

Jealousy and Fear in the Body of Christ 1-9

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This message is entitled, "Starving Body of Christ," and tonight I want to share with you some readings from Rick Joyner's book, *Visions of the Harvest*. He's a wonderful prophet of God, has a complete and total heart for the body of Christ, has his fingers on the pulse of the Lord, and is acutely aware of the things that hinder us in the body; the dynamics that go back and forth.

So, I'd like to read this selection; and it's from the chapter called "War and Glory." In this particular chapter, he portrays the church as an island and all the different denominations as different buildings on the island, and around it, of course, is the sea and the ocean. And later in the chapter, you will see they both will start to arrive and they want to get into the island, but there is fighting going on so...

Let me go on with this story and explain to, or just read, to you exactly what he has to say:

"I was in a vision standing on an island in the middle of the sea. There were many types of buildings spread about in groups all around the island that seemed to make up several little cities. Even within each of these little cities, the buildings seemed to clash with each other in color and architecture. There were very old ones next to very modern ones. This made them all seem unattractive and confused.

"There was a war going on between the occupants of many of the buildings and many were already bombed out shells. The people who were still living in the buildings were starving and wounded. At first I thought that I had been caught in the middle of a terrible civil war. Then I realized I was looking at the church.

"As I continued looking, I saw two dark spirits over the island. Together they were directing the battles and the clashes between the buildings. One was named Jealousy and the other one was named Fear."

And that's what we're going to talk about tonight.

"They congratulated each other every time one of the buildings suffered damage or people were killed or wounded. It seemed that no one who was involved in the fighting could see these spirits, though they dominated the island.

"As I was kept looking, two more even powerful and frightening spirits were rising up over the sea. These became great storms. One was named Rage and the other Lawlessness.

"They quickly started causing a stirring up of the seas and causing great waves to crash into the island. Soon these storms became so large that I felt they were going to do even more damage to the island than the war, and maybe even destroy the whole island. Even so, the war had the people in the building so occupied that it did not seem anyone was aware of these growing storms.

"I knew these people in the city had to be warned about these storms. Then I saw some apparent watchmen trying to do this, but no one would listen to them. Those that could hear the watchmen could only debate about whether the watchmen could be trusted. This was remarkable, because if anyone could look up, they could see the storms themselves. But no one would look up."

My words...they were so embroiled in the battles that they weren't looking up.

"These wars had left so many people wounded that the hospitals were quickly becoming the largest buildings on the island. Hospitals were movements or denominations that had given of themselves to healing of the wounded.

Don't you just love that bumper sticker that says, "Christians kill their wounded." Boy, I tell you...

"The very small hospitals seemed to be respected and the warring factions would not attack them. The ones that had grown larger were being attacked as the jealousy of the warring factions would not allow them to have respect. Even in a place where their own wounded were being cared for. Soon the attacks on these hospitals from the other buildings became some of the biggest battles.

"As I watched time pass swiftly before me like pages being turned in a book, the conflict just went on and on and soon everyone was wounded somewhere. But even those who were not badly wounded had the appearance of being either phantoms or grotesquely deformed from starvation and disease.

"Anytime a building received a supply of food which would attract people, it would become a target. I could not comprehend how a war could be so cruel and yet this was the church.

"In the midst of the battle, men were still trying to add to their buildings or start new ones. New ones-- but it was futile. Anytime one building would start to rise a little higher than the others, it would become the main target of all the other buildings close to it. When a new building would be started, it would become the focus of unrelenting attacks by all the others around it.

"My thought was that this entire island would soon be like the temple in Jerusalem after it was conquered by the Romans. Ultimately there would be not one stone left upon another."

And I don't think I will go on too much more with this but, he was then carried to a place where the leaders were planning different things and they all had the word "Treasury" written on their foreheads. Treasury.

So he goes on a little bit and says:

"The grief of listening was too much to bear. It was so obvious that if the effort and resources were put into building rather than in what was going into fighting, there could a city build that would be no equal. Yet, they had chosen the way of destruction instead of life."

And here he goes on and speaks about the lights—those who refused to get involved with the conflicts, arguing over doctrine. These are my words now...Arguing over doctrine, wanting to be first, wanting to protect their territory, feeling threatened. Jealousy and Fear are the two spirits over this island that is depicted as the church with all the different people in it.

We go now to 1 Corinthians 3:1-4 and I will read from the NIV. "Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit, but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. ² I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. ³ You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans? ⁴ For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere human beings?

We should all be following Jesus Christ.

And in 1 Peter 2, I want to quote from this because I feel it's a direct salve from the problem. Really, he says, "Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every..."

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"1 Peter 2:1 Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind." In the Aramaic Bible in Plain English, which I happen to like this translation, "Therefore, put away from you all wickedness, all treachery, partiality, envy and slander." Put these things away.

You know, what is slander, really? I mean, there's telling lies about people, there is telling, disclosing of weak points of people and difficult things, lies of people. They're telling the truth, but things that are not so beautiful to look at, which tend to deprecate the person and put them down. I think we know. I think the Holy Spirit quickens to us when we've crossed a line, when we've said something that is injurious to a person.

One of the standards I like to apply to myself—if the person was standing in the room right now, would you say it that way or would you say it at all? There's a good question. Would you say it if the person was in the room right now? And would you say it that way? So, this is something to look at. How many times do we cross that line in a day? When we're wounded or we're hurt, when we are feeling rejected, unwanted, when we feel challenged, when we feel threatened. Is it just human nature to pull up some dirt and to fight back with wicked claws, tooth and nail, saying things that are injurious to the other person?

One day the Lord said to me point blank, "*Look! When you criticize another soul, first of all, you're criticizing Me. I live in that soul. Second of all, I died for that soul.*" And as my husband often says, "When a mother has a mentally-challenged child, she doesn't want to hear how mentally-challenged the child is." To her, the child is beautiful. She wants to hear good things about the child because she's helping that child to walk and to adjust to life.

So the Lord has said to me categorically, "*When you say anything negative about anyone, you're actually launching an arrow that goes into that person and wounds them.*" They may not hear it with their own ears, they may not understand exactly what it is, but they feel it in their spirit.

And one of the things that Rick Joyner talks about later on in his book is that the Lord was watching this whole scenario, these battles between the churches and between the people and the churches. And at the end, the Lord begins to build His Church. When He does so, He says, "*Tell them anyone who has their brother's blood on his hands will not be used to build my House.*" That's pretty serious. That's very serious.

So, if they're not building the Lord's House, whose house are they building? You know, that's a good question. If we have blood on our hands, if we bite and tear at each other, if we find fault with each other, if we gossip and deprecate one another, we have blood on our hands. Just as Cain had blood on his hands and blood that swallowed up in the Earth, "your brother's blood cries out to me," this is all part of jealousy.

And I have experienced this emotion. I understand what it feels like. And when I boiled it down to get to the root of the problem, why do I feel jealousy? It is because I have not applied myself to the gifts God gave me and I haven't used them. So, I look at someone else that HAS applied themselves and HAS used them, and I feel envy. I mean, that in a sense is a very healthy emotion because it tells you that something not right in here (points to heart). Something's wrong with you if you feel envy, if you feel jealousy, there's something going inside of you that's sick. It needs help.

And of course, the Lord is so good, so gentle to come to us and to pinpoint exactly what it is. What does a body look like? What does a healthy body look like? I've been in a couple healthy churches. They've been very active.

They're very positive. The people are upbeat. They may have problems, but the way they act in general is very upbeat.

There are a lot of ministries that are healthy. People are delegated different jobs according to the anointing that God placed in them. People are being trained. People are being raised up and taught so they can go from being a spectator out there and listening to the Word of God to being a messenger of the Word of God; one that has nothing to be ashamed of. As the scripture says, "Show yourself as a workman who has nothing to be ashamed of."

One of the things I have sensed in different churches is that's it is okay to sit in the pews, be quiet and listen, be supportive in very simple ways. But if your ministry begins to rise up inside of you, and there's not some kind of vehicle for training you, then you're gonna feel frustrated. You're gonna feel let down, rejected and frustrated because all the time pastors are talking about how they believe in the five-fold gifts and how they want to raise up prophets and about the anointing.

I mean, people come from different places and they come in and prophesy over different people and the pastor is aware of what is being prophesied over that person. Well, that person needs a place to go. Once they've been prophesied, they need a vehicle to take that dream, that seed-word that's been planted in their heart. They need training and a vehicle to get them launched, to get them to be able to exercise the gift. Otherwise they just sit there and lie dormant. Nobody's happy feeling like they're unused. Nobody feels good about that.

So, what are the signs of a healthy church? Are the ministries, and the people in charge of those ministries, constantly imparting anointing, imparting teachings, and people graduate out of that? They go from sitting and listening to receiving, to being messengers of the gospel in their community.

It may be the start of another church. I mean, is this something to be afraid of? That you've trained somebody under you so well, they can go out and start another church? Aren't there enough people to go around for the gospel?

A sick body that isn't getting this kind of training - they're not getting channeled. They're not getting used. It's like God is constantly, constantly pouring down His Spirit on the congregation. And unless that water, that Living Water is captured and runs through the lines in the plumbing in the House, that water comes in through the roof and begins to rot the roof, rot the floor, go all the way down and rot the foundation.

The anointing has got to go somewhere. The Power of God, the Spirit of God, it's got to go somewhere and if it's not being properly channeled, like plumbing, the water source comes in. Some goes to the kitchen, some goes to the water closet, the bathroom or bathrooms. Some of it goes outside to the hose. In the same way, in a church, a church building, there are different ministries and ministers who serve the flow of the Spirit into the proper channel. And if this isn't happening in the church, it's not healthy.

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In this situation, you have good people, anointed people, committed people. They come and they don't find any place for them to be used, they leave. Because the Spirit won't be mocked. The Spirit will be used.

If you have a heart for God and are praying for the gifts and you're prophesied over that you've got a gift, you don't want to just sit there. You want to be trained in that gift. And you want to be able to be use that gift. You're being called by the Holy Spirit. You will account for that gift. Everything that is given, we will make an accounting to the Lord for.

So, what does a sick body look like? Well, the first of all, the water is just pouring in through the roof and it's getting all the bedding wet. It's getting the ceiling wet; it's buckling. It's getting the walls wet; they're molding.

The floors are beginning to disintegrate. If there's beds in the building, they're soaking wet. And the water is going through to the disintegrating floor to the foundation until that house collapses. This is serious stuff. Very serious. To waste the waters of the Spirit and to waste lives and vocations. People who feel called and to frustrate that and not to nurture it, that's serious.

And you see, the principalities that are over the church right now that are causing these problems are Fear -which I'll get into next, and Jealousy. And jealousy, as far as my understanding goes, is always a function of what am I not doing. That when I find someone else successful at what they are doing, I'm jealous.

If your relationship with the Lord is profound and personal and precious to you, He's going to pinpoint what it is that you're not doing that's causing you to be jealous. But then there has to be a venue for you to work out of that jealousy by being used.

So, there's division, there's stagnation, there's unrest. There's a feeling of hopelessness that prevails. People feel frustrated and dissatisfied with where they are and where they are going. There's a general feeling that "I'm not growing in the Lord, I'm not doing anything. Isn't there more for me, Lord? Isn't there more?"

Because people are good, they don't overstep their bound of leadership. And if leadership doesn't open doors for these people, they're not going to go crashing them down. They make a few suggestions, but hey, if they're not going to be received, they are just going to turn around and leave. They're going to go where they are wanted. They're going to go where they're needed. They're going to go where they can be trained. And that church is going to suffer terrible loss. Plus, in the meantime, the foundation is rotting out from under the building. And it's going to collapse, the building, if someone doesn't do something really quick about it.

What should the body of Christ look like? What should a church body look like? Simple. It should look like Jesus. It should feel like Jesus. There should be joy. There should be levity. There should be commitment. There should be brotherly love that is so sacrificial that if there is a position open in the choir, and two people want the position in the choir, but there is only position open that the one person prefers the other person to take it and the other person prefers for them to take it. You know like a contest over humility. Who's going to win this contest? You go—No, you go—No you go, it's okay—Well...no, no, you better go. I mean, we've seen it so many times. That is brotherly love.

Love, one another. Deeply and from the heart. Tenderly, love them. Brotherly love is such a sign. You know? I'm not talking about smiles, and "Hey, I love you, Brother and how are you?" and "Love you, Sister, and I'm so sorry you're not feeling well, can I pray with you?" I mean, those are all nice signs of affections, but I'm talking about where the rubber meets the road, taking a look at the needs of that individual in the church and seeing, "Are the needs of that person, according the Spirit of God, are they being met?" Or are they being glanced off and pushed aside?

A healthy body looks like Jesus. That's number one. It feels like Jesus—there is joy, there is levity. There is brotherly love. There is no fighting over places. There is no arguing and backbiting, because everyone is so happy with what they have been given to do.

So God gave some (as the Scriptures say as going now to the Scriptures,) "And God gave some to be apostles, and some to be prophets, and some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach the unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the son of God become mature attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."

The body of Christ has a FULLness. There is fullness there. There's ligaments. There's muscles. There's bones, there's nerves, there's blood. There are so many different positions for people to fill in the church.

You know, addressing this whole topic of jealousy, the Lord once told me, "I have millions of positions for people in churches. No one musician can meet everyone's needs. No one minister can minister everyone's needs. You

know, different strokes for different folks. Some people like this way, some people like that way. They're ministered on a deep level. Some people have this gifting, some people have that gifting.

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All of these giftings, thousands of these giftings fit together in the body of Christ. There is NO room for jealousy, people. No room, because every charism, every single gift and gifting is needed in the Body at one time or another. And if we're too busy pushing people away, you know, because we're afraid or jealous, those poor people are never going to be raised up into the ministry God has for them.

And don't bother trying to send people to the church. "Give me more people, Lord." If you don't have the ministry set up and you're not using what you have the way the Holy Spirit wants you to use it, you don't want to pray for more people. You wanna find out what are the gifts I have overlooked right now and do something about it.

So in God's house, a healthy church, what does it look like? It's full of hustle and bustle and people who are committed, joyful. And sure, they have problems like anyone else, but they're feeling completed, they're on the way. They're happy with where they're at and even happier where God is taking them. It's an exciting journey.

But if they're not moving forward on any journey, then they feel lost. And they are—they are like sheep wandering the hillside. When this happens and we attain unto the fullness of Christ where every member of the Body is being used, the way God intends them to be used, the way the prophets prophesied over them to be used - when this happens, the Body of Christ is healthy and vibrant and alive and able to handle new people. Then the Scripture has it... "Then we will no longer be infants, tossed to and fro by the waves and blown by every wind of teaching, by the cunning craftiness of men, and their deceitful scheming Instead speaking the truth in love.

Ephesians 4:14

Now this deceitful scheming thing, this is important. Because that's what Jealousy (whose principality, Jealousy and Fear) are continually, treacherously, scheming deceitfully to separate and divide and cripple the Body of Christ. Constantly. And they will use anyone who is willing to do it, because people who are wounded and not healed from their wounds go out and wound some more. And the thing just cascades.

You know, here we are with the book from Rick Joyner, *The Vision of the Harvests*, and all these different buildings and they are all fighting each other, and they're all fighting inside the building. And if someone goes to the hospital to get help, then they start attacking the hospital. You know, how many times have we seen a beautiful movement of God being attacked?

One of the things I think about especially is the woman who wrote the book, *Always Enough*, Heidi Baker. You know, she labored in Africa for 20 years. Twenty years that woman labored and brought forth maybe a handful of churches. Maybe. She went to Toronto and got slain in the Spirit. And they couldn't pick her up off the floor, she was so heavy. The Power of God glued that woman to the floor. And it took several people to get her up from the ground. And she was out, for something like three days.

And yet this Toronto movement got so much bad press that the people, well, the people that actually funded Heidi withdrew and said to Heidi, "if you're going to be involved with those fruitcakes and those nutcases, then we're not going to support you in Africa."

She went back to Africa anyway. What happened? An unprecedented movement on the African continent, an outpouring of the Spirit that is beyond imagining. In the history of the world, an outpouring of the Spirit. Conversions. Healings. Miracles at the hands of little children. And that was a hospital in Toronto. So what happened?

People attacked it and now any form of prayer out of Toronto sometimes gets attacked. For instance, resting in the Lord. If the Holy Spirit touches you and you go out, and you rest in Him, and He works on you profoundly. He does surgery. Major surgery. But people ridicule that. And that's a hospital. People come out of that strengthened and healed. Soaking prayer is another one, because soaking prayer comes out of the Toronto movement. Resting in the Lord. Sure, there's been abuses. Abuses of different movements.

For all of our tongue-speaking brothers and sisters, which I happen to be one of them, look at the kind of bad rap that speaking in tongues got. I mean, that's ridiculous. The Power of God through the Holy Spirit, through the infilling of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues is a beautiful manifestation of a supernatural movement, through a person's intellect and heart. And yet, it's slandered. Maybe because someone used it and acted really weird. (It) May have been the Spirit or may not have been the Spirit, but then the whole movement of speaking in tongues is tagged and anathema. Is tagged as being bad and shameful. So, you can't blame a movement by a few blunders and things you don't understand.

You have to look at the overall fruit and the fruit is there, folks. The fruit is amazing. But Toronto was a hospital and it came under attack. And it's still coming under attack. So, what Rick said is true. I mean, this was shown to him by the Lord. It's not something he dreamt up. He's a prophet of God. He receives dreams and visions and what he is reporting to us about the state of the church is accurate. This is not something he dreamt up.

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First of all, we need to stop being jealous and to find out what it is that we are not doing to other people. We need to deal with ourselves.

And you know, I think a lot of times we are talking about sloth. We're talking about laziness. We're just too lazy. We don't want to put in that much effort. Or maybe, God help the poor people who do it, but maybe you've been in a church and you were slapped down. You had a gift and it wasn't cultivated, and you were slapped down and told to get back into your seat. And it broke your heart.

You need to get healed of that. Because that gift that God gave you is still alive. He wants you to use that gift. Don't let anyone slap you down. Yes, there is a place for order, for rules of order, and to do everything in order, but if you've been given a gift and you can't be trained in that gift and raised up in that gift where you are, it's time to move on, to find a place where there is room for your growth.

That's very important to the Body. Because you someday will be used as a messenger of healing to other people who need that touch. There's not enough people to go around to touch ones that are wounded. There's not. We need more healers. We need more wounded healers. People who have come from that kind of background and they understand what you're going through. And they cover you with compassion and prayer and lead you in the right direction.

So, I'm all for schools of prophesy and prophetic. I think that's a wonderful thing. That's a beautiful thing. There's far too few. Talking about obtaining a whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Okay. That's what we're talking about. And we're talking about the whole Body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament.

Each individual minister is a supporting ligament to the pastor and to one another. There's no favoritism. There's no division. And the pastor honors the gifts bestowed on each individual by Christ the head. The head is the one who does the bestowing of the gifts. The pastor moves from becoming a pastor and an overseer to becoming a coach to raise those people up and to make sure they are progressing in the giftings that God has given them. 'Cause each part does its work.

Everyone has an opportunity to use their gifts, and believe you me, there's plenty of room for every gift you can imagine. They're nourished in many different ways, with different talents and abilities. And there's no room for

jealousy because everyone's busy being productive and using their gift. Rather, there is a growing sense of new life and excitement.

Things are expanding. People are being added to the Body, daily bringing others in. And people are not only being added, they are being raised up and sent out or they're being added and they stay. They don't move on right away because they're finding the nourishment. Okay.

Let's move on now and talk about Fear. Because the two principalities that were over the island in *Visions of the Harvest* that the Lord revealed to Rick Joyner were jealousy and fear. So let's take a look at the inner workings of fear and what's really at the foundation of fear.

What part of fear makes the body weak and sickly? Fear of the new, the unknown, the different. It becomes a habit. We've used...you know, fear has its place. We use fear to protect ourselves and to protect our interests, to protect our family. In some ways it's a healthy response to something we don't know or we don't understand. But then God has given us an intellect and we can go beyond the points of brushing something aside because we are in bondage to the fear. We can go beyond that. We can take the time necessary to discern, or Is this a threat? or Is this a blessing from God? That takes time and effort.

And a lot of us are so busy with the work of the Lord that we don't have a lot of time to look into a person's background - where they came from, what they teach, with an open mind to discern whether or not we should be afraid of that person or whether or not that person is going to be a blessing to us. So we just phsst (hand swipe). I mean many times that's what we do. We just say, "Oh, I'm too busy for that, I can't handle that right now, it's just too much."

I can't tell you how many times I've done that. And you know, Satan is an artist at sending his demons and getting you busy with 'something', Martha, Martha; getting you busy with things. Because he knows some things are coming that's a real blessing, and he doesn't want you to recognize it so he'll get you too busy with things. You'll be so overwhelmed that, when that potential blessing comes, you won't have time to discern it. And you'll miss the Lord. He's done that to me many times.

It takes a while to get onto that trick. The minute you find yourself so busy and overwhelmed with things, it's time to...it's like two thieves in a store. One goes to the cash register and make a big ruckus, you know, makes a scene. And everybody's drawn to that person's scene. In the meantime, his buddy over there is picking up everything in sight, sticking it under his coat and making out the door. And the alarm may go off, but they're so busy watching the guy holler and making a scene, they don't even know it. So, the enemy gets away with theft: grand theft, theft: thieving of life, thieving of gifts. He gets away with it, because we're so caught up in the world and worldly things that we're not paying attention. Close attention to what's in front of us.

There's a lot of virtue to be had with checking with the Lord before we do anything; because anything we do that's going to take time (first of all, we don't waste time—time is a precious gift), it's gonna take time, take resource and attention. And it's going to take effort, which will wear you out. And if you haven't checked with the Lord before you do something, you may be being set up by the devil to miss something else 'cause you're just too tired, you can't deal with everything.

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You just can't deal with everything. There's a lot to be said also for relegating duties and jobs. You know, pastors can't do everything. They need helpers. They need people to do different things so they have the time to discern and do the really important things when they come along. There is no fear in love, because perfect love casts out fear. Everyone knows this scripture, because fear hath torment and he that fears is not made perfect. I John 4:18

Fear is something we use to preserve and protect, but if we don't take the time, as I already said, to discern something as a threat, we may miss a blessing from God.

Fear of the different and the unknown is one of the most powerful suppressants of the Holy Spirit: fear of being ridiculed, fear of being rejected, fear of failure, fear of loss. There are so many different things that Satan succeeds and causes us to be afraid of. How careful we have to be to not let that happen. So, you know, "I won't speak in tongues because there are some people, well, they just don't believe it that, and I'm just not gonna, you know, ruffle the waters." That's sad.

The gifts that come with the manifestation of tongues are vital to the body. Strike for Satan. He just disarmed a soul that could be used in the Lord's army, in one area at least. According to Mark 9, it says, Whoever is not against us is for us. Well, teacher, said John, we saw a man drive out demons in your name and told him to stop because he's not one of us. Do not stop him, Jesus said. No one who does a miracle in My Name can not in the next moment say anything bad about me. For whoever is not against us is for us. I tell you the truth. Anyone who gives a cup of water in My Name because you belong to Christ certainly will not lose this reward.

Guys, there are water bearers everywhere. There are people bringing a cool, refreshing cup: a word in season, a prayer in season. And because of fear, many times they're not paid attention to. They're overlooked. They're swept to the side. Oh, we don't know that person. We don't know where they're from. We don't know their family history. I mean, you know, they're not related to any of us. I mean, you know. Who knows? Maybe they're running from the law. I'm going to be serious about this, because it is important.

Fear of the unknown and why are we afraid of the unknown? Why do we allow it to control us? Because we don't want to make it an unknown. So, it remains an unknown and it remains in the 'fear' file cabinet. Oh, we don't know about that. And because we are so busy with other things, we don't take the time to find out. That's a shame.

I didn't know this man and I wanted to censor him. When Paul was converted, the work they had to do to get the other apostles to listen to him. They were still afraid that he was going to arrest him. Fear. Fear. Fear is no replacement for discernment. Throwing a name tag on something 'se you don't want to deal with the true nature that it is and sticking it off in a corner is no replacement for painstaking discernment and seeking God with your whole heart to find out: "Is this relevant to me or is this a gift from you, Lord, to me or to my body? Please, Lord, enlighten me on this."

Do we take the time to discern? I know I haven't. I've been guilty about brushing people aside. I mean, the Lord used Balaam's ass to talk. That ass had more sense than Balaam did. So if He can use Balaam's ass, why can't He use us? Why can't He use someone we don't recognize. Someone with a different cultural background, maybe, someone with a different economic background. Educational background? I mean, it's just like the world to pigeon-hole people according to those things.

And yet, what does the Lord say? The Kingdom of Heaven belongs to the poor. We should be listening to the poor because they are simple. Their mind isn't cluttered with all these things - all these games, these social games, all these things that people use to try to impress other people. Their mind isn't cluttered like that. Their mind is simple like a child. And unless we become like little children, how can we enter the Kingdom of Heaven?

So, fear of listening to people from another economic strata, fear of listening to people without an education, without seminary training, without college training in degrees in religion. So, we become afraid. And we don't recognize the Lord's golden vessels sometimes because we are too busy trying to size them up: "Well, they belong to my culture. I don't where they came from, I don't know their background. Well, they didn't do this school or that school or that seminary or they didn't do this or didn't do that." So, you know... I don't know? (hands raised) You know?

I just, you know, status quo, things are good just the way they are. Let it go. Fear's is no replacement for discernment and the Lord will hold us accountable. I mean, He will say, "Why didn't you listen?" You know, I read from a beautiful testimony today. She wanted so badly to reach a woman who was from a royal family in Europe and she just couldn't make herself to do it. A simple woman, she was a very simple woman, spirit-filled, full of knowledge, full of wisdom, full of understanding, not literate in the sense of a person from royalty that had gone to universities. And you know, it could very have been that that woman's salvation hung on the ability to communicate with her. But fear prevented her from speaking to that woman.

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The Lord was urging her to speak to her, but fear prevented it. Because she was judged to be of a higher social strata, more educated, more enlightened. And yet she wasn't. It was the poor, simple one who had the true wisdom, the wisdom of God. And how many times has the Lord nudged us to do something and we've "Oh, that person won't listen to me", "Oh, oh, they, no... you, oh, you know, I mean, you know, oh, I don't know how to talk to him". Or maybe it's someone on the street. And the Lord wants you to show that person love and affection and what if they steal my wallet? I mean, what if they knife me? Fear. Fear. Fear is such an effective stopper of the Holy Spirit and the anointing. "What if I prophesy that and what if I prophesy to that person and what if they reject it? They're going to think I'm a kook." Well, what if they do? Who do you answer to? We answer to the Lord.

You know, once we're given a message to deliver and we've delivered that message, our work is done. It's not a matter of if they accept it—that's between them and God. I did my part. Now it's between the Holy Spirit and that person. I can pray. That can be part of my part, but I'm not going to blame myself if I am turned away.

I gave a pastor a letter one day that I was going to give a musician. It was a beautiful exhortation and encouragement about spending more time in the secret place with the Lord. So the ministry that poured forth from this beautiful garden, this interior garden, would be richer because the Lord was calling this man to a great depth, a profound depth, a special anointing. And that was the basis of the letter.

The pastor never read the letter because he came back in front of the congregation and said something about that letter. Kinda joking around—that was totally irrelevant. never said what he thought I said. I didn't get that impression. He didn't read the letter. He didn't read the prophecy. He presumed I was saying one thing when, in fact, I had given a beautiful exhortation for this musician.

Why was he afraid to read that? Maybe he was too busy. Maybe he had a lot of things on his mind and reading a page of...babble or whatever, from someone unknown, unproven, and not a lot of credentials, schooling, or whatever. Didn't have enough time for that. Just phsst – tossed it aside. Just go on, I knew what she was going to say anyway 'cause I know where her head's at.

But he didn't know and what I said was not from me.

You see, why are we so afraid to listen to what people have to say to us? What is that shuts the water off, that backs up the plumbing, that stops the flow? It's fear. You don't want to take the time to discern whether or not this person is authentic, just throw them aside. And you go with the people, the usual ones. Well, let me tell you, the usual people get worn out. They can't do everything. They can only get spread so thin and they collapse.

So the Lord gives us all a little piece of the puzzle. I like very much what Rick Joyner said. Basically He said, "There's no way that one person can fulfill the 'job' of Christian. There are so many different facets of being a Christian and and so many different needs, that there's no one person on Earth that could fulfill all those. No matter how great his prophetic anointing, it's just impossible."

And what's so beautiful is, the Body of Christ is like a puzzle. That's why the Lord gives a piece of the puzzle to this one, another piece of the puzzle to that that one, one piece over here, another over there. And when you receive the pieces of the puzzle, they become one whole, cohesive understanding. And you get the whole picture. Until we receive from the different places that the Lord wants to give us, we don't get the whole picture. We may think we have the whole picture, and then things don't go right, and we say, "where did we go wrong?" And the Lord's standing there saying, "I sent you prophets to tell you. I sent you people that had a word for you – but you were afraid to listen to them. That's why this happening to you."

I can look back on my marriage and my husband, you know. Wow... He definitely has a way of communicating with the Holy Spirit. What He has shown him, whether I want to receive it or not. If I'm afraid to deal with it – can't run from it for very long, not when you live with someone that's really anointed. It's going to keep coming back.

I remember once the Lord was dealing with me about providing for myself, when we were in Florida. A woman had...an attorney had come, a woman attorney had come and chained herself to a light post outside of the courtroom. She brought absolutely nothing with her – she had nothing but the clothes on her back.

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Because by the end of the day, she had a tent, she had a sleeping bag, water, (she was fasting,) she had juice. She had a porta-potty. She had everything. At the end of the day - she was there for like a week long vigil protesting a case over the custody of children. And here I was priding myself on not needing a lot of things and needing Jesus only. Well, pride is bad anyway. But, I mean, here I am thinking that I have it all together (air quotes) and this woman comes along and shows me that no, you don't have it all together. You're still insecure, you're still trying to do for yourself. You're not trusting the Lord.

"Look at the way she trusts me."

Yes, Lord, I see that. Guilty as charged.

But, you know, it can be a bumper sticker that convicts you. The Lord is famous for putting a car in front of you, you can't get around, and the message is on the back of the car or on a license plate. You just didn't want to hear it that day because it was confirmation of what your husband was trying to tell you or your pastor was trying to tell you, or even a friend was trying to tell you and the Holy Spirit is dealing with you.

So fear is Huge. Fear blocks the movements of the Holy Spirit through us. Fear quenches the Spirit. Fear deprives of life and cuts off life from people, because we're so afraid we don't want those living waters to flow so we bottle them up or we turn the faucet off in order to prevent damage from being done.

Now, I'm not saying that there aren't cases where we do have to turn the faucet off. There absolutely are cases like that. But what I'm talking about here is the principality of fear working with jealousy, in the church, causing people to kill each other, to wound each other. Causing churches to be destroyed, causing spiritual hospitals to be destroyed because they're afraid. They're afraid of the anointing, they're afraid of the gifting, they're afraid of the new movement of the Spirit.

Fear.

God help us.

We don't want to succumb to fear. I have to laugh every time I think of it (it doesn't really exactly fit in here), but I always think to myself when I get out of bed in the morning, 'Shoot, there might a lion out on the corner, I better stay in my house.' LOL! So, the Lord always deals with me so I ask him, "Help me get out of bed, please!" (looks up

heavenward) In this case, you know, again, judgment. Making a value judgment or pigeon-hole judgment, that is no place for discernment and that won't wash.

When we face the Lord and He says, "*Why didn't you listen?*"

Um. "Well, because of this, because of that..."

"No, why didn't you discern? Why didn't you take the time to listen very carefully and discern if that was of My Spirit or of that person's flesh?"

Why is the body of Christ weak and starving for food - emaciated? Fear has a great of do with it.

You have to look for our fruit! Is there fruit in this person's life? Are they peaceable? Are they gentle? Are they humble? Are they helpful? Are they self-sacrificing? How long have they been Christian? How are they serving the community? I mean, these are part of the things we need to look at when we discern whether or not a person has an accurate message for us.

Matthew 7, "For out of the overflow of the hearts, the mouth speaks. A good man brings forth good things of the good stored up in his heart. And an evil man brings evil things of the evil things stored up in his heart. But I have to tell you that man will have to give an account at that day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words, you will be acquitted and by your words you will be condemned."

So, if we're criticizing somebody the Holy Spirit has sent and haven't taken the time to get to the bottom of it, and to discern it, we're going to be accountable for that person's blood. Because as I mentioned earlier, to talk about someone is to shed innocent blood, and it cries out to the Lord.

Of course, as the Bride of Christ, we are called to look like the Lord. And the Lord's innocent blood was shed. Not that we're that innocent. But what I'm saying is He was rejected, despised, scorned. And people had contempt for him.

And if you're in the ministry, or want to be in the ministry, you can expect to wear the crown of thorns, the crown of scorns. You can expect that. It's gonna happen. You're gonna have to resemble Jesus. You're gonna go through those trials, those fires, and gonna be wounded. But your intimate connection with the Lord will serve, continue to heal you—to heal you from the wounds. So that you can go back and love, even from the way Jesus loved from the cross. "*Father, forgive them for they know not what they do. Forgive them, Lord.*"

I mean, this is the response that we got to have when people unjustly criticizes us. Eventually, somehow, the Spirit of God has got to bring us to the point where we grieve for those who criticize us when we know that God has sent us. WE need to grieve for those people because they don't know what they are doing. They'll find out someday, but we need to pray for them, forgive them, and move on.

In Matthew, the Lord says, Dear friends, since God so loved us, we ought to love one another for God is love. Whoever lives in love, lives in God and God in him. There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. And the one who fears is not made perfect in love because if anyone...

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...says I love God yet he hates his brother (gossips about his brother, backbites, and pulls down his brother), he is a liar. For anyone who doesn't love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command, 'Whoever loves God must also love his brother.'"

Fear and love cannot co-exist. One or the other is going to win over. And these demons of fear and jealousy that have so hog-tied the Body of Christ, those two demons can be conquered by love. Certainly jealousy can be conquered by love. But fear can be conquered by love because when you love someone, you automatically want to think of the best of them. You don't want tear them to pieces. You want to build them up and encourage them. You want to talk behind their backs the way you would talk to their face, building them up...

Fear and jealousy are an unholy pair, and somehow Love has got to triumph over both of those. And through the Spirit of God living in us and the power of Jesus' Love in us, we can choose, make the choice to not allow fear and jealousy dominate us and to dominate our situations in churches. It's a real challenge. But if we want to grow in the gifts, we have to do it, because we can't minister out of fear. We can't minister out of a partisan spirit, a spirit of separateness, name-calling or labeling. We can't minister from that place.

Ministry flows from Love. And the Lord will not entrust his choicest gifts to His Golden Vessels unless they are ministering from a place of love, authentic love, which has no fear. In Matthew 12:30, the Lord says, "He that is not with me is against me and he who does not gather with me scatters." That was what was going on in those buildings, that Christian island. People were being scattered. Inside the church, they were being attacked, and running from each other and being scattered and outside the church. There were even camps... Rick goes into that... were outside of the city walls proper. And the people there were being attacked and were being scattered.

In the meantime, these tremendous storm clouds were building and building and building. And people were coming in ships; fugitives from the world wanting to get on the Christian island. They can't because the fighting is so intense in the church that there is no place for them to land. And if the Lord did - if the Lord allowed them to land, then the people would be conscripted into different groups to fight more battles.

So, the Lord has to put His arm out and basically say, "Wait. They're too busy fighting and being petty right now. When they get it out of their system and things dies down, then I can build My Church. Then you can come on the island. Then you can learn about Christianity."

There was a situation where people, you know, were not from the same culture, the same background. Well, let's say we're part of a group. They were outside the group. In Numbers 11:24, "He brought together seventy of their elders and had them stand around the tent. ²⁵ Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke with him, and he took of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied—but did not do so again. However, two men, whose names were Eldad and Medad, had remained in the camp. They were listed among the elders, but did not go out to the tent...and they prophesied."

Then the people say, "Well, look, look, they are prophesying. They shouldn't be doing that."
And the Lord said, "No, no, no, no. no. Leave them alone."
Moses said, "Leave them alone."

This whole spirit of fear, fear of the different, the new moves of the spirit... It's been said by some very, very knowledgeable people that the elders of one movement and the church rarely accept the new movements that come in. They tend to be suspicious and to reject the new movement of God because they are not familiar with what's going on.

And, I mean, this is just human nature. But they're not having the nature of humans; we have the nature of Christ who can understand and discern all things. And so, I just want you to please search your heart. If you have backbitten or gossiped or looked down at people because they are a different culture or different economic strata, you know that's just a very sad thing because they are vessels.

First of all, Christ died on the cross for them. Second of all, you don't know that the person you're looking down on isn't a prophet of God and isn't a very pure soul that is coming to edify you to help you along and to support you. You don't know that.

And if you just reject them out of hand just because they don't fit your criteria and you don't really take the time to discern? My, my, my... what a blessing you've lost. What a tremendous blessing. And I've done it. I've done it.

Father, forgive me if I have turned anyone away because of pride, fear, or jealousy. Give me a heart that affirms others and always takes the time to carefully listen to see if they are truly your messengers and have a word of hope and truth to share with me and those entrusted to me. Amen.