, but now you shall see the operation. There will be men and women, boys and girls, in this hour so overtaken by the Spirit of God and His power, they will be changed into individuals like this earth never has known.”

— Billye Brimm