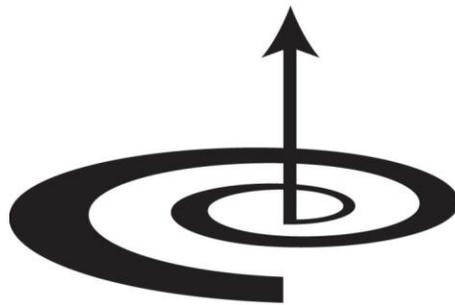


# **RALLY THE TROOPS**

God's Solemn Call To  
A Chosen Generation



*A Message by Chad Hollingsworth*

# **AUTHOR'S NOTE**

The message of this book is meant to be one of hope and not one of pessimism. It is my goal to inspire you to live beyond an apathetic life. God never meant for any of us to simply wander from day to day without a greater sense of purpose in our lives. He gave us purpose in Him. It is our neglect of our relationship with Him that has led to the conditions within the larger Body of Christ. If we will but turn to Him again, we will see revival within our own lives and within our churches as well. Revival is contagious!

While a corporate revolution is desperately needed within the Body of Christ, it is the individual's responsibility to bring it to pass. If we wait for the fire to start within the lives of others before we ask the Lord to fan the flames of our own hearts, we may be waiting for quite some time and there is no doubt that we will miss out on many blessings during that "waiting" period. But if we will but look unto the Father for intimacy each morning and ask Him to fill our days with His presence, the fire will undoubtedly begin to grow within our own lives.

I write these words out of my own personal experience over the last ten years. I have been very despondent at times regarding my relationship with God. At times, I have been uniquely intimate with God. Through it all, what has resonated within my soul and kept me consistently intimate with Abba Father has been my willingness to seek Him first and to seek Him daily. I write because I feel I have been called to share the beauty of my experience with others. I do not claim to have all the answers. But I know the One who does. And it is the inspiration that I have found in Him that has led me to putting these words together.

I know at times in this book I have used much scripture. And I have used long passages of scripture. This is intentional. Truth be told, everything that makes any sense to me anymore ties back into the Word of God. It is where I find

my peace. It is where I find my courage. It is where I am inspired to love others more deeply. The Word of God has become my all in all. And this makes even more sense to me when I consider that Jesus Christ is the Word of God fulfilled in human flesh. He is our example and our light. Basically, it's not that I have fallen more in love with words written on a page, but rather that I have fallen more in love with the man to whom I owe my salvation. This is the light that I hope to shine. I pray that the words written within the cover of this book share that message. May all who choose to read these words be blessed by them. And may our heavenly Father encourage all who choose to heed His voice. May you have courage like never before. May you have peace like you've never known. This is my prayer over you and I pray it confidently in the name of Jesus, Amen!

# THE PROBLEM

So, it's not like we are experiencing a new problem. No, in fact, this problem is as old as the Church itself. You know, kind of like the writer of Ecclesiastes said, "There is nothing new under the Sun." So what is this problem that must be addressed? It is the problem of division. Division comes when different lines of thought and reasoning enter the picture. We have cultural divides, racial divides, not to mention all of the socio-economical issues that divide us daily. These things, among others, have divided us from one another since the beginning of time. When God questioned Adam regarding the forbidden fruit, Adam blamed the woman that God had created. In that one moment man was separated from woman in a way that God did not intend.

We were created differently. That's fine. But we were not created divisively. For all of God was in agreement that all of creation was good. But once mankind, through both the man and woman, ate of the forbidden tree, we took destiny into our own hands. There started the division. That division was not just between man and woman, but also with God and man. Our persistence to do things our way is what divides us from God. And it has surfaced in all areas of life since that point. So one could say that the problem isn't really division itself, but rather the sin that causes it. Yeah, see, I don't really see myself as a divisive person. But a sinner...now that I can relate to. For I make rampant mistakes whenever I take my eyes off of God. Therefore, the problem lies in each one of us and each of us must be willing to address it. *Romans 3:23* tells us that "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." We all have ownership. We were each born of it. And it is up to each of us to acknowledge our ownership of it. Until we are willing to do that, we can go no further.

When I begin to understand my sin, I begin to understand my need for a Savior. That's where the solution comes in. But we'll get to that in a minute. Right now, we still need to gain a deeper understanding of our rootedness in sin. Sin's roots drive deep into the soil of humanity. In that one transaction between mankind and God by doing what our own desires and lusts drive us to do, we drive a wedge between ourselves and God. How did man come to the point of sin? There were plenty of other trees to eat from. Why did we grab that one forbidden fruit? It was not because of hunger, but because of seduction. We were seduced by the Deceiver, Satan, to believe that eating that one piece of forbidden fruit would transform us into a greater creation than what God created Himself. After all, was that not what brought on the fall of Satan? Self-glorification? Pride? Can you own your role in your own destruction?

Misery loves company. This adage is as old as the truth it holds. When Satan was banished from heaven, he didn't want to leave alone. So he seduced one-third of the angels to follow him into his new domain. He was given power over the earth. He is the Prince of the Air. He has dominion here, for now. His intentions have not changed. His ways of seduction have not changed. He still seeks to convince man that there is none as great as himself. With that line of thought, we will come to the conclusion that there is no need for faith. There is no need for forgiveness. And so each of us bite of the fruit of self-indulgence.

Until recently, I used to believe and teach that the only thing that separated true believers in Christ from Christ Himself is that we were born under a sinful condition and that Jesus did not come from the seed of a man. But we each must also recognize that when we each reach the age of accountability, we willingly sin. Christ resisted all forms of temptation even though He was faced with it throughout His life. I do well to make it through a single day without honoring my own will before God's will. Because of this propensity to sin, I must acknowledge that I continually reach for the forbidden fruit. I am no different from Adam. Because of this epidemic problem within every one of us, we need to be saved from ourselves. That's where the solution comes in.

# THE SOLUTION

Every problem demands a solution.  $1 + 1 = 2$ . If a problem has no solution, then chaos rules the day. Early on in history only the Jewish people, the Nation of Israel, had a solution. They were God's Chosen. Not because they deserved it more than anyone else. Not because they asked for it. No, God showed them mercy and favor because He had greater plans, and He needed a people that would remain united despite the most vehement hatred. And they continue to serve the purposes of God. God chose these people to bring His Son through. And Jesus reached out to the Jewish people to reconcile them to God.

You see, the Jews, just like the rest of us, have a propensity to seek their own way. We see their rebelliousness time and time again throughout the written history of the Bible. But Jesus came to finally reconcile them. And yet they rejected Him. They hated Him because He did not represent the idol that they had built as their God. Jesus came in love, but they demanded that He come in power. But because the essence of Jesus was His love for a lost people, He remained true to His calling. He remained obedient to the Father in all things—even when things didn't pan out the way He hoped. Because of His love and obedience, He became a solution to the problem of sin. He gapped the gulf that was created between mankind and God. And because the Jews rejected Him, God made Him available to all that would accept Him.

God clearly gave us the solution through Jesus Christ. He was either the greatest lunatic of all-time, not to mention history's greatest conman, or He truly was the Son of God. Jesus stated in *John 14:6*, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father, but by Me." *John 3:16* tells us that God loved each one of us, individually, so much that He sent Jesus to earth to do what we could not do for ourselves. As John the Baptist stated, "Behold, the Lamb that takes away the sins of the world." The answer is Jesus. Jesus and only Jesus.

Well, is it really that simple? Yes and no. Jesus paid the ultimate price for our sins. He was beaten and crucified as the spotless lamb that atoned for the sins of the people. He paid a dear price. The pain, agony and death thing are hard enough for us to imagine, for I do not know another human being that would go through such torment out of love for a people that He knew would still reject Him. It's hard for most to give a dollar to a homeless person because they believe that person will simply buy another drink. What would you do if you were presented the opportunity to go through hours of torture, embarrassment and pain just to let someone know how much you loved them when you knew they would simply turn their back on you? Would you walk that mile?

Jesus did walk that mile willingly. He serves as not only our atonement and salvation, but also as our example to a world that desperately needs that same salvation they we have received. For Christians, salvation is not the end of the spiritual process we are called to, but rather the beginning. Salvation is an awakening. It is a transformation. The Church has called new believers into a state of apathy for years, decades or perhaps centuries by selling us a rotten bill of goods. They have told us that salvation is free. It is something that we should not make profit off of as the Roman Catholic Church did for centuries. So we make the offer of salvation to others at no cost. But salvation, by Jesus' standards, will cost us everything. We must be willing to be transformed into a new creation.

What is this new creation thing and how in the world can I make the statement that we've been taught wrong? Well, the Church has taught that salvation is free. And that leads us to easily accept Christ into our hearts. But when one lives in an affluent society, like America, where Christianity is not outlawed; then if we are not careful, we will be lulled into a deceptive religion that I call "churchianity". Churchianity is the act of going through religious ceremonies such as weekly attendances to a church, marriages, and funeral proceedings without taking into consideration the matters of the heart and soul. Think of it like the Church of the Laodiceans in the following passage of the book of Revelation:

"And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'" *Revelation 3:16-22 NKJV*

Do you see the seriousness of the offense of being lukewarm? Do you hear the passionate cry of a loving God who despises seeing a people deceived into apathy? This is the cry of God to the Body of Christ in America today. This is the call of God:

*Repent, for you are desolate even though you remain rich in worldly possessions. You are miserable despite your celebrations and parties. You are naked spiritually, for you have not clothed yourselves in the white garments of the Righteousness of God. Your hope is to not by gold from the core of the earth to demonstrate your richness and security, but to buy purity of self from the Father. Just as the Apostle Paul's eyes were opened once he was made blind by the Lord, so also is your need. Quickly,*

*consistently each day and with all of your heart seek the Lord through the salvation of Jesus and transforming power of the Holy Spirit.*

# **BETWEEN THE AWAKENING**

This message of “rallying the troops” has been brewing in my spirit for more than a decade. The name actually came from a line in a song by the Christian rap/ hip-hop group GRITS, *All Fall Down*. The line stated that it was time to “Rally all my troops in GI Joe gear.” That song itself is a call out of the apathy that worldly success brings. There have been times that I have tried to promote it. There have been times that I have reverted back to the old self and ignored God because He didn’t open up the doors that I banged on. What I failed to realize is that this was a vision given by God. If it were my vision, it would have been successful the first day I decided to promote it. But because it was His calling and His vision, it is dependent on His timing. And this day, God has put it on my heart to write these words and begin the process of releasing it for His Glory.

You see, revival is mostly a personal thing. And that is what *Rally The Troops* is all about. It’s about seeing hundreds, if not thousands of Christians living the life as Jesus described it. It’s about living life as Jesus lived- Completely glued to the Father by consistently remaining in the present. Not looking on to tomorrow, or looking back on yesterday. It’s about remaining in the now.

I’ve walked a pretty twisted road to get to where I am today. I’ve tried to remain strong and be a man of faith, good will and charity. But I, like the rest of us, have screwed up here and there. But when I got mad at God, my pastor and everyone else around me because they didn’t see my future as I saw it, I led myself down a very destructive path. I picked up old habits and returned to a pretty rotten frame of mind. As a firefighter/ paramedic, I see quite a bit of death. And that changes everyone. You never get numb to it no matter how

much you convince others you do. Anyways, that all seemed to lead me further and further from the God that I had once been so intimate with. And I grew very lonely inside. I missed the old me that had peace.

And so I would try to press back in, but it wasn't the same. So much had changed. Kids, work, church, friends...it was all so different. So I would retreat back into old things again, not because I really desired them, but because they were there for me. It seemed that everything regarding my spiritual life had moved on without me. I wasn't even missed. Now I know, it's not about feeling sorry for yourself; because all of us have very busy lives these days. But I do know the hurt of feeling like no one really cares.

But then one day, God would not leave me alone any longer. He literally pressed me to the edge of the cliffs of my own sanity. Not in some sadistic way. But in a way where I had nowhere else to go. You see, in *Matthew 21:44*, it says that "whosoever falls upon the rock will be broken, but whomever the rock falls upon will be crushed forever." Jesus is that Rock. We will either be broken by throwing ourselves completely into His arms, or if we deny Him, our rejection will bring our permanent demise and eternal damnation. Jesus loved me so much that He was willing to break me. And break me He did.

The last two to three years have been the hardest experience I have ever known in the natural. It started with a fractured skull and brain bleed which showed a personal frailty that I had not addressed before. And it has more recently taken every personal dream and hope and pretty much done away with them. Here I am at thirty seven years of age. I have a beautiful wife and children. But I've been a financial disaster. My integrity has been challenged. I've been accused of being a bad employee. I just didn't get it.

But the reality is that created the problems for myself. I have only reaped that which I have personally sown. When I asked God to make me more like His son Jesus, He has done just that by giving me understanding. And through it all, He has loved me with compassion and patience. To be more like Jesus is to have a greater understanding of the Father. And I know my Heavenly Father to be true and faithful to His Word. Therefore, I will not allow myself to focus on the natural

order of things. I must address my mistakes and correct my actions so that I do not have to endure the same penalties in the future, but I must also step beyond the natural into the spiritual.

Spiritually, I believe God has given me some really cool wisdom. What my eyes have been opened to is that yesterday is gone and tomorrow may not come. All that really matters is the present. All that matters is now. When I began looking into the four Gospel accounts to see what it was that made Jesus amazing as a man, I realized that He stayed true and intentionally bound to the Father. And He did that as flesh and blood, without the “superhero” powers that we ascribe to God. He was able to perform miracles and lead others to salvation because He always watched what the Father was doing. That is the secret.

Do you remember the book and video that came out a few years ago called *The Secret*? Well, it’s a new age belief system that believes in the power of visualization and positive thinking. The truth is that it is based on some biblical principles. It just doesn’t give credit to the actual author. There are also some deceptive thoughts involved, but hey, when it is a deception, or perversion of the truth, then we really don’t even have to ask who the author is...do we? The reason I bring that up is because that helped me understand a little deeper and start to develop a little personal spiritual philosophy. It is about being intentional.

Jesus was intentional in everything He did. He walked with purpose. He told stories that had incredible depth even though they seemed so simple on the surface. That was intentional. And He intentionally lived a life devoted to the calling of the Father. Even to the point of death on a cross. When asked by what power He used to do the works He did, He gave an answer:

The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jews persecuted him. Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working." For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God. Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell

you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these. *John 5:15-20 NIV*

Jesus only did what He saw the Father doing. He asked the Father to show Him what He wanted done. And then Jesus joined in. I've been told that if you want to become part of a movement of God, then see where He is moving and then join in. Well, to me, this makes sense because that is what I see Jesus doing. So in order for Jesus to do the works of the Father, He had to stay continuously in the present. And so He did. Look at the next passage of scripture to see just how much He stayed in the present:

Then one of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus, came there. Seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet and pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." So Jesus went with him. A large crowd followed and pressed around him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'" But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. He said to her,

"Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering." *Mark 5:22-34*

You see, Jesus didn't divinely order that woman to touch her. In fact, He was on the way to help another person in need. But then He felt power go out from Him. A woman needed a touch from the Master so deeply, that she pressed beyond the great crowd and simply touched the hem of His garment. He realized in a moment that someone special had touched Him for His healing power. No great light went off and no fireworks blasted. The disciples around Him didn't even realize that anything had happened. But Jesus felt the need of the moment and faith demanded a healing. And Jesus wanted to bless beyond just the natural healing.

Now, you could be asking what all of this has to do with you. Okay, so Jesus lived in the moment. Cool. But He was still God in human form, right? Yes, He was. But He also lived completely as a man. Read what Paul and Timothy wrote to the church at Philippi concerning the man Jesus:

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. *Philippians 2:5-8 NKJV*

Jesus knew He was God's equal. He, in fact, is God. But He made Himself of no reputation. Or perhaps better said He operated completely as a man. He only did what He did through human means. He could have done it through other means, but He didn't. He came as not just our Savior, but as our example. One could say that I am making an argument too grandiose to believe. One could argue that you and I could never do the works that Jesus did. But those would be our words, not Jesus'.

Jesus believed that we could do greater works than you and I can imagine. He thought that we could do the works He did and more. And the beautiful thing is that He told us so. After Phillip, one of His disciples, asked Jesus to show them the Father, Jesus replied:

Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." *John 14:9-13 NKJV*

Jesus did not do things of His own authority. He did the will of the Father. And if you and I remain fully present in each moment as Jesus did, and if we submit ourselves truly to the will of the Father, then the power that resided in Jesus will also reside in you and I. How is this you say? Surely you will not argue that the words above are my own. They are the words of Jesus. And Jesus promised that we will not only do the works He did, we will do even greater works. How can this be? How can we do greater works than Jesus Himself? We definitely cannot become the salvation, but that's not what He is speaking of here. He is talking about the goodness of God being made evident upon the earth. Whether it be through healings, love, or some other gift of the Holy Spirit, we can surely continue His work. But it must be done in accordance to His will and through the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus continued:

"If you ask anything in My name, I will do it. If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of

truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.” *John 14:14-18 NKJV*

You see, many modern day believers live very shallow lives. We accept Jesus as Savior, but we do not heed His full Word. And so we never enter into the deeper aspect of the faith that so many have been willing to die for. I’m not asking you to die. I simply want you to live beyond a shallow Christian experience. What would this world look like if Christians began living their lives in accordance to Jesus’ instructions to the disciples? How many more could be saved? How many more glorious events would transpire that bring glory to the Father by the strength of Jesus in our lives? It is a choice each must make for himself, but I tell you that the option is there for us. And I truly believe that this is the heart of Christ. Not for our own glory. But for His.

This is the truth that much of the modern day Body of Christ has neglected. We simply arrive at an awakening and then meander through this natural world by natural means and try to make sense of it all. But God wants so much more for us. He wants us to shine brightly. My earthly father has challenged me greatly when I have made repeated mistakes that lead to my demise. He simply asks me, “How’s that working for ya?” You see, if what we are doing is not yielding good results, then perhaps we should stop doing those things and aim higher! It’s time we start living beyond the awakening.

# LIVE THE LIFE

So there is life beyond the awakening. And it is up to each one of us to live it. We must make a bold stand to live as the new creation that God has caused us to be. I'm not saying that we're going to be perfect or that we will not sin again, but surely we should have higher expectations than to just accept that we shall live in sin. We are to rise above sin and the only way to do that is to remain fully in this moment. I would venture to say that you are not in sin at this very moment. As you read this text, you are intent on seeing a greater picture of God and His role in your life. That is where your heart should be. So if you are without sin in this moment, what keeps us from stringing enough of these moments together so that we might not sin again? It is surely possible, for that is what Jesus instructed a woman who was caught in the very act of adultery to do.

Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one

condemned you?" She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." *John 8:3-11 NKJV*

So, from a personal perspective, it is possible for us to sin no more. Otherwise, Jesus would not have given this woman such an instruction. Jesus commands us that we sin no more. So, what gets in our way? Ourselves. Our will. In order for you and I to stay intimately glued to the Father moment by moment, we must embrace the understanding of submission. There is no other means by which we may keep ourselves from drifting from the Father's will. We cannot change our will, for we have the very same will of Adam. We, like Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, must pray "Nevertheless, not my will but Yours."

But living the life is more than just living a personal sense of holiness. It is more than just being one individual among the masses that has a heart set on God. We must find like-minded individuals and submit ourselves to one another. Now this is not the same submission that we offer to the Father. With the Father, we offer Him our entirety. We hand over our life. But with fellow believers, we are to simply allow them to inspect our lives in a sense of community. No man is an island. We all must live with one another. We are surrounded by believers and unbelievers. We are surrounded by the prideful and the humble alike. But we, as fellow believers, are to remain in but not of this world. We are to operate by a different set of principles.

What would that world even look like? There are those that are operating with an understanding of community, or a sense of unity. But for much too long, the Body of Christ has been divided and separated. We have separated ourselves from one another through doctrine and principle alike. Is this the will of God for us? I would argue that it is not. Unity is important to the Father. It is perhaps best reflected in one of the psalms. In Psalm 133, David writes:

A Song of Ascents. Of David. BEHOLD, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments. It is like the dew of

Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; for there the LORD commanded the blessing— Life forevermore. *Psalms 133*

You see, when brethren dwell together in unity; there, in that place, the Lord commands blessing. He is pleased with unity amongst His Church. Unity, like the oil that saturated Aaron when in the Lord's presence, covers us in blessing. Like the dew that falls and covers everything under its presence, so also will unity amongst the Body of Christ saturate us with His blessing. How beautiful could that be? I would liken it to the great revivals that have shaken this land before. And I am sure that the fields are white unto harvest, meaning that unbelievers would be shaken by such a demonstration of love and unity. Is this not what Jesus prayed for in His last recorded prayer in John 17? Let's read His words:

Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.

While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. **I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.** Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." *John 17*

*\*bold added by me for emphasis on the specific passage*

Now I know that the chapter above may be difficult to undertake in one setting, but remember that this was Jesus' last recorded prayer. He prayed it before the disciples and it is a complete prayer. That is why I felt the need to put

it all in there. That being said, the text in bold are the words that I was specifically referring to. But let's break down the entire prayer, so that we might have better understanding into the mind of Christ.

First, let's look at the timing of this one event in the midst of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. This prayer happens before all of the disciples minus Judas Iscariot. This prayer follows some very close instruction from Jesus in the midst of one of the most intimate talks Jesus has had with His disciples. He begins explaining that the end of His earthly life is at hand. He understands the tribulation that the next few days will hold. Not just for Himself, but for His disciples also. In reading the text, you can hear the love of a friend in His voice. He is warning the disciples and encouraging them to not lose heart at the same time. He knows the next few days will shake the disciples' faith to the core, but He also knows that the resurrection is coming!

Knowing the surroundings of this chapter is helpful, but let's breakdown the different sections of Jesus' prayer. The first part of Jesus' prayer is focusing on thanking the Father for the work He has completed in the life of Jesus. Jesus is grateful for the Father's provision in all things. The Father has blessed His life with continual communion. In the first part of His prayer, Jesus communes with the Father once again and asks Him to glorify Him. He seeks to draw all men unto Himself that they may be reconciled to the Father. Jesus knows He needs the Father to make this happen and to give Him the strength to endure what lies before Him. So, for the first part of the prayer, Jesus prays for Himself.

The second part of Jesus' prayer is focused on the disciples that stand before Him. He has a heart for these men that God has provided Him. Just before this prayer, He tells the disciples that they are no longer considered servants but friends. You can see the love He has for them by the words of His prayer. You see how in the prayer, He affirms them, He reassures them, and He empowers them. Jesus' heart is for His ministry to grow fuller through the work of the disciples. Until this point, they have hovered around Jesus and sought answers from Him. He lets them know that they have all answers and at this point in their journey, it is time for them to begin sharing their testimony. Jesus

has held nothing back from them. And now, it is their time to shine. As the light, they too will be hated by many because of their reflection of the Father. But Jesus asks that the process of sanctification be made complete through the Word. He encourages them to cling to His words, for in them, all of life is contained.

The third part of Jesus' prayer focuses on those that would believe in Him through the testimony of the disciples. Do you realize what that is saying? Jesus prayed for you and I in His last recorded prayer of the Bible! Jesus had us in mind when He approached the accusers and assaults of mankind. He prayed for us because He wanted us to know that we have never left His mind. Even now, while sitting on the throne at the right hand of the Father, He sits and intercedes with the Father on our behalf. How amazing is that fact? Jesus, Lord and Creator of the Universe, prayed for us before going through His darkest hours as a man. It is one thing to know that He prayed for us, but to know what He prayed is an entirely different thing altogether! Look again at His prayer directed to us:

“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.”

What is it that Jesus prays for us? He prays for unity. He prays that the believers that come through the testimony of the disciples would be unified in their faith toward God. Of all the things that Jesus could've prayed there, why would He choose unity? What is it about unity that speaks directly to the heart of man and God? Unity speaks to God because it shows that His children are focused beyond themselves. It is a beacon of light unto the world that states that there is something different about this group. If we are united in Christ, then we are no longer seeking to serve our own needs, but rather our intent is changed to loving others as we love ourselves. With Christ as our example, we are willing to

lay down our own lives and personal agendas for the greater good of the Body of Christ.

What is the common denominator that we see within the movements of man right now? It is solidarity. However, these movements are based on the promotion of self. Whether we view the revolutions in the Middle East, the Union strikes of America, or the protestors around the world, we see the same thing. They are protesting because they seek to protect their own interests. This is where a move of God and the move of man vary greatly. Man will unite, despite differences, in order to push a similar agenda, whereas, God will bring people together in unity for a singular purpose. Nevertheless, we see where unity plays a very specific role in causes of revolution.

When it comes to God, we should desire to see revolution as well. However, this revolution denounces self-interests. It denies ourselves so that we might do the will of God. For the Christian, unity is about submission as opposed to power. Where man's social movements have proclaimed power to the people, God's children should be about giving all power to God. This is important because when you and I gather in His name and under His authority, He can accomplish much more than any movement of man could ever dream of. Where the collaboration of man may stir the hearts and minds of those seeking a different agenda, collaboration of the saints will stir the heart of God who will follow by pouring out His blessings over His people. Remember what Paul said to the Romans in *Romans 2:4*, it is the "kindness of God that leads to repentance."

When Christians unite and are made perfect in One, seeking His truth over our personal agendas, then God will be lifted up and the world will believe that Jesus Christ is the Son that the Father sent to save us! This was the heart of Christ. When He prayed that we would all be one, it was for a purpose. Anytime that the world sees man standing united for a common cause, people stop and take notice. And if we will but listen to the direction of our Savior and heed what His prayer states, we will see a revolution that will yield hundreds and perhaps thousands of souls for the Body of Christ. What a beautiful day that would be!

# IN ONE ACCORD

The early Church was a picture of what God desired the Church to be. Things are always right in the beginning before man gets to meddling with things. Life for Adam and Eve was beautiful before the Deceiver stepped in and convinced them to seek their own agendas. Likewise, the Church has been separated by the dissension of mankind. Let's look for a bit at what the early Church looked like.

And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James [the son] of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas [the son] of James. These all continued ***with one accord*** in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. *Acts 1:13-14 NKJV*

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all ***with one accord*** in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. *Acts 2:1-2 NKJV*

So continuing daily ***with one accord*** in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. *Acts 2:46-47 NKJV*

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, saying, "What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. "But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name." So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, because of the people, since they all glorified God for what had been done. For the man was over forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed. And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God ***with one accord*** and said: "Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: 'Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things? The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers were gathered together Against the LORD and against His Christ.' For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through

the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. *Acts 4:13-31 NKJV*

Now the multitude of those who believed **were of one heart and one soul**; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need. *Acts 4:32-35 NKJV*

And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all **with one accord** in Solomon's Porch. Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed. *Acts 5:12-16 NKJV*

After reading these passages of scripture, do you see the difference between the early Church and many of the churches of today? The early churches had favor with the surrounding communities because the Spirit of God was resting on them. For much too long, I believe that many today's churches

have been simply going through the motions of Christianity without seeking God's face. If they simply have not known to seek Him in unity of heart, where He makes His grace so evidently found, I fear that they have felt the need to manifest a move of God within their presence. And a man-made substitute will never meet the true needs of God's people. It will only create more manipulation, division and hurt because it does not originate from God Himself.

So, let's focus on the matters that were of great importance to the early Church.

The first issue is in bold in the passages above. Whenever Christians gathered and were of one accord, then God move accordingly. This is the first calling of the Church. We are to be of similar mindset. Paul, in writing to the Church at Ephesus said this in *Ephesians 4:13-16*:

“till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head-- Christ-- from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”

So what we see from Paul's writings is that it is the doctrine of men that tricks us and carries us away from our true calling in Christ. Before we go any further, let me reiterate that I am not trying to do away with denominations. I am simply proposing that if our denominational boundaries are honored and taught before we instruct one another of the importance of unity within the Body of Christ, then surely we have lost sight of some very important early teachings. If we look back to Jesus' prayer in *John 17*, we will again be reminded that His heart was to see believers united as one body seeking the Father. Denominations have their place

as arms, legs and other parts of the body, but we must submit to one another through the centralizing mind of Christ.

If we will begin to live with one another in one accord, there are many benefits that the entire Body of Christ will receive. The early Church experienced things like a greater sense of sharing, eating meals together and simplicity of heart. They had favor with those outside the Christian faith. The power of the Holy Spirit rested fully upon them. Miracles were done in their midst. And who could forget that the Lord added to the Church daily? You see, just as Jesus prayed, when the Church unites with the same spirit of love toward one another, everyone will take notice.

First off, God takes notice and He has great pleasure in seeing His children get along. As a parent, I can tell you that there is a sweetness that overtakes my heart when my children are all getting along with one another. There is a peace that resides within my household and things seem to flow better. But when those little munchkins begin to fight and squabble, there is a division that overrides everything. Have no doubt that God takes great account of the united or divisiveness of His Church.

Secondly, men notice. Not just the believers within the Church, but also those outside of the Church. I love what the Word says in *Acts 5*, “yet none of the rest dared joined them, but the people esteemed them highly.” How sweet are those words? The unity within the Church was regarded as sacred and special, even by those completely outside of the faith! When was the last time you heard something positive being stated by the media concerning our churches? Nowadays, all we hear of is scandals, division and strife. Oh, sweet Bride of Christ, we have truly wandered far from God’s heart’s desire of unity amongst His people.

Third, there are tangible gifts that will rest on us if we learn to submit to one another in the fear of the Lord. The Bible says that a house divided cannot stand, nor can a kingdom divided stand. For so very long, we have lost the power of the Holy Spirit and love for one another because we have allowed our different interpretations of the Word separate us. If we can grow in the fullness of Christ

to the point that we honor one another despite our differences, then we shall see God's glory fall upon us again. I'm telling you that we can prepare for a Third Great Awakening within our land! But this truly does depend on us gaining understanding on this key issue of submission.

# MAKING THE CHANGE

As I stated early on in this book, every problem demands a solution. This line of thinking that I have proposed to you would serve no purpose if I did not feel that the Lord has given me a solution to meet our problem. And the solution lines up with scripture, which is the true test of God's inspiration. We simply have to begin realigning ourselves with the thought processes of the early Church. This task would be too overwhelming if we were to try and take it on at a national or even global scale, but if we will break it down to the simplest of forms, we will see God's glory fall gracefully on the entire Body of Christ.

For simplicity, I am proposing that we begin to focus on a few practical and very real things we all can do to establish this mindset in our lives. First, we must return to the beautiful concept of sharing with one another. Second, we must meet with one another. Third, we must pray together- both spiritually and physically. And fourth, we must honor one another. If you notice, none of these things promote the individual. That is because in Christ, the entire Body is the only individual when we all take on the mind of Christ. Read what Paul wrote to the early Corinthian church:

Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. *1 Corinthians 1:10 NKJV*

If this is how Paul begins his letter to one of the early churches, how much emphasis do you think Paul places on the concept of unity? He pleads with the brethren to be united in thought! This should be the heart of each and every pastor in our churches today. But, like any tired parent of many rambunctious kids seeking each their own way, I am sure they are frustrated, worn-out, and sometimes simply want us all to "Shut Up!" Oh, that the saints of God would hear

the importance of these words! We must learn to get along with one another, just so that peace can again rule our assemblies.

Okay, so we have to share with one another. Yes! I have said many times that the reason that social entitlements do not work when administered by the government, is because it is not the government's job to do such a thing! God set the Church up as a place of healing and hope where people could receive blessings, both spiritually and physically. Unfortunately, we have done an inconsistently poor job of reaching out to others less fortunate in our communities. Therefore, the government stepped in. We don't need more Welfare! We need more WARFARE! Think of the lives that could be changed if we began food pantries within our communities that not only handed out tangible, physical needs to those needing assistance around us, but we also handed out hope and inspiration. Think of the strongholds that could be broken down, the generational curses, and the lives that could be impacted by the cause of Christ if we would but step up and begin meeting the physical needs of those around us. The opportunity exists, but we must learn to seize it.

Second, we must meet with one another. Just like any other concept I am sharing here, this will best be understood if we break it down to the simplest of elements. And that element is the family unit. How sweet is it when we get together in the family unit? Man is made for relationship. That is evidenced by the creation of Eve and the subsequent children. And if those relationships are divided, as when Cain slew Abel, then pain, sorrow, and grief come to fruition. But when the family is united as with Noah and family aboard the ark, there is beauty and provision.

Our society is so fast-paced that we seem to have lost touch with the people that gather together around the dinner table to share a meal and converse. Somewhere along the way, we've lost the desperate need for the simple things in life. Kids play sports year-round and they have to be at practices and games until late at night. Mom or dad work late or travel with their jobs constantly. And yet, we wonder why divorce rates are so high! It is because we do not make the necessary adjustments within a world that calls for all of our

attention at every turn! We must return to the basics. We must begin to gather together on a daily basis as a family and then be intentional about meeting with one another on other platforms from there.

Third, we must begin to pray together again. When the family gathered together for meals, they prayed together several times a day. Now, it is rare for most families to hear one another pray. Jesus said in *Matthew 18:20*, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." Jesus taught on the importance of gathering together in His name. This can only be done with a prayerful spirit. But praying together goes well beyond just meeting with one another and praying our own agendas. Watch the emphasis Paul places on praying in like-mindedness in his letter to the Church of Colossi:

For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.  
*Colossians 1:9-12 NKJV*

Paul tells the church that he and Timothy do not cease to pray for them. He continues to inform them that he and Timothy are praying together in agreement that the entire church be filled with knowledge of God's will and wisdom. They pray that the church would walk a worthy walk, that they would please the Lord fully, that they would be fruitful in their works and that their knowledge would increase. They pray that they would be strengthened for all that the Lord has put before them. Do you see the attitude that Paul and Timothy take together in prayer? It is empowering. It is strong. It releases God's power. It's begs the Lord's ear on matters that are eternal in nature. This should be our prayer life with one another. One that builds others up. One that is not focused on our own

goals and dreams, but one that strengthens the Body of Christ to do the will of God.

Fourth, we must begin to honor one another. We must esteem others higher than ourselves. I really like how Paul wrote on this subject to the Church of Philippi:

Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. *Philippians 2:1-4 NKJV*

Paul charges one of the early churches that it is their responsibility under Christ to look to the interests of others. How lackadaisical has the Church become in this matter? I understand how busy life has become. I understand how packed our schedules tend to be. But that does not excuse us as followers of Christ in the responsibilities charged to us. Paul makes an earnest plea for the early believers to follow Christ's example because they accept the consolation, comfort, fellowship, affection and joy of Christ. We must begin to honor one another again. This is a mandated priority as a believer in our faith.

Is it any wonder that the divorce rate within the Church is as high as those outside the Church? We have abandoned our first principles. If we would just begin to put our families back in order, how much would the world take notice? This is the heart of the message. This is what will gather the world's attention as we seek to live our lives fully representative of Christ has done for us. But we must stop being so individualized. We live in a compartmentalized society that has taught us to constantly "look out for numero uno." It should be no surprise that we have no witness with the world! We must remain in and not of the world. We must begin to live by a different standard of conduct. One that is focused on others, for it is the Lord's responsibility to look after our own interests. And He does a much better job than we can.

Once we begin to implement this within our families, we can then begin to reach out with this message within our churches. After all, is not the church just a larger extension of the family unit? It is indeed. It is the fellowship of like-minded believers. Each individual church must begin to exist beyond their personalized needs. What an influence a single church can be if it is modeled after the example the Lord has given us in His Word. What a difference that could make! And once we reach beyond the individual church, we must begin to work these principles within the larger body of churches within each community. What a testimony of the love of Christ it would be if churches across denominational lines and boundaries began to share with one another, meet with one another, pray with one another and honor one another within our communities!

Peter wrote in his first epistle, "For it is time for judgment to begin at the house of God," Indeed, I tell you that a spiritual cleansing within our many our own lives and the life of the Church is direly needed for this generation. This generation is filled with those that seek to change others before looking inwardly. As is most often the case, the change must take place inside God's house before it will influence men outside of our four walls. If we will but learn to submit to God and one another, we shall see the Glory of the Lord in our midst. In this, we cannot lose heart. We must be strong and very courageous.

# CONCLUSION

In the movie *Braveheart*, Mel Gibson plays a character by the name of William Wallace. While I enjoyed the entire movie, there is one line that speaks louder than any other. Wallace says the line toward the end of his life when he is given an opportunity to escape the painful death that awaits him shortly. He says, "Every man dies, but not every man truly lives." This is truth beyond the simple statement that is made by Mel Gibson in the movie. Hebrews 9:27 says that it appointed for men to die once which is soon followed by the judgment. You see, all men die a natural physical death. The real question is how we live our lives before the judgment of God.

There is much to be said on this subject of living, but let it suffice to say that we should each take serious consideration of how we have used the gifts, talents, abilities and relationships that God has blessed us with. It is not mere chance that your friends with those you choose to call friends. The Lord has placed people in your life that are typically similar minded. Because of your similarities, you have great influence over them. If you begin to make a change toward living a more intimate life with God, people close to you will take notice. There is no telling what doors may be opened for you to share the love of Christ. And it all starts with a personal revolution of heart.

Personal freedom comes through submission. In order for one to live to their brightest potential, they must have an authority beyond them. That authority is God Himself. When we learn to submit to Him and the principles within His Word, we will begin to grow in ways we have not before imagined. The reason for the growth is that God's principles are outlined for our benefit. God is not some controlling dictator that seeks to keep us under the continual pressure of His thumb. He is love. And love seeks the best for others at all times. God is not threatened by our success at any time; therefore, He wants us to be the best that we possibly can in all things. The Bible is not a book of rules, but a guidebook

that we are given to bring us along the more beautiful paths and keep us from the destructive cliffs of self-interest.

Submitting to His Word is one thing. But it is not the only thing. If it were the only thing, then the Pharisees and Sadducees that sought the demise of Christ would have been right. He threatened everything they believed. But that is because they believed more in the looking holy than being holy. Their minds were set on the right things, but their hearts were far from God. This is the problem we see in many lives of “Christians” that allow God to enter their heads but not their hearts. Therefore, we must be sensitive to the Holy Spirit as He speaks truth to our hearts through the Written Word of God. Despite his personal failures according to the law, David was favored by God and considered a man after God’s own heart. Do you get that? David was not a man after God’s mind, but molded in the heart of God. True knowledge is that level of understanding that supersedes the mind and penetrates the heart. This is the knowledge we are to seek. And that depth of understanding only comes from intimacy with Christ.

God is calling us to living a life beyond our own interests, and I would like to remind you (and be reminded myself) that the only way the Bride of Christ will reach our full potential is if we spend time with one another, pray with one another, share with one another, and honor each other above ourselves. Christ demonstrated the ultimate sacrifice by laying down His life completely for you and I. How shallow of a repayment we have returned unto Him by separating ourselves from one another and building walls between us. We must begin to align together in order to take down strongholds of spiritual wickedness. Paul used the understanding of military structure to define the church on several occasion. Hence, the reason this calling is called “Rally the Troops.” There is much to be learned from our military by the churches within America. And with this, I will finish.

What if the Church gained understanding of how we might best operate by looking to the structure of our military? Like our armed forces, we have distinct divisions that operate by very different means. Like our military, we have various ranks within the Body of Christ, but no one rank is indispensable or valued above

any other. Like our military, we honor ourselves by appreciating those that have gone before us, by honoring those that serve with us, and by helping those that are downtrodden and less fortunate. As Christians, we all have different jobs and different families, but we are all called to the same calling. We are strongest when we are one. We are best when we are united. This is our calling in Christ.

There is no longer time for stepping on one another for personal gain. We must all be submitted to Christ and fulfill His calling of unity. Read the calling of the Apostle Paul to the Church of Corinth:

For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of

Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way. *1 Corinthians 12:12-31*

May we all seek to fulfill the calling of the Apostle Paul as He reiterated the calling of Christ! Imagine what our world would look like if Christians from within each individual church lived out this calling with one another. What then if each church within a community began to do the same? I'm telling you, a testimony to the goodness of God would erupt from unbelievers if we did such a thing! This is the heart of *Rally The Troops*. This is my heart. And I pray that it becomes yours as well! May God bless you tremendously as you bless one another!